

PIGEON FORGE

To Again Try For Incorporation

Sevier County News-Record, March 2, 1961

The Pigeon Forge community will again attempt to become Sevier County's third city. Nearly 100 residents of Pigeon Forge met Monday night at the Pigeon Forge Elementary School to discuss incorporation, and a vote of 35-30 was taken favoring holding another election. Another vote was taken prior to the incorporation vote to decide on what type of government the proposed city would use.

The vote was approximately 45-7 in favor of the city manager type of government over the mayor-alderman type.

COMMUNITY CENTER UPDATE

- Recreation Swim Team gives kids a competitive experience in a recreational structure, by competing with Knoxville area teams of similar size and skill level. The summer finale is the City Meet at the University of Tennessee Aquatic Center, where more than 1,500 area kids take part in an exciting life experience.
- Swim lessons for everyone from first-time swimmers to advanced swimmers and lifeguard training. All classes are Red Cross certified.
- Summer camp is all-day camp for children ages 5-12. We offer swimming, exercise classes, arts and crafts, bowling, cooperative games, martial arts and good old-fashioned fun for children. The Community Center facilities are the kids' playground for this summer experience. Counselors are all college students or college graduates in youth education-related fields. We are very particular about who works with our children, and we only employ the best counselors.

Our outdoor pool opens Memorial Day weekend. In addition to a state-of-the-art swimming pool, we offer a concession stand and shaded structures, water slide, and picnic area. Pool rental rates are very affordable, so you can book the whole outdoor pool for a special event. Rentals are after hours, so your group will have the pool to themselves. *For more information, call 429-7575.*

Here are Pigeon Forge's First City Officials

Sevier County News-Record, June 22, 1961

Pigeon Forge recently incorporated and elected its first city government.

Charles Clabo — Pigeon Forge's city recorder
Xan Davenport — Pigeon Forge's first mayor
Winfred Whaley — vice-mayor of Pigeon Forge
Wade McMahan — city commissioner, posts that Davenport and Whaley also hold
Dan Conner — appointed by the city commissioners as city manager

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PIGEON FORGE MESSENGER

A PUBLICATION FOR THE RESIDENTS OF PIGEON FORGE

50 YEARS Of Success



Earlene Teaster
City Manager



Join us April 4, when Pigeon Forge celebrates the 50th anniversary of its incorporation. This issue of *The Messenger* is a journey through some of the highlights of the past 50 years and includes reprints of news stories about activities that were significant in the development of Pigeon Forge, along with photographs of our early residents. We thank the Pigeon Forge Public Library for providing this information. We hope you enjoy reminiscing, and invite you to join us in celebrating this milestone our city's history.

Pigeon Forge HAS RAPID 10-YEAR GROWTH RATE UPDATE

1971 – Pigeon Forge's official state-certified census is 974, and within the city limits there are 52 businesses. Sixteen of these have been in the community for at least nine years, 11 for the past five years, and 21 have been established sometime within the last two years. These figures show that all but four of the businesses in Pigeon Forge were started within a 10-year period. This is a phenomenal growth rate for a community that was not even incorporated until April 1961.

There are seven restaurants with a total seating capacity of 430. The 11 motels in the city have a total of 199 units and all but two of them are less than 10 years old.

All content information provided by The Mountain Press

LIBRARY Update

Pigeon Forge Library's Summer Reading Program, "One World, Many Stories," kicks off Tuesday, June 7 at 1 p.m. with one of our favorite guests, author and storyteller Allan Wolf. Programs for children kindergarten through eighth grade will be offered each Tuesday through July 19, with exceptional guests including Matt Fore, Doug Berky, Kyle Scribner and book illustrator Michael White. Preschool story times will continue on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and teens won't be left out. They'll have their own program with a chance to win great prizes. Be sure to stop by the library soon to get all the details. *For more information, call 429-7490.*



This nearly 500-pound hammer was used to forge at the Iron Works on the Little Pigeon River over 150 years ago. It is pictured here at the home of Robert Wear in the 1940s.

You're Invited To The Celebration

Please join us **Monday, April 4, 1 p.m.** at the Pigeon Forge Community Center for a series of presentations and discussions as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of our hometown.

1 P.M. PIGEON FORGE: OLD TOWN

Jane Whaley Scott, Julie Householder, Ron Rader

Early residents will share stories of the town primarily centered on the Old Mill. Learn about the first families to build a tourism economy and hear about those large-acre farms where cattle, corn and hayfields mixed with cottages and cafés.

1:45 P.M. THE 1950s: 45 RECORDS & '55 CHEVYS

Gwen Cody, Donna Allen, Herman Adams

It was a carefree time in Pigeon Forge a few years after World War II. More people were moving from rural Sevier County and clustering in the early subdivisions. Hear residents tell of these good times.

2:30 P.M. TRANSISTOR RADIOS & BASEBALL DIAMONDS

Jackie Barnes, Butch Helton, Danny Suttles

Boys and girls of the '60s tell of the transition from bicycles to cool cars and cruising Remac's Drive-in. Listen to their stories of Halloween pranks and old school days.

