

'ENTERPRISE' NEWSPAPER

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been using a building on the east side of the square.

Klutts, who owned the paper until he died in 2013, left it to his business partner, Executive Editor Terry R. Ford. Ford died in 2016 and left it to his twin sister, Brenda J. Moore. She assured readers that the newspaper would carry on with the same integrity and belief as before.



Owner William Klutts holds the office cat, "Dingbat."

When Moore died in 2018, her daughter, Sue Ann Cloar, inherited the newspaper. Cloar sold the newspaper to the Hutchersons, effective Oct. 1, 2020.

Working with Hutcherson at the paper are bookkeeper Sandra Ward and typist Charity Gray. The delivery staff includes Alice Bricco, Jim King, David Ford, Joyce Biggs and Ken Currie.

Today, the *Lauderdale County Enterprise* prints and distributes 4,600 copies each week through subscription and single copy sales. Gone are the hot type for printing, the old letter presses, pasting up pages and writing stories on typewriters. Each Tuesday, the final stories, ads and page layouts are done on computer. The paper is sent digitally to Union City where it is printed.

The paper went from typewriters to digital in 2008, Hutcherson said. She and other staff members had to learn the new process in two weeks. She remembers that Klutts, the editor, did not want to give up his typewriter.

Hutcherson worked at the paper setting type when she was young. She left to raise her family, but returned when her two children were nearly grown about 25 years ago.

Since then, she's done about every job at the *Enterprise*: interviewing and writing stories, typing, paste up, selling and creating ads, dealing with customers, layout. "You name it; I've done it," she said.

It has always been her dream job. "Ever since high school, I dreamed of being published," Hutcherson said. "I'm living the dream; I get published every week."

She learned from the best, she said, when Klutts and Terry Ford were her bosses.

She learned to always make the paper fair, to keep her opinion out of stories. "You report the complete news; you report the complete facts. We're here to help everybody."

She still goes by the motto of the early owners – Campbell and Hedgepeth – to build up and not destroy.

She's tickled, she said, to be the owner, to carry on the paper's role in the community. "I love it. I really love it. It's my baby."



Owners Beverly and Mike Hutcherson

Ripley Power and Light offices will be closed ...

- Thursday & Friday, December 24 & 25, for the Christmas holiday.
- Friday, January 1, for New Year's Day.
- Monday, January 18, for Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday.
- Monday, February 15, for President's Day.



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Ripley POWER AND LIGHT COMPANY

Winter 2020-2021



Ripley Middle School wins first championship since 1993

Hard work and learning from past mistakes helped the Ripley Middle School football team win its first championship in almost 30 years.

Coming into their final game of the season as underdogs, the players went on to beat Brighton 22 to 14 in a nail-biting, thrilling game.

"Brighton was undefeated," said Head Coach Hunter Dixon. "We had already lost to them once. Though we were considered the

underdogs, we entered the game thinking we had a chance to win."

For most of the championship game, though, Ripley was losing. The score was 0 to 14 with six minutes left in the game when Ripley scored its first touchdown on a pass play. With Ripley still losing 14 to 6, its defense stopped Brighton, and Ripley got the ball back. Three minutes were left in the game.

With 1 minute, 10 seconds left on the clock, Ripley scored on a running play, went for two points and made it,

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Ripley Middle School 2020 Season

- Ripley 48, Halls 0
- Ripley 30, Haywood 14
- Brighton 20, Ripley 14
- Ripley 32, Dyersburg 14
- Lake County 38, Ripley 30
- Covington 36, Ripley 22
- Ripley 48, Munford 22
- Ripley 36, Millington 8

Semifinal

Ripley 30, Munford 8

Championship

Ripley 22, Brighton 14



Coach Hunter Dixon talks to his players.



Players and cheerleaders celebrated the championship with a parade.

A CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON FOR RIPLEY MIDDLE

... Continued from previous page ending the game tied, 14 to 14, and forcing overtime.

Ripley got the ball first in overtime on its own 25-yard line and scored a touchdown on its first play. Brighton then got its chance. Brighton took the ball all of the way to Ripley's one-yard line. It had two attempts to put the ball in the end zone, but Ripley's defense stopped it both times. Ripley won.

The last time Ripley Middle won the championship was in 1993.

"The effort and work ethic of these kids was phenomenal," Dixon said.

Normally, the team prepares for the upcoming season over the summer, but the team couldn't practice the first two months because of COVID-19. When the team finally got to practice in August, the players would keep training even when practice was officially over, Dixon said. "They worked extra to make up for lost time."

Dixon, who is also the P.E. teacher at Ripley Middle, has coached football for eight years. He worked at Henry County High School for four years before coming to Ripley. His assistant coaches are Anthony Barbee, Austin

Thompson and Samuel Wiggins.

