



*J*ust as the sun broke the horizon on Friday the thirteenth of April, twenty of us from UT packed our cameras and our cars and made the 45-minute drive north to LaFollette. It is not every day that students are invited into a town whose population is less than one-third of our university's, but for 14 years the students of Professor Rob Heller's Advanced Photojournalism class have been welcomed into this small town and asked to capture the everyday lives of its citizens. This year was no exception.

Sleepy-eyed or caffeine-kicked, we too took part in what is the tenth edition of the "Eyes on LaFollette" project. We worked from sunup Friday until midday Saturday to tell this town's stories through photographs. This project was not easy, but the experience will not be forgotten, nor will we forget the workers behind the counters who seemed to always know their customers' names or the crossing guard who told his life story while working from the middle of the road. We searched the streets, markets, marinas, and farms to offer an outsider's perspective on the everyday life in LaFollette. What we did not realize and what we will always remember is that while interacting with and working alongside the people of LaFollette, we were embraced, we were put at ease, and we too became insiders.

What's cookin'?



top left Lindsey Ratliff, a waitress at The Diner, poses for a quick photo in between running plates out to customers. **Photo by Adam Brimer**

top right Charley Baird waits for his customers at the front counter of Charley's Pizza. **Photo by Brett Garvey**

center Edna Ashley pours cornbread batter that she just prepared into a pan at The Diner. **Photo by Adam Brimer**

bottom left Butcher Phillip Farmer cuts through a steak as he has for 40 years now at Hollingsworth. **Photo by Paul F. Hassell**

bottom right Hollingsworth's famous butcher Phillip Farmer sharpens the butcher knife. **photo by Paul F. Hassell**



Faces



top left Lynn Soles, a technician at Southeastern Clinic of Permanent Cosmetics, shows before-and-after pictures of some clients. **photo by Lisa Schohl**

top right At the flea market, Bob Alvey shares stories about the changes he has seen during his 20 years of residence in LaFollette. **photo by Paul F. Hassell**

center left Gary "Boss" Osborne mans the counter at the Indian River Marina office. **photo by Jamie Wilson**

left Kathy Rogers helps her daughter Anna shop for a formal dress for an upcoming ball. **photo by Jamie Wilson**

above Carl Cloudy, 79, a retired coal miner from LaFollette, takes a smoke break while talking to a friend at a land auction in the Valley View Elementary School. **photo by Dessislava Yankova**



top left Ora Eads, 93, shows off his Bingo prize at the LaFollette Senior Citizen Center. **photo by Anthony Cheatham**

top right Nelly Henegar, 90, speaks to a visitor as she sits in her living-room-recliner at LaFollette Gardens Apartments. **photo by Anthony Cheatham**

above Jim Mayfield waits for customers who are drawn to his ripe Florida tomatoes. **photo by Paul F. Hassell**

left (left to right) Robert Sopha, James Olson, John Stooksbury, Chad Gilliam and Will Morris rehearse the color guard for the JROTC Military Ball. **photo by Grace Wade**

bottom left Kim Stanfill paints a black rose while designing a "50th Birthday" arrangement at The Flower Basket. **photo by Grace Wade**

bottom right Pearl Harper prepares scrambled eggs for the LaFollette Church of God's Country Breakfast. **photo by Grace Wade**





above Daryl Turner prepares a motorcycle trailer in the body shop at Bushtec. **photo by Jodi Felkley**

above right Ronnie Carroll drills into the fender of his 1967 classic car. **photo by Ashley Yeager**

right Jo Taylor puts the finishing touches on an arrangement at Ideal Florist. **photo by Lindsey Lynch**



At Work



above center David Paul, one of the workers at Lyk-Nu, reaches up under the front fender to tighten it into place on the white Jeep Cherokee. **photo by Ashley Yeager**

bottom left Ray Bostic lines up a nail while working on his new fence. **photo by Alex Wassel**

bottom right Randy Laving, a team supervisor from Huntsville, Tenn., works on the roof of a soon-to-be floating restaurant at Twin Cove Marina on Cove Lake. **photo by Dessislava Yankova**



top left Adam Ivey lifts floorboards onto the base of a houseboat he is helping to build for co-owners Herbert McGhee and Bob Stormer. **photo by Ashley Yeager**

top right Steve Ward of H&E Block Supply prepares the storefront for business. **photo by Patrick Booher**

left Susie Nelson, co-owner of Creative Expressions, buffs a client's nails. **photo by Lisa Schohl**



below Larry Helton sprays foam off the top of filters during a backwash cleaning cycle at the LaFollette Water Treatment plant. **photo by Steven Boada**

bottom right Recycling Center employee Leon Goins dumps cans into a processing machine. **photo by Raffae Lazarian**



above left Mark McHenry works under a silo at H&E Block and Supply. **photo by Patrick Booher**

bottom left Tim Hall and Casey Boshears load an old sofa into the back of the LaFollette Street Department's garbage truck. **photo by Steven Boada**



