

City Council meets in regular monthly session

The Beattyville City Council met in regular session on Monday, February 9th at 6 p.m. at City Hall. Mayor Scott Jackson and council members, Sam Cockerham, Ronnie Stamper, Glenna Cummins, Charlotte Hogan and Mitch Cornelius were in attendance with council member Savannah Mays absent. The meeting was opened in prayer by Sam Cockerham followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Paul Nesbitt of Nesbitt Engineering addressed the Council on projects his company was involved in. Wastewater improvements - \$1.23 million dollars with approximately 3 months for release of funds; the KY 587 utilities project \$41,500, the DOT will pay the city and the city will then pay Nesbitt, on motion made by Glenna Cummins and seconded by Ronnie Stamper; \$3 & 1/2 million dollars to be put in an interest bearing account, an agreement request for the Mayor to sign request for draw down was made by a motion made by Mitch Cornelius and seconded by Sam Cockerham. Mr. Nesbitt related that there was several projects that would be under construction this year.

Mike Smith of KRADD reported the following: Water treatment plant improvement Phase 3 for \$5,000,000, fully funded;

Beattyville Outlook - \$250,000 budget, half funded, seeking \$125,000 in funding; Beattyville WPA - budget \$1,432,000, \$750,000 secured; Beattyville WWTP Rehab - budget \$2,304,000; Beattyville WTP Improvements Phase 2 - budget \$7,500,000, going to bid; WPA and Mercantile Hub - \$750,000 grant from Historic Preservation.

A discussion was held on a pay increase for the Mayor and Council members. Council decided to forego raise.

Juneteenth was accepted as a holiday by a motion made by Glenna Cummins and Ronnie Stamper seconded.

Glenna Cummins made a motion with Sam Cockerham seconding to pay the Chamber of Commerce dues for 2026 in amount of \$50.

The Council made a motion by Mitch Cornelius and seconded by Charlotte Hogan to buy a half page ad in the 56th District Basketball tournament.

Doug Brandenburg requested the Council to approve annexing Hawkins Road into the city limits. Ronnie Stamper made the motion with Glenna Cummins seconding.

Ronnie Stamper made the motion to accept the minutes of the January meeting and Sam Cockerham seconded.

Main Street Manager Teresa Mays gave the Council a preview of upcoming events for Main Street. Cruising Saturday nights will be held the first Saturday of the month beginning in April. Appalachian Memories Festival will be held May 15th and 16th on Main Street. Live at Lunch will be held Thursdays in May and Flashback Fridays in June. Sam Cockerham made the motion and Mitch Cornelius seconded to approve the calendar.

Police Chief Cody Sparks reported that his office answered 83 calls, wrote 18 citations, made 9 arrests and worked 2 accidents.

Public Works Director Ferrell Wise reported that his department answered 89 calls with 81 being for water/garbage and 8 for sewer. Of those 81 calls 59 was completed in water/garbage and 3 for sewer with 27 still not completed.

City Treasurer Sally Gilbert reported that the General Fund was in good shape as was the garbage account, sewer and water.

Ronnie Stamper made the motion with Sam Cockerham seconding to accept the report as submitted.

The meeting was then adjourned.

Down the Backroads of Yesterday

By Bob Smith



Cold nights in a rockshelter

Thus far, this winter has been somewhat of a surprise. The winter can be likened to those of 59-60, 76-77, 77-78, and 84-85 when we measured our snowfall in feet rather than inches. It is easy to remember snow that came early and stayed late or the drift I measured in February of '85. It was 150 yards long and 21 feet deep and the state road department had to get a strip mining company to plow the Big Andy with a strip mining bulldozer because their equipment could not to it. It was hard to believe. I don't ever want to see snow like that again. However, I still remember those enormous piles of snow and ice with the towering cliffs behind them.

Nature paints beautiful landscapes when she dips her brushes in cups of fire and ice. On one of those crispy mornings when I had spent the night before under a rockshelter I crawled out of my bedroll, dusted off the snow and hung the military snooze bag on a holly bush to dry off. I glanced up at the smoke swirling into the heavens just above the timberline. The snowfall must have moved out during the course of the night. The bright blue skies were sailing past the pine tree tops. I never saw a more beautiful scene. I heard a small noise and turned my head in time to see one of the two cousins, I brought along, stirring up the fire.

Chris pitched a couple of logs as big around as your leg on the fire. A fearsome looking plume of hot ash seemed to watch as smaller showers broke up and continued skyward.

Within seconds, the blazes of the two individual fires were burning much brighter. I glanced around briefly and grinned. My insulated underwear had kept me toasty warm inside my military sleeping bag. I had used my entrenching tool to shovel out a shallow pit, filled with soft, white pine branches and created somewhat of a lean-to wind breaker. I had stayed much warmer and drier with this set-up in the past. A few minutes later the shelter was much improved and warmer now.

Mom had cried, squalled and carried on since the day before. I loved to camp out in the snow and ice, but my mother was scared to death by it all. I could sleep out like that in the winter and wake up early in the morning feeling like I was sitting on top of the world. The air was clean and fresh and easy to breath. You could hear the crows squawking and even the camp fire smelled fresh as the great outdoors. I was really looking forward to the day of excavating and making some fascinating discoveries. Being away from home and living in the past was special. I simply can not describe the sense of freedom I get when I am back in my natural world taking the breath of free men and living as though every day was the Fourth of July. I thrill to this natural world I love so much. I am so

happy that I can come and enjoy the fruits and joys of history. My wife noted some time ago that I could count my hobbies on a full time basis. I believe that my excavations of the Ancient's passing and searching for the past with my metal detector constitutes at times a plural pursuit that I am able to enjoy on its own as I enjoyed my first morning among the ghosts and shadows of lost civilizations long before the books were read and the footprint of history were always moving.

