

# **HISTORICAL VIEWS of CARTER COUNTY by Francis Nash**

The first explorers probably came to Kentucky in the late 1600s. The first settlement was Fort Harrod, established in 1774, with Boonesborough coming one year later, as Daniel Boone led a group through the Cumberland Gap to the Kentucky River area. It was Boone's third trip to Kentucky, which was a part of Virginia at that time. Kentucky would become the 15th state of the Union on June 1, 1792.

The area of Carter County was first surveyed in 1785, although some earlier maps indicate the Little Sandy River. Parcels of land granted to Richard Grahm and Colonel William Grayson of Virginia for their war service made up a large portion of this area. In 1800, there were only about 500 families living in eastern Kentucky. The first post office in 1811 was known as Little Sandy Salt Works. Another early settlement was near Smokey Creek. As population grew in the northeastern area, a meeting was held in 1837 at the Crossroads Hotel, northwest of Grayson, to call for the creation of a new county. Largely through the efforts of Senator William Grayson Carter, the grandson of Colonel Grayson, the new county was chartered May 1, 1838, with Grayson as the county seat. Portions of Greenup and Lawrence were taken to form the new county, the state's 88<sup>th</sup> out of 120 counties. The first judge was John Frizzell. The population in 1840 was 2,300 people. Later, portions of Carter would be used to form Boyd and then Elliott County. The county at one time extended all the way to the Big Sandy River.

The county courthouse was built in 1840 and stood until torn down to construct a new one in 1907. That building forms the center of the present-day structure which has had several additions and remodeling projects through the years. In 2007, Judge-Executive Charles Wallace headed up a Centennial celebration of the courthouse, collecting pictures and memorabilia.

With the growth of the western end of the county, residents sought to form a new county in 1904. They broke away with some citizens of Rowan and Elliott to form Beckham County named after Governor J.C.W. Beckham. Formal offices were established with the county seat in Olive Hill. Legal questions over the formation led the county to being dissolved by state action, after lasting just eighty days. It is the only county in the state to be abolished. Later, some citizens also wanted to move the county seat to Olive Hill and called for a vote in 1929, but it failed to pass. Rivalries between the east and west end have persisted through the years with the proverbial dividing line being Biggs Hill.

The population of Carter County grew rapidly until after the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when it stabilized at around 22,000 people, not many less than the present day meaning little net growth in the past hundred years. There was a mass movement to the north by many residents of eastern Kentucky during and following WW II seeking the industrial jobs in Ohio and Michigan. Another exodus occurred in the 1960s, and the 1970 census showed just 19,500 people. It rebounded to around 25,000 in the 1980 census and 27,000 in the year 2000.

The county is governed by a Judge-Executive and five magistrates, representing geographic districts in the county who form the Fiscal Court.

Not too many county officials have enjoyed longevity in office, as voters tended to opt for change after a few terms or the candidates sought other offices. The county offices have been held by males, except in 1998. Alice Joy Binion, widow of the three-term sheriff, Coleman Binion, who was killed in an accident, was elected and served one term as Judge-Executive. Democrat Joe Kitchen completed 20 years in service beginning as Sheriff starting in 1978 and then the next election moved up and completed four terms as the Judge Executive. Charles Wallace began his tenure as Judge Executive in 2002 and continues today.

The County Court Clerk's office had the most stability with Ralph "Buster" Cartee serving seven terms from the 1960s into the 80s. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Elias Davis also enjoyed seven terms as Clerk. Hobart Haney and then his brother Bill combined to serve seven terms as jailer, beginning in the 1930s. Charles Kiser, Property Valuation Administrator, has served seven terms, being first elected in 1981.

The ladies finally got a chance to help govern in the county, when in 2002, Debbie Carper and Judy Roark won election as magistrates on the Fiscal Court.

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Carter County contains two incorporated cities, Grayson and Olive Hill. Grayson named for Colonel Grayson, officially became a town in 1844, six years after the formation of the county. A map of that era shows eighty lots and five streets in the area around what is now the Courthouse. Around the early center of town were the Wilhoit Law Office and the Bagby General Store, along with the houses of the Goble, Davis, and Johnson families. Crossroads was an area along the stage coach line at the Barretts Creek ford that contained a large settlement until Grayson began to grow.

The first homes in the Olive Hill area were said to have been built by the Henderson family as early as 1792. Others included the Cox, Riggs and Reeves families. The Tackett family settled near Trough Camp. Zachary Tyree operated the first store in Olive Hill and the county's first physician was Dr. John Steele, who practiced in Olive Hill beginning in 1855. It is thought the town was named by Capt. E. P. Davis for Thomas Oliver, the oldest citizen, and known as Olivers Hill before being shortened. Others have written that they believed that the name came from a rare Olive tree growing in the yard of a Dr. Lyon. The area was large enough to warrant a post office in 1844, with official recognition as a city from the state coming in 1861.

The population of Olive Hill exceeded that of Grayson for some time through the early part of the 20th century, bolstered by the railroad and the firebrick industry. Grayson is now the larger of the two in terms of population and business districts. Olive Hill had 1385 residents in 1920 with 832 in Grayson. In the last census, Grayson counted over 3800 with Olive Hill at 1800 residents. Much of the area growth in the 1980s and 90s has come from development of subdivisions outside the city limits of Grayson. The city received a large HUD grant in 1979 for rebuilding and renovating a

low-lying area of the city known as Dixie Park. The present renovated Municipal building in Grayson was built in 1941 as part of the J. Albert Bagby community park.

Olive Hill celebrated its centennial in a big way in 1961 and buried a time capsule to be opened in 2061. Louie W. King, insurance agent and businessman, headed up a committee with pageants, shows, programs and a history written by Fred Evans. A play “Out of These Hills,” commemorated the occasion, as well.

Grayson marked its Sesquicentennial in 1994 with various events. GO radio honored each native-born citizen as a Grayson Lieutenant.

The whole county celebrated the nation’s Bicentennial in 1976, with the publishing of a book, various programs and a play, “Our Fathers Pride” performed in Grayson for several nights with a cast of nearly a hundred local actors, recalling many episodes of the county’s history on stage. Judge-Executive David McDavid worked with Hubert Rogers, Christine McGlone, Faye Cargo and Paul Hensley in directing the activities that included a buried time capsule at Grayson Lake.

Looking back to 1890, Grayson and Olive Hill were not the only official towns. Enterprise, Mt. Savage, Denton, Willard, and Pleasant Valley also held charters. The map of that time, also showed Pactolus, Vincent, Reedville, Aden and Wesleyville,

Grayson and Olive Hill are both served by a mayor and six-member city councils. J. A. Raybourn was honored for twenty years of mayoral service to Olive Hill having led the city for terms over four different decades. The city has had its periods of political turmoil. In 1992, the Council voted to impeach then mayor, Jim Short, but Short challenged it in court and refused to leave office. Others were appointed to be mayor, and amid the controversy, there were disputes, much division and rancor. Some humor was injected, though, when residents bought hats proclaiming—“I’m the mayor of Olive Hill.” Short was subsequently reelected and served one more term.

In Grayson, the first woman to hold office in a county mayor’s chair was Leda Dean, who was elected in 2002 and served four years.

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Carter is one of the largest counties, geographically, in the state, covering 411 square miles in the foothills of eastern Kentucky. The elevation ranges from 520 to 1300 feet above sea level. It contains many colorful communities and areas of beautiful hills, woodlands, tremendous gorges, caves, and streams. It is known for its wide variety of trees, plants and wildlife. People have settled in all parts of the county and have built schools, churches, country general stores and post offices. Early families came mostly from the area of Virginia, then later groups migrated from the Big Sandy area. In the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the brickyard boom, there was an influx of northern state workers. Many interesting facts highlight the history of some of these places where people made their homes.

Carter City was once a railroad boom town, and the area was known as Smith Creek. Saulsberry was an early name for Aden. Cribbs Hill was so named because of the large corn cribs built there. The Stinson community has also been called Stringtown, Boghead

and Mechanicsburg. The place was once known as Bullseye Spring, then Fontana, and finally named Gregoryville in 1920 after a Judge Gregory.

Many of the towns and landmarks take the names of families that helped shape the early history of the county.

Tygart's Creek which winds through the county and its spectacular gorges was named by Michael Tygart, who along with Simon Kenton, were some of the first explorers to the area.

Davy's Run was named after Dave Lunsford, the engineer on the train making the daily run. Grahn, named for Karl B. Grahn, a prominent industrialist, was once called Fireclay because of the large deposits of clay ore. Hitchins is named in honor of the manager of General Refractories that brought jobs and prosperity to the area in 1911. Before that time it was Anglin and E.K. Junction. Kings Chapel is also Dry Fork on Sinking Creek. Pleasant Valley is still called Counts Crossroads by some folks. The residents of Willard recall when it was an important railroad town and held a reunion every year in Ashland Central Park for their former citizens, beginning in 1931 and the Willards Day continued for decades.

Wesleyville is named for Wesley Fultz, and Gartrell, Boone Furnace, and Grassy Creek are often used synonymously. McGlone Creek and Rooney are the same places. There is Evermans Creek, Williams Creek, Jacobs, Prater, Johns Run, Lawton, Jamison, Wilson Creek, Huffs Run, Porter Creek, Beckwith Branch, Norton Branch, Damron Branch.

Other communities, past or present, with unique names are Goble, Bet, Beetle, Brinegar, Kilgore, Whitt, Resort, Rosedale, Music, Soldier, Star, Smokey, Sophie, Buffalo, Eby, Globe, Gesling, Leon and Rush.

You could go to Democrat Hill, Clark Hill, Schoolhouse Hill, Garvin Ridge, Rattlesnake Ridge, Tick Ridge, Pope Hollow, Hillman Hollow, John Moore Hill, Blueberry Ridge, Bald Eagle Mountain, Anglin Pond, Bens Run, Horton Flats, Tater Knob and Rupert Mound among other interesting names. Whatever the name or the place, Carter Countians have always had a special pride in their heritage.

Over the years, Carter County has had about a hundred U.S. Post Offices located in small buildings or general stores in the various small communities. Until 1971 when the Postal Service was formed as a separate business under a merit system, postmaster jobs were political plums for supporters.

Rural Free Delivery, RFD, began expanding at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and new routes were added as needed. Grayson didn't have home delivery of mail until 1969 and in Olive Hill, it was not until 1997, when their streets were marked for delivery.

By the mid-1980s, mail delivery had been consolidated into thirteen offices, and then down to seven in the 21<sup>st</sup> century at Grayson, Olive Hill, Carter, Grahn, Hitchins, Soldier and Willard. The longest serving of the county postmasters is Bobbie Ratliff at Willard where she has been since 1975.

Many family cemeteries dot the landscape of the communities. In 2007, the Rattlesnake Ridge Historical Society, headed by Vicky Gilbert and Carolyn Carroll, completed a wide research of the various cemeteries and listed the information on a CD available to the public. The cemeteries numbered over 500 in the county.

When time zones were formed by the government, Carter was in the Central zone

until 1960, when the boundary was moved to include the county and eastern Kentucky in Eastern Standard Time.

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Kentucky's only native son to be elected to the White House was Abraham Lincoln. Kentucky also was the birthplace of the Confederate States' only president, Jefferson Davis. Carter County has had one native son occupy the Governor's mansion in the history of the state, William J. Fields. Isaac Shelby was the state's first governor, and Fields became the 41st chief executive in 1923. Fields was a long-time congressman for the area when Democrats chose him to run for governor, after their candidate, J. Campbell Cantrill passed away. The party turned to Fields, spurning Senator Alben Barkley, who wanted the nomination. Fields was elected even though he lost Carter, which was predominantly a Republican county through the early part of its history. His campaign slogan was "Vote for Honest Bill from Olive Hill." Following the Depression and the War and the influence of labor organizations, Carter has had a heavier Democratic voter registration.

During the Fields' administration, great strides were made in public education and the development of state parks. Fields was a moral conservative, and refused to attend even the inaugural balls, because he was against dancing. Following his term as governor, Fields tried but failed to win back his seat in Congress. Alben Barkley would go on to become vice- president under Harry Truman. Governor Fields died in 1954 and was buried in Olive Hill. A plaque in his honor is located on the Courthouse lawn, and the multi-purpose room at Carter Caves is named for him as well as a bridge near his homeplace. A few other Carter Countians have sought some of the state-wide offices, without success.

Jim Short of Olive Hill wrote of a Kentucky political story when he penned Caleb Powers and the Mountain Army, in which he tells about the conspiracy to assassinate Kentucky governor William Goebel. Powers was convicted of conspiracy, but was later pardoned and elected to Congress.

One man with a link to the county has been Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Fred Vinson, of Lawrence County, who practiced law in Carter, serving on the high court bench from 1946-1953. Robert Burgess Stewart, of Denton, served in the U. S. State Department from 1938-1945.

