

## Returning To Childhood Roots

By Becky Greenwell  
bgreenw2@bellsouth.net

Childhood memories are the best memories. Recalling them is easy and can be done anytime they are jogged. Going back sometimes may be a little more difficult. But I did it.

A couple of weeks ago my uncle David passed away. When you become a certain age, your health starts to deteriorate, and your visits get farther apart, and you know your time is getting near. During those times you think a lot about the past,

you want to make sure you remember them with birthday cards and Christmas cards and visit them one more time.

That's what I think, but sometimes it doesn't work out that way. I planned to visit him a couple of years

ago; we didn't make it. I bought birthday cards and Christmas cards, but I'm just not very good at remembering to mail them. I keep up with many relatives on Facebook, but don't comment very often.

When I got the call about his passing, I scolded myself for not doing enough. I consoled myself with he wasn't sick anymore and is with the rest of his family. It still didn't justify me for the-should-have-but-didn't excuses.

I was going to his funeral. My husband and I did, and it was a beautiful military service.

The bittersweet thing about funerals is that they become reunions. There are family members you don't see often, especially when they live several hours from one another.

I saw many of my cousins I grew up with. Some I hadn't seen for several years, and they didn't look like I remember them. Those would be greeted with, "So good to see you again, now which one are you?" Names were given and the memory was jogged as their face became familiar. It was a great reunion through bittersweet circumstances.

The funeral was about an hour's drive from where I spent six years of my childhood, which held a lot of memories. We took an extra day to go back to explore the Village of Dalzell, Illinois. The population of this village was now 663 compared to 496 when my family were residents in 1965.

I still have an uncle living there, my mother's sister's husband. Uncle David was my mother's last sibling; Uncle George is her only surviving brother-in-law along with two sisters-in-law. I did not want to miss the opportunity for a visit with my uncle.

Arriving in the Village we first took a tour. I directed my husband along the way. We went past my uncle's street, and I recognized the curve coming up as the one the church

sat on. St. Thomas More Church looked the same, the fire department across from the church, and next to that was the schoolhouse I attended. Same two-story brick building, two rooms on the first floor for the first through fifth grades and two rooms directly above. One was for the sixth through the eighth grades and the other, the film room, was used for special events, like watching "school related" films. There were 75 students in the school when I attended. I was disappointed because we left the year before I got to move upstairs and be one of the older students.

The gymnasium was next to the school where I cheered for the Dalzell Indians.

We continued around the town to discover a lot of the places I remember were no longer in business. The tavern that served fried turtle and turtle soup, which was our favorite, especially during Lent, was gone, as well as the bakery that made fresh Italian bread, and the little corner grocery store. The post office was now a residence, and a new post office was built on the other side of the Village.

That wasn't where my mind was headed though. I wanted to see the house we grew up in. The little pink house on the curve of a road. When we lived there it was a pale pink house with a closed-in front porch, a ramshackle of a garage next to it, and a three-room concrete block house in the back that we used as a playhouse.

I must admit I was on the edge of my seat as my husband approached the corner curve. The house was

there exactly as I remember. It wasn't pink anymore. It had fresh white siding, an open porch on the front of the house, and a new garage with white siding. The windows were all the same, I knew which one was my bedroom and which was the living room. The playhouse was gone. Amazingly though the big backyard wasn't very big anymore.

We then headed to my uncle's house. Near his house we saw a new park that wasn't there before. It had a bright blue sign identifying it as "Liesse Park." There was also a ballfield with a concession stand displaying signage as "Lucy Liesse Memorial Concession Stand."

My uncle George was "...instrumental in developing the Village Park for the benefit of Village residents, especially the Village's children." That according to the Resolution he proudly hangs on his wall. Next to that is a second Resolution naming the Concession Stand in his wife's honor. He told me she said, if there was going to be ball there would have to be popcorn. She started popping popcorn.

Uncle George lives in his own home, loves to make lots of soups, and entertain his family. He updated us on all the things going on in Dalzell. He mentioned names I still remembered and told us all the history and changes since I left there in 1965.

He also told us he would be 90 on his birthday in July. You can bet I have marked it on my calendar, and I will be returning then to give him another big hug for his birthday.

### COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

## 4-H NEWS

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY • COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

BY

ANNETTE BUCKMAN

COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT FOR 4-H

### Share The Benefits

#### Of The Great

#### Outdoors With Youth

Spring and its warmer weather are just around the corner. Now is the perfect time to encourage young people to step outside and experience nature as it awakens from its winter slumber.

Spending time outdoors offers numerous benefits for youth. Sunlight exposure can help reduce nearsightedness and increase vitamin D levels, both of which are important for healthy development. Outdoor play also increases physical activity, helping reduce the risk of childhood overweight and obesity.

