



Focus launches 24/7

By Focus Staff

Could you use some 'good' news? We thought so.

With that in mind, The Focus is pleased to announce the launch of 24/7, our latest contribution to the Knoxville media market. With the addition of Farragut to our coverage area, on top of the entirety of Knox County and Seymour, we were

overwhelmed with requests for additional, quality local news. We answered that request with 24/7, your source for breaking local news.

24/7 is a blog component of KnoxFocus.com. Through 24/7, Focus readers will now be able to enjoy community focused, local news 24 hours per day, 7 days per week instead of having to wait for a week.

KnoxFocus 24/7

The Focus is committed to variety, so in addition to daily news briefs, members of our diverse staff will offer personal perspective, political commentary, and investigative reporting not found in our printed

edition- which hits newsstands every Monday.

We would like to personally thank you for allowing us to be your preferred source for local news over the last 10 years and look forward to further serving

you through www.knoxfocus.com and KnoxFocus 24/7.

To visit 24/7 click on the logo (pictured above) on the top right of our homepage.

FOCUS Weekly Poll*

Do you support or oppose the extension of James White Parkway from Moody Ave, where it currently ends, to John Sevier Highway?

SUPPORT 69.29%
OPPOSE 30.71%

Survey conducted
December 11, 2012.

* Focus Weekly Polls are conducted by an independent, professional polling company.

Support still strong for James White Parkway Extension

By Focus Staff

After almost a month of opponents coming from seemingly every direction possible, support for the proposed James White Parkway Extension remains strong. To date Knox County Mayor Tim Burchett, City of Knoxville Mayor Madeline Rogero, Vice Mayor Nick Pavlis, the Urban Wilderness Arts & Trade District, Ijams Nature Center, the Appalachian Mountain Bike Club, the Knoxville News Sentinel, Legacy Parks, and a host of others, have all expressed opposition to the

project. However, those who support the project have become increasingly vocal following TDOT's recent public hearing in South Knoxville.

Despite overwhelming opposition to the project from various political leaders and civic organizations, two Focus polls indicate support for the project remains strong among area residents. Focus Publisher Steve Hunley hired a professional polling company to query 9th District registered voters on the issue on November 15 with the question

"Do you support or oppose the extension of James White Parkway from Moody Avenue, where it currently ends, to John Sevier Highway?" The week after the TDOT public meeting, the polling company re-ran the same poll.

The December 11 poll indicated that 69.29% of 9th District voters support the project. While a decrease from the November poll results, which indicated that 83.63% supported the extension, the most recent poll demonstrates that an overwhelming majority of 9th district voters still

support the extension.

Safety is the predominant concern of those in favor the proposed extension. While the elected officials who oppose the project have all expressed an adamant desire to see safety improvements made to Chapman Highway, many South Knox residents want to know where, how, and when they expect to see these improvements made.

South Knox resident David Howard, who resides on Moody

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Tennessee 4-H teams with Operation Christmas Child for 2012, 2013

Kids love helping other kids. That's a given at all times of year, but especially at Christmas. That's certainly the case with Tennessee 4-H's this holiday season – and that will carry over into 2013.

Tennessee 4-H is announcing a partnership with Operation Christmas Child, an international organization that collects toys as well as toiletries for needy children around the world. The items are packed in shoe boxes and distributed during the holiday season and throughout the year. Operation Christmas Child has distributed more than 100 million boxes since 1993.

Tennessee 4-H's in several counties have been collecting shoe boxes for this season, but are also making plans for an even bolder goal for 2013. Youth around Tennessee will collect a separate item each month, and then bring all those items together for huge "packing parties" next fall. 4-H's will collect toothbrushes and toothpaste, soaps, other toiletries, candy and small toys. If you send a box through Operation Christmas Child, you can follow its route online, and see what child receives the gift and where they live.

"4-H's pledge their heads, hearts, hands and health to their clubs, communities, and their country, but also to our world. The 'world' part is what we focus on here. We are really taking that to heart," says Justin Crowe with Tennessee 4-H and University of Tennessee Extension. "This partnership with Operation Christmas Child allows our

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Brad Walker Orchestra: A Christmas Spectacular



PHOTO BY DAN ANDREWS.

The Brad Walker Orchestra and Valerie Duke were well received at a show at The Orangery last Thursday.

