

COMMUNITY

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A Big Red barbecue

It was one of those simple moments – a beautiful spring evening spent with a bunch of friends – that make you remember why you decided to stay here in the 'burbs.

They held a barbecue last Tuesday night at the Halls Outdoor Classroom. You should see that place. Somebody hit it on the head by saying later, "Wow, they didn't have this kind of classroom when I was in school."

The point was to unveil



Jake Mabe

ing his scoutmaster uniform and a pair of socks I wouldn't be caught dead in, said to be sure and photograph the Scouts. They've done a bunch of good work here.

So has the Women's

Elementary barbecue a few weeks ago. Maybe, just maybe, you'll remember that next time you curse Marvin Hammond over your bill.

A bunch of other groups joined the cause, too, like AmeriCorps, TVA, UT, the Beaver Creek Watershed Association, the Tennessee Water Resources Recovery Center and Southern Designs landscaping. It's like that here in Halls. When it's needed, we all pitch in.



Celebrating at the Halls Outdoor Classroom barbecue last week are: (front) Halls Crossroads Women's League outdoor classroom committee chair Delores Lee Kopp, UT Water Resources Center Senior Research Associate Ruth Anne Hanahan, Halls High teacher Mike Blankenship, (back) HPUD President/CEO Marvin Hammond, Ron Kopp of Southern Designs landscaping, Lower Clinch Watershed coordinator Melinda Watson, Halls High teacher Kerrie Coley, Knox County watershed coordinator Roy Arthur and Kevin Ford of AmeriCorps. *Photos by Jake Mabe*

the Halls Crossroads Women's League native garden. But, this is Halls. I think somebody just wanted an excuse to eat, talk and hear good music.

A bunch of fresh-faced kids from Boy Scout Troop 506 roasted hot dogs around the campfire. Ted Hatfield, sport-

League. In addition to the garden, the League has donated two benches for use at the classroom. One recognizes the group's outdoor classroom committee, chaired by Delores Lee Kopp.

Hallsdale-Powell Utility District helped too, just like they did at the Halls

Leah Gardner, a landscape architect who works special projects for HPUD, and local favorite Sarah Pirkle blended their voices together in perfect harmony, pretty as the mornin', on a few mountain tunes. I sat on the grass while they worked magic on "The Sweetest

Gift," bobbing my head to the beat, wishing the moment would never end.

On the school side of that awesome bridge, Butch Grigsby was serving up the best barbecue you've ever had in your life. He threw some barbecue and beans on a plate and asked if I wanted hot dogs for dessert.

Butch says he's "been doing it (cooking barbecue) my whole life" and has entered several cook-offs the past few years. It's good stuff, I can promise you that. Butch took pity on a poor bachelor and let him take a plate home for later.

Kevin Ford of AmeriCorps was making sure folks recycled all the plates, cups and utensils. Halls High teachers Marcia Southern and Sharon McNeely were sitting in lawn chairs near the garden. Dr. Bob Collier tried not to spill barbecue sauce on his clothes.

And me? Well, I wiped my mouth, went back for seconds and thanked The Big Guy for being born here in the crossroads.



Sarah Pirkle and Leah Gardner in the Halls Outdoor Classroom barbecue.