# Flashforward

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**October 2026 Number 132**
**PRESERVING OUR PAST FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS**


## Historical Society honors three Washington County citizens

The Washington County Historical Society honored the contributions of three individuals when it convened its annual meeting Oct. 4 at the Mount Sequoyah Bailey Center. The organization presented its Distinguished Citizen Awards to (from left in photo) Lindsley Smith, Dr. Stephen A. Smith and Jan Lefler, all of Fayetteville.

Mailco USA of Fayetteville sponsored the event and luncheon.

Lefler, a registered nurse, worked for 33 years at Fayetteville's Veterans Administration Health Care system and retired in 2007. In 2009 she completed Washington County Master Gardener training and volunteered at the gardens of Headquarters House Museum. In 2011 she was named the Master Gardener of the Year and achieved Lifetime Master Gardener status in 2023. For 18 years, Lefler voluntarily recorded the "what, when and where" of the plant species used in the Headquarters House garden with notes on their success. Her passion for the Master Gardener program earned her the 2024 Mimi Cox Mentor of the Year award.

Lindsley Smith spent most of her career as a professor, attorney, author, state legislator and communication director for the City of Fayetteville. She represented Fayetteville in the Arkansas House of Representatives from 2005 to 2010, which inspired her historic preservation philanthropy creating and directing the "Women in the Arkansas General Assembly"
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***Historical Society honors three Washington County citizens*** *(continued from front page)*

biographical project and release of the book *Stateswomen: A Centennial History of Arkansas Women Legislators 1922-2022.* She sponsored and passed the Arkansas Heritage Trails System Act, which led to the establishment of a state historic trails system that includes the Butterfield Overland Mail Route and Trail of Tears. She has also served on the boards of the Evergreen Cemetery Association and the Clinton House Museum. She produced and published videos of local history such as “History Comes Alive” at Evergreen Cemetery and “The Lovely Mural.” As communication director for the City of Fayetteville, she directed the creation of a detailed history section on the city’s website, updated the city’s seal with local historic sites and developed the Hall of Fayetteville History on the third floor of City Hall.

Stephen Smith at age 21 became the youngest legislator to have served in the Arkansas General Assembly. He was chief of staff to Attorney General Bill Clinton, administrative assistant to Gov. Bill Clinton and vice president of the 1979-80 Constitutional Convention. He taught more than 30 years in the Department of Communication at the University of Arkansas. He studied under architecture professor Cyrus Sutherland and participated in the archeological dig at the Ridge House before it was restored and worked on the restoration of the Bank of Kingston. He was a founding board member of Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas (now Preserve Arkansas). He was appointed to the Fayetteville Forward Historic and Heritage Resources Group, which he led for almost a decade. He was instrumental in the rescue of the Clinton House Museum, creation of the non-profit Clinton House Museum Foundation and preservation of the Woolsey Farmstead and the Porter Produce building. He co-authored the book *Stateswomen: A Centennial History of Arkansas Women Legislators 1922-2022.* He also directed several students in Washington County history research and writing projects.

## New board members begin WCHS terms

*WCHS board members (from left) Emily Sledge, president Regina Sherwood and David McKee at annual meeting.*

Members of the Washington County Historical Society elected the organization’s officers and board of directors for 2026-27 during the annual meeting on Oct. 4. Their one-year terms began immediately and will last until October 2027.

The officers are Regina Sherwood, president; Debbie Groom, past president; Malcolm McNair, first vice president-membership; Theresa Ewing, second vice president-finance; Brynda Pappas, recording secretary; Peggy Chenault, corresponding secretary; Lisa Lashley Higgins, treasurer; Patsy Watkins, *Flashback* editor, and Abigail Freeman, director of historic programs.

Board members are Mark Bair, Scott Biehle, Jon Cigainero, John Davis, Dave Edmark, Larry Foley, Jerri Reed Foster, Gretchen Hunt, Holly Brain Johnson, Rebecca Luebker, Tommy Lewis, David McKee, Rick McKinney, John Mitchell, Nese Nemec, Curt Rom, Karen Rorex, Alice Ann Simkins, Emily Sledge, Jim Spillars, Bob Underdown and Bob Young.