Exploring nature can also support young people's social and emotional development. Time spent outdoors has been shown to reduce stress, anger and aggression while helping youth build stronger relationship skills. Research shows that children who regularly interact with the natural environment are often better communicators, stronger collaborators and tend to misbehave less than their peers.

Learning outdoors also encourages youth to pay attention to the environment around them. This type of experiential learning helps improve focus and attention once students return to the classroom. Nature provides a hands-on learning environment that can enhance curiosity, creativity and academic success.

Parents and caregivers can encourage young people to spend more time outside in many simple ways:

filled with vegetables or flowers and let youth help care for it.

- Turn outdoor time into a learning experience by identifying trees, plants and insects in your yard.

- Weather permitting, set aside time after school each day for outdoor play and exploration.

- Take a walk or hike together. Many Kentucky communities have invested in trails and walkable spaces.

Take advantage of local trails, or visit one of the many beautiful trails located in Kentucky's state parks, nature preserves or arboreta.

Kentucky 4-H also provides many opportunities for youth to explore the outdoors. Many counties offer outdoor clubs that allow young people to learn about their local environments. Several 4-H projects encourage youth to observe nature and collect information from the world around them. One of the most popular opportunities is 4-H Summer Camp, where youth experience outdoor adventure while building independence, leadership and lifelong friendships.

#### It's Never Too Early to Think About 4-H Camp!

The Union County 4-H Camping Program will be held June 9-12, and now is the time to start making plans to attend! 4-H Camp is one of the most exciting opportunities offered through the 4-H program, giving youth the chance to experience outdoor adventure, build friendships, and develop leadership skills.

Youth who wish to at-

tend as campers must be at least nine years old and no older than 14 on the first day of camp. Eight-year-olds may attend if they will be entering the 4th grade in the upcoming school year. Youth ages 15-17 can also participate in camp as a Counselor in Training (CIT) or Teen Leader, where they help guide younger campers and gain valuable leadership experience.

If you are interested in attending 4-H Camp, please contact the Union County Extension Office at 270-389-1400 for more information.

#### Get Involved In The 4-H Communications Contest!

Union County will host a 4-H Speech and Demonstration Contest on May 5 at the Union County Extension Office. Registration will begin at 5:00 p.m., and the contest will start at 5:30 p.m.

Participants are encouraged to pre-register by Friday, April 11 by calling the Extension Office at 270-389-1400.

Speech categories include:

- Junior Division (Ages 9-13): Speeches must be 3-5 minutes long.

- Senior Division (Ages 14-19): Speeches must be 5-7 minutes long.

Demonstrations may cover a wide range of topics and should be 5-15 minutes long.

For more information, including contest rules, categories, and tips for preparing a speech or demonstration, please contact the Union County Extension Office.

## UNION COUNTY KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION - 2026

Union County elementary schools are getting ready for next year's kindergarten classes! If you have a child who will turn age 5 by August 1, 2026, you'll need to attend Kindergarten Registration with your child.

Registration is set for the following times:

**Uniontown Elementary:**

**Thursday, March 12, 10am-6pm**

**Morganfield Elementary:**

**Monday & Tuesday, March 16 & 17, 8am-4pm each day**

**Sturgis Elementary:**

**Thursday, March 19, 3:30-5:30 pm**

Please bring your child for a brief screening along with their official birth certificate and, if possible, medical records to include immunization records and current physical, eye, and dental exams.

If you have questions or need more info, please contact the elementary school your child will attend. School staff members look forward to meeting your child!

## PUBLIC NOTICE

The Union County Fiscal Court is accepting applications for a Full-Time Groundskeeper position at Moffit Lake.

Applications can be picked up and turned in at the Union County Judge/Executive's Office located at 100 West Main St., Morganfield, KY 42437. They may be obtained via email by emailing [jill.hunley@unioncountky.gov](mailto:jill.hunley@unioncountky.gov) or on the County's website at [www.unioncountky.org](http://www.unioncountky.org). Applications will be accepted until March 20, 2026.

The Union County Fiscal Court is an Equal Opportunity Employer: All applicants are considered for employment without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status, or disability. 3/18c

## City of Sturgis A Plan for the Future

Your participation matters, let's shape our community together!



March 31 at  
5:30PM



Union Co.  
Expo Center  
125 Pryor Blvd.  
Sturgis, KY 42459

Together, Lets Plan for our Future!

## Townhall Meeting

Come share YOUR vision for the future of Sturgis



\*Special Guests\*

**Tad Long, John Buchanan, Sarah Stoll**

~ Community & Economic Development Team from Ky League of Cities ~

**Christopher Wooldridge**

~ Faculty & Director - Center For Economic Development @ Murray State University ~

Sandwiches and light refreshments will be provided by Job Corps Culinary Dept.

Please RSVP if you plan on attending! [jessica.gibbs@cityofsturgisky.com](mailto:jessica.gibbs@cityofsturgisky.com)  
270-333-2166