



## EAST TENNESSEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Making history personal

— since 1834 —

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CONTACT: Cherel Henderson  
(865) 215-8823  
[cherel@eastTNhistory.org](mailto:cherel@eastTNhistory.org)

### **East Tennessee Historical Society Honors Cocke County Initiatives with Awards of Excellence in History**

KNOXVILLE, Tenn., May 24, 2019 – The East Tennessee Historical Society’s (ETHS) annual Awards of Excellence were presented at the organization’s Annual Meeting on May 14, 2019, at the Foundry on the World’s Fair Site in Knoxville. Since 1982, the Society has annually recognized individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions to the preservation, promotion, programming, and interpretation of the region’s history. Two Cocke County initiatives were among the 44 awards presented.

- **Edward R. Walker, III**, was awarded ETHS’s highest honor, the ***Ramsey Award for Lifetime Achievement***. Eddie Walker had not yet started first grade when his grandmother’s stories awakened an interest in history. With great interest and curiosity, he continued to ask questions and seek information and at age 14 began records research at the old Lawson McGhee Library in Knoxville. He was only 26 when appointed as the official Cocke County historian and has since committed his life to making history accessible to students, genealogists, and the wider public. He is the author of more than ten books on the history of Cocke County, wrote a weekly newspaper column, “Page from the Past,” from 1996-2001, and was instrumental in founding the William Cocke Chapter, National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution.
- ***The Newport Plain Talk*** was the recipient of a ***History in the Media Award*** for their bi-annual special edition titled “Smoky Mountain Homeplace” dedicated to the history of Cocke County. This year’s series, “Let the Stories Be Told,” was so popular that it was expanded to three issues. The series encouraged readers to send in family stories that are “always told.” Not only did this generate interesting tales to read related to local history, it also encouraged residents to delve into their own family histories.

#### **About the East Tennessee Historical Society:**

Established in 1834, the East Tennessee Historical Society has 2,000 members across the United States. The Society sponsors the Museum of East Tennessee History, East Tennessee National History Day, and the family heritage programs “First Families of Tennessee” and “Civil War Families of Tennessee.” Its active publications program includes the biannual genealogy magazine *Tennessee Ancestors*; the annual *Journal of East Tennessee History*; and

*Newsline*, as well as other books pertaining to the region's history. For more information on ETHS, exhibitions, or programs, call 865-215-8824 or visit the website at [www.EastTNHistory.org](http://www.EastTNHistory.org).

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