A Carter County native and teacher, Mary Elliott Flanery, was the first women elected to the Kentucky House of Representatives. In 1921 she began her term representing Boyd County and was active in promoting equal rights.

Grayson native, J. Harry Davis, spent two terms each in the Kentucky House and the Senate, and was followed in the Senate by his wife, Pauline Davis, the first woman elected to the Senate. Their son, James A. Davis, was elected to four terms in the House of Representatives, representing Carter County. Olive Hill native, Democrat Gene Cline, started as Circuit Court Clerk in 1963, served for three terms and became County Judge-Executive in 1976. He was then elected State Representative in 1982 serving until 1991, when he was defeated by Republican Walter Gee, in a backlash for supporting the Kentucky Education Reform Act. Dr. J.M. Rose served in the State Senate for four terms in the 1930s and Roger Qualls was in the House for four terms in the 1950s.

Leading the area into the 21<sup>st</sup> century have been long-standing Grayson legislators Representative Robin Webb, Democrat and Senator Charlie Borders, Republican . Both have taken important leadership roles within the General Assembly in Frankfort and backed many programs for the county and the northeast Kentucky area. Sen. Borders announced his retirement in 2009 to take a job with the Public Service Commission and Webb won a special election to occupy his Senate seat. Jill York, Grayson businesswoman then won the election for Webb's house post, giving Carter County two ladies in the General Assembly for the first time.

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Early transportation routes into Kentucky were waterways and small, primitive trails. The Wilderness Road was Kentucky's first roadway as Daniel Boone blazed through the southeast mountains. In northeastern Kentucky, early trails developed along routes for moving salt to the Ohio River and the Bluegrass regions. The first good roads were privately operated and users were charged a toll to travel. A toll road was established in the early 1800s along the route of the current highway U.S. 60. That road later would extend eastward to the nation's capital and became known as the Midland Trail.

It was along that trail in 1829 on his way to the inauguration, that Andrew Jackson stopped at Col. John Plummer's stagecoach inn at Crossroads on Barretts Creek,

Few roads or streets were very smooth. The mining of ore and coal in Carter County helped to develop a system of roadways, and the availability of local limestone made the roads better than most of that era. At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there were around 1,000 miles of dirt roads in the county.

The first automobiles came to the county in 1912, and roads began to improve with government help. The early cars were sold in Olive Hill by Everett Fields, the governor's son, and W.S. Phillips and Z. T. Hall in Grayson. In the roaring twenties, a vehicle could be purchased for a little over \$500.

In the mid-20s, the paving of Midland Trail began. It became known as U.S. 60 and underwent renovation and widening in the 1950s changing some traffic patterns and

buildings in Grayson and Olive Hill. Carter County natives served as Highway Commissioner during that era. First John Keck, then Bert Kiser, of Olive Hill, and they helped insure any new route remained through downtown Grayson and Olive Hill. Keck served a short time then as Circuit judge and Kiser was also a State Senator.

The modern interstate system would cross the county in the late 1960s and early 1970s, as sections of I-64 were constructed, much of it under the direction of Graysonian Frank Kemper, state highway engineer. This meant that travelers by-passed the main sections of Grayson and Olive Hill. Residents of Grayson have long sought, without success, an exit on the west end of town at U. S. 60. County and state roads saw many improvements with increased aid from Frankfort. In 1995, Grayson became the eastern terminus of the new John Y. Brown AA highway designed to connect the Ashland area with Alexandria in northern Kentucky. This brought increased traffic problems for the city along its Carol Malone Blvd and the interchange.

Carter County briefly had local bus service, when Hughie Grizzell established the Eastern Kentucky line after WW II, to serve Carter and surrounding counties, and another bus line ran between Grahn and Olive Hill. The idea was abandoned in the early 1950s when most people opted for owning their own cars. The Greyhound line used to make stops at Tyree's store in Olive Hill and on Main St. in Grayson, before the big buses reduced service, bypassing the county.

One form of transportation that finds a unique spot in county history is aviation, with the pioneering aerodynamic experiments of inventor Matthew B. Sellars. At *Blakemore*, his expansive home at Grahn, Sellars put flying machines in the air just a few years after the Kitty Hawk flight of the Wright brothers. As early as 1897, he had constructed his first wind tunnel for experiments and worked with gliders. In 1908 he flew his four-winged quadruplane for a short distance from a hillside in Grahn. In 1911, however, his valued assistant, Lincoln Binion was killed in a propeller accident and Sellars moved away. He became an editor of an aeronautical magazine and was hailed as one of American's great flying men, serving on several national research boards.

He also was a creative inventor, wiring his house for electricity before any others, using windmills to generate power. His *Blakemore* home was listed on the Registry of Historic Places when it mysteriously burned in 1974. Sellars' work has been exhibited and preserved by the Smithsonian Institute. In 1976, the Carter Co. Vocational school students built a replica of one of Flying Machines for public display. The Olive Hill airport is named in his honor. In 2009, Sellars granddaughter published a book [A Moment in Time](#) that included a collection of his notes and photographs.

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The eastern part of Kentucky has seen railroad tracks vanish at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup>

century, but the rails played an integral part in the life of the state and Carter County. Before the age of the automobile and truck, trains provided for the transfers of products in and out of the communities and the transport of people. Railroad lore is remembered fondly by many.

The first railroad charter was issued to Carter County in 1849. From the 1870s, various companies and uses for railroading developed over the next century. The Eastern Kentucky Railway ran from Riverton on the Ohio river through Grayson to Willard and Webbville, a total of thirty-six miles. Economics forced the closing of the E K line in 1928, but some business people, led by R. M. Bagby, kept the Grayson to Webbville run open as the E K Southern Railway until January of 1933. Bagby was later State Senator and had an unsuccessful bid for Lt. Governor.

The engines had some colorful names like *Red Dragon*, *The Blue Goose*, and *The Southern Queen*. They were gasoline-powered, not the traditional steam engine. Many of the railroad bridges from that line stand to this day. The railroad and its depot provided the conduit for economic and population growth in the city and county. Short spurs from the EK Railway ran to Stinson and out to Bullseye Springs (Gregoryville) from about 1885 to 1893.

The legacy of the EK Railway is preserved by a local club and is the only abandoned rail line in the country with state historical markers all along its former bed. The Grayson train depot was dismantled in the summer of 1938 and the area where the train ran was, for many years, called Railroad Street. In 2007, retired KCU History professor, Tom Gemeinhart, created an intricate replica of the old Grayson Depot for public display. The same year a pictorial history, Eastern Kentucky Railway, was published by Terry Baldrige of Greenup County.

Several small lines were constructed in the county to meet particular hauling needs. A Kinniconick-Freestone Railroad went from Lewis County to Freestone, Gesling, and Carter City from about 1890 to 1940, carrying limestone and other materials. The Ashland Coal and Iron Railroad had been built to haul coal and stretched from Ashland into Carter County near Denton.

A railroad line was built by Andrew Brown of Buffalo, New York, for logging purposes in the western part of the county in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Neal Salyers, of Olive Hill, researched and published a booklet in 2005 about the Carter Caves & Olive Hill Railroad 1881-1884.

The C & O Railroad-Chesapeake and Ohio, started as the Elizabethtown- Lexington & Big Sandy line and followed west to east, the old Midland Trail, meeting up with the old AC & I line. The train tracks were laid through Olive Hill in 1881 and changed the face of the city. The depot was located in the valley near Tygarts Creek, starting a move to build stores in that area, instead of on the hill, east of that point. The Tabor family had one of the first commercial buildings in what would become the new downtown.

Passenger traffic on the C & O at its peak brought seven trains through each day, with many stops along the way at places like Soldier, Lawton, Aden, Leon, Hitchins, Mt. Savage and Denton. The “George Washington” and the “Fast Flying Virginian” were big passenger trains that roared through the county. Perhaps the most famous passenger to travel that line was President Harry Truman, who drew a huge crowd to the depot area of Olive Hill on his whistle-stop campaign tour in 1948. He spoke from the rear of the train and surprised the country by defeating Thomas Dewey in the fall election.



A large freight train derailment in Leon in 1978 resulted in a chemical spill into the river that forced Grayson to shut off the water intakes, leaving the town without water service for almost a week during a cold winter. Passenger service ended through the area in 1972, and members of the Olive Hill Rotary Club took the last coach west, as the colorful railroad era passed. The historic Olive Hill Depot still stands on Railroad Street and remains the center of many town events

The railroads tracks have been taken up, and the old ties sold off or given away. Attempts have been made by many government and civic organizations to use the C & O right of way area for a “Rails to Trails” program, allowing bicycling and hiking along the former beds.

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Kentucky is known for its coal deposits and mining, and much of the early economy of Carter County has been associated with extracting material from the earth.

The settlement of the county was due in large part to the demand for salt, which constituted a medium of exchange as well as a preservative. Salt wells in the area led early settlers to become salt-makers and traders. The brine was drawn from the Little Sandy and boiled. Early county families known for their salt-making were the Scotts, Kouns, Strothers, Osentons, Botts, Evermans, Kibbeys, Gaines, Lewis’ and the Lowerys.

In the mid 19th century, iron-making became an important industry, as the natural ore was smelted in large stone furnaces. The county boasted five such iron-making facilities. Pactolus was the first in 1824 started by the McMurtry and Hall families. Then came Mt. Savage, Star, Boone, and Iron Hills, later called Charlotte’s Furnace. Historical markers tell the story of many of these iron-making areas with Mt. Savage the last one to close in 1882. When the iron furnaces were no longer financially feasible, a new industry brought jobs to the region, around the turn of the 20th century.

Carter County became a center for clay mining and firebrick manufacturing. The quality fire clay found in the county was mined and then baked into bricks in large kilns, that were originally heated by local coal, then later by natural gas. The firebrick was used to line steel blast furnaces and boilers of steam engines. At their height in the early 1900s, there were five brickyards located along the C & O Railroad in Carter, the biggest such operations in the world in one small county. The companies operated the mines and then the large refractories to make the brick. Coal camps developed in areas of the county as miners hauled out the clay and also the coal to fire the kilns.

George Carlisle built the Olive Hill Brick Co. in 1895 which later became General Refractories. In 1900, Clyde Hayward built a plant six miles west of Olive Hill near Soldier. The area soon bore his name, but he sold the operation later to Ironton Firebrick. The following year the Harbison-Walker Refractories of Pittsburgh completed their Kentucky Works facility in Olive Hill. General Refractories of Philadelphia, then built

another plant at Hitchins in 1911 and Louisville Firebrick, a company started by Karl Grahn, opened at Grahn in 1913. General Refractories had another plant at Haldeman in Rowan County. The brickyards provided employment for over 2000 persons, many coming in from other states to work.

By the late 1950s the demand for the bricks in furnaces waned, and the plants began to close. Hayward shut down operations in 1954, Harbison-Walker in 1964 and General Refractories-Olive Hill in 1971, a huge economic blow to Olive Hill. The brickyards were a source of pride for the area and likewise the companies provided the community revenue and contributed to park development and civic growth.

A downsized Grahn brickyard kept working after the company was purchased by Bill Shuck in 1985. Schuck Industries, a separate company, took control of the plant at Hitchins in 1997 after acquiring U.S. Refractories. The Hitchins plant, with a much smaller workforce, involves itself now in monolithic refractories such as mortars and castables for the steel mill industry.

Coal has also been a leading product in the area at different intervals in history with deep mining beginning when the railroads arrived for transport. There were large seams and mines in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century in the areas of Norton, Geigerville, Kilgore, Dry Fork, Denton, Music and Willard. There was high demand for coal by the brickyards, but miners suffered under difficult and unsafe conditions, often walking out on strike.

Another coal boom came in the 1940s, when mines were opened by George Stephens as Moore Branch Coal Company. J. L. Boggess had Willard Coal. Grayson Block was owned by S.U. Pratt. The Sexton-Blankenship mine and the Cornett family's Johns Run mine were also active. Labor disputes, falling prices and rising government regulation caused the companies' market to dry up.

But then in the 1970s, a third boom came with strip mining of hilltops. The Addington Brothers with offices in Grayson, figured prominently in the coal – striping business in Carter and surrounding counties, employing many, and also making large donations to area charities and schools. Carter was producing large amounts of coal with other companies such as Grefco, Prichard, Union Boiler, and Little Sandy Coal. By the turn of the new century, though, strip mining had ceased in the area.

With the abundance of timber in the county, the logging and saw mill industry has played a prominent role at various times in the county's history beginning with the railroad boom and the need for cross-ties. It was resurrected again in the 1970s providing lumber for construction. Three sawmills operate to this day.

Limestone has been mined heavily in Carter, and at the peak in the mid-1920s, ten quarries were producing rock. In various areas open pit mines were established particularly at Carter, Olive Hill and Lawton. Today, only two companies remain, Mountian Materials and AA Stone, specializing in limestone. The stone was supplied to the railroads in the early part of the century for ballast then later used for road building. One of the first companies was Poplar Ballast, an enterprise of the Lewis family at Carter City, founded in 1911.

