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Local library first to launch yearbook archive

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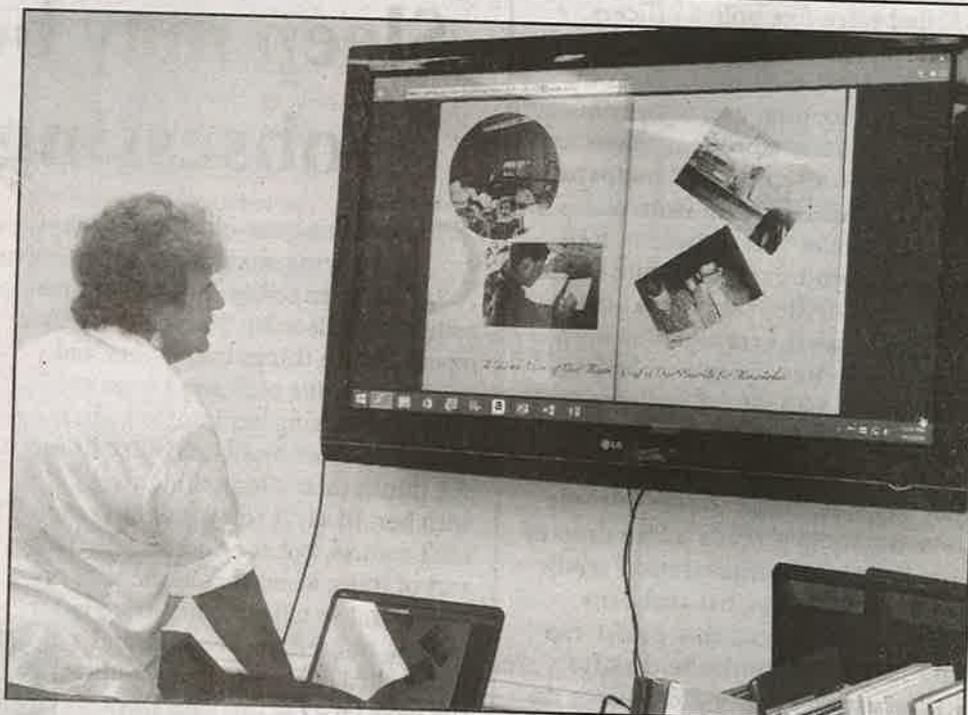
One of high school students' most anticipated events is the day yearbooks arrive. But as time passes, these once treasured possessions often get lost, damaged or simply go missing.

Thanks to grant funding, Pulaski County Library System now makes it easy to reminisce over high school days through an online archive of 89 local yearbooks published between 1921 and 1977.

see **YEARBOOKS** | page A3



Melinda Williams/SWT
This fragile, spiral bound 1939 Pulaski High School Oriole is among the archived yearbook.



Melinda Williams/SWT

Carol Smith with Pulaski County Library System demonstrates an 89-volume yearbook archive the library launches this weekend. Yearbooks from Draper, Dublin, Pulaski and Pulaski County high schools are available at pclibs.org.

YEARBOOKS

Technology coordinator Carol Smith said the library system is the first in the state to have all of its yearbooks digitized for online viewing. One of the best parts of the project — it didn't cost the library a dime.

The archive was supported with funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services administered by the Library of Virginia. The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 123,000 libraries and 35,000 museums. Its mission is to inspire libraries and museums to advance innovation, lifelong learning, and cultural and civic engagement.

The yearbook archive, accessible at pclibs.org, contains 89 yearbooks: 1921-1974 editions of the Pulaski High School Oriole; 1943-1974 edi-

tions of the Dublin High School Maple Leaves; 1951-1953 editions of the Draper High School Valley Echo (Draper and Dublin high schools merged in 1954) and 1975-1977 editions of the Pulaski County High School Cougar Pinnacle.

She is hopeful some of the newer Pinnacle editions, and a few older yearbooks that are missing, can be added to the archive in the future. That will depend upon funding being available and will have to wait at least until archives are completed at the state's other libraries.

Because so many yearbooks are discarded or damaged over the years, Smith said it wasn't an easy task to find them — especially the older editions. A collection was started a couple of years ago when Dublin High School held its All-Years Reunion.

Smith expressed grat-

continued from page A1

itude to those who were willing to loan their yearbooks to the library so they could be shipped out for scanning.

The only editions missing in the archive are the 1938 Oriole, the 1947 and 1948 Maple Leaves, and the 1952 Valley Echo. Smith said she's not sure an Oriole was published in 1938.

"It's a great volume of yearbooks," she said of the archive.

Besides allowing people to look back to their high school days, she said the archive is beneficial to genealogy researchers and reunion organizers. It also serves as record of local art, fashion and history throughout the years.

Every page in each yearbook was scanned, including the inside covers, so signatures and messages written to their original owners are visible. Unfortunately, some photos had been cut out of a few editions, so those photos will be missing.

Although the archive's "search" feature isn't working correctly right now, it should be fixed by the fall. Users will then be able to search all of the yearbooks at once or just one.

Users also can save and edit photographs, copy and past them into a Word document and copy the url for individual pages for emailing. Pages and even an entire yearbook also can be downloaded.

For those interested in receiving instruction on how to use the archive, Smith is offering a Yearbook Archive Demonstration 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. July 19 at Dublin Library on Giles Avenue.

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