

Walden's Ridge Civic League Report to the Town of Walden September 14, 2021

Thank you for the opportunity to report on activity at the Walden's Ridge Civic League. We also want to express our gratitude for including our organization on the Town of Walden website. The opportunity you have given us to showcase our progress and programming is priceless. The new website is quite attractive, and I think everyone is pleased with the new look and function. We all appreciate the way community assets are integrated, and we can be increasingly proud of our little Town.

At the Civic League, the response from the public to the return of both Old-time music on Fridays and the Mt. Opry's Bluegrass on Saturdays has been wonderful. Demand for this type of entertainment is obvious. Unfortunately, because of the resurgence of COVID 19 and the delta variant, the Mt. Opry decided to cancel their performances in August and now again in September. A decision about the October date will be made closer to the 4th Saturday. We want the musician and audiences to be safe, and the board of the Civic League supports these decisions.

Old-time music performances on Friday nights are continuing under the guidance of Phillip Stewart. The group has enjoyed gathering outside under the pavilion several times. This seems to be a good option for now, and we welcome you to come and hear them at 7:00 PM this Friday, September 17th. Please check our website www.waldensridgecivicleague.org for any last-minute updates.

We are very pleased to announce the addition of two professionals to our Board of Directors.

Steve Daugherty has served on many boards in the Chattanooga area and brings a wealth of experience from his lifetime of service. He is an especially valuable addition to our board because of his knowledge of music and his connections with artists. Steve owns and operates the Folk Music Store and School in Red Bank, and his enthusiasm for helping build our programs and outreach is outstanding.

Ben McGowan is not only an attorney, but also lives on the mountain. Though he is incredibly busy as president-elect of the Tennessee Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, he has graciously taken on the additional roll of working with the Walden's Ridge Civic League. For his first task, he is adapting our by-laws to be more inclusive. Ben is an attorney with Summers, Ruffolo and Rogers, P.C. We appreciate his energy and service.

We welcome **Amy Slovak** as Media Chairman. Being a young person who is well versed in communication technology, she has already energized all of us with her ideas and initiative. She has made some much-needed corrections to our Facebook pages. She is already busy with new posts and handling all sorts of nice responses and comments. This is a very exciting step forward, and we can hardly wait to see what all she will accomplish.

Amy and her dad, **Gary Slovak**, are in the process of setting up our traditional Christmas card photo opportunities. These family photo sessions offered by the Civic League were a successful fund-raising venture and were well received last year. We will begin scheduling photo shoots in October so the pictures can be made into personal Christmas messages in plenty of time for sending to friends and family.

Undaunted by the threat of COVID, Committee Co-chairs **Gary** and **Amy Slovak** are working enthusiastically with Events Chair **Carolyn Longphre** on ***A Very Opry Christmas*** scheduled for the weekend of December 10-14. Plans are for live music with Mountain Cove Bluegrass Band as the headliner. Santa will be there, and everyone can join in decorating the buildings for Christmas and enjoying a bonfire as we light the Christmas tree. On Monday and Tuesday **As Isaac** will present a Christian music concert. They usually pack the house for the two nights, and we are anticipating this traditional holiday weekend with great joy.

On January 20th, we look forward to hearing a quintet of the ***Chattanooga Symphony Orchestra***. On January 29th we will offer ***Hot Cider and Warm Stories*** in cooperation with the **Judy Baker** of the Cleveland Storytellers Guild. Continue to check our website and Facebook page for details on all these events

Following our long-term vision, **Rodger Castleberry** is continuing to work on scanning and archiving thousands of pages of minutes from 1926 forward. Our goal is to provide these papers in a reader-friendly setting where the history of Walden's Ridge can be studied and appreciated. In order to help everyone learn more about the Civic League, we are creating information stations. **Rita Smith Irvin** has filled a bulletin board with newspaper clippings on the Mt. Opry and is dedicating an area to its founders. She is also designing interesting history displays in our glass cabinets. We have temporarily removed the photographs of the Civic League past-presidents. These photos are being cleaned, restored and reframed with new matts. They will be hung in a new location where the photos can be viewed at eye level to make them more accessible.

As you invited us to do, we are very diligently gathering necessary information to present a request for funds to the Town Finance Committee. Steps involved are evaluating and prioritizing needs and talking with tradesmen and professionals to help formulate the request. We sincerely appreciate this opportunity, and we are taking it seriously. Thank you again.

Karen Stone
President