



No. 22: May 2016

# What's Happening in LG

A Free Local Newsletter

Sponsored by the Locust Grove Arts Alliance

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**SPRING ROBIN.** . . Marea Breedlove, one of the local artists who will have her work exhibited at the Founder's Day Art Show, sponsored by the Locust Grove Arts Alliance, took this robin picture at a park in Grove recently.

## Founder's Day art show May 14

The 3rd annual LGAA Founder's Day Art Show held at the VFW Hall will be even bigger and better than the first two. With more than 25 artists displaying and selling their works, a silent auction, demonstrations, and more, the day will be an artistic blast.

The show runs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Two Adirondack chairs, footstools and one table crafted by Jerry Yates will be raffled off that day. You may buy tickets from LGAA members for \$1 each or 6 for \$5 before the art show, or you may buy them during the show on Founder's Day.

The return engagement of the very popular Fishinghawk Karate Studio fire walk and fire breaks will be during the LGAA Founder's Day Art Show.

"We have some new stuff for this year. Different exciting fire breaks, and possibly a 20 foot fire walk. 10-12 ft is normal, so we are trying something different this year." said David Fishinghawk.

*(Continues on Page 7)*

## Mayes Key remembers Yonkers of his youth, stories of his service

He was born in a store in the small town of Yonkers that is no more. He is a veteran of two wars. He is a humble man who turned 90 years old in March. He is Mayes Orlando Key, and he has been a resident of Locust Grove most of his life.

Mayes is the youngest of five children born to Leoma Estell (Stella) Holland Key and James Jobe Key.

Named after his Aunt May, Mayes said, "I've always had trouble with it."

But Trouble is something Mayes and his family have always known how to deal with.

"My parents had to cross Grand River to go to Waggoner to be married. The river was frozen and a group of men had to cut a channel through the ice so the covered wagon could be driven across it," wrote Wanda, Mayes' wife, in a story about his parents.

As a child, Mayes also

*(Continues on Page 8)*



**WAR MEMORIALS.** . . Mayes Key stands by his medals. The one framed on the left is the Bronze Star, and the one framed on the right is the Oklahoma Cross of Valor. Other honors are in the display case.



**ORIGINAL DOODLE** by Locust Grove's famed artist Willard Stone.

## Free dance lessons set

A free dance workshop to learn Jitter Bug and Swing dancing of the 1920s and 30s jazz era will be held June 3-4 at the VFW Hall on north Broadway.

The workshop will be taught by Louise Siddons of the Scissortail Traditional Dance Society ([www.scissortail.org](http://www.scissortail.org)).

On June 3, the workshop will be held from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., and on Saturday, June 4 the workshop will run from noon to 4 p.m.

Everyone who attends the workshop is invited to attend the monthly dance at the Community Building which the Senior Citizens sponsor.

The workshop is needed to help find dancers to perform in a play this fall about Willard Stone's younger years. Dancers are needed for the scene where

he meets the woman who would become his wife, Sophie Coger, at a honky-tonk in Oktaha in 1940.

Dancers needed for that scene can be high school and adult ages.

April Stone, who is in charge of the LGAA Children's Theater, encourages everyone to be a part of this community-wide celebration. Contact her at 918-729-0487 for more information.

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## LGAA meets May 11 at VFW

The next meeting of the Locust Grove Arts Alliance will be at 5:47 p.m., May 11, at the VFW Hall. The group will be making final plans for its annual art show during the town's Founder's Day event the following Saturday, May 14.

In last month's meeting, Roxann Yates reported the newsletter has gone to 10 pages thanks to support from the community.

The 15 members present were given 30 tickets each to sell on the Adirondack furniture being made by Jerry Yates to benefit the arts alliance.

The group recognized a donation from Clark and Marcia May.

Tristin Brunner has volunteered to do face painting on Founder's Day, and Ray Grass and others who worked on the Historical Mural at the corners of Main and Broadway will be recognized at 10 a.m. that morning.

Shaun Perkins reported on a new exhibit at the Rural Oklahoma Museum of Poetry, a selection of autograph books from the 1880's to the 1970's.

April Stone talked about the Willard Stone Legacy event, and that a play about Stone would be held by the LGAA Children's Theater at a date to be determined. The Pipe Springs production is still scheduled for July 8.

Chainsaw artist Mike Wheeler was given a grant of \$400 to replace a chainsaw which was stolen from his property.

## About What's Happening in LG

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** While this newsletter is produced by the LGAA and will contain our organization's news, we also want to publish information about any activities in Locust Grove that our community might be interested in.