3:15 P.M. OLD CITY HALL: 'THE CORNER' POLITICS

Earlene Teaster, Dan Conner, James Householder

The town's earliest officials discuss how Pigeon Forge has grown. City politics developed from those first meetings at city hall in the Paul Sims building, located on "the corner."

4 P.M. CALL THE LAW: POLICE & OFFICIALS REMEMBER

Police Chief Jack Baldwin, Steve Husky, Ronnie Whaley

Local law enforcement officials tell of the days when one police cruiser was sufficient to maintain order in a not-so-busy Pigeon Forge. Hear of the crimes and punishment, the court cases and challenges of early law enforcement.

4:30 P.M. BROWSE THE TABLES OF PIGEON FORGE MEMORABILIA

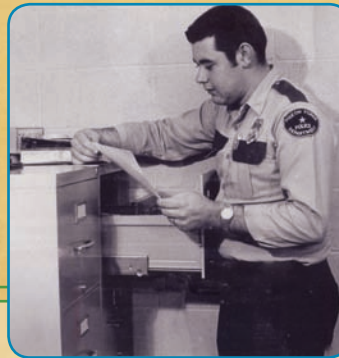
5 P.M. 50TH ANNIVERSARY CEREMONY & CELEBRATION

Featuring city officials, musical performances by Jimbo Whaley, other area musicians and more to celebrate our town

WE NEED YOUR HELP

The Pigeon Forge Public Library continues its search for old photographs, home movies and memorabilia to place on display for the anniversary celebration. Please contact Veta King at the library if you have items you would like to place on loan; 429-7490.

Pigeon Forge Scrapbook



Pigeon Forge police officer Ronnie Whaley patrolled the town in the days when one or two cruisers maintained law and order in the early 1970s.



Charles W. Conner, pictured by heavy road equipment used in the construction of the new U.S. Highway 441, the Parkway in Pigeon Forge, circa 1950. Photo courtesy of Bob and Jackie Barnes



This group of bowlers was one of the town's early leagues at Smoky Bowl Lanes on River Road at the south end of Pigeon Forge. Back row, L-R: Lewis Maples, Jack Hatcher, Leon Whaley, Lon Sutton. Front Row, L-R: Ron Valentine, Bob Hatcher



This photo was taken in the early 1960s at Smoky Bowl Lanes. L-R: Mary Jean Ownby, Betty Mayes and Judith Maples. Photo courtesy of Betty Baker



L-R: Gwen Lamons, Clellene Mayes, Ann Ward, Jane Oury and Betty Mayes gather for Clellene's piano recital in the mid 1950s.

Ashley and Mary Katherine Butler home in Pigeon Forge



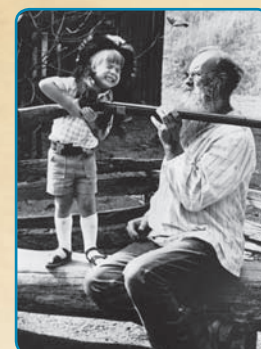
Taken in the late 1960s or early 1970s, this photo shows old white farmhouses that lined River Road. There's a Texaco sign at Paul Sims' corner, and just south of the Texaco is a Sinclair Station. Newman's Supermarket and the Dog 'n' Suds sit near the Methodist Church. Walt Benson's crops are pictured near the Old Mill. Pigeon Forge's landscape began to change drastically in the mid '70s. Photograph courtesy of Caroline Stout



Pigeon Forge Firemen of the 1960s. The city fire hall was located near the National 5-10-25 Cent Store on the Parkway by the present day Old Mill Avenue intersection. The building also was home to a local garage and Bank of Sevierville. Pictured L-R: (front row) Bill Barnes, English McCarter, Bob Quarrels, Herman Adams, Ronnie Stinnett; (back row) Tate Myers, Max Trotter, Garland Harmon, Bob King, Paul Sims, Charlie Beck, Ray Beck, Ted Reagan



Dolly Parton at Dollywood®. Photograph courtesy of Pigeon Forge Department of Tourism



Gunsmith at Silver Dollar City. Photograph courtesy of Pigeon Forge Department of Tourism

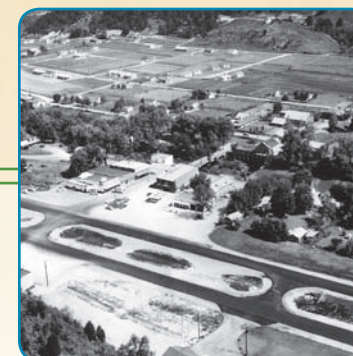


Firemen fight the blaze at Pigeon Forge Pottery fire in 1957. Photograph courtesy of Bashor's Photos, Sevierville

Bob Henry worked at Fort Weare Game Park, a Pigeon Forge zoo.



Pigeon Forge as residents knew it in the late 1950s, when business owners and community leaders began proceedings for incorporation. Circa 1955; photograph courtesy of the Mountain Press newspaper



Women waiting at the Middle Creek Depot along the Pigeon River Railroad line, circa 1920. Pictured L-R: Ulla Chance Catlett, Bertha Marshall Roberts, Jenelle Ogle Campbell. Photograph courtesy of Paulene Householder

