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ON THE COVER: David Hill loves preservation and history. He owns a small herd of Buffalo that roam his farm in Maury County.



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A PASSION FOR PRESERVING THE HISTORY OF MAURY COUNTY

BY JASON ZASKY

As the owner and chairman of the board for Columbia-based WireMasters, Inc., David Hill has long been a fixture in the local business community. But in the past 15 years, he's also been pursuing his passion for preserving the history of Columbia and Maury County.

Most notably, Hill and his wife currently own three historic properties in Columbia, namely: the Mayes-Hatcher house; the Skipwith-Harlan home; and The Depot at Union Station.

The first of his purchases was the Mayes-Hatcher house—aka Mayes Manor—in November 2007, which was built by Samuel Fulton Mayes on the eve of the Civil War.

"I was in Florida considering retirement, and upon returning home, I learned that the Mayes House (in Columbia's historic

district of West 6th St.) was going to be sold at auction two days later," recalls Hill. Long story short, Hill paid \$480,000 for the property, "which everybody thought was crazy," because the home was a "total mess," as he puts it.

"The house was basically used as a warehouse from 1968-2007, and the roof was leaking, and the plaster was falling in, and the chandeliers were gone," relates Hill, "so I restored it back to its glory. Now, if you go inside, you think you're going into a museum. All the furnishings are to the period when it was built."

Similarly, the Skipwith home—which was built circa 1811 for Revolutionary War hero Nathaniel Greene's daughter and her husband—was dilapidated and in danger of falling down.

"When I bought Skipwith in 2011, it had been on the market for at least three years. If I hadn't purchased it, the house wouldn't



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< FROM PAGE 6

have lasted three or four more years," opines Hill, before adding that he did a "complete restoration" and "got it out of the situation it was in."

Last but certainly not least, Hill went on to purchase Union Station, which opened on Nov. 13, 1903, and was used for passenger travel until 1966 and freight traffic through 1982.

"It was brought to my attention that it was on the Top 10 list of the most endangered historic properties in the state of Tennessee," says Hill, which motivated him to purchase it and begin searching for the materials needed to restore the building to what he describes as "better than new" condition. That included a trip to East Tennessee, where Tennessee pink marble is quarried.

"(The Depot) had been totally stripped of every beautiful aspect that was once there. All the doors were off the hinges, and all

the glass was broken. All the plaster was coming off. It was a complete restoration, and no expense was spared in doing it right. I tell people now that's it's better than it ever was, and it really is," says Hill, before noting that the station now has marble baseboards and marble dividers in the bathrooms, like it did in the distant past. But Hill's interest in preserving history isn't limited to architecture.

He also has three authentic log cabins (built in the 1820s-30s) that he moved to his farm, which also happens to be home to a small herd of Buffalo.

"They are beautiful to see—majestic animals—and fit in with my love for American history," says Hill, who values the idea of "preserving history for the people who come after me. After I'm gone, these things will hopefully be around for a long time."

And while The Depot and the above-referenced homes aren't open to the public, tours are available from time to time. For in-

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< FROM PAGE 8

stance, the Skipwith-Harlan-Hill house will be on the Maury Home Christmas Tour this year.

"We finished the restoration of The Depot in 2014, and it's been on the Maury Home Christmas Tour at least twice," says Hill, before revealing that there's a third-floor conference room that WireMasters uses for executive meetings.

"I've always said that WireMasters is one of the best-kept secrets in Maury County. A lot of people don't even know we're here," offers Hill, despite the fact that the company has grown exponentially since he got his start in the warehouse when the operation was just three years old.

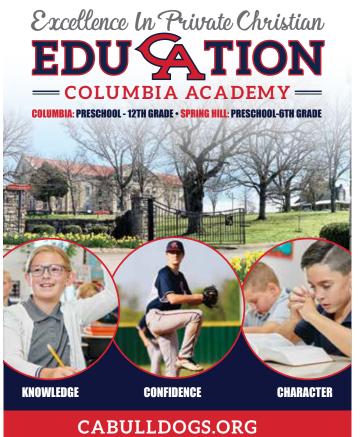
"The company was small when I purchased it," notes Hill. "It had 11 employees and was doing about \$9 million in annual sales with one location. Now we have 14 locations in three countries, and we employ over 400 people globally and are knocking on the door of \$300 million annually."