Please contact Betty Perkins at [bperk@sstelco.com](mailto:bperk@sstelco.com) or 918-479-5617 (leave a message if no answer), if you have news on LG events, places, or people for inclusion in future issues. For advertising, call Roxann Perkins Yates at 918-530-5321 or email at [roxannperkins@gmail.com](mailto:roxannperkins@gmail.com). As LGAA is a nonprofit organization, advertising must support the publication of this newsletter. Your support is greatly appreciated.



# Callery presents history of early LG

LG Creative Communities is a group working with the Creative Oklahoma organization in a 20-month initiative to foster creative ideas in our community.

On March 18-19, a small group of LG citizens attended the opening retreat weekend hosted by Creative Oklahoma in Oklahoma City for all 8 of the communities selected for this project.

Creative Oklahoma describes the project in this way:

"Creative Oklahoma will work intently with these communities over a

twenty-month time period to cultivate new ideas that contribute to economic growth and societal transformation. We believe that fostering a grassroots network of Creative Communities is essential to the vibrancy of the state and will help Oklahoma become a nationally recognized destination to live, work, and visit."

In keeping with the mission of the Creative Oklahoma Initiative, Locust Grove's history was discussed on March 25, at the VFW Hall by Centennial Committee member Hugh Callery. Callery presented



**FORMER NEIGHBORS.** . . *Hugh J. Callery visits with Joan Bennett, following his presentation on the history of Locust Grove. The two lived next door to one another when they were growing up. Callery lives in Owasso, but he said his volunteer hours are spent in Locust Grove. In addition to the Creative Communities project, he is also a member of the LG Centennial Committee.*

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a slide show of historical town photos, and he gave detailed information about the photos. A brief discussion of the Oklahoma Creative Communities Initia-

tive also took place.

Among the topics discussed were the roads of travel.

State Highway 11 was built in 1925.

"The highway ran from the Arkansas state line through Locust Grove to Boise City," Callery said.

In 1934 Highway 11 became 33, and in 1982, 33 became 412.

In 1955 only 20 percent of Oklahoma roads were paved.

"Highway 82 north to Salina and south to Peggs

*(Continues on Page 6)*

## Tag Agency moves down Main, offers more services

The Locust Grove Tag Agency has a new location and new services, too. Owners Brenda and Jason Williams took over the tag agency when Loy Willis retired in January, 2015, and Brenda runs the agency now, with Loy and Brenda's sister Becky helping her out.

"We have been blessed by the opportunity to have the agency and also with the purchase of our new building," said Brenda Williams.

The new office site, located at 216 E Main, was more recently the law offices of Tammy Ward.

"I have always loved the building," said Williams, "and when the chance came up to purchase it, we didn't pass it up."

Along with the new location, Williams said that they are offering some new services, including Pikepass services. Besides vehicle registration and

title work, the tag agency also offers notary services, drivers licenses, Check-Free bill pay and fax services.

The tag agency is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and can be reached at 918-479-1800. The fax number is 918-479-1801.

"We are very thankful for our customers' loyalty over the last year and a half and we hope that each time they come to our agency they know we appreciate them and we will do what we can to help with whatever they need," said Williams.

*"We have been blessed by the opportunity to have the agency and also with the purchase of our new building."*  
-Brenda Williams



**NEW DIGS ON MAIN...** *The Tag Agency, owned by Brenda and Jason Williams, moved just over a block down Main to 216 E. Main last week. The agency is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The phone number is 918-479-1800. The Williamses purchased the house which was most recently owned by Tammy Ward for her law offices, just west of Holman Company.*

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**NEW BEAR TAKING SHAPE.** . .Mike Wheeler works on a chainsaw sculpture during the Founder's Day activities last year. He'll be back in the same spot, across from the VFW.

## Mike Wheeler to make second appearance at Art Show May 14

*By Shaun Perkins*

If you work on trees for a living and have an artistic eye, you might eventually end up becoming a chainsaw artist. At least that's what happened to Locust Grove's Mike Wheeler, a chainsaw artist who has been making art from trees for many years now.

"I do tree work and always had a lot of wood around to practice on so I just decided to try and make something out of it," Wheeler said.

That work got more difficult this winter when Wheeler was watching his son Jaiden at the state wrestling tournament and someone broke into his house and stole his chainsaws that he uses for carving.

After Rural Oklahoma Museum of Poetry director Shaun Perkins bought a war memorial carving from Wheeler for the museum, the Locust Grove Arts Alliance decided to donate funds for Wheeler to buy new chainsaws.

Wheeler, who has four children, Sam, Andrew, Faith and Jaiden, grew up in Tulsa and Claremore but spent his summers in Locust Grove.

"I've lived in Locust for about twenty years," Wheeler said, "And I really enjoy it. The people are great here."

Wheeler will be making a return appearance at this year's LGAA Founder's Day Art Show, where he will be chain-saw carving on Broadway Street, across from the VFW. To reach Wheeler, contact him at 918-856-0050.