By Tasha Mahurin
mahurint@knoxfocus.com

The melodic sound of the Brad Walker Orchestra and Valerie Duke filtered through The Orangery last week. A Knoxville favorite, The Brad Walker Orchestra plays mostly in

the style of Glenn Miller, but plays tunes of all the major big band leaders, such as Glenn Miller, Tommy Dorsey, Les Elgart, Benny Goodman, and Harry James.

The Orchestra consists of 15 professional

musicians who have played with bands and artists such as Glenn Miller, Tommy Dorsey, Benny Goodman, Harry James, Les Elgart, Ray Charles, N. Riddle, Frank Sinatra, Lawrence Welk, Con Hunley, Ray Price, Jim Ed Brown,

and many more.

Depending on the event the Brad Walker Orchestra may suggest a solo piano, a trio, a small combo, or the full orchestra. A five member combo took the stage for a packed house at the Orangery's Christmas

Spectacular and provided the perfect backdrop for the vocal styling of Valerie Duke.

Now the house band at Cherokee Country Club, Walker commented on the rising popularity of swing

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Support still strong for James White Parkway Extension

Cont. from page 1

Ave., spoke to the Knoxville City Council at a recent meeting and in an emailed statement in which he expresses his disgust at the actions of Mayor Rogero and Vice Mayor Pavlis. “Vice Mayor Pavlis gave a rousing speech to the faithful, even pointing out that we can put a man on the moon so we should be able to fix Chapman Highway,” said Howard, regarding the Vice Mayor’s speech during the TDOT meeting. “This was a great style without substance sound bite, but there was no plan offered to solve the deadly problems our citizens face daily on Chapman Highway.”

Brad Walker Orchestra: A Christmas Spectacular

Cont. from page 1

and big-band music. “It’s music that has stood the test of time,” Walker told *The Focus*. “It’s music that you can fall in love with and get lost in.” Walker, who has been a professional musician since the age of 16, leads the orchestra with the trombone, along with trombonists Jeff Jennings and Gordon Massengill. Kenny Jackson, David Laughn, Doug Rinaldo, Jack Furnari, and John Snyder serve as the orchestra’s saxophonists and all double as clarinetists. Tom Fox, Mike Thomas, and Craig Valentine provide the trumpet-ing, while Ed Niedens tickles the keys, Jack Cate plays the bass, and Warran Hanharran sets the beat on drums. “I’ve always been in love with this music. It takes you back to a different time, a different place, and a different era,” Walker told *The Focus*.

Howard went on to write: “Mayor Rogero, who I voted for during her election, voiced her opposition to the project without the euphoric man on the moon rhetoric, but again, no plan, no solution.” South Knoxville resident and business owner Bobby Smeltzer, 55, also supports the proposed extension. “I’m not against parks, but I wish our leaders were as passionate about our safety as they are about the Urban Wilderness,” Smeltzer told *The Focus*. Those against the extension have also expressed concern that an extended parkway would dramatically affect the already struggling business community

in South Knoxville. Smeltzer argues that the business-es might, in fact, notice an increase in revenue if the parkway were extended and traffic subsequently lessened on Chapman Hwy. “People would probably shop in South Knoxville more often if they didn’t feel as though they were taking their lives into their hands every time they went to turn off of the road,” he added. Additionally, one long-time South Knox resident is particularly passionate about the proposed extension citing over three decades of commitment to the project. “I am and have been

for over 30 years an advocate for the completion of JWP,” South Knoxville resident Sylvia Woods told *The Focus*, adding that she has been involved in the project since before the 1982 World’s Fair. For additional project information, one can visit the TDOT website at www.tdot.state.tn.us/sr71/ or contact Mr. Dwight Armstrong, TDOT Project Management Division, at dwight.c.armstrong@tn.gov or (865)594-2409. TDOT is expected to make a decision on the matter early next year. *The Focus* will continue to follow the story as it develops.