Acme Stone worked the big mine near Rockcrusher Curve in Olive Hill later to be controlled by Standard Slag Company. Hubert Cecil and Roger Quall's Pleasant Valley operation was also bought out by Standard Slag, then Ken-Mor, but Cecil's son and grandsons continued to operate a salvage yard nearby. The Ruth Brothers also had acquired several of the quarries by 1960.

The limestone company owned by Watt Hillman of Lawton was started in 1917 as an open pit, but then began drawing rock from the mountain underground using mules, wagons, gun powder and manpower to extract rock and haul it to the crusher. The acreage was sold after the war and from the mid-60s to mid-70s an out-of-state firm used the many dark caverns of the mine to grow mushrooms for sale, closing down then reopening in the 1980s for a few more years.

In 2006, it was announced that the so-called Lawton mushroom mines were being sold to Global Data Corporation to establish a high-tech data storage company that would be called Stone Mountain Complex. The corporation had promised hundreds of jobs for the area with the high-tech development that was halted in 2008, when funding dried up and the buildings that were constructed sat idle. The demise was particularly disheartening to Olive Hill, since another plant promising jobs, Fresh and Ready Foods had purchased the Industrial Park in 2004 and broke ground for a plant that never materialized.

There is also evidence the county became the source for saltpeter or sodium nitrate, mined for gun powder use during the War of 1812. At least two caves around the Carter Caves area were used for this purpose, one of which is a tourist site even today.

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While much of Carter County's industry over the last two centuries has come from mining natural resources, there have been other job-related activities. In the early 1940s, the garment industry got a solid start in Olive Hill, hiring many women to operate the sewing machines. Virgil Stallard rented a large building on Railroad Street to Morton Rose to form the Blue Anchor Company in 1947 but it closed after ten years. In the early 1960s, when the economy was being dragged down by the closing of the brickyards, more garment factories opened. William Dysard, of Ashland, formed Carter Industries in 1963 at the old Aiken Hall at Erie School. It was later moved to the east end in 1969 and became Ashland Sales and Service, sewing for mostly government and military contracts. While it has been sold, it continues to operate with some of the same honor system and flex time policies of Mr. Dysard.

Olive Hill entrepreneurs Stallard, Gene Case, Leslie Henderson, Ora Duvall and Woodrow Burchett were all at one time instrumental in the sewing factory boom along with New York and Pennsylvania firms. As many as five factories functioned through the 1970s under names like Cowden, Case, Gibraltar, Ralco, Factory Fashions, and Midland.

The contract sewing business was a very volatile and every-changing industry. An Olive Hill Industrial Park was established by townspeople in 1973 and a large structure built that at first housed Case, Inc. but now contains Carter Industries. The newer Carter Industries was started by a New York firm in 1996 and replaced Isratek that had occupied the industrial building.

Over 1000 people have been employed at one time in the many garment factories of Olive Hill until much of the work was taken to other places and many plants closed, leaving just the two by the turn of the century employing around 200.

Jerry Duncan created some jobs in 2005 with a company to manufacture and sew seat liners for car companies. They set up shop for the William Matthew Company in one of the old brickyard buildings.

Fred Jones established a card plant and some employment for the city in the 1950s before moving out then reorganizing as Olive Hill Finishing Co. in 1975. A sassafras oil distillery of P.R. Driscoll's at Cedar Run and keg factories at Leon and Lawton, have been unusual aspects of the county's industrial history.

The arts and crafts have played a large role in not only producing income for artisans but building a reputation for this area in wood and coal crafts, furniture-making, broom-making, weaving, quilting, and the crafting of musical instruments. Various craft and quilt guilds were formed. Hubert Rogers was a prominent carver and dulcimer-maker who demonstrated his talent in many places including the Smithsonian in Washington. John Ramey has gained fame for his hand-carved dulcimers. A converted farm building the "Chicken Coop" located near Carter City and run by Donnie and Helen Crum, showcases many of the wares of talented local artisans, male and female.

The Ruth Brothers brought employment to many with their state-wide road building business, since the 1940s. In 1957 they established East Kentucky Paving Corporation in Grayson with Sally York heading the office to this day. They left the asphalt business in 1988 but then built Grayson's Conference Center and the adjoining Holiday Inn.

In the latter part of the 20th century, Grayson and Olive Hill have become known as bedroom communities, as workers lived locally while traveling to better paying jobs at tri-state industries. They worked at Ashland Oil, Armco Steel or joined the boiler-makers union and construction trades. The telecommunications and wiring business lured many workers to higher paying out-of-state jobs. Those jobs flourished in the 1990s, then fizzled, with many returning home to find other employment.

Both cities have made attempts at luring industry, forming committees and purchasing industrial sites. There have been several disappointments through the years with prospects that failed to materialize.

In 1991, a committee led by Chamber executive and career Grahn brickyard manager, C. W. Stevens, helped bring Grayson its first real industry as Cook Family Foods, later becoming just Cooks Hams, built a modern ham-processing plant along I-64, and became the county's largest business employer. The road to the plant bears Stevens' name. The plant was purchased and renamed Smithfield in 2008.

A decade later, 2001, Carter County officials also cooperated in the development of East Park Industrial complex, nine miles east of Grayson. Governor Paul Patton had a new road constructed from I-64 to the Ohio River, and new plants for Cintas and Cingular and the Ashland Community and Technical College opened facilities along the parkway.

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Kentucky is noted for its beautiful horse farms, bluegrass and tall tobacco. Carter County's agriculture for decades centered around burley tobacco. Early settlers farmed to survive and raised corn, wheat, sorghum, flax, and vegetables. Grist mills were built in the early 1800s to grind grain into flour. Two such mills, Pactolus and Vincent Mills, located on the Little Sandy River, remained in business for many years. Pactolus was built around 1810 and operated into the 1940s, owned by several different families. Vincent Mill was built in 1874 by the J.A. Vincent family who operated it until it closed in 1921. The Pennington Grist Mill on Little Fork, also operated in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Dams had to be built in the river to furnish the water power to turn the giant wheels.

Sorghum was a valuable crop in the early history and is still raised today in limited amounts for production and sale of the molasses.

Farmers started growing tobacco in Carter County around 1883. It would be the first crop that could be raised and exported for cash, creating a whole new atmosphere of commercialism on the farm. The early oxen were replaced by the mule to prepare the land, and the tractor would later arrive on the scene.

Dr. Lewis Prichard and W. D. Malone were among the first investors in a tobacco warehouse to collect the burley and ship it on to Louisville. Several business people attempted to keep the warehouse work going within Grayson in the face of difficult marketing conditions. The Bagby and Shivel Warehouse would find the most success although it was short-lived.

A Grayson loose-leaf market was established in 1918, and leaf sold for thirty-six cents a pound that first year. Prices would fluctuate in the early part of the century, and a drop in prices led many farmers to quit in disgust. The market closed in Grayson in 1921, but a co-op was formed to keep the industry going. Such cooperatives would be the basis for the federally-backed market pool, formed in the early 1940s. Government price-support programs soon stabilized the marketing process and tobacco farmers and the county enjoyed a strong livelihood from the crop. Those price supports ended officially in 2004 and while many farmers continued to raise tobacco on contracts with companies, some took the federal buy-out payment that was offered and retired. Other farmers concentrated on the strong beef cattle market or diversified their operations.

Carter farms were also active over the years in apples, milk production and poultry. The chicken and dairy farms disappeared by the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and fewer farms were operated full-time. Olive Hill for years had an active Stockyard, buying and selling livestock. Much of the good flat land for farming around Grayson was owned by the Rupert family since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. David McGlone still farms a beautiful portion of that today, and has served county farmers on state-wide boards including the Kentucky Farm Bureau. There are still about 700 families in the county engaged in some type of farm activity including several who have turned to greenhouse and horticulture operations.

Raising and riding horses started gaining in popularity in the 1960s as stables and training facilities began popping up around the county to accommodate those who would show their horses. It has become a strong industry as well as a popular hobby with several stables throughout Carter County. Many horse shows were started in eastern Kentucky during that time period.

The University of Kentucky Agriculture Extension Service has assisted Carter County farmers since 1920. R.H. King was county agent for over thirty years starting in 1926 and is credited with introducing many methods to help farmers increase production. Ronnie Graves of Carter County served as area poultry specialist for thirty years.

Some notable farm families who helped sustain the Extension service, serving on boards and working on programs have been the McGlone, Brammell, Fankell, Buck, Ramey, Lewis, Marcum, Carroll, Suttles, Littleton, Damron, Bauer, Haight, Lowe, Bush, Harris, Hall, Flaughner, and Ruggles families.

With an influx of federal dollars for Rural Development in the late-1960s, Community Development Clubs were formed, under the direction of Bill Marshall, agent. Several like Pactolus, Norton Branch, Pleasant Hill-Rattlesnake Ridge, Gregoryville, Willard and Hitchins were able to build buildings, firehouses or make other community improvements. Cora Keeton, Clell Lucas, Larry Carroll, and Charles Tolliver were also leaders in area community development.

Carter County has one of the top Extension Homemakers groups in the state developed largely while Sally Lewis was the county agent for over thirty years retiring in 2004. The clubs started in 1946 and the county now boasts fifteen clubs in various communities with Gregoryville, the oldest. Homemakers assist in many community projects and yearly sponsor a huge Holiday Fair in Grayson. In terms of longevity- Helen Lemaster, Phyllis Clevenger, and Betty Johnson have been members at Hitchins for over fifty-five years.

The Extension 4-H program has been strong with clubs at each of the schools, since formed in 1970 with Ron Arnett the first agent. Excellence awards in county 4-H each year are given in honor of Carl Littleton and Mary Roe, two early advocates of the program.

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Over its history, Kentucky has had its share of lean times economically, and Carter has often been listed among the poorer counties, with nearly 20% living below the official poverty level and unemployment figures that often were in the top ten in the state.

Around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the county was enjoying some relatively good times, and prices were not so bad either. One could buy a mans suit for \$1.75, a pair of shoes for 25 cents, a sugar-cured ham for 16 cents a pound, and coffee for 10 cents a pound. Local businesses consisted of general merchandise, grocery and feed stores, millinery shops, livery stables, blacksmith shops, undertakers, barber shops, saloons, hotels, furniture stores, doctors, drug stores and of course, lawyers.

Before the days of automobiles and better roads, local commerce centered around the “mom and pop” general stores scattered in every community. Later, business districts would develop within the main towns.

The local banks served as major contributors to the growth of the economy. The bank officials were instrumental in providing leadership for many community activities, as well.

The first permanent bank was started in 1891, as the Commercial Bank of Grayson began operating under the direction of Dr. J. W. Strother, the first of five generations of his family to hold officer positions at the bank. Wick Strother succeeded his father, Dr. Strother as president in 1935. Jack Strother assumed the presidency in 1956, and turned it over to his son, Jack Strother Jr. in 1982 who has led the bank to the present, although Jack, Sr. still reports to the bank for work each week. Jack Strother Jr's son, Mark, is now a vice-president, as the bank continues to serve the community. Commercial Bank opened an interchange branch on Carol Malone in 1976 and moved its main bank to a new facility on East Main Street in 1981. After troubles at the Peoples Bank, that institution was acquired by the Commercial Bank in 1987 and became known as their Olive Hill branch bank.

First National Bank began in 1902 as the Citizens Bank, with local stockholders. In 1926 while Henry C. Rupert was president it became First National. Judge R. C. Littleton served two different terms as bank president and L.E. Osenton and George Robinson were early presidents. Earl McGuire and his family became involved in the bank ownership and Everett English was named president in 1966 succeeded by Raymond McGuire in 1972. The bank built branches in Willard in 1975 and Rush in 1977 bringing banking to rural areas of the county. First National opened a branch in Olive Hill in 1990 and would later also expand into Sandy Hook and West Liberty. The Grayson bank was moved from its original location downtown to a new building on South Carol Malone in 1995.

The McGuires then served as leaders on the First National board, with the exception of a ten-year period beginning in 1983 when David McDavid was chairman. Everett .E. McGuire is current chairman with Willis Kelley as president. Also serving in the president's chair have been Giles Robinson and Don Smith.

Several banks in Olive Hill became active around the first part of the 20th century, along with one at Willard, but didn't survive. The Peoples Bank in Olive Hill was founded in 1913, with E. S. Hitchins as president it grew into one of the largest banks in the area. Mr. M.S. Qualls and C.S. Cartee had long tenures as president. Members of the McGuire family became active on the bank board by the 1960s and Roger Patton was named president in 1973. His popularity led to the street at City Hall being named in his honor. The Peoples bank had moved to a new building on Main Street in 1965 from its original location near the Depot on Railroad Street.

In 1990, business people from both ends of the county joined to invest in the Citizens Bank of Grayson, with Charles Jordan as president, and located it along North Carol Malone Blvd. The bank operated locally for ten years before being sold and consolidated by a regional bank.