A History Not Forgotten



Laura Jernigan



Terry Wells



Eugene Wells

photos and story by Lauren Boyd

A CROSS THE RAILROAD TRACKS LIES A STRETCH OF ROAD THAT ONCE LED TO A BUSTLING NEIGHBORHOOD OF SIXTEEN HOMES. NOW ONLY FOUR TRAILERS, THREE HOUSES, AND A CHURCH ATOP A HILL LINE THE STREET AS DIM REMINDERS OF LAFOLLETTE'S DWINDLING AFRICAN AMERICAN POPULATION. This road, though short in distance, is a pathway to an important part of the town's history and culture that few knew to exist. The Wells family and Laura Jernigan make up four of the five African Americans still living here. Terry and Eugene Wells are ministers who preach on the radio and have their own public-access television show. Just up the block from the Wells lives Laura Jernigan. She has lived in the same house for more than 20 years. A retired mother of two, Laura moved back here after raising her children in Oak Ridge. Further up the hillside, not far from the others, lives Jerry Allen. Peering between the street's houses, you can see the warehouse of the tire company that once was the site of the LaFollette Colored High School. The school opened its doors in 1929 and closed them forever in the 1960s. Laura recalls trying to learn home economics without stoves and chemistry without having access to labs or lab equipment. Graduates of LaFollette Colored High School and their children will celebrate the school's history in early June, as Laura is planning its first reunion.



Tucked away on a partially wooded hilltop just five minutes from the town sits the Long Hallow Cemetery. Graves stretch from the clearing to the edge of the treeline. The ground is uneven and probably not suitable for a cemetery, but the founders did the best they could with the land. Laura Jernigan's father and two other men established this ground as a final resting place for African Americans. The county had no place to bury people of color. The graves are old, older than much of LaFollette's history. Some headstones were actually carved by hand; many are nothing more than sunken indentations in the earth marked by large rocks. Laura still owns the land and charges little to nothing for plots. She can remember a time when her father charged eleven dollars—now decades later, the price remains less than fifty dollars. This cemetery, the high school, and these last five individuals are all that remain of the African American culture and history in this town. Little is being done to preserve that culture and history, but the June reunion might mark a new chapter for the African Americans of LaFollette.

right Officer Jarrett stops traffic to wrangle a pony on the railroad tracks at Towe String Road. **photo by Lindsey Lynch**

below left Vet tech, Laura Bean, and Jerlyn Sponseller, D.V.M., perform a dental exam on a dog at Campbell County Animal Hospital. **photo by Kristen Yates**

below right Jerlyn Sponseller, D.V.M., prepares to perform surgery at Campbell County Animal Hospital. **photo by Kristen Yates**

Animal Welfare



above Campbell County Animal Shelter worker, Brenda Watkins, holds three young kittens from a new litter. **photo by Raffe Lazarian**

left George Moses, of the Campbell County Animal Shelter, caresses a young puppy. **photo by Raffe Lazaria**

below A timid puppy warms up to Beth Caldwell at the animal shelter. **photo by Jodi Felkley**





When he's not flying business jets, Bert Loupe can usually be found managing Campbell County airport. This quiet Friday afternoon provides him the opportunity to roll one of the planes onto the tarmac for a brief flight beneath the grey sky. **photos by Jamie Wilson**

Flying Solo

Credits

This project was photographed, edited and designed by the advanced photojournalism class at the University of Tennessee: (from bottom left) Paul Hassell, Adam Brimer, Jodi Felkley, Lindsey Lynch, Lauren Boyd, Ashley Yeager, Grace Wade, Kristen Yates, Dessislava Yankova; (from top left) Professor Rob Heller, Josh Wolff, Raffae Lazarian, Steven Boada, Cory Floyd, Jamie Wilson, Alex Wassel, Lisa Schohl, Patrick Booher and Bilal Sheikh (not pictured – Anthony Cheatham). Thanks to Linn Hudson and the entire staff of the LaFollette Press, Charley Baird of Charley's Pizza, and Linn, Suzanne and Samantha Hudson for providing beautiful accommodations. Special thanks to Larry Smith, who, in 1993, agreed to work with us on this extraordinary collaboration. And thanks to all the citizens of LaFollette for opening up your community to our eyes and our cameras.

