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District Roundup

NEWS FROM YOUR DISTRICT

The Rev. Harry Hight, pastor at Lebanon (Chilhowie) Charge, models the shirt that has been signed by countless Holstonians.

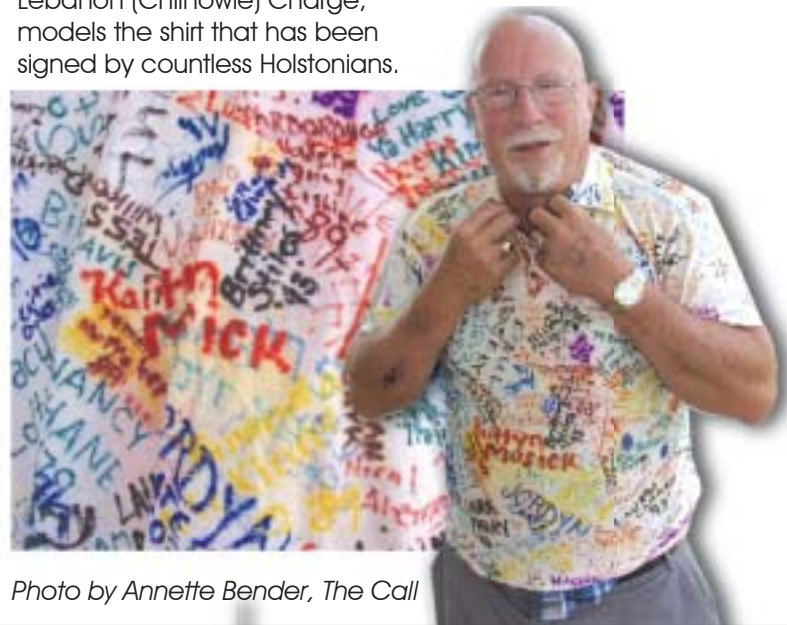
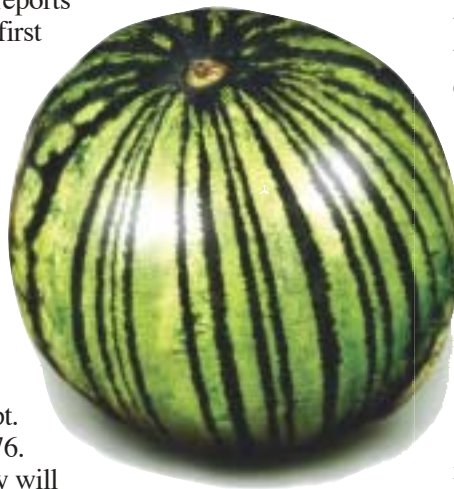


Photo by Annette Bender, The Call

Abingdon: When the Rev. Harry Hight was 23 years old, he served as a counselor at a junior-high camp in Virginia Conference. “One of my kids came up uninvited and started writing her name on the back of my shirt,” says Hight. That girl didn’t know it then, but she started something. For 42 years, the pastor has carried that same shirt to Holston camps and assemblies, inviting people to make their mark on his apparel. Now that Hight is 65, the terry cloth shirt requires careful handwashing and is well beyond its heyday. But Hight still receives an occasional signature, most recently from retiring Bishop Ray Chamberlain at Annual Conference 2004. “The oldest legible name is Trudy Williams from First Maryville in 1967,” says Hight, who is now retired and pastors Lebanon (Chilhowie) Charge. “I wonder what became of her?” Hight invites Holston members who remember signing his shirt over the years to e-mail him at hhight@preferred.com.