For much of this century, Grayson and Olive Hill had reputations of being Saturday towns, with business centered around the rural folk heading for town on the weekends.

Some county businesses today have roots that go back a hundred years or more. Horton and Brown Pharmacy in Grayson marks its beginning in 1886 when Elijah and W. A. Horton bought out another drug store. Frank Brown joined as a partner, followed by his son Bob, and later Willie Patton.

The Rabourn & Sons store at Lawton has been around since 1883 with Andy Rabourn, still operating into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Henderson Funeral Home marks its start with the family's coffin-making business in Olive Hill in 1825. It later merged with rival Oney Funeral Home in 1994. The J. F. Lewis & Co. store has been at the center of commerce in Carter City, since 1890, run by the Lewis family.

The Main streets of both Grayson and Olive Hill have seen numerous empty storefronts in a trend that began in the 1980s as many national chains expanded and moved in forcing locally-owned stores to close their doors. Grayson saw its business center shift more to the interstate connection road after 1973 and away from Main Street, including the moving of the Post Office in 1976. Many businesses sprang up around the I-64 interchange, with much of the industrial and business land developed by Johnson & Goebel Company.

The small-town atmosphere means several home-town businesses have been operated by two or more generations and fifty years or more.

Two department stores established in the 1930s, highlighted Grayson's Main Street for decades. Cova and Van Baker operated Bakers and Jimmy Rupert's store was also a family-owned business with Ruperts continuing into the 21<sup>st</sup> century under the ownership of the Wilson family. Wilma Shivel operated her dress shop for over 45 years starting in 1942 and it continues today under Diane Ferguson. Ruth Haney's Jewelry has been in its location since 1961.

The Dyer family started their home appliance business after the war in the mid-1940s and continue to this day. Arnold Dyer sold the first televisions in town and his sons, John and Harold, expanded to operate two large furniture stores that now spans three generations. Homer Womack and descendents, with now four generations, have operated the Farmers Hardware store in Grayson since 1916, which included hardware and farm machinery. The machinery division was split off in 1969 and operated by Pete Littleton as Farmers Machinery, selling tractors and implements.

The Malone Funeral Home counts its history since 1933. Davis Hardware, began in 1890 and stayed a hundred years. The Woods family operated grocery stores in the east end of the county for over a half-century. City Florist of Grayson opened in 1959 and has had several owners and locations to the present.

Harry Brown started the first of what would be many mobile home sales lots in Grayson, which his son continues today. Gerald Stamper and son, continue the carpet business started in the 60s. The Kretzers, father then son, have provided insurance from Hord St. for nearly 50 years. Three generations have served the area at Miller Insurance agency in Grayson and Olive Hill. Three generations of Charlie Kisers, have overseen Kisers Tax and Accounting. Three generations of Shaffers have worked as concrete contractors in Grayson. Three generations of Burtons have been providing cars and mobile homes. Porters Tire, with Eddie Porter was started in 1960 at Globe and continues with another generation as does Parkers in Olive Hill, Boggs Hardware in Grayson and Lykins Insurance and Owens Insurance, in Olive Hill. Three generations have worked the Tackett Furniture store in Olive Hill since the late 1930's and the Lowe's Service Station and Repair Shop started in 1958 is still going in its third generation. Sally's Flowers opened by the Hendricksons in 1954 marks more than fifty years in business.



Johnson Realty starting as Johnson-Huff involves the family and has been a major real estate development force through the years. The Mullins and Sexton pallet plant operated through three decades in Willard before the Sextons gave up the wood business to make Sexton Brothers Dog Food from Willard Milling, starting in the mid-1980s.

In 1935, W. A. Porter on Rt. 504, Olive Hill began selling monuments and his family continues the work today. Walkers Grill has been serving customers meals in Olive Hill for nearly fifty years.

The James family ran a popular restaurant in Olive Hill for over sixty-two years, finally closing in 2002, but son Tony, has James Hardware, started in 1979 and continuing today. The Stamper brothers operated a grocery business for over seventy-five years.

The Waggoner family has dominated the car business in Carter County. George Waggoner's boys and three generations to follow operated dealerships in Grayson and Olive Hill. In Olive Hill from 1930-1999 with Sam and Gene Waggoner continuing after that, as a towing service and NAPA store. George Waggoner, jr. and Son Motors sold Chevys in Grayson from 1923-1995. Many in the past bought cars at Levisay Motors and the McGuire's Grayson Motors. The Qualls and Kiser families in Olive Hill and Davis family in Grayson were prominent in the gasoline and petroleum distribution business, with Prince and Ross, the bottled gas variety.

Residents of Olive Hill fondly remember the G.W. Raybourn General Store in business for over seventy-five years and Todd Raybourn store for fifty years. People recall pleasantly the Olive Hill Department Store, H. T. Sparks Feed, Willard Boggs' Western Auto and the McCarty-Kirby Store in Olive Hill, the tallest building in the city with a skating rink on the third floor. Cartee Wholesale, De Hart Pharmacy and De Hart Barber Shop and Stephens Barber Shop count a half-century of service to Carter Countians. Kenny Stevens has been in his jewelry store on Scott St. since 1950.

Bill Scott, the barber, cut hair for fifty years at his Hord Street, Grayson shop. Many folks remember Grayson Milling Co., Botts Drug Store, Houck Furniture, Ernie Womack's, Ben Franklin, Cookes Florist, and Smiths Jewelry that had long histories. Ed Johnston's general store at Hitchins is esteemed in a popular bluegrass song. Grayson once had two lumber yards, Bagby and Evans.

The first real strip mall, called Town Mall, was built by the Bill Justice and sons in 1989 along South Carol Malone Blvd. Grayson got its first McDonalds near the interchange in 1983 owned by Sam and Darlene Perry, who then expanded to Olive Hill in 2005. The first national department store, K-Mart, opened in 1981 in Grayson. The company built a bigger store on the other side of the interstate in 1995, and Tom Womack moved his Farmers Hardware to the vacant building.

Carter County has had some fascinating eateries through the years, many lasting for decades. Folks aren't likely to forget the meals at such places at the Cobblestone Restaurant, Camp 60, Willies's Burgers, White Owl Diner, Burtons and Smokey Valley Truck Stop in Olive Hill. In Grayson, much time was spent at The Yellow Jacket Grill, Logans, Perkins Restaurant, The Brown Derby, The Shangri-La, Malone's Sweet Shoppe, The Black Cat, Jacksons, and The Shake Shoppe.

Two working entrepreneurs endeared themselves to Carter Countians for dozens of years. John Tyler in Olive Hill shined shoes for 10 cents, and Buster Hord in Grayson

mowed yards and did odd jobs. Two black folk in white communities that loved people and to whom love was returned.

Both Grayson and Olive Hill governments have participated in state efforts to revive downtowns and encourage more development along Main Street with beautification, renovation and renaissance projects. Both Grayson and Olive Hill also enacted zoning and planning at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The county is a part of the state's FIVCO area, that includes Boyd, Lawrence, Greenup and Elliott. Area Development Districts in Kentucky assist local governments in business, industrial and community development.

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Some of the modern conveniences of life have been late in coming to Carter County. Electricity was turned on in 1905 when Grayson and Olive Hill acquired generators. The general rule was that lights would come on at dusk and go off at 9:00 p.m., later extended to 11:00 p.m. To warn of impending darkness, the operator would blink the lights about fifteen minutes before turning them off for the night. There were no individual home controls. The bills were based on the number of bulbs one had installed.

Grayson and Olive Hill were first joined by a telephone system in 1902, and by 1906, the Big Sandy Phone Company had 102 subscribers in Olive Hill and 42 in Grayson. Residences were charged \$1.00 for the service.

The rural areas of the county did not get electrical service until 1950, with the formation of the Grayson Rural Electric Cooperative, with Hobart Adams as the first manager. The RECC headquarters building is the old Bagby mansion in Grayson, built by millionaire musician, George Bagby, for his mother, who died before occupying the grand residence. In 1994, Carol Ann Fraley assumed the CEO's office, the first woman to head a co-op in Kentucky.

Natural gas would come to the area with massive pipeline work in the mid-1950s. The first water lines were run along Railroad Street in Olive Hill in 1927, and the Grayson water system went into operation in 1932. City sewage treatment plants didn't come until the early 1960s. Water began flowing to outlying county areas with the formation of the Rattlesnake Ridge Water District under the auspices of the Fiscal Court. The District received funding and starting running lines in 1984 with three commissioners, Bill Gilbert, Johnny Miller and Danny Stamper.

They originally bought the water from Grayson until building their own treatment plant in 2001 taking water from Grayson Lake and then expanding lines into other counties.

Grayson and Olive Hill expanded their system of water and sewage treatment facilities several times to keep up with demand. Grayson's water supply is taken from the Little Sandy River. Olive Hill draws from its own lake, and has often struggled in dry seasons. The problem was alleviated in the late 1990s, when, helped by volunteers, a line was run from Tygarts Creek to the lake on Perrys Branch to pump water from the creek. Much of

Grayson's development came under Utility Supt. Billy Jack Lewis, for whom the city's utility office is named.

Some services have disappeared, however. Grayson, at one time, had its own hospital. The Stovall Memorial Hospital, located on South Hord Street operated from 1927 to 1966. It was built by Dr. J. Watts Stovall and named for his father. Later Dr. R. G. Townsend would buy an interest while he and his son practiced there.

Getting to area hospitals and medical treatment became more convenient, when the county agreed to an ambulance tax and the Emergency Ambulance Service began operating on both ends of the county in 1987. EMT's operate now from newly-constructed barracks in both cities.

In 1973, a development committee, headed by Fred Buck of Grayson, established a Carter County Clinic bringing in two doctors at a new building on U. S. 60 East. The building, though, soon became a part of the Little Sandy District Health Department, which now operates clinics in Grayson, Olive Hill and Sandy Hook.

Local Health Departments had started in Kentucky in the early 1940s with legislation passed in Frankfort. The county health department located in Grayson was eventually incorporated into the FIVCO regional department in 1973, but later became Little Sandy with just Carter and Elliott counties. The department has been charged with giving immunizations, health inspections, many preventative programs for the public and in-school education. Helen Riffe, Louetta Murphy and Anna Lois Lewis had long careers as county health nurses.

In 1986, Carter Nursing and Rehabilitation Center opened its doors for residents in East Grayson. Beginning in the 1990s area hospitals located primary care clinics in the county. Kings Daughters Medical Center of Ashland built facilities in Grayson and Olive Hill. Our Lady of Bellefonte Hospital opened an outreach center in Grayson and St. Clair Medical Center of Morehead established a clinic in Olive Hill.

Dr. Harold E. Shufflebarger was Grayson's leading physician for more than fifty years starting in the 1950s and he also served as mayor and majority stockholder of the radio station. In Olive Hill, it was W. H Wheeler, Dr. J. M Rose, who was also State Senator, and later Dr. Paul Lewis that folks relied on for medical care for decades.

Since 1949, a Gearhart has been working on teeth in the county with dentist offices of Lowell Gearhart, then his son Jerry.

Dr. Rodney T. Gross served as the county's only veterinarian for over thirty-five years before his death in 1992. Doc Gross was active in many local and state organizations.

A Carter County native, Dr. Larry Fields, practicing in Ashland, served as the national president and then chairman of the board of the American Academy of Family Physicians, for two years beginning in 2006.

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Kentucky has prided itself in its tourist attractions and has built a state park system that is second to none. Carter County is unique in that two state parks are located within

its borders and a third close by, thus the Grayson slogan, “the heart of the parks”.

Besides drawing hunters and fishermen over the years, early visitors came to the area in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century aboard excursion trains from Cincinnati and other cities to see the many natural caves near Carter City, which became a hub for that traffic. Various private owners built a hotel and pavilions to receive the visitors. The Ramey and Cartee hotels were favorite spots for travelers for many years.

Later in 1924, the Carter Caves Company was formed and local roads were built into the area. The attraction was, by then, privately owned by the Lewis family until 1946, when the Grayson and Olive Hill Rotary Clubs worked together to secure the property. J. Watts Stovall and Louie W. King headed a committee to get the “Caves” included in the state park system which occurred in 1949.

Over the years, Carter Caves has been developed into one of Kentucky’s finest resort areas. The early 1960s saw a new lodge, golf course and other improvements. In 2004 the lodge was named the Lewis Caveland Lodge, to recognize the contribution of John F. Lewis. Jonathan Lewis published a book that same year to highlight the history and contribution of his ancestors in the development of the park.

One event at the Caves, the “Crawl-a-thon,” started by long-time park naturalist, John Tierney, in 1981, brings hundreds of cave enthusiasts from all over the country each January to explore the caverns around Olive Hill. Cascade Caves with its underground river, Bat Cave, home to 30,000 Indiana bats hibernating in the winter, and the many natural bridges on park property make it one of the most popular parks in the state. The annual Pioneer Life week in the summer has taken many tourists back in time to the frontier days of Kentucky.

