



Dr. Roy Don Whitcomb

We All Have Ancestors To Appreciate

Neuman Carson Branan and Jasper Rogers Whitehead. I am the only male on earth who is a descendant of both these men. They were my grandfathers.

Let me tell you a bit about them. Neuman Branan grew cotton, tobacco, pecans and a few other crops on his farm in Cool Springs, Georgia. Cool Springs consisted mostly of a crossroad, two stores, a school and a church.

It was where my mother grew up, and it was not far from Plains, Georgia where future president Jimmy Carter was growing up at about the same time.

Neuman had two sons and two daughters. All of them worked hard. The difference between life in Cool Springs and life in Plains was that the

Branan family was not nearly as well off as the Carter family. As he grew older, my grandfather was able to accumulate some property, but in the beginning when the children were at home, life was hard.

One of the highlights of my year as a child was our annual trip to Georgia to see my grandparents. We usually went in July when they were "gathering" tobacco. (In Georgia they do not cut tobacco as we do, but they gather it a few leaves at a time.)

I remember my grandfather being very busy, and grandmother cooking for all the work hands every day at lunch. It always struck me as odd that Granddaddy did all his farming barefoot, but I learned this was common in southern Georgia.

When he got a break, Granddaddy would take me for a ride on the tractor! I thought I was something spe-

cial! My earliest memory of him is when he would ride me on his knee and say, "Ride a little honey down to town. Take a little ride and don't you fall down," at which point he would pretend to let me fall. I loved it.

He would also do "this little piggy went to market" with my fingers and toes. Even in his busiest season, he found time to play with his oldest grandson.

Jasper Whitehead was a native Kentuckian. He made a living for his wife and ten children by farming, mining, logging and railroading. In other words, he did whatever it took to put bread on the table, and during the Depression this was quite a feat.

Sometimes the family lived in a mining camp and sometimes on a farm that they bought. Jasper was known for his strength and his ability to work.

Jasper was also a preacher. I regret that I never got to hear him preach. (I think some of the family did not approve of the denomination with which he was associated.) I would love to have seen him "bring the Word" and get excited in the pulpit. I never saw him like that.

When I was growing up, Pappy and Ma (as we called them) lived on a little farm a mile or so from town. I like to go out there and fish in the pond. They also had apple trees, and there was a lake (actually a leftover pit from coal mining) where Dad and I could go fishing.

I am sure that you have ancestors who have had an impact on your life. My grandfathers are two such men for me. I am myself, but I am also the sum of all those who have gone before me. I feel fortunate to have had two men like this who passed their genes on to me.

Neither of these men is still living, so I am unable to express my appreciation in person. But, Granddaddy and Pappy, if you are listening, thank you.



Legislative Update

by State Rep. Danny Ford

Something old, something new attracts legislative attention.

Political commentators across the state have been predicting what this year's session would bring since voters signed off on last November's Annual Sessions Amendment to the Kentucky Constitution.

Among those predictions were issues like workers' compensation, mandatory garbage collection and tax reform. I've been reading my column over the past few weeks you know that they were correct.

The House Natural Resources and Environment Committee approved the governor's proposal to require counties to establish mandatory garbage collection to every home and business or certify that they have cleaned up all illegal dumps within that county.

The bill passed with the promise that several changes will have to be made before the full House could approve it. The House Labor and Industry Committee approved a workers' compensation reform bill on Valentine's Day.

However, the next day the bill was sent back to the committee for reconsideration.

As I mentioned, tax reform was also expected to receive our attention and we approved a resolution to create a special task force on tax reform.

If approved by the Senate, the task force would study our current tax code and work together to develop a comprehensive reform plan.

The House of Representatives, Senate and Executive Branch will each take part in this task force. Legislative membership on this task force would be in proportion to the representation of each political party in each chamber, ensuring that all Kentuckians have representation.

The task force would be required to turn their findings in before this November, giving us time to make informed decisions and draft legislation for the 2002 Regular Session. With four weeks left until we adjourn to return home until the next session, other measures have already passed the House and now make their way through the Senate.