As a bonus for the Locust Grove Arts Alliance, Wheeler will be carving a bear on Founder's Day, and give it to the LGAA as a gift to be used as the group sees fit. One possibility is that the bear will be raffled off on Founder's Day with the rest of items in the silent auction.



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## --Callery Presentation--

(Continued from Page 3)

was gravel. They were rough roads. On Thursday nights Mom and Dad would load us boys up to eat in Salina. It took 25 minutes, and we could listen to a whole radio show on the drive," Callery said.

Other segments of the presentation included conversation about the businesses of the first 50 years of this community.

"There were no empty stores downtown in the '50s," Callery said.

A report on the early schools, celebrations, feries, the locations of Doctor Hugh Callery's offices, etc. was shared. "Doc Callery," the presenter's father, served the community for 50 years and died in 1991.

"Dad practiced until 1991. He never retired. Office hours didn't mean anything. People often came to the house to be treated," Callery said.

Callery's mother, Helene, was an educator and taught at Locust Grove, Murphy and Lowery. She lived in Locust Grove until her death in 2004.

The local LG group hopes to involve as many people in town as possible in this project.

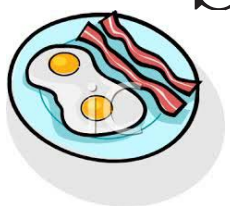
The group will have more meetings, presentations and workshops in the future. Contact: Shaun Perkins at [rompoetry@gmail.com](mailto:rompoetry@gmail.com) or by phone, 918-864-9152 for more information.



*THE END. . . Hugh J. Callery chose a unique slide to end his presentation of the town's history. Those who missed his presentation will be able to watch it on Founder's Day when the Locust Grove Arts Alliance will be running the recorded version throughout the day at the VFW Hall. The hall opens at 10 a.m. when more than 25 exhibitors will be displaying their artwork. Items will also be available in a silent auction that will run from 10 a.m. until parade time at 3 p.m.*

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## LG is Creative OK pick

In March, Locust Grove was selected as one of eight towns in Oklahoma to be a part of Creative Oklahoma's inaugural Creative Communities Project. In this project, the nonprofit organization Creative Oklahoma will work with each community for 20 months in creative problem solving to address economic development and quality of life issues.

The leadership group for LG Creative Communities consists of Marea Breedlove, Hugh J. Callery, Elaine Clark, Ray Grass, Jennifer Henson, Angela Holman, Shane Holman and Shaun Perkins. The team sponsored the LG History in Photos, a presentation by Callery on April 25, which will be available for viewing at the LGAA Art Show at the VFW Hall on Founder's Day this year.

More information about LG Creative Communities, including sign-up sheets will also be available at the VFW Hall. The Creative Oklahoma mentoring team will be in Locust Grove on May 23, Monday, to start the process of working with the community. The place and times will be announced soon. Follow LG Creative Communities on Facebook for updates.

## Join the Mayes County Arts Scene



Readers are invited to check out the Mayes County Arts Scene, a place where information on local art of all kinds -- dance, music, performance, visual, literary, etc. -- can be shared.

Search Mayes County Arts Scene on Facebook and "like" the page to keep up-to-date on arts information in our county. Also, post any arts-related news to MCAS page.

## --Founder's Day--

(Continued from Page 1)

Photography, wood works, paintings, jewelry, and various other artwork will be on display. The following is a list of artists that will be showcase during the art show: Marea Breedlove, Amy Bolin, Tristin Bruner, Jennifer Downing, LaTasha Duncan, Angela Elliston, Ray Grass, Jennifer Henson, Shelley Horton, Stuart Horton, Dean Majors.

Also, Kelly Palmer, Betty Perkins, Georgia Rainbolt, high school art students, The Rural Oklahoma Museum of Poetry, Amanda I. Smith, April Stone, Mike Wheeler, Deaana Vaughn, Dean Wyatt, Jerry Yates, Roxann Yates and Mary Yoder.

Contact Roxann Yates by phone at 918-530-5321 or by email at roxannperkins@gmail.com for more details.



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## Mayes Key recalls life in early day Yonkers. . .

(Continued from Page 1)

lived in Hominy and Broken Arrow and returned to Yonkers in 1938.

"In 1948 the Fort Gibson Dam was built, and Yonkers was in the flood plain, so the folks moved moved to Peggs," he said.

Mayes attended the first school built in Yonkers. It was replaced with a stone building whose remnants can be seen today.

"It was a one-teacher, one-building school that students attended from first grade through eighth," he said.

The ferry and train stop are some of Mayes' fondest memories.

"The ferry was four miles from Yonkers. It would take riders from Wagoner, 12 miles away for 25 cents," Mayes said.

Before World War II, people couldn't flag the train to make it stop.