In the early 1960s, the Army Corps of Engineers, working on flood control projects, developed a plan for a reservoir on the Little Sandy, south of Grayson, that would become Grayson Lake in 1964. Carter and Elliott County community leaders had formed the Grayson Reservoir Development Committee to promote the reservoir, with Harold Haight, the Grayson RECC manager, as their chairman.

A state park, picnic areas, beach, campground and boat dock facilities have evolved along with the Camp Webb Conservation Center, named for long-time Grayson optometrist and sportsman, Dr. Robert C. Webb and dedicated in 1970. The area also contains a Fish and Wildlife Division animal preserve. One of the county’s oldest homes, the Horton-Kitchen cabin, dating back to 1837, is located on the Corps property. A championship golf course, Hidden Cove, was built on the Grayson Lake State Park in 2003.

Grayson once had a golf course, Sunrise Valley, built by contractors K. E. Clifton and J.W. Newland in 1962 on 560 acres just south of town on Route 7. Local golfers enjoyed it for ten years, when it was sold and then closed.

Tourists are also attracted to nearby Greenbo Lake, and Yatesville state parks and a wide variety of activities held in the area each year. A proposal by the Army Corps of Engineers in the 1970s would have built another large reservoir on Tygarts Creek at Kehoe, but the attempt was halted by negative public reaction and desire to protect the scenic gorge and Tygart State Forest.

During the summer months, the Northeast Kentucky Museum is open on the Carter Caves road where artifacts and displays of early Carter County history can be seen. Jim Plummer has operated the facility since 1972 and is a third generation collector of

historical items. Natural history is featured including minerals and fossil samples, native American artifacts, war memorabilia, and even propellers from early Matthew Sellars' experiments.

Since 1970, large crowds have gathered the last weekend in May, for Grayson Memory Days including the Anna Robinson Memorial Art Show, a championship horse show, a variety of music, and the parade. The events are coordinated by a committee chaired yearly by Robert Caummisar, veteran secretary of the Grayson Chamber of Commerce.

Since 1969 when Tom T. Hall returned for a big gathering, Olive Hill has been known for its 4<sup>th</sup> of July Homecoming. The Olive Hill Chamber of Commerce sponsors a parade, fireworks and various programs for over week. The Campbell Family Farm Sorghum Festivals had a 33-year run at Pactolus ending in 2004. Kenneth Rice and other antique lovers formed The Old Time Machinery and Antique Association in 1981, and soon brought property on Route 7 south, where a large machinery show is held each September.

In the late 1990s, the Grayson Tourism Commission, formed after a motel tax was passed, launched two events. The Antique Show and Sale in the spring and the U S 60 Yard Sale in August resulted in large crowds coming to town. In 2004, they cooperated with the Grayson Chamber to create a fall Funtoberfest event. In 2006 the commission dedicated a welcome center on the city park, a restored two-story pre-Civil War log cabin, once belonging to the Taylor family of Lost Creek, near Willard.

Bluegrass music festivals highlight the county schedule through the summer months, including the big Shrine Club show in Olive Hill, bringing in the tops names in bluegrass. The Carter Co. Shrine Club sponsored a horse show in 1975 and with its own showgrounds, occupied in 1978, they now sponsor two championship horse shows and a car show yearly. Grayson Jaycees started a horse show in 1963 that had a 42-year run.

In 2005, the Kentucky Quilt Trail was established as quilt patterns were placed on barns as a tourist attraction. Carter County was the location of the very first quilt, on the farm of Dean and Grace Ramey near Carter City.

From 1912 to the late 1930s, families always enjoyed the county fair, with rides, livestock and crop exhibits along with horse, mule and automobile races. It was held on property just north of Grayson and also had dates in Olive Hill.

The county fair and its attractions were revived by the Grayson Jaycees in 1991 and continues today under the direction of a county Fair Board, that purchased over 80 acres of land in 2005, just west of Grayson at the old Lewis farm, for a new fairgrounds.

Those grounds were used two years of a four-year (2003-2006) run for Carter Co. Summer Bash, a charitable gaming event developed by the Fair Board and the Chamber of Commerce under the direction of their respective presidents, Jill York and Don Gibson. The huge weekend brought thousands of people to Grayson to try to win over \$600,000 in prizes and cash. The profits were used for recreational and cultural grants. The grounds also became the home of several other events, including the annual Rudyfest, a bluegrass music festival started by Todd Burchett and friends to benefit local sports programs. In 2007, Lincoln Theinert began a special Independence Day music and fireworks program at the fairground site.

Beginning in the 1990s, the City of Olive Hill began developing an extensive city park with shelters and amphitheater to complement the city pool and named it all after long-time mayor, J.A. “Skinny” Raybourn.

Early recreation and entertainment in the area centered around family, church, and community activities, with craft-making, quilting bees, and barn-raising bringing folks together. Before the days of television and video games, the Grayson Opera House and Alpha Hall were showplaces for movies and performances, and at one time in the 1950s-60s era, Grayson had not one, but two theaters, the Clark and the Gray. Folks enjoyed the Lyric and Stamper theaters in Olive Hill in the 1920s, then Sable Tabor’s Dixie Theatre. There was also the Stephens movie house at Hitchins, as well as a drive-in theatre at Pleasant Valley.

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The first school in Kentucky was opened in 1775 at Harrodsburg, and Transylvania University in 1788 became the first college chartered west of the Alleghenies. Before Carter County became part of the state, a child’s education was paid by the parent, usually a few dollars a month in cash and products for grammar school enrollment. In 1838, Kentucky established a public school system, and support in 1841 for the county was forty cents per student. A property tax levy began in 1839, and school districts were officially organized. James B. Botts is listed as the first common school commissioner in the county in 1860. In 1875, the county had fifty-nine school districts, each with a board of trustees. Schools were local and of the one-room variety, and by the turn of the century, there were 100 in Carter County, with a few of those buildings still standing, and one school in Grayson for the training of “negro children.” Teachers received about \$200 to teach a five-month term. The Grayson Graded School was taken over in 1907 by J.W. Lusby, and the first high school class graduated in 1911. Known as “Elizabeth’s children,” the five girls all had mothers named Elizabeth. Olive Hill graduated its first class the following year with two students, Emily Woods and Edith Boggs. Other high schools would soon start around the county. Lusby also authored a book The Teachers Guide for use in the schools. Dr. Lewis Prichard, an early Grayson physician, built a high school for the town and saw the first graduating class in 1918.

In 1913, the missionary society of the Methodist Episcopal Church came to Olive Hill to open Erie Industrial School to train children and help the disadvantaged. The first graduating high school class was in 1922. Erie was named for the Erie, Pennsylvania church conference that contributed to the building funds. Erie had both daytime and boarding students who were trained in various trades and worked in community service and mission projects. The school closed in 1958.

The county system saw centralized control and consolidation gradually take place over the century, with the one-room school replaced by larger elementary and high schools. Most of the independent districts merged with the county system in 1934 and

school bus transportation became an important part of schools.

The longest serving of the school superintendents was Heman H. McGuire, whose administration lasted twenty-four years. He was forced out in 1962, after the state had investigated the county on allegations of misconduct, poor performance and had performed audits, removing the entire school board in 1961, an episode that brought much negative publicity for the system from around the state and divided the county politically. McGuire's administration built several new elementary schools and he served as president of the Kentucky Education Association. The supporters of McGuire would, for years, be known as "Hemanites" and his opponents, The Citizens for Good Government, informally were known as the "Hogbackers."

Ernest Robinson was then named superintendent and in 1971 all high school students were brought to new centers in Grayson and Olive Hill at East Carter and West Carter. East was a consolidation of Hitchins and Prichard and West Carter combined Carter High and Olive Hill. There would be a vocational school at Pleasant Valley to serve both. The Carter Co. Vocational School, now the Career and Technical Center, was built in 1969. Interestingly, the new school at East took on a new name—The Raiders, instead of adopting "Tigers" from Hitchins or "Yellow Jackets" from Prichard. West Carter retained the name "Comets," to keep that tradition alive.

Twenty years later, the same consolidation took place at the Junior High level with new schools for East and West. They would later convert to Middle Schools.

Much of the building expansion programs, including gyms for the high schools and the middle schools took place during the sixteen-year tenure of Supt. Harold Holbrook and the athletic facilities at both high schools are named in his honor.

The Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 brought about many changes in the operation of the school systems in the state as hiring authority shifted from the School Board to the individual school councils.

Local educator, Cita Dyer became the first woman to lead the school system, being chosen to serve as superintendent in 1994, serving through 1997.

Just as high schools like Hitchins, Carter, Denton, Soldier, and Erie had been consolidated earlier, the elementary schools began to disappear. Lawton, Clark Hill and Grahn were eventually merged into Olive Hill Elementary by 1994. On the east end, Hitchins and Willard became Heritage Elementary in 2000. The Prichard school remains as one of the largest elementary facilities in Kentucky. Max E. Calhoun spent much of his fifty-year career as their principal. Hayden Parker is credited for building the reputation of the Olive Hill School. Upper Tygart, Carter, and Star still have their small community elementary schools.

The school system has been reduced in number of schools to eleven today, but student enrollment exceeds 5,000, with over 1,000 individuals employed.

Fond memories of the community schools bring many people back to reunions each year. Prichard alumni have gathered every year since 1920, no doubt making it the longest continuous school reunion in the state. The county spelling bee, held yearly for over eighty years may be the longest-running in the state.

The county has had many endearing and dedicated teachers. Several teachers spent forty or more years laboring in the classroom and continued to work for education through the Carter County Retired Teachers Association. The retired teachers formed their organization in 1985 to continue to work on education issues and scholarship

support. Wanda McCoy spent over fifty years in the classroom. Gladys Mabry, Iva Jessie, and Myrtle Parker, had service of forty years or more, according to records. .

Assisting families and removing barriers to learning was the motive for establishing Family Resource Centers at the elementary schools and Youth Service Centers at the middle and high schools. The state provided funding for these and the East Carter center with Becky Walker, director, was the first in 1992. By the turn of the new century, every school in the county had centers staffed.

The old Olive Hill School building overlooking the city was purchased by the city's Historical Society headed by Madeline Powell and Linda Lowe. They have worked through grants and donations to make it usable by the community again. Likewise at Grahn, the residents worked together under a corporation formed in 1995 with Gloria Bunting, chairperson. They obtained grants to purchase the school building in 1999, and after renovation formed the Grahn School Community Center, with Starlene Harris, director, to reach out with many educational, benevolent and community services. The former Hitchins School was purchased in 2007 by Edward Issacs and then donated to the Hitchins Preservation Society for development for the community, and volunteers began work to convert the building for public use including a museum and performing arts center.

Some parents and churches joined together in 1997 to form Carter Christian Academy a private tuition school, with Bro. Charles Davis as chairman. CCA offers classes for age 4 through grade 8, with enrollments that have approached 100. The school offers a Bible-based curriculum with classes at the First Baptist Church in Grayson.

Dropout rates have always been a problem in eastern Kentucky and in Carter County the latest census showed only 65 percent had completed high school. Government and volunteer programs have helped citizens though, in obtaining job training and G.E.D high school equivalency diplomas, as well as prepare them for college. The East Carter Adult Education Center and Olive Hill Adult Learning Center have full-time staffs and daily classes. Both have been active since the mid-1980s and receive funding from the state. The centers have received acclamation in education circles for excellence in meeting their goals.

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Carter Countians have always had a deep-seated religious faith, and it is truly a county of churches with over 120 organized and functioning. The early circuit riding preachers held services in homes and brush arbors, and later communities built combination school/church meeting houses, such as the early Montgomery meeting house on Little Fork near Hitchins built in 1838. It was later renamed Savage Memorial Methodist to honor the family who originally gave the land. The Lindsey Chapel Methodist church traces its origins to 1820.

Methodism was dominant among the early established congregations, and the Baptist doctrine had many followers among the first settlers. The Methodists built the first building in Grayson, just west of the Courthouse, and now the Bagby Memorial Methodist church sits on Second Street. The Presbyterian church founded in 1875 is



named for J.C. Bayless, missionary, who came to the county in the 1860s. The First Church of Christ, Grayson, was established in 1883 and has had four different buildings in its history.

Old regular or Primitive Baptists were strong in the early days, then Missionary Baptists broke away and formed their own association in 1876. Old-time camp meetings and tent revivals including the famous Willard camp meetings from 1908 to 1914 helped give birth to many congregations. By the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there were approximately sixty congregations in the county with licensed preachers.

Congregations grew in number and membership in every community during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Walter Duncan at Garvin Ridge and F. M. McNurlin at Hitchins served their congregations for over thirty years and were instrumental in the formation of the Carter County Ministerial Association.

