



NEWSLETTER

Neighbor, Friend, Community Volunteer - Jordan Northcross

by Lucy Cogbill

A newspaper article printed several years ago on the houses of La Grange noted that Jordan Northcross purchased his house on Lagrange Road in 1977. He purchased it from James McNamee, who at that time lived next door at Tyrone Place with his wife, Imogene - who went by her nickname, "Jenks". A little later, Jordan married Bettie and the two of them began a family in the home that Jordan had begun to restore.

Jordan had arrived roughly five years after the town Board of Mayor and Alderman adopted a planning ordinance on May 1, 1972. Proponents of the need to adopt the ordinance to help protect the unique historical qualities of the town were John & Betty Walley, who had moved to La Grange early in the 1960's, setting out to restore one of the oldest landmarks in the town at that time - Reverie, built in 1825. The town was nominated to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places and listed as The La Grange Historic District on April 4, 1975. Mr. Edwin A Keeble, a nationally recognized architect, who had keen interest in La Grange and was married to Alice Beasley, 1941 Maid of Cotton and daughter of Peter & Ida Lee Beasley of Hancock Hall, did one of the original inventories of the town's historical and architectural significant structures during this general time period of application of the National Register. He also helped many with their homes, including Mr. & Mrs. Stanley Allen's house, Westover of Woodstock, Lucy Holcombe Pickens' birthplace. The La Grange Planning Commission and its subsequently developed zoning ordinances, the designation of a National Register Historic District and the creation of the local Historic Zoning Commission (HZC) were the early beginnings to formalize municipal authority to establish protections for the town's historical aspects and character.

Jordan Northcross, while he may not have known what lay ahead for him when he first moved in, became one of the fundamental instruments, if you will, that helped to accomplish the outlined preservation goals in his capacity as an architect with planning skills, serving on both the HZC and Planning Commission boards. The Walleys, Bill & Ann Haas and other preservation-minded folks (such as David Hoyt Bowman, a founding member of *Memphis Heritage*, who in 1976 wrote down his observations and research on the history of the town in a document he titled. "The La Grange Plan") expressed the perceived need for these efforts. These individuals and Jordan, along with fellow resident architect at that time, Mr. Harry Martin, arriving at a Providential time period, in my honest opinion, foresaw the importance of preserving the historical aspects of La Grange and due to their collective efforts, the community still largely possesses its architectural ~cont'd on page 4



Shout Out! (Get to Know Your Neighbor)

Jim and Melissa Palmer, with the help of Ronald and Collette van Tol, were in charge of lighting the tree at the La Grange Civic Center for the holiday season. While at this task, it was noted that the electrical box for the tree was missing it's weather cover and more importantly, the light for the flagpole and it's control sensor were broken. Ronald is an Electrician by trade and quickly set to remedy this. Once electrical issues had been resolved, a new flag was purchased and raised. After at least 3 years of being without, we are thrilled to have a flag once again flying to honor our local veterans and preside over our town.



La Grange Birding Society

by Jim Varner

Bird watching, or birding, is America's largest spectator sport, with over 60 million participants. Some are casual backyard observers, while others aggressively pursue rare species and compile life lists that number in the thousands. The popularity is easily understood when one considers the widespread distribution of birds, their intrinsic beauty, and the limited skills and resources needed to observe them. All that is required are eyes, ears and a sense of curiosity.



Having recently moved to La Grange and establishing a birding group, it has become apparent that individuals in rural communities are much further along in their ID skills than their urban neighbors. Although the Spring and Fall migrations provide for the most diverse viewing, every season provides for the appreciation of migratory and resident species. Throw in the added benefit of time spent outdoors and social interaction with like-minded individuals, and you have a winning formula. Fair warning: this hobby is habit forming. Interested in joining, please contact Jim Varner at jamescvarner@gmail.com.

The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members ~ Coretta Scott King

Mark Your Calendar...

Yoga: Every Wed. 5:30pm (Mat), Thurs. 10am (Chair), Civic Center (\$10 per class or \$8 ea for a 4 week bundle)

Pickleball: Every Tuesday, 9am, Pinecrest Gym

Mahjong: Every Friday at 12:30pm at Cogbill's with lunch together at 11:30am

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Glaucoma Awareness Month: Protect Your Sight

by Marla Mounce

Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of permanent vision loss - and it often has **no early warning signs**. Known as the “*silent thief of sight*,” glaucoma can slowly damage vision before you realize anything is wrong. The good news? **Early detection and treatment can help preserve vision.**

Who Is at Risk?

You may be at higher risk for glaucoma if you:

- Are over age 60 (or over 40 for some individuals)
- Have a family history of glaucoma
- Have diabetes, high blood pressure, or heart disease
- Have had an eye injury or eye surgery
- Use steroid medications long-term
- Are African American, Hispanic, or Asian

Can Glaucoma Be Prevented?