House Judiciary Committee members approved a bill that would require county sheriffs to notify residents, schools and youth-service organizations if a registered sex of-

fender moves into the area.

The bill, HB 10, calls for day care centers, schools and groups like the YMCA to be notified if a sexual predator moves within a quarter of a mile. The state already maintains a sex offender registry.

The Judiciary Committee also made a change to a "gun buy back" bill enacted during last year's session. When passed, the original bill allowed local police departments to turn confiscated firearms in to the Kentucky State Police for auction. Funds from the auction go towards purchasing body armor and other protective devices.

The change, approved by committee members to be considered by the entire House, would require law enforcement agencies to determine if the confiscated firearm was used to commit a crime. If so, the firearm would be kept as evidence.

Members of the House Health and Welfare Committee approved HB 16, which helps adopted children find stability in their new home by making all state-approved adoptions consistent with each other. Now adoptions will be finalized within 20 days

of the birth parent's consent.

If the Cabinet for Families and Children removes the child from the birth parents due to abuse or neglect, the adoption takes place 20 days after the cabinet approves the adoption. This bill would prevent adoptions from becoming long, drawn out affairs and helps children who are often lost in the system to find a life-long home with a new family.

As always, I hope you will feel free to contact me over the next few weeks regarding these issues. Please continue to call or write me and share your opinion on this or other issues.

I can be reached here anytime, or call the toll-free message line at 1-800-372-7181. Those with hearing impairments may leave messages for me by calling the TTY message line at 1-800-896-0305. If you'd like to check the status of any General Assembly bills, the Legislative Research Commission maintains a toll-free line, 1-877-765-0447.

Also, if you have Internet access you can keep track through the Kentucky Legislature Home Page: <http://www.ky.state.ky.us>. I'd also like to invite you to visit your state capital. I can arrange a guided tour of this century-old Capitol Building and now is an especially interesting time to visit since the General Assembly is in session.

MOVING

Western Rockcastle Water Association will be moving on **MARCH 2nd** to their new location (former Citizens Bank building on Hwy. 150 in Mt. Vernon).

Office will be CLOSED March 2nd and will REOPEN at 8 a.m. on March 5th

New address will be:
PO Box 627 • Mt. Vernon, KY 40456

Office Hours:
Monday - Friday 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Closed 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. for lunch

21st Century Community Learning Center at RCMS

Spanish Wednesdays 3:30 - 5:30

Computer Basics Tuesdays 4:00 - 6:00

Quilting Class Mondays 4:00 - 6:00

GED Course Every Tuesday 4:30 - 6:00

Soccer Mondays & Tuesdays 4:00 - 6:00

Gymnastics Saturdays 8:15 - 10:15

Circles of Learning Mondays & Tuesdays 3:00 - 6:00

We would like to invite everyone out to our Community Learning Center for the classes we are offering. Other classes will be added as we are made aware of needs in the community that we can assist in meeting. If you would like to attend a class, or if you have a suggestion for classes to offer, please contact Anthony Coffey or Terry Parkey at Rockcastle County Middle School at 606-256-5118.

Citizens Bank

Staying the Same Where it Counts

While other banks are going through changes that involve more than just updating their technology, we have stayed the same in all the areas where it counts: attentive, personal service, great financial products, and we are still locally owned and operated - and we are still sailing under the same name we started with in 1904: Citizens Bank.

Citizens Bank welcomes new customers:

- Open a new checking account of at least \$500, and we will replace up to 200 checks from your old bank at no charge.
- Open a savings account with a \$1000 deposit or purchase a CD worth at least \$1,000 and receive a safe deposit box free for a year.
- Open a Christmas club account, stay up to date through 49 weeks and we will make payment number 50 for you.



U.S. Hwy. 150 West
Mt. Vernon, KY 40456
606-256-2500

Main Street
Brodhead, KY 40409
606-758-8212

Hwy. 421 South
McKee, KY 40447
606-287-8390

24 Hour BankLine 1-800-530-8561

Member FDIC