Carter County has ties to one of the most colorful, rich and controversial religious cults of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the House of David, founded in Benton Harbor, Michigan by King Matthew Benjamin Purnell and his wife, the former Mary Stallard of Olive Hill. Upon Purnell's death in 1927, Queen Mary formed her own City of David congregation. The House of David had bearded traveling baseball and basketball teams that barnstormed the country and came to Olive Hill to play on several occasions.

John W. James is said to have brought the idea of "Christians only" to Barretts Creek, as early as 1803. The Robert Gee Memorial Christian Church was built in 1920 at the site in Gregoryville of that first group that never had a building. Gee was the grandson of James.

That movement of indigenous Christian churches (Churches of Christ) has deep roots in the state and county, leading to the establishment of many churches in the area and one of that brotherhood's largest schools, Kentucky Christian, located in Grayson.

The college began as Christian Normal Institute in 1919, an outgrowth of J.W. Lusby's school to certify area teachers. C N I had a high school and a teachers college division. As the college department grew, emphasis was placed on study for various Christian ministries, and the high school and normal schools were phased out.

Upon the sudden death of his father in 1937, J. Lowell Lusby became president at the age of twenty-two. The school changed its name to Kentucky Christian College in 1944 and achieved university status in 2004, becoming K C U. It has undergone many campus improvements and growth over the past several decades. In the 1970s, with the completion of the interstate, the campus was redesigned to face east and through fund raising headed by Development Director, Lester Pifer, new buildings and higher student enrollment were realized.

In 2007, a joint venture with Kings Daughters Medical Center of Ashland, also put a health facility on campus in a two-story building that also houses the KCU Nursing program.

KCU is fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and once again offers teacher training and certification programs, with a variety of vocational degrees along with the Bible majors. Student body size has increased through the years to over 600. Keith Keeran became the school's fourth president in 1987. He announced his retirement in 2008 and the following year, Dr. Jeffrey Metcalf was inaugurated president.

K C U been selected several times as one of the top-50 schools in the south by *U. S. News and World Report* magazine. K C U is known for its quality music program and

yearly attracts hundreds for its “Feast of Christmas” presentations. The Concert Choir, under Mark Deakins, music professor, has recorded many CDs and performed at Carnegie Hall in New York.

One college music group formed in the 1990s, called *A-180*, later changed their name to *Audio Adrenaline*, and became one of the top contemporary Christian rock groups in the country.

Summer specialty camps on the campus at KCU bring thousands of teens to the Carter County area each summer.

Building names tell of past leaders with Lusby Center for the founder and first two presidents; Young Library, named after the third president, L. Palmer Young; J .O. Snodgrass, J .W. Jones, and R.B. Neal Halls, named after early founders with Lusby. Nash Chapel for Donald Nash, Greek professor and noted author of a dozen books. The McKenzie Student Life Center for James C. McKenzie, a vice-president who launched the school into a growth era, and Dale Hall, after long-time Bible professor Andy Dale. The Damron Hall of Champions gym, in Lusby Center is named for coach and teacher, Donald R. “Dick” Damron, and Morgan Street after professor Alice Morgan.

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Kentucky has long been the “hotbed” of basketball, and Carter County has had some roundball success stories over the years. The 1944 Olive Hill Comets won the regional and went to the state tournament semi-finals. The team also defied state black and white segregation laws and voted to play Booker T. Washington of Ashland that year, both home and away. Playing on the squad was Jack Fultz, who would later coach Olive Hill to successive trips to the Sweet Sixteen in 1955 and 1956, and again in 1959, when his team made it to the final four. Comet teams gathered every year for special reunions for over forty years. Fultz later became principal at West Carter High and compiled and published the voluminous work, The Comets Tale, a history of all Olive Hill High sports from 1917-1971. He is an inductee into the KHSAA Hall of Fame and has received many honors as coach and educator, working for the school system for sixty years. Fultz also served as commissioner of the EKC, the oldest school conference in the state, formed in 1930 as a football conference. Carter County schools would be strong members of the Eastern Kentucky Conference which is now active in others sports including basketball, volleyball, golf, and cross-country.

A Grayson Prichard High team received notoriety in the 1942 season by winning twenty-eight straight games with just five players going the whole year almost without relief.

After high school consolidation into two county schools, only one boys basketball team has made it to the State tournament. The 1986 East Carter Raiders under long-time coach Charles Baker broke the dry spell for Grayson and played in Rupp Arena in Lexington. The team, later, was beset with a tragedy in 1990 when senior guard, Brad

Elliott, collapsed after a December game in Ironton and died. A scholarship is awarded yearly at the school in his memory.

Following consolidation, in 1971, high school football and girls basketball would return to the local sports scene. Some girls basketball had been played in the 1920s and football had ceased during WW II. The football programs had a period of learning to compete with established schools. At West Carter, Ralph Asher was assistant coach and is still teaching the boys today.

The girls basketball program began attracting strong interest in Olive Hill when John “Hop” Brown led teams to the Girls Sweet Sixteen in 1988 and 1989. His Lady Comets later won six more regional crowns, in 1996 and five consecutive titles from 1998-2002.

In 2000, the ultimate dream became a reality, as the West Carter Lady Comets won the State Championship defeating Shelby Co. in the finals, bringing the big banner back to Olive Hill to the gym that later would be named *Hop Brown Court*. In quite a storybook finish, Hop’s daughter, Kandi Brown, the third of his daughters to play for him, sealed the win and was named the state tourney’s Most Valuable Player.

In 2003, Megan Gearhart, the third of the Gearhart sisters to play for West, was chosen as Miss Basketball in the state of Kentucky. That was Brown’s 25<sup>th</sup> season and his last, as he succumbed to brain cancer in August of that year and his faithful assistant, Von Perry took over. Brown finished his career with 514 victories. A memorial park stands in his honor at the entrance to downtown Olive Hill at the old railroad caboose and he was named posthumously to the Kentucky Hall of Fame.

Carter county girls also shined at the State tournament when the East Lady Raiders, under Coach Hager Easterling, won the region and the first game of their Sweet Sixteen bid, in 2004.

Another county team claims a remarkable state title—the 1984 East Carter baseball squad, under veteran coach J.P. Kouns, won the Kentucky championship in Paintsville, beating Harrison County, on a dramatic last inning homer by Kevin Bair. That same year, Scott Burnett of East won the Class AA State cross country title.

County teams have been noted for their enthusiastic fan support, but perhaps none as faithful as Mickey Grills, who has seen every West Carter football game and missed only one basketball game in over twenty-five years. And then there are Jeff Roe who has been volunteer manager and Comet scorekeeper for thirty-five years and John Adams, timekeeper, at East also serving for over thirty-five years. Helen Kennedy of East Carter was honored in 2007 for her life of faithful support.

The rivalry of East and West has been intense through the years in all sports. Leading the crowds in cheers has advanced since the beginning from the four or five cheerleaders to squads of twenty or more doing dance and acrobatic routines by the 1980s. County cheer squads have traveled to competitions yearly, winning several state and national awards. Kelly Littleton coached the East cheer squads for twenty-five years.

Amateur baseball was a mainstay of sports in the county, with competition between communities beginning as early as 1900. The two brickyards in Olive Hill sponsored a traveling team known as the “Brickies” that played rugged schedules every summer. In the late 1940s, Grayson teams won two state titles advancing to the nationals, and Olive Hill had a semipro championship in 1950. The Olive Hill Merchants’ team of 1938 and 1939 went 42-2 over the two-year period. Both towns had baseball parks and saw opponents come from afar.

In the late 1940s, Grayson's field was lighted and then dedicated by baseball commissioner A.B. "Happy" Chandler, and Olive Hill heard the praises of Governor Earle Clements as its new field was dedicated.

The 1950s would see the baseball scene switch more to the youngsters as Little League was organized in 1955 and the older crowd turned their attention to softball as a summer pastime. One Carter Countian, Jamie Swanagan, was named an All-American softball player four times, the first in 1995, and played on three national championship teams. Other local teams have excelled on the state level.

The Little League continued to grow in both cities, offering opportunities for all ages, girls and boys. Later, youth soccer and football programs were added. East Carter Middle School was the site of the first full soccer field named *Bill Ticknor Memorial Field* in 2001, in honor of the man who helped organize the first teams in Grayson.

Carter Countians have cheered on the University of Kentucky Wildcats and Olive Hill pharmacist, Gayle Rose, played for the "Cats" as part of the undefeated 1953-54 team. A native Carter Countian, Daniel Jesse, was football coach for thirty-five years at Trinity College in Connecticut, one of the longest tenures in college history.

The only Carter Countian to make it to the pros is said to have been Georgia Mullins, who played for the womens basketball professional team, the Arkansas Travelers, in the early 1950s.

Kentucky Christian basketball has also brought notoriety to Carter County. The Knights mens team has won seven national titles in their non-scholarship division of the National Christian College Athletic Association. Veteran coach Dick Damron led them to four of them. The Lady Knights have captured ten national championships with Ron Arnett coaching in nine of those. Four times the two teams won the titles in the same year. In 2006, the school announced it was bringing intercollegiate football to town by launching a KCU football program.

Carter Countians love car races, and fans have seen dirt tracks come and go in the county, since the 1940s. Wayne McGuire of Grayson and Gene Waggoner of Olive Hill, then later Jack "Blackjack" Boggs have made names for themselves on the racing circuit.

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The state's first newspaper was published in Lexington in 1787, but the first truly successful operation was the *Advertiser* founded in Louisville in 1818. The state's first licensed radio station was Louisville's WHAS, in 1922, though amateur broadcasts had been on the air prior to that time. The first television station began in Louisville in 1948, WAVE.

Carter County's first paper was the *Kentucky News* printed in Grayson in 1882, followed closely by the *Bugle* in 1891, and the *Herald* in 1900. Soon consolidation brought about the *Bugle-Herald* and the *Olive Hill Dispatch* would make its appearance.

The county has had many efforts at spreading the news. A *Grayson Tribune* paper was published in 1904, then Archie Haight started the *Carter County News* in 1913. J.W.Lusby formed the *East Kentucky Journal* in 1916.

In the mid-1940s, the *Carter County Herald* founded in 1913 was edited by Waldo Fultz in Olive Hill, and the *Sandy Valley Enquirer* and the *East Kentucky Journal* published in Grayson, were all putting out papers weekly. In 1944, the *Journal* edited by J. Lowell Lusby, merged with the *Enquirer* to form the present-day *Journal-Enquirer*. It was bought by W.E. Crutcher of Morehead in 1951. Jim Phillips edited that paper during the 1950s and 1960s, formed his own publication briefly *The Press-Advertiser* then moved to the local radio station, WGOH in 1969, to anchor the local news there to this day. *The Carter Co. Herald* ceased to function in 1965 but the *The Olive Hill Times* began publication in 1969, after the *Journal* was sold to a regional company and began publishing two papers.

Both papers eventually sold to national corporations. The weekly edition offers different front pages and publishes as the *Grayson Journal-Enquirer* and the *Olive Hill Times*. Since 1998, they have been owned by CNHI Corporation which also purchased the Morehead, Greenup and Ashland papers. A shopper is also produced by the company and a news website.

With the advent of radio, local residents would tune in to AM stations in Huntington, Ashland and distant signals like Cincinnati, Nashville and Chicago for entertainment. The first television shows would come from WSAZ-TV, Huntington which went on the air in 1949.

Carter County joined other rural areas of the state in getting local radio service in the decade of the 1950s, when in 1959, WGOH-1370 AM went on the air, from radio hill west of Grayson. Carter Co. Broadcasting Company would later add the FM station, 102.3, in 1967, providing night-time service and live local sports broadcasts. The FM station separated programming in 1979 to become WUGO. The call letters of both, representing Grayson- Olive Hill. GO radio, as it is called, also began operating a community cable TV station in 1982, for the Grayson area after the county was wired for cable reception beginning in the late 1970s.

WGOH-WUGO has received many statewide and national awards for public service and programming. It is one of only a handful of stations in the country to receive four National Association of Broadcasters coveted "Crystal Awards" given to the top ten community service stations in the nation each year. The AM station has always featured classic country, bluegrass and gospel music, while light rock is heard on FM, known as U-102. Local news, radar weather and sports have been mainstay in the programming of the stations. The station has been cited in broadcast textbooks as a model for small-market broadcasting.

CBS correspondent Bill Stewart and Tom T. Hall had short stays as disc jockeys. Bluegrass musician Moon Mullins once hosted the Bluegrass hour, as did Olive Hill native, Carmel Stevens, for twenty-five years.

The station suffered a setback, when one icy morning in the winter of 1994, the 325-foot tower came crashing to the ground in the middle of the night. The station was back on the next day at low power and a new tower was built. In 2006, WUGO began broadcasting local ballgames and all newscasts on the internet through the website, [wgohwugo.com](http://wgohwugo.com).