# Ice Cream Social brings in the crowds

On one of the hottest days of an intense summer heat wave the community turned out in large numbers Aug. 15 for the historical society's annual Ice Cream Social. In the middle of the afternoon patrons visited on the lawn of Headquarters House Museum and occasionally sought comfort in the air-conditioned building.

Musical entertainment was provided by the Dead Horse Mountain Band. In recognition of the nation's 250th anniversary there was also a recitation of excerpts from the Declaration of Independence by University of Arkansas journalism professor Larry Foley dressed in Thomas Jefferson's 18th century attire.

The bookstore sold copies of the updated version of the 1983 publication *Yesterdays: A Walk Through the Washington-Willow Historic District* by Carolyn Lewis Newbern and also *The Afterlife of Leslie Stringfellow* by Stephen Chism, the new *Forgotten Fayetteville and More Hidden Histories From Washington County* by Jerry Hogan and Susan Parks-Spencer, and the new edition of *Marian Tebbetts Banes, A Memoir.*

Ice Cream Social sponsors were Hiland Dairy, Adventure Subaru, Arvest Bank of Fayetteville and Old Buildings of Fayetteville. The event also receives assistance and support from Experience Fayetteville, the Downtown/Dickson Street Merchants Association and the Washington County Master Gardeners.

*At the Ice Cream Social: Abigail Freeman (left) scoops the ice cream, Larry Foley (center) portrays Thomas Jefferson reading the Declaration of Independence, visitors gather in the parlor (top right) and the Dead Horse Mountain Band performs (bottom right).*

# Poster on display highlights Battle of Fayetteville

Visitors to Headquarters House Museum will have the opportunity beginning in November to see a new exhibit explaining the basic information on the Battle of Fayetteville. The Civil War battle occurred April 18, 1863, in the area around what is now the intersection of College Avenue and Dickson Street.

The exhibit is a poster with text and art about various aspects of the battle. It includes brief biographical sketches of the Union and Confederate commanding officers and a list of the battle's casualties.

Research for the poster was conducted by Russell L. Mahan, author of *The Battle of Fayetteville, Arkansas*; Jim Spillars, past president of the historical society, a living historian and Civil War re-enactor and descendant of soldiers who served in the First Arkansas Federal Cavalry and Infantry, and Alan Thompson, park historical and retired registrar at Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park. The narrative was written by historical society board members Peggy Chenault and Nese Nemec, a retired composition and journalism professor at NorthWest Arkansas Community College. Archival information was obtained from the Southern Memorial Association of Washington County, the Encyclopedia of Arkansas and *Arkansas Times*.

## Volunteers honored for service

The historical society has recognized individuals who offered their time recently as volunteers for the organization's activities:

July – History Camp volunteers

August – Nicholls family as Ice Cream Social Super Scoopers and Maylon Rice as Supreme Ice Cream Social Ambassador

September –Trudy Farrell for providing centerpieces at the WCHS annual meeting, Susan Foley for contributing flowers and working as a server at the annual meeting, and Matt Kushner for serving as a tech specialist for the annual meeting.

## Membership has its benefits; join WCHS now

As a WCHS member, you will receive our *Flashback* quarterly journal and *Flashforward* newsletter, which will update you on Society activities and events. You can also visit our website for background on Washington County history, for scheduling tours of Headquarters House Museum or historic walks in Fayetteville. Membership dues are the main source of income to care for our historic properties, publish our two membership periodicals and carry on all Society activities throughout the year.

Membership dues are renewable each year during the month when you joined. A membership at Explorer level or above ($100 or more) receives free access to 1,380 museums and cultural Institutions across North America. Membership levels are General, $35; Trailblazer, $60; Explorer, $100; Wagon Master, $250; Pioneer, $500, and Statesperson, $1,000. Join now at https://washcohistoricalsociety.org/join

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