Cleveland: The Rev. Mat Merker, pastor at Benton UMC, is delighted by joint worship services with fellow Cleveland church McDonald UMC. After McDonald visited Benton recently, Merker reported in the newsletter, “What a great day! Praise the Lord!” On Sept. 26, Benton plans to put a sign on the church door and head over to McDonald. The Rev. Terry Benetto is pastor at McDonald. **S**

Johnson City: Edgefield UMC takes its annual Lord’s Acre Sale seriously. After a sermon based on Matthew 25:14 by the Rev. Estel Williams in March, 110 church members each received \$5 with the challenge to “multiply your talents.” The idea was to do something creative to raise money and craftwork before the Lord’s Acre Sale in September. Some parishioners doubted their own abilities, reports Janet Elliott, but within the first week one member turned in \$100 after creating and selling jewelry. Other projects included growing watermelons, making chow chow, baking bread, and arranging flowers. By the end of August, only 10 members had returned their \$5. The others joined in raising a total of \$6,287. The Lord’s Acre Sale on Sept. 11 raised an additional \$7,576. Elliott reports that the money will help pay for Edgefield’s new Christian Life Center. **M**



Maryville: A Chili Cook-Off to benefit Camp Wesley Woods will be held at Broadway UMC on Wednesday, Oct. 20, at 6 p.m. Groups or individuals wishing to participate should plan on stirring up two gallons of bean-laden concoctions and paying a \$25 registration fee. For \$4, you can sample the chili and see who wins the prize. For more information, contact Jason at (865) 982-5551. **L**

Morristown: Bale’s Chapel UMC held a one-day Vacation Bible School under the theme “Hero Quest.” As a mission emphasis, leaders chose two local “hero-filled” facilities, reports the Rev. Dixie Miller. The 21 adults and children who attended VBS put together small bags of candy and word-search puzzle books for patients undergoing chemotherapy. They also collected coloring books, crayon packs, and story books for the infant-toddler program at a nearby hospital. **S**

Oak Ridge: The Rev. Neville Hammer, a retired clergy member living in Lenoir City, died in August at age 74. Since then, \$1,595 has been donated in Neville’s memory to a Camp Wesley Woods scholarship fund. Camp officials say that Hammer cared about Wesley Woods and his children attended there.

Tazewell: Central UMC has begun recognizing members with a “Senior Salute” newsletter column and the gift of a potted or fresh plant (“depending on the season and their personal preferences,” says Betty Munsey). “Even though we sit side by side on the pews with these senior friends, we often don’t know much about their lives,” Munsey says. “Senior Salute shows we care.” **S**

Wytheville: Morgan’s Chapel UMC and Rockford UMC recently joined for worship at Paige’s Meeting House. Of the 118 in attendance, six were visitors, reports Pastor John Grimm. “What a thrill!” **S**



East Ridge kids on wheels: “The hit of our trike-a-thon was the snack table,” Patty Emery reports.

Big Stone Gap: Last month, the district’s Church & Community Renewal Project continued its 10-year-tradition of providing school supplies for needy children in four counties. Church & Community Worker Nancy Tomlinson Hobbs reports that 351 children received paper, notebooks, pencils, glue, pens and other items. The Morristown District United Methodist Women helped assemble the supplies, Hobbs adds.

Chattanooga: The Mother’s Day Out program at East Ridge UMC held a trike-a-thon, raising \$650 for St. Jude’s Research Hospital. Director Patty Emery reports that 11 children participated and several church members came out to watch. **M**

Kingsport: Bishop James Swanson preached at the district conference at Colonial Heights UMC on Sept. 12 – one of the numerous appearances he is making throughout Holston. After hearing Swanson, the Rev. Gale Flanary, pastor at Old Union-McFerrin UMC, had this to say on the “Holston Talk” messageboard at www.holston.org: “Folks, I can tell you truthfully that God through him touched our hearts in a powerful way. He is undoubtedly ‘water washed, bread fed, and spirit led.’” **S**

Knoxville: Rutherford Memorial UMC recently broke ground for a new parsonage in a new subdivision. According to the *Fountain City News*, the congregation had to choose whether to remodel the old parsonage, pay a housing allowance, or build new. “Church members Dale and Joe Longmire made the decision easier with the donation of a lot in a ... subdivision they are developing,” the newspaper reported. Pastor David Green led an evening service on the lot where he’ll eventually hang his hat. **M**