Francis Nash, GO Radio General Manager, who has been on the air since 1966 as announcer and sports broadcaster, with the air nickname "K.J.," has authored two books. He researched the history of radio and television in Kentucky. The book, Towers over

Kentucky, was published in 1995 and later made into a Kentucky Educational Television network documentary. He also wrote, in 2003, a book about the Lady Comets legendary coach and his teams, The Hop Brown- Lady Comets Story with proceeds going to a memorial scholarship fund at West Carter.

Between 1973 and 1997, Kentucky Christian operated a low-power educational radio station from campus with call letters WKCC.

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Carter County counts its share of disasters over the years, though the area is somewhat sheltered from many weather-related catastrophes. Weather extremes do occur with winters that have seen temperatures plummet to 20-25 below, as recently as 1977 and 1984. Temperatures can reach near 100 degrees in the summer months. Records show the winters of 1899, 1917, 1977, and 1978 were particularly harsh.

Jim Fankell, of Grayson who has kept official records for National Weather Service since 1972, reported a near 20-inch snowfall in 1993 and again in March of 1996 and the temperature reached 31 below on January 19<sup>th</sup> of 1994.

Heavy rains often cause flash flooding along the county's creeks and rivers. The overflowing Tygart Creek has brought several feet of water to the streets of Olive Hill on numerous occasions, including big floods in 1906, 1913, 1917, 1939, and 1950 that impacted areas along the Little Sandy and Little Fork Rivers as well. Re-routing of the Tygarts Creek in Olive Hill at the "Old Devils Backbone" and building the Grayson dam have helped control many problems. Heavy flooding in 2002 and 2003 forced the city of Olive Hill to abandon and demolish part of the Hydreco Village apartment complex and rebuild them on higher ground. Flooding has destroyed homes and businesses in the Willard area with heavy rains in 1950, and Grahn was almost washed away in 1960 storms. The Louisville Firebrick building was damaged and then the next year burned, but was rebuilt.

Carter City lost most of its businesses and many homes during the floods of Buffalo and Smith Creek in 1934. No doubt the few residents of this area in 1812 felt the large earthquake along the Madrid fault in western Kentucky, and there have been several tremors over the years.

Fires have been particularly tragic in nature for the county with business districts in Grayson and Olive Hill seeing major destruction from flames in alternating years from 1914 through 1917. Hitchins had many businesses destroyed in 1962 and 1977. Olive Hill was the scene of a fire that destroyed much of the old Harbison - Walker plant in 1967, then another major business fire in 1976. The Grayson City Building was gutted in 1978. Two main corners of Grayson's Main and Hord streets were destroyed by fires in the 1990s, five years apart.

Over a twelve-year span through the 1920s, three Grayson churches were burned to the ground, all later rebuilt, and one of the most heart-rendering fires came in 1988,

when Prichard School caught fire. No one was injured, but the building was later demolished.

Grayson and Olive Hill have utilized strong volunteer fire departments to battle blazes, and other county communities, including Hitchins, Carter, Norton Branch, Grahn, Webbville, and Oldtown now have fire fighters that serve admirably, many of them for thirty years or more. Norton Branch, Grahn and Hitchins were formed in the mid-1970s as outgrowths of the Community Development Clubs.

Later, the Carter County Firefighters Association was formed in 1983 to provide mutual aid, and also Roger Haney led in creating the Search and Rescue Unit. Their job was made a little easier with the coming of the 911 emergency dispatch system in 1997.

Walter “Budge” Johnson who helped start the Hitchins department in 1976, served as president of the Kentucky Firefighters Association and Jack McKinney of the Grayson department was his state chaplain in 2001. Larry Collier of Grayson and Allen Stapleton also have had stints as state president. Stapleton has served over forty years at Olive Hill and Carter. Duane Suttles of the Grayson department serves as director of the Eastern Kentucky District of the Firefighters Association.

Honoring fireman and first responders was the goal of Don Boehly of Grayson, who undertook a nationwide bike tour in 2004, completing it at Ground Zero in New York City in 2005, on the fifth anniversary of the 9-11 attacks on the U.S.

After the 9/11 attacks, U. S. Homeland Security launched efforts to get states and localities prepared for any disaster or storms. Tommy Thompson, head of Carter Co. Emergency Management and 911, put together mock disaster training sessions and Carter, in 2006, was one of the first counties in the state to be declared “Storm-Ready.”

Disease and epidemics have also taken a toll in the early history of the county with the influenza outbreak of 1917-18, resulting in 1,500 cases in the county and over 100 deaths. It was so bad, flu shots were demanded by city ordinance. The same years, smallpox also swept through the county.

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During the Civil War, Kentucky was a border state and hoped to remain neutral. When Confederate troops came into the state, however, the legislature formed a militia, and the state was plunged into the fighting on the side of the Union. Many Kentuckians would support and fight for the Confederacy though, as families and communities were divided. There were many slave-owning families in Carter County and approximately 300 slaves in 1861, and the county was split in its allegiance. Many men joined regiments of the Union army, but county sheriff, William J. Fields, whose grandson would later be governor, opted to align with the Confederate States and formed Field’s Partisan Rangers.

Early in the war, famous southern general John Hunt Morgan’s Raiders fought several battles in the county as Union General George Morgan had over 8,000 of his men in retreat from Cumberland Gap to Ohio. The Morgan’s Raiders camped near Olive Hill, where Union Captain James Scott’s family lived. Morgan reportedly rode by the house to salute the wife, but then after being ambushed in the night, Morgan ordered his Confederate troops to torch the town.

In Grayson, Dr. A. J. Landsdowne incurred the wrath of the Union forces as he housed several Confederate recruits at his home. Some escaped, while others were taken prisoner, and Landsdowne, himself, was held prisoner in Louisville until he took an oath not to help the South again.

Civil War reunions with soldiers from both sides were held in Grayson for many years, at a site near what is now Kentucky Christian University. An historical marker there tells of soldiers from both the Blue and the Gray gathering to remember and honor the fallen comrades.

Highlighting Carter County's history in the Civil War was a play written and produced by teacher Robert Harris of Grahn. The musical drama, "Someday" was performed by local talent at the Grayson Lake State Park amphitheater for twelve years starting in 1992. Estelle Risk, an *Ashland Daily* news writer, penned a collection of Civil War stories titled, No More Muffled Hoofbeats.

Carter has its own version of the Hatfield-McCoy feuds embedded in the annals of history. In the years following the Civil War, the county's western end erupted with problems between the Underwood family, Republicans and loyal to the Union against the Holbrooks and the Stammers who had supported the Democrats and the Confederacy. The so-called "Underwood War" took place in the 1870s, and was triggered by charges of horse thievery and murder. Several all-out battles took place at Fort Underwood on Dry Branch. Violence, animosity, and terrorism continued, wiping out a considerable number of the Underwood clan. It was representative of a time of "vigilantism" where official law enforcement was sparse leading to folks creating their own course of justice.

Carter Countians have been long known for their patriotism and have sent many young people to fight for the nation. The Old Soldiers Monument at Wolf honors the dead of the 19th century fighting, and other memorials to county war dead include the famous "Doughboy" on the Courthouse lawn and the huge granite monument in front of the American Legion in Olive Hill, attesting to the county's appreciation to those who served in the many 20th century conflicts. Not counting the thousands who died in the Civil War, Kentucky has lost over 16,000 lives in foreign wars.

Olive Hill is home to an Engineers battalion of the Kentucky Army National Guard since being founded in 1927. The company saw action in the Pacific theatre in WW II.

The armory in Olive Hill was built in 1960. The Guard has been called on locally to serve in many disasters and community projects throughout Kentucky. They were activated for homeland security after the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks on the U.S. and were notified of deployment to Afghanistan in 2007.

A Citizens for Veterans Association was formed in 2004, and the county was recognized nationally for its sacrificial effort in sending sixty-seven county veterans to visit their new WW II memorial in Washington, D.C. all expenses paid. A community-wide fund-raising campaign made the trip possible. At the visit, East Carter ROTC member, Kyle Stewart, who later joined the Marines, became the first person to play taps at the national memorial.

The trip was spearheaded by Mike Malone of Grayson. The next year, the CVA began a work, led by president John Rice and a committee of volunteers, to build a permanent memorial park for veterans in the heart of downtown Grayson. The park has become a beautiful tribute to the soldiers who have served their country. The property was donated by the Wilhoit family and had been the site of their old homeplace.



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Dealing with the criminal has changed quite drastically over the history of the state and the county. Modern jails and a well-organized justice system replaced the occasional court days and public lynching. The Kentucky State Police, county officers and city police forces have supplanted the City Marshall and Police Judge.

Some believe the largest crowd ever to mass in Grayson was on May 21, 1896, in a hollow off the E K Railway, just south of town, for the hanging of William DeWitt, convicted of choking his wife to death. It was the last legal hanging of the century in the county. DeWitt had preferred to die, instead of receiving a life's sentence.

Four years prior to that execution, a man accused of killing his wife, was lynched by a mob. A group from Willard, armed with rifles, commandeered a train, and took Austin Porter from the county jail. After Porter confessed to his crime, he was taken to Willard to be hanged. He was shoved off a bridge, but the rope broke, and he had to be fished from the waters to try again. On the second attempt, he died, and his body was left for a time as a public spectacle.

Records show the first grand jury held in the county was 1836, near Barretts Creek at a popular inn there. Later, all proceedings would be moved to the Courthouse with judges serving the county.

A lot of the criminal activity prominent in the county has dealt with moonshining and bootlegging alcohol. Taverns sold whiskey until the county voted dry in 1886. Since then, the sale has been legal only between 1933 and 1937 when the county was noted for some pretty rowdy night spots and taverns. Attempts to permit legal sale under local option elections have failed, and the county remains one of the few "dry" areas around the state.

National headlines spoke solemnly of Carter County when a student, Scott Pennington, took a gun, walked into Deanna McDavid's English class at East Carter High School in Grayson and shot her in the head on January 18, 1993. He then shot janitor Marvin Hicks. Pennington was sentenced to life without parole for the two murders.

Prisoners were housed in the Carter County jail behind the courthouse for decades until the building, condemned by the state, was abandoned and the new Carter Co. Detention Center opened on East Main St. in 2002.

In 2004, proceedings in all courts were moved from the courthouse to a new Carter County Justice Center at the corner of Main and Hord streets, downtown, the sites of the old Commercial and First National banks. Carter is part of the court circuit that includes Morgan and Elliott counties.

Little Sandy Correctional Facility opened in 2005, just across the county line at Lakeside in Elliott County. The prison, secured through the strong work of Rep. Rocky Adkins, brought several hundred jobs to the area.

Much of the attention of law enforcement in the latter 20<sup>th</sup> century dealt with illegal drugs and crimes committed in association with the problem.

Prominent attorneys who served in the county for lengthy periods in history were Ora Duvall, A. J. and Hubert Counts and the Kennard family in Olive Hill. H. Rupert Wilhoit, Thomas Yates, and three generations of the Theobold family are remembered in Grayson for their law practices.

A Grayson attorney, Henry R. Wilhoit, Jr. has served as a federal judge of the District Court in Eastern Kentucky since 1981. In 2003, Kristi Gossett, of Grayson, became the first judge of the newly formed Family Circuit Court. Kim Gevedon, of West Liberty, was the first female to sit on the bench in the district, serving one-term as District Court judge beginning in 2001. Rebecca Phillips won the Circuit judgeship in 2006, the first woman to preside over that court.

Dennie Hall served as Circuit Clerk for over twenty-five years beginning in 1939. Roy Gee, headed the clerk's office for twenty-five years also, ending in 2001. Back in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, E. P. Davis and W. A. Davis combined for over fifty years in that office.

In 2007, Grayson designated sections of Main Street to honor Jack Claywell, police officer killed in an accident on duty in 1983, and Randy Utley, firefighter killed in 2003. In 2006, a county constable, Elmer Kiser, was murdered in the line of duty, during a traffic stop. His name was added to other officers at Eastern Kentucky University Memorial Wall who had fallen in the line of duty. The wall also includes Claywell, Sheriff Coleman Binion and Olive Hill police officer, Glen Stephens, who died in 1965

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Kentucky has produced its share of great entertainers, particularly popular country and bluegrass performers. Carter County has had many aspiring artists, authors, and musicians, with a few attaining some degree of fame.

Billy Starr Stallard, of Olive Hill spent thirty years in country music, writing and singing. Tom T. Hall, Olive Hill native, moved to the top of the Nashville scene in the 1960s and 1970s, first as a songwriter and then as a famous solo performer. The "Storyteller," as he is called, is remembered with street signs and welcome billboards in his hometown. Keith Whitley and Ricky Skaggs of nearby Elliott and Lawrence counties appeared many times as bluegrass artists locally, and often met to perform on GO radio.

While not well-known to many visitors, Carol Ann Malone's fame and success on the European opera scene caused town fathers to name a boulevard in her honor, and she has returned to her hometown of Grayson for concerts over the years.