"During the war everything was rationed. People couldn't get gas or tires, so they would flag the train down to go to Wagoner. The government said the K O & G train had to stop if people needed transportation. The cost was 23 cents to go and 28 cents to buy a ticket to come back," Mayes said.

His parents and sibling are now deceased. He and Wanda had five children -- the late Tim Key, Karen Key Rice, Andrea Key Rawdon, Marsha Key Vick and Mark Key -- six grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. The Keys have been married 65 years.

"We have love and respect for each other, and we thank God every day for his many blessings," Wanda said.

The couple were married in 1950, and in 1958 they bought "the only house we have ever owned," Mayes said.

It rests on the foundation of "the old grocery store and post office of Mark, Oklahoma," Wanda said. Mark was two miles west

of present day Locust Grove.

The Keys hope to have an historical marker placed sometime in the future.

But in the past, Mayes served in two wars -- World War II and the Korean War.

"On my 18th birthday I registered for the army," Mayes said.

After basic training at Camp Robison in Little Rock, Mayes left for Camp

(Continued on Page 9)

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# Mayes Key tell of his time as a POW. . .

(Continued from Page 8)

Shelby, Mississippi, and became a soldier of the 69th Infantry Division. In October he was sent to New Jersey, after which he boarded a ship destined for England.

"On Christmas Day, replacements were needed for the Battle of the Bulge. Eighty men from each company of the 69th Division were then sent to LaHavre, France," Mayes said.

Subsequently, Mayes became a soldier in the 83rd Infantry Division and he and other soldiers were put in box cars bound for

Belgium.

"In my first combat at the Battle of the Bulge, in the Ardennes Forest, we couldn't have fires because it would signal the German forces. We didn't have good boots, and my overshoes were way too big. That was the coldest winter on record," Mayes said. "I got frostbite on my feet and legs. I wouldn't go to the hospital because when I came out, I would be put in a different unit."

Mayes, instead, was sent to an aid station and then to a clearance station to recover. Evidence of his

frostbite can still be seen today.

The division battled for three weeks. "All reserves were sent in," said Mayes. Allied and German casualties were great, but the German losses were heavier. This battle was the beginning of the end for the German forces.

Involved in three campaigns -- the Battle of the Bulge, Rhineland and Central Europe, Mayes, in the second campaign, became the first Oklahoman in the 9th Army, Company E to reach the Rhine River.

On their march to Berlin, Mayes' division stopped in Badertz, Germany, where word of a counter attack of panzers was rumored. "The company put a line for a phone, then pulled back one and a half miles to set up a defense," he said.

Mayes and three other men were picked for lis-

tening duty. "We were to listen for the armor and call the company," said Mayes.

"I saw the phone line jerk the next morning," he said. "A company of Germans overcame us and took us prisoner."

Mayes and three other soldiers were taken to a regular army camp. The men were commanded to empty their pockets.

"I had a new knife from Sears and Roebuck and wrapped it in a handkerchief to conceal it," he said. Mayes carried the knife many years afterward. "I carried it too long," and only part of it remains. "I also had a spoon and fork. I still have that fork."

The prisoners continued to march to one barn and then another. They were given bread and cans of horse meat to eat.

"The meat got bigger and bigger the more I chewed it," said Mayes.

Eventually, the prisoners ended their march southwest of Berlin at Stalag 11A prison camp. The prisoners were only fed dehydrated vegetable soup full of white worms.

"We just thought of the worms as protein," said Mayes.

A telegram, read to a relative who had the only

(Continues on Page 10)

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## Key spots Yonkers cousin

(Continued from Page 9)

phone in Yonkers, related that Mayes was missing in action.

"My cousin wrote the message out and delivered it to my parents," Mayes said.

After being in the POW camp for three weeks, an American lieutenant and German camp commander negotiated a truce, "and the 83rd Division came in with trucks and ambulances and liberated us," said Mayes.

"General Eisenhower said all POWs will be sent home," said Mayes.

A second telegram home stated that Mayes had been returned to military control.

While being processed to go home from a "tent city" named for cigarette brands, Mayes was in the camp "Lucky Strike," and he spotted his cousin from Yonkers, Sherman Sly.

"Sherman was a turret gunner on a B17. He was on a raid on a German ball bearing factory. Sixty Allied planes were shot

down, and Sherman spent 19 months as a POW," Mayes said.

From that time on, the two never separated. Both crossed the ocean on a liberty ship "and we could eat anytime we wanted," Mayes said.

In 1950 Mayes again served his county with the National Guard 45th Division during the Korean War.

While serving 14 months in the war, his first child, Tim, was born.

"I didn't see Tim until he was nine months old," Mayes said.

Later, Mayes became an



MAYES AND WANDA KEY TODAY

electrician, worked at Oklahoma Cement as electrical supervisor and retired after 29 years of service.

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