The American Indians lived for long periods of time in the protection of cliff shelters or a single village. Temporary alliances, were formed, but warfare was a way of life for the Ancients. When they went to war they hunted each other for centuries, or until one side or the other is hunted to extinction.

My cousins and I had decided that we would enjoy a snow covered excursion on Peddler's Fork the next time we had significant snow around to truly enjoy the blizzard. We had to take our outing on a moments notice since the weatherman back then were either as incompetent then as now, or worse. Our weathermen were predicting three or four inches, in addition to the original eight inches that was first predicted. We told our folks where we were going.

They knew where we were headed, but they weren't wild about it. My stepdad said you know where you are headed so be careful. Uncle Jim and his boys had some words over it. He squeezed my arm and said, "you know that country. Take care of them." I assured them we would be careful around those cliffs and we would be back Sunday sometime. We got to the Peddler's cliff around 2 p.m. Saturday and started to set up our excavation site and where we would sleep. The snow was really coming down now. We chose an enclosed area near a sheltered end of the cliff. We cut and put some white pine poles to make a lean-to, covered it with shaggy pines, and in turn, covered the lean-to with a sheltered tarp we brought along.

We dug our shallow pits for beds, lined them with soft pine boughs and used our sleeping bags in the holes to stay warm.

We got there early enough to build a fire and gather wood for the night. We dug and sifted a pile of dirt that evening and had some pretty nice artifacts to show for it. Right before we turned in for the evening we found a beautiful bone fishhook. I never forgot it as it was only the second fishhook I ever found in my diggings. I smelled the fresh pine and snow the next morning before it got light enough to see out of the tent.

We got after it early that morning. We had found a shoebox full of artifacts before even breakfast next morning. There was some nice projectile points, both arrowheads and spear points. There was a flint hoe, a hematite pestle, a couple of nice flint knives

and several large pottery sherds to try to reassemble. I had dreamed about fishing Peddler's Fork many years ago. There weren't many really nice fish in Peddler's Fork, but there was a few. One of the best fish I had even eaten fried was a large slab rock bass. I have caught several rock bass or "redeye" over the years, but this one was the topper. The fish weighed over a pound. I've seen bigger rock bass, but not on the end of my line. I saw a lady turn a state record bass loose at Natural Bridge. I had already poked up the fire and added some dry brush and limbs to warm things up. It was cold under that cliff in spite of the fire I had built. By the time my cousins got dressed and got outside to help I already had a skillet of scrambled eggs, a pot of coffee and a couple skillets of bacon and spam. Also grilled a few pieces of toast.

By the time Chris and Richard got through eating I was already filling up my sifting screen. I told them they were doing the dishes. I picked up a screen and walked over to the side and began to shake a screen, I began to rake through the dirt and gravel. A small piece of flint caught my attention. It was a gray Mississippi point (turkey point). I shook the screen again and almost immediately saw another triangular point in a chert green. A flake or two was gone from the point, but it was basically intact. A lot of flint chips and shattered bones were left in the screen.

I yelled at the cousins, "get your sorry butts in gear. If we are going to find anything we are going to have to get on with it." Moments later, a lot of squawking was going on and some interesting back and forth and a whoop came when one of us had found what we thought was special. Every little bit one of us would show the others what we had found.

The morning had passed quickly and we stoked the fire again and put on a kettle of soup. I also put a few hot dogs on to cook, grill or whatever. Within minutes, I was smacking some hot dogs, Chris was getting some vegetable soup and Richard was opening us a cold pepsi.

In a couple of days we had found numerous arrowheads and spearpoints, many chipped and broken points, a lot of scrapers, a few flint knives, a rough pipe, two hematite hoes and a flint pestle. There were numerous clay pot sherds in the screen, a atlatil weight, a couple of gorgets and some broken bones and claws in the pot and a discoidal which I took to be a game of sort. There was a polished tortoise shell, probably a rattle. That night was cold as the previous two nights. I think I slept better the last night than the two previous ones. My homemade bed had adjusted to my body and I was very tired, tired enough to rest comfortably.

AVOID DANGERS AFTER A STORM

STAY SAFE AROUND POWER LINES

- If you see a downed power line, move away from it and anything touching it. Keep a distance of 50 feet, as the ground around the downed power lines may be energized. Assume ALL downed power lines are live.
- If you see someone in direct or indirect contact with a downed line, DO NOT touch him/her. You could become energized as well. Call 911 for assistance.
- Don't step in water near downed lines.
- NEVER attempt to move a downed power line or anything else in contact with it using an object such as a broom or stick.
- NEVER drive over a downed power line.
- If your vehicle comes in contact with a downed power line while you're in the vehicle, stay inside the car. Call 911 or honk your horn to get help, but tell those rendering aid to stay away from the vehicle.
- If you must exit the vehicle for life-threatening reasons - jump out and away from it, making sure to land with your feet together and touching. Then, shuffle away with your feet touching until you reach a safe distance. NEVER attempt to get back into a vehicle that is in contact with a power line.



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