Bluegrass has been a popular form of music, indigenous to Kentucky, and many local bands perform at various venues every week with several recording albums. Darwin Sturgill, of Olive Hill, formed bands beginning in the 1960s, and has cut albums as a country and bluegrass artist. George Molton has traveled and recorded, remaining in the country music genre. Virgil Leon Sturgill was one of the leading folk music performers in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. J. P. and Annadeene Fraley, of Denton, preserved

the Appalachian mountain music heritage with family music festivals yearly at Carter Caves, beginning in 1971.

Grayson dentist, Danny Howard, formed a band in 1967 called the *Explosive Soul*. It would later be the *BBC* and then *City Heat* as they travel with their rock and soul music, to concerts, clubs and festivals to this day. The band has also backed up many famous country and rock artists. In 1986, Howard formed *Soundwave Productions* to provide professional sound for events and bands across the country.

Country crooner, Dwain Messer, of Carter City, has gained local popularity over the past decade with his concerts and recordings.

During the big band era, the Olive Hill Brass Band was a prominent favorite for parades and special events.

Clogging has become an important entertainment style for the area. Bill Robinson and the *Carter County Cloggers*, later known as the *Wizards of Dance*, have been traveling to shows and events, locally and around the country since 1997.

Gospel is certainly the most revered of all forms of music in Carter County, with many soloists and quartets singing weekly and several have produced recordings for sale.

Paul Salyers was Kentucky poet laureate, publishing thirty books of poetry starting in 1971. Several other Carter County poets have self-published works and meet monthly as the County Poetry Society. Area residents respected the great works of Jesse Stuart, of nearby W-Hollow in Greenup County.

Olive Hill native, Stephanie Bond, gave up her business career to write and sold her first romance novel to Harlequin Books in 1995. Now living in Atlanta, she has had over forty best-selling romance, suspense and mystery books published.

John McGill, began his writing career in Olive Hill, and went on to become one of Kentucky's most respected newspaper sportswriters. In 1974 he wrote a story of romance and adventure set in Carter County. For Which the First Was Made was a novel that included both real and fictional characters in the county, including Matthew Sellars. He published another book, Kentucky Sports in 1978.

Sam Fred Kibbey, Grayson attorney, appeared in several stage productions and wrote a successful play. William C. Kozee penned two books on the early families of eastern Kentucky. Viola Gross wrote the history of her family, published in 2003, telling of her black ancestors' life and times in the South.

East Carter graduate Tim Farmer, after a traffic accident in Grayson in 1984 where he lost the use of an arm, went on to become a noted sportsman and host the popular *Kentucky Afield* television show. Farmer was the subject of a Steve Flarity book, published in 2005—Tim Farmer, A Kentucky Woodsman Restored.

One of the best-selling books by a local author was Guts and Glory, published in 1991 by Grayson resident, Randy McGlone. The book chronicled his experiences as a soldier and various campaigns during the Vietnam War.

Carter Countian George Wolfford, long-time Ashland *Daily Independent* reporter, wrote the Pictorial History of Carter County, in 1985, an extensive work highlighting many achievements and prominent citizens over 150 years of the county's history. The book includes dozens of photos and biographical sketches.

The Carter County History, written by a committee of several residents, was published in the nation's bicentennial year, 1976, with stories of individual communities and historic photographs. More information about local families was published in a large

volume during the Kentucky bicentennial year, 1992, by the Historical and Genealogical Society as the Family Heritage of Carter County, featuring genealogies, submitted family histories and pictures of the county. It was updated with another publication in 2000. The society's efforts were chaired by Donna Bond and Janet Bentley with a desire to preserve the family history of the county.

Local artists of the Carter Caves Art Expo put together a unique book of historical sketches of places around Carter County, to help commemorate the state's birthday. In 2002, the *Journal-Times* published a volume of submitted family photos with the purpose of preserving those memories.

In recent years, Larry Carroll, art instructor, helped local students create a history mural of the city along the wall in downtown Olive Hill and a special war mural at the Grayson Veterans Park.

Local musician and videographer, Tony Collier, has produced several DVDs at his studios highlighting various aspects of the history and beauty of Carter County, making them available to the public.

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Census figures and other research usually puts the state of Kentucky near the bottom of the states in household income, educational and literacy levels, and sadly near the top when it comes to poor health, with high rates of heart disease, smoking and obesity. Carter County would no doubt also fit into that profile. In 2007 A Medical Institute of Kentucky study put Carter at 77<sup>th</sup> among the Kentucky 120 counties in overall quality of health.

It can hardly be said that the county is diverse in race or religion being ninety-nine percent white and Christian with a small number of Hispanic families and African-Americans arriving to join in the labor force beginning in the late-1990s.

A check of the census and phone books would show the same common Anglo names now, descendants of those who settled in the northeast area of Kentucky two hundred years ago. Northeast Kentucky is often seen as a transition area between the mountains of Appalachia to the south and the industrialized cities of the north. That is reflected in the culture, language and people.

But Carter Countians are quite proud of their strong traditional family values. Those native to the county were raised to be friendly and caring. That big heart is evident with numerous "benefits" that dot the calendar each month, for some person or family in need. Much of the county functions on the good graces of volunteers.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, communities had "poor houses" to assist the needy. They had to rely on family, friends, churches for assistance. Occasionally, the local government had commodities to share. The Great Depression blanketed the country with economic despair in the 1930s. The New Deal era brought some work with the Works Progress Administration constructing several public buildings in the county. Government social and welfare programs of all types, were expanded in the 1960s.

The Northeast Community Action Agency, inc. was chartered in 1965 and charged with helping alleviate poverty in Carter and surrounding counties. It has since administered dozens of government assistance programs for those counties and has its

headquarters at the old Erie School in Olive Hill. Northeast works with Head Start programs for children, meals and van transportation for adults, as well as energy assistance and home repair projects.

The Glenmary missionaries order of the Catholic Church became active in Carter County and help initiate many family assistance programs including Bethany House in Olive Hill beginning in 1981. Bethany House became a center for various outreach efforts and became a community-owned corporation in 1991.

Carter has become a model for other counties during the holiday season with its *Project Merry Christmas*, to consolidate holiday assistance. The program has been on-going since 1982, whereby a central committee with president, Phyllis Davis, coordinates efforts to help needy families. A big one-day distribution features toys, food vouchers, clothing and more for every household and child. Over 300 families in the county are assisted annually with funds raised by the committee among local businesses and individuals. Mike and Sandy Brammell's Radio Shack Angel Memorial Tree became one of the top revenue producers for Hospice. The fire departments and policemen have been active for years in making many happy faces at Christmas

Programs for the senior citizens were initiated in the 1980s. In Grayson, folks formed the Carter Co Senior Citizens Corp. and began raising money to construct a center. That dream was realized in 1986, when a building was dedicated at 2<sup>nd</sup> and Hord streets. Bessie Baker served as chairman of the corporation for over twenty years. In 2007, it was announced by Olive Hill mayor Danny Sparks that Gov. Ernie Fletcher would bring state funds to construct a Senior Center on Railroad Street ,which was completed in 2009.

The American Cancer Society's Relay for Life in Carter County has often netted more donations than many large cities and surrounding counties combined, topping an amazing \$100,000 in 2007 with a remarkable thirty-five teams participating.

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Many clubs, lodges and organizations have been a part of Carter County life through the years. Besides several social and special-interest clubs there were active service clubs. Rotary Club was Grayson's first service organization founded in 1939 with over twenty-five charter members. The Olive Hill Rotarians started six years later and both clubs were very dedicated. The county has Womens Clubs and Garden Clubs. There was an active Dorcas Society for the ladies at various times for nearly eighty years starting in the early 1890s.

The *Grayson Jaycees* were formed in 1954 and in Olive Hill, the following year. Both groups assisted in youth programs and had club buildings. Grayson had an especially strong group through the 1960s-70s. They built a horse show ring, a club building in 1973 and sponsored many city programs including the Christmas parade. The Jaycees sold their property in 2005 to the Carter Co. Extension service. The Grayson Lions Club came into being in 1976 founded by many of the former Jaycees. They had a horse show for several years and have held a fund-raising radio auction yearly. A group called SUNNY, inc. was established in Grayson in 1985 to take care of many unmet needs in

the county. The county, in recent years, has also seen volunteers give their time to Meals on Wheels, Habitat for Humanity and contribute regularly to United Way. The Odd Fellows, Optimist and Kiwanis Clubs were active for a short time in the county's past.

The Masons have been present in Carter County since its infancy. The first real organization in the county was the Trimble Lodge in Grayson, dating back to 1845 named for its first master, John Trimble, with the Olive Hill Lodge beginning in 1897. Willard Lodge was formed in 1885. The Little Sandy Lodge at Rosedale was started in 1892 and a lodge at Soldier in 1897. Little Sandy merged with the Trimble Lodge in 1967. A lodge at Carter had merged with Trimble in 1938. A new lodge building was constructed in 1974 on U. S. 60 East Grayson on land given by Arthur Hamon. The Order of Eastern Star chapters in both cities have been active since the early 1900s.

The Carter Co. Shrine Club, established in 1957, has invested money in local projects including building their beautiful horse show park in Olive Hill. They have clubhouse facilities at Echo Canyon on the Carter Caves Road, and dedicate profits from their many events each year to the Shriners Childrens Hospitals.

The Moore-Armstrong American Legion post of Olive Hill was formed in 1933 and has assisted in many benevolent programs for decades and constructed a park west of town. It is named for close friends from Olive Hill who lost their lives in WW I in the same battle. That post, along with the Grayson VFW and Willard American Legion have led in patriotic tributes through the years.

The county has always had a good scouting program for boys and girls. The Scouts got their start in the 1930s and there have been as many as four boy scout troops and numerous cub scout packs. They had their own headquarters on College Hill for a time in the 50s and 60s. Ed Kemper of Grayson has been a scoutmaster in the Tri-State Council since 1967. The Girl Scout Council's Camp Cardinal is located near Carter Caves serving eastern Kentucky.

The Carter Co. Art Guild was born in 1980 in Grayson to promote art. The group has published a fund-raising calendar yearly featuring artwork of local members. Proceeds support art in the schools and community. Artists also formed The Carter Caves Art Expo group in Olive Hill in 1989 and have sponsored a yearly event at the Caves.

The area features many opportunities for special interests with strong clubs for car enthusiasts, hunters, fisherman, bowlers, golfers, ATV riders, horse lovers, and hobbyists of all types.

While Carter has received negative publicity for being one of the few counties in the nation without a tax-supported library, volunteers have established family libraries at the Adult Education Centers in both ends of the county and continue to push for public and state funding. A public petition actually established a library district in 1976 and with bicentennial money a library opened with a board chaired by Bob Caummisar.

The county magistrates opposed the tax levy and refused to recognize the petition method for establishing the library. That issue was brought to court and went all the way to the Kentucky Supreme Court which upheld the method and the library. The issue wound up before the U.S. Supreme Court which refused to hear the case, thereby legally giving the library district the right to exist and receive tax funds. The Carter Circuit Court refused to enforce the tax, though, since, by that time, another petition had been received to abolish the tax. The library closed after three years when state grant funding ran out.

The whole episode divided the county with anti-library tax forces even publishing

an underground newspaper, *The Little Jimmy Brown Newsboy* attacking the idea of a library tax and its proponents with great ferocity.

In 2009, the libraries finally officially opened in Grayson and Olive Hill with state library grants, after the city councils in Grayson and Olive Hill and the County Fiscal Court agreed to put the necessary matching funds into their budgets, rather than any taxation.

Yearly, The Grayson Chamber of Commerce promotes the city by sponsoring the Miss Grayson Scholarship pageant, a prelude to Miss Kentucky and Miss America. Virginia Murphy has headed it up yearly since the mid-1960s when the Grayson Younger Womens Club was sponsor. She has been helped for over twenty years by Diedre Shufflebarger, and the Little Miss and Miss Pre-Teen pageants have been added.

Since the mid-1970s the Chamber has recognized outstanding individuals from teachers to fireman, youth, medical professionals to farm families and other categories. The annual Community Service award is named in honor of a charter member of the chamber, S.U. Pratt. Deceased community leaders each year are memorialized with the R. E. Applegate award and the Keystone of Grayson award is the Hall of Fame of service for the city, citing those who have served over an extended period of years.

**IF YOU HAVE RECOLLECTIONS OR INFORMATION TO ADD TO OUR  
COUNTY'S HISTORY, LET US KNOW AT GO RADIO.**

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Sources:

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Cover photo- Courthouse , circa 1907; Don Malone

Photos-

Radio Hill, Lewis Lodge-Carter Caves, Gregoryville Church  
Lusby Center-K C U, Prichard Elementary School, The Doughboy Monument  
Carter County Justice Center, Olive Hill School, Grayson Welcome Cabin,  
Old Olive Hill Train Depot, Grayson Lake.