There is no cure for glaucoma, but **vision loss can often be prevented with early diagnosis**. Because symptoms usually appear only after damage has occurred, routine eye exams are essential.

Lifestyle Tips for Eye Health

Healthy habits support overall eye health:

- Stay physically active
- Eat leafy greens and colorful fruits and vegetables
- Avoid Smoking
- Protect your eyes from injury
- Manage chronic health conditions

How Is Glaucoma Detected?

Glaucoma testing is painless and part of a comprehensive eye exam. It may include:

- Measuring eye pressure
- Evaluating the optic nerve
- Testing peripheral (side) vision
- Advanced imaging of the optic nerve

Treatment Options

Although glaucoma cannot be cured, it can be controlled. Treatments may include:

- Prescription eye drops
- Oral medications
- Laser treatment
- Surgery in advanced cases

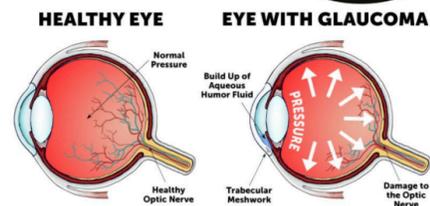
Schedule Your Eye Exam

Glaucoma doesn't have to steal your sight. **Regular comprehensive eye exams are the best defense**. During Glaucoma Awareness Month, take time to protect your vision - for yourself and for those you love.

Early detection saves sight.

What is Glaucoma?

Honoring Glaucoma
Awareness Month





character and integrity in a quality natural, environment. During my time as an alderman and later, a mayor for the town in the mid to late 1990's, I was very grateful to have had Jordan on the team as both a member of the Planning Commission and the Historic Zoning Commission.

Jordan's involvement helped develop both the zoning plan and map the HZC Guidelines as we have them today. State laws require an architect, "if available", to be a member of the HZC and Jordan's membership filled that niche. The Planning Commission needed to create official general plans for the town's physical development, ordinances to govern that growth and create zoning maps, etc. The "2010 Plan" for future growth was prepared for the town in December of 1989 by Chris L. Demetriou, who was in the Graduate Program for City and Regional Planning, Memphis State University. This plan became adopted by the town.

An updated, certified street map to scale was produced later, also with the help of Jordan and other local officials, and was adopted by both the Planning Commission and Board of Mayor and Alderman. Determining the accuracy of this information for the street map was no small challenge since it included not only relying on a distant past map commonly referred to in land deeds but also included identifying and updating any changes that had

occurred up to that present day, such as streets long gone to ditch erosion and searching for any legally recorded quit claimed features at the County Courthouse. From this documented information, a certified map was produced for the town free of charge by the then State of TN Planning Office chairman, Mr. David Cranes and his staff which was then preserved by formal recording at the county Courthouse. This established a fairly non-debatable, updated, vital document for use by the town going forward.

In addition, during that same general time period, Jordan, along with the former Water Dept. Manager, Mr. John Still and myself, collaborated with the work needed to comply with Tennessee's 1998 Growth Policy Act, Public Chapter 1101. That law required, in short, that towns across the state that wanted to retain the ability to annex additional property in the future must submit a long range (20 year) plan of proposed urban growth boundaries and their respective feasibility reports to supply city services to any annexed areas *and* that any municipal plans submitted be agreed upon by the county representatives as well. This was no small task for those of us working on it, and was costly in terms of having to obtain legal counsel to defend our plans to declare urban growth boundaries in the face of an acrimonious, contrary position taken by then Fayette County Mayor, Jim Voss, against towns in the county who foresaw that they would need to annex in the future.

I mention all this technical back history to illustrate that these accomplishments did not happen on their own overnight. They are the product of innumerable volunteer hours attending and chairing meetings, holding public hearings and doing the supportive legwork to form the blueprints of the La Grange Zoning Ordinances that govern the various zones within the town today. These written ordinances represent the literal, expressed will of the community for the past 40+ years to steer the future growth and preservation of the town and considering that meetings are open to the public and the community has always had the opportunity to submit their input makes them a collective statement.

Jordan Northcross has voluntarily invested 40+ years of his time and professional assistance to guide the town throughout these processes and patiently chaired many -sometimes contentious- responses at meetings to proposals to keep the zoning ordinances and guidelines relevant to meet the needs of the day but also to remain true to original foundational intent. That intent, as I interpret it- was and is to preserve a small town atmosphere with an emphasis on respecting the historical integrity of the architectural and surrounding environmental qualities.

I count Jordan Northcross as one of those truly special individuals who has obviously given so much of himself to our town and I am very grateful to him for his contributions.

"I have the utmost admiration for Jordan, sharing his information and talent for so many years in La Grange. Many times my questions on zoning or on architectural points have been met with knowledge, enthusiasm to answer and professionalism! Working with him on the Historic Zoning Commission has been an honor! La Grange is fortunate to have his willingness to provide his time and efforts. To Jordan, I thank you!" ~ Patty Crenshaw