Tennessee 4-H teams with Operation Christmas Child

Cont. from page 1

4-H members to help other children in a meaningful service project, and contribute to a global experience,” Crowe says. 4-H’ers who are students at UT’s College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources will be collecting items for Operation Christmas Child. “Our Collegiate 4-H club is very eager to begin with this life-changing project,” says Shelby Summarell, an agricultural education major from Warren County. “The whole process will be such a meaningful experience for each member. There is so much joy and fulfillment in knowing you are helping someone less fortunate in such a positive way,” Summarell says. James Swart, a biosystems engineering major from Monroe County, serves along with Summarell in the State 4-H office as a student assistant. “Collegiate 4-H is very excited about our partnership with Operation Christmas Child over the coming year,” he says. “We are looking forward

to working with our club members, and also members of the faculty and staff here on the agricultural campus. We see this as a great opportunity to give to others in the world, and make a positive impact,” Swart says. Crowe says several Tennessee 4-H clubs are already working to provide items for Operation Christmas Child, including groups in Hardeman, Jefferson and Robertson counties. 4-H’ers were also recently involved in a “packing party” for the charity in Brentwood this holiday season at the Tennessee Baptist Children’s Home. In addition, Crowe will make a trip to Lima, Peru, in February 2013 with Operation Christmas Child leaders, to deliver boxes there and see firsthand how the charity is able to help people. “I’m excited to see this program in action,” he says. “When I get back, I plan to share my story around the state to get other people as excited as I am about this project.”



Riley Wheeler in his United States Army uniform. Photo provided by Riley Wheeler.

Crowe adds there’s an environmental angle to the collection effort as well. Rather than putting items in cardboard shoeboxes, 4-H’ers will be encouraged to provide plastic boxes that can also be used to store grains and foods and to collect rainwater. 4-H is the Youth Development program for University of Tennessee Extension. 4-H teaches leadership, citizenship and service learning to more than 306,000 youth in the fourth through the twelfth grades. 4-H also has more than 5,700 adult volunteers. UT Extension is one of four units in the UT Institute of Agriculture.

Synonyms For Classic Tv Cinema

After grading a stack of papers last night and noticing some students’ overuse of the thesaurus, I fell asleep on the couch to the sounds of MeTV. I guess the two blended in my mind as I lay there, because my mind started forming nonsensical synonyms for classic TV shows instead of counting sheep. I completed the list this morning and thought I would share them



By Sarah Baker
bakers@knoxfocus.com

- with readers.
1. Nuptial Vacationers
 2. Hexed by Blonde
 3. The Dusk District
 4. Everyone who’s akin
 5. High Spirits during Sunlight Hours
 6. The Original Robert Tenderness Demonstration
 7. Run off to the Nocturnal Rodent
 8. Papa’s Paramount Awareness
 9. First Person Adoration of Carrot Top Comedian
 10. The Courting Vessel
 11. Roll-Over Prize Ranch
 12. Heave Mesh
 13. The Rummage Chap
 14. Slip Seam
 15. Lime Land
 16. Holy Woman in a Hurry
 17. Chaz’s Cherubs
 18. Happy Bathroom Remodeler Extra


1. Honeymooners 2. Bewitched 3. The Twilight Zone 4. All in the Family 5. Happy Days 6. The Bob Newhart Show 7. Leave it to Beaver 8. Father Knows Best 9. I Love Lucy 10. The Love Boat 11. Bonanza 12. Drag- net 13. The Rifleman 14. Petticoat Junction 15. Green Acres 16. Flying Nun 17. Char- lie’s Angels 18. Mary Tyler Moore (Really stretched for that one)

FOCUS Weekly Poll

Do you support or oppose the extension of James White Parkway from Moody Avenue, where it currently ends, to John Sevier Highway?

Support 69.29%

Oppose 30.71%



| By Age | Support | Object | Total |
|--------|--------------|--------------|-------|
| 18-29 | 75.00% | 25.00% | 4 |
| 30-49 | 58.62% | 41.38% | 58 |
| 50-65 | 70.66% | 29.34% | 167 |
| 65+ | 70.61% | 29.39% | 279 |
| Total | 69.29% (352) | 30.71% (156) | 508 |

| By Precinct | Support | Object | Total |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|-------|
| 25 | 64.29% | 35.71% | 56 |
| 26 | 62.71% | 37.29% | 59 |
| 27 | 72.34% | 27.66% | 47 |
| 29 | 66.67% | 33.33% | 48 |
| 89 | 65.69% | 34.31% | 102 |
| 90 | 79.00% | 21.00% | 100 |
| 92 | 84.85% | 15.15% | 33 |
| 93 | 61.90% | 38.10% | 63 |
| Total | 69.29% (352) | 30.71% (156) | 508 |

| By Gender | Support | Object | Total |
|-----------|--------------|--------------|-------|
| Unknown | 62.50% | 37.50% | 16 |
| Female | 65.77% | 34.23% | 222 |
| Male | 72.59% | 27.41% | 270 |
| Total | 69.29% (352) | 30.71% (156) | 508 |