That said, Hill's philosophy about hiring—and who to hire hasn't changed in the intervening years.

"I enjoy helping people to try and get ahead, and we should share our blessings because if we do that, everybody wins," he begins, emphasizing how WireMasters is always looking to hire.

"We love to hire local people and people we know in the community," he concludes. "It's all about commitment. I believe if you really commit to something, you'll be successful."

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Hillhistoricproperties.com Wiremasters.com





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IT'S AN EXCITING TIME TO BE AT COLUMBIA ACADEMY

Columbia Academy recently announced plans to expand facilities to accommodate growth with the launch of the Building in Faith Campaign. Phase One of the campaign is for \$4,000,000 and includes the ongoing expansions of Vest Hall (elementary school) and the Spring Hill campus. CA supporters have already pledged or contributed over \$2,600,000 towards the fundraising goal.

Columbia Academy President Dr. James Thomas says, "It is an exciting time to be at Columbia Academy. Our outstanding faculty and staff provide a first-class Christian education for all of our students, and that has attracted a large number of new students and families. The "Building in Faith Campaign" will transform our campuses so that our students at all ages will have much-needed spaces to continue to learn and grow."

The 3-year plan includes renovations and additions to six current areas including: the lower school, preschool, Spring Hill campus, Business Office, Academy Hall, and the tennis courts. The Spring Hill campus and lower school buildings are already under construction, while the remaining projects are slated to begin within the next 1-2 years.

Recently reporting its tenth consecutive record enrollment with 1154 students, the Board of Directors has approved a \$6 million campaign in two phases to meet student needs. Chairman of the Board, Seth Lasater, stated, "We are thankful to be able to move forward with this exciting vision for our school. We are 'Building in Faith' in our students and are thankful for our dedicated supporters who are making this a reality."

The Vest Hall, lower school building addition, includes five new classrooms and renovations for seven classrooms. The Spring Hill campus that serves preschool through sixth grade is adding four new classrooms, including adding sixth grade and dedicated art, music, and computer/library rooms.

The planned preschool building addition will allow for indoor play, a lunch room, and a common meeting area. The Academy Hall and Business Office renovations will combine all administrative offices into one building and allow an entire building to serve as a new Academic Resource Center for upper school students.



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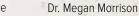
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COMMUNITY CALENDAR



November 19, from 11 am to 6 pm Food Trucks in the Park

Near Bridle and Saddle Pavilion at Maury County Park. 1018 Maury County Park Drive

Find fun and delicious food at Food Trucks in the Park! November's Lineup includes MuleTown Pizza, The Spice is Right, Off The Hook, Oak Hill Farms Coffee, and Crunchies Munchies. The quarterly event is sponsored by Maury County Parks and Recreation.

November 19, 2022, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm **A Very Maury Christmas 2022**

The Factory at Columbia 101 N. James Campbell Blvd., Columbia

A Very Maury Christmas is a regional holiday market featuring over 60 curated vendors. Taking place on Saturday, November 19th from 9am to 4pm. A \$5 entry fee will be accepted at the door with a portion of the proceeds benefitting aMuse'um Children's Museum. The Preview Party on November 19th is a ticketed event hosted by aMuse'um. Tickets will go on sale in November. Please go to their website for more information





36th Annual Christmas Parade & Tree Lighting

December 3, Parade will begin at 6:00 pm with the tree lighting to follow around 7:15 pm

The parade and tree lighting will be one festive holiday celebration on Columbia's charming, historic town square! This familyfriendly, community favorite event is expected to bring endless holiday cheer, live entertainment, and the lighting of Columbia's 40' Christmas tree by Santa Claus himself.

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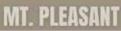
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