Dixon had 40 players on the team, one of the biggest squads he has coached; 31 of the players were eighth graders. "It was good this year to have so many eighth graders," he said. "Most of the kids had played together all three years of middle school. It all came together this year."

The 2020 championship game will be hard for many people to forget. "It was the biggest crowd I have seen at a middle school game," Dixon said. "The crowd was so supportive." Then he added, "it was a very stressful win."

In memoriam – Alonzo Beard

Alonzo Beard, Ripley Power and Light board member and longtime alderman for the City of Ripley, died September 9 at Methodist Germantown Hospital.

Beard, who owned Beard's Insurance, replaced Elizabeth Lague as the city's representative on the Ripley Power and Light Board of Directors in April 2012.

Born April 9, 1944, he grew up in Gates as the 11th of 14 children. He graduated from Carver High School in Brownsville in 1962 and received his bachelor's degree from Tennessee State University in 1966.

While serving in Vietnam, he was wounded in his left shoulder and awarded a Purple Heart. He spent several months in the hospital

and returned home as a disabled veteran.

Beard began his career in insurance at Equitable Life Insurance Company of Iowa in Kansas City, Mo. He returned to Ripley in 1979 and started his independent brokerage firm specializing in life and health insurance and annuities.

He was a deacon at Holly Grove Baptist Church in Ripley and a life member of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Inc. He served as Ripley Police Commissioner, a Boy Scout troop leader, treasurer of the Memphis Area Associations of Government, treasurer of the Nathaniel Lodge No. 216, Lauderdale County Election Commissioner and a 32nd Degree Mason with the Dyersburg Consistory.

Beard also was a member of the local and national branches of the NAACP and the Lauderdale County Democratic Party.

He is survived by his wife, Diane; two daughters, Mary Helen Beard of Nashville, and Latasha Beard of Cordova; a son, Ricky Smith of Mesa, Ariz.; two brothers and five sisters.



Alonzo Beard
1944-2020



Thompson appointed to Power and Light Board

Replacing Alonzo Beard on the Ripley Board of Alderman and Ripley Power and Light Board of Directors is Austin Thompson, an active member of the Ripley community.

THE 'ENTERPRISE' NEWSPAPER OLDEST BUSINESS IN LAUDERDALE COUNTY

The *Lauderdale County Enterprise* has been publishing news about the Ripley area for more than 135 years – documenting local history and serving readers throughout the community. In fact, it is the oldest business in the county.

"Even with two fires and a flood, the *Enterprise* never missed an issue," said Beverly Hutcherson, a long-time employee who recently purchased the weekly newspaper with her husband, Mike.

The first fire destroyed the newspaper's building; the second fire destroyed customer records, she said. The fires occurred earlier in the newspaper's history, but Hutcherson remembers the flood well; a water line broke on the second floor in 2016, flooding the first. She remembers gathering up cords and equipment so they wouldn't get wet and putting out the paper with her feet propped up on a box above ankle deep water.

The newspaper's own story begins in 1885 when L.A. Palmer launched a weekly called *The Ripley Enterprise*. Charles Campbell and Col. J.W. Hedgepeth purchased the newspaper in 1893 and changed the name to *The Lauderdale County Enterprise*.

The two men set about to give the community the best paper possible and publish "all the news that's fit to print." They also established on the masthead the motto: "Seek to Build Up, Not to Destroy."

The paper won the gold plaque in 1940, offered by the Tennessee Press Association for the best display advertising in the state. During its history, *The Enterprise* has won several awards from the Tennessee Press Association.

Campbell died in 1943 and left his interest in the news-



Col. J.W. Hedgepeth, above, along with Charles Campbell, purchased the Ripley Enterprise in 1893 and changed the name to the Lauderdale County Enterprise. Hedgepeth is pictured reading the newspaper with his ever-present pipe and flower in his lapel.

paper to his son, John, who sold it to B.C. Durham Jr. During that year, Hedgepeth wrote an editorial that appeared in the *Enterprise* reflecting on his 50 years of ownership.

"It can be truly said that none realizes more fully how swiftly time passes than he who, week by week, month by month, and year by year, moves up the dates which record the transition from the icy winds of winter to the balmy breezes of spring, the fullness of summer, and the ripening beauties of autumn ... That our efforts have been rewarded with a reasonable measure of success, is reflected in the long tenure of service we have given the public."

Six years later, Hedgepeth retired and sold his share to William A. Klutts, who bought Durham's half in 1965.

In 1969, construction began on the newspaper's current location on Jackson Avenue. Klutts designed the building for newspaper publishing, Hutcherson said. The newspaper had

Continued on the next page ...



The newspaper's production changed with the times. An employee, above left, sets type, letter by letter, with the linotype machine. The 'set' page would then be put on the press. Years later, Regina



Moore, above right, a long-time employee, pastes up a page. Copy and ads were printed on special paper, which was then pasted on the newspaper page.