Survey conducted December 11, 2012

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The Focus would like to thank all contributing writers. Submissions from our writers are gratis and are greatly appreciated. While articles are not guaranteed placement, we do strive to place as much as possible. Submissions for the paper are on a space available basis and are subject to publisher and editor approval.

We want your news: that is what makes this paper truly a community newspaper.

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Christmas wishes for the coming year



By Richie Beeler

I don't ask for much. Long gone are those days of Christmas past when I hoped to find a bike or some race cars or a new set of Lincoln logs under the tree. Gift certificates, candy, and other odds and ends are nice this time of year, but there comes a point in life when Christmas becomes much more about giving than receiving.

I certainly hope to make some folks happy this year. To be sure, Christmas is a wonderful time to share with those less fortunate than we, and our culture provides many chances to do so. But I have always believed Christmas is also a unique opportunity to show family, friends, and those we hold dear just how important they are to us.

With that in mind, I decided to compile a list. It's a rather short list. I already have more than I can say grace over, and I have no intentions of building bigger barns in which to store it all. No, my Christmas wishes are mostly for others and how they might be blessed in the years to come. So here's my Christmas wish list for 2012 – and the years that lie ahead.

Success for Butch Jones and the Tennessee Volunteers. This may sound like a very selfish wish, but I

can assure you it is not. After being a season ticket holder virtually my entire life, I have attended one University of Tennessee football game in the past three years. And it isn't because I'm a fair weather fan. I did not start scrambling to get my tickets back when rumors were flying about Jon Gruden coming to UT. The truth is, I simply have other priorities in my life now that have relegated Tennessee football to a place of lesser importance – which is exactly where it should be.

But that does not mean I think it isn't important. Tennessee football is to East Tennessee what the Rocky Mountains are to Colorado, or the Golden Gate is to San Francisco. Without a thriving, successful football program at UT, people are simply not getting the best version of East Tennessee. That goes for natives, students, tourists, and the business community. Those who think UT needs to be a "top 25" academic institution at the expense of football, should wake up and take note that the University of Tennessee belongs to Tennesseans. It is our state school. And our state loves football. The decline of the UT football program has had a profoundly detrimental effect on the culture of East Tennessee. Here's wishing Coach Jones all success in bringing it back.

Snow. And it doesn't even have to be a white Christmas. Hey, I'm not greedy. But for snow lovers living in the central East Tennessee

valley, the past decade or so has been a gigantic exercise in frustration. Even the few instances of "significant" snowfall we have experienced have been largely disappointing compared to what could have been. There was a big snow in 2010, but it affected areas primarily south of Knoxville. The following year produced several snow events, but none of great consequence. And the winter of 2012 was an absolute bust for snow and cold. After the first week of January, temperatures across East Tennessee went into a relentlessly warm pattern that lasted

well into late spring. The last truly memorable snow event that affected Knoxville and surrounding areas came on January 31st and February 1st of 1996. Not only did the area receive between 6 and 10 inches of the white stuff, but temperatures also plummeted to near zero for several nights, putting the region in a true winter deep freeze. The snow hit on a Thursday night and the courthouse, where I work, did not reopen until Tuesday morning. They just don't seem to make snows like that anymore. But what the heck – I'll send up a Christmas wish for one.

Wisdom for Congress and the President. As I lay out my final Christmas wish for 2012, I must once again emphasize that I did not vote for President Obama. I strongly disagree with his philosophy of how the American government should work, as well as many of his policies. I think his health care plan passed in 2010 is a colossal disaster that has the potential to send this country right over the proverbial fiscal cliff. But Mr. Obama is the President. And he and the Congress have decisions to make during the coming months that will dramatically affect the quality

of everyday life in America. Questions loom about whether to extend the Bush tax cuts or let them expire. A battle is even now ongoing as to whether the rich should pay more. The 2% cut in the FICA payroll tax, now in its third year, is once again up for extension or expiration. Tax deductions that have for decades been the financial safety net for millions of middle class homeowners could end up on the chopping block. Here is a wish – and a heartfelt prayer – that both the President and our elected representatives put politics aside and for once do what is right for America.



The Seymour Volunteer Fire Department in the Seymour Christmas parade. See A4 for additional photos.



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| Special # 9 One beef enchilada, one chile relleno with rice | 5.00 |
| Special # 10 One chile relleno, Spanish rice and refried beans | 4.75 |
| Special # 11 Two beef enchiladas with Spanish rice or refried beans | 4.90 |
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| Chimichangas One flour tortilla deep fried or soft. Filled with beef tips. Topped with lettuce, tomatoes, sour cream, melted cheese, and guacamole & served with refried beans. | 5.00 |
| Nachos Supremos Tortilla chips topped with beef, chicken, and beans. Guacamole, lettuce, tomato, and sour cream on the side | 5.60 |
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FOCUS MORE ON Seymour & South Knox



The Seymour Christmas Parade was held Saturday, December 15. See www.knoxfocus.com for more photos!

Winners:
 1st Place - Seymour Baptist Tabernacle (Misfit Toys)
 2nd Place - Knob Creek Baptist Church
 3rd Place - McLemore's Florist
 Honorable Mention - Union Valley Missionary Baptist Church
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Knox County GOP finds unity through diversity

By Tasha Mahurin
mahurint@knoxfocus.com

The West Knox Republican Club's annual Holiday dinner, held last week at Rothchild Catering and Conference Center, had an altogether inclusive flair this year.

Members from across the Knox County Republican party gathered to celebrate the holiday season in a room adorned by a large Christmas tree and traditional Christmas decorations. Yet, shining as if a bright beacon of diversity, a gold menorah, stood in the center of the room.

According to party members, the Knoxville Republican Jewish Coalition has been active within the Knox County Republican party for the past three years. Aaron Margulies, among others, was present on behalf of the coalition to help usher in the holiday season. Margulies told the Hanukkah story and offered a prayer in Hebrew as his wife lit the menorah.

The stated mission of the Knoxville Republican



PHOTO BY DAN ANDREWS.

Attendees from last week's West Knox Republican Club Holiday Dinner at Rothchild Catering.

Jewish Coalition is to foster and enhance ties between the American Jewish community and Republican decision makers. Additionally, they work to sensitize Republican leadership in government

and the party to the concerns and issues of the Jewish community, while articulating and advocating Republican ideas and policies within the Jewish community.

Ruthie Kuhlman,

candidate for Knox County GOP chair and sitting president of the West Knox Republican Club, believes that inclusion is critical to the future success of the Republican Party.

"We've got to reach

out and open up," Kuhlman told *The Focus*. "Regardless of race, religion, gender, or socio-economic background, we need all Republicans to come together to make our party work."

While the Republican Party is not widely regarded for its diversity, recent political defeat both locally and nationally has sparked a progressive wave throughout the party, particularly in Knox County. Each elected official present conscientiously wished those in attendance both a Merry Christmas and a Happy Hanukkah.

Kuhlman also expressed her desire to see more continuity throughout the party county-wide. The local party is segregated into smaller chapters that include the North, South, and West Knox Republican Clubs. Kuhlman maintains that these individual groups must work closer together.

"It's a critical time for the Republican party," she stated. "I feel strongly that our various chapters should come together to represent the entire Knox County Republican Party at least twice per year, perhaps for the next Holiday season."

214 Adair

I first saw the pretty pink bows on the white picket fence last year. Even from a distance, it was breathtakingly beautiful. We drove by it countless times during the Christmas season. This year, I sent a letter to the

resident at 214 Adair to ask if I could come by and take a picture to share with Focus readers. I went there to meet a stranger; I left feeling like I had visited a dear friend.

Wendi (Coatney) Holsonback grew up in Knoxville on Radford Place off of Broadway. She became

a single mom, moved away for twenty years, and returned to this area only a couple of years ago. That is about the time I started noticing new life at 214 Adair—a pink door, pink flamingo figurines in the yard, and a white picket fence. Tucked away in the middle of the Smithwood neighborhood is the small, red-brick home. The history behind the house, built in 1947, is intriguing. "When I saw this place I knew I loved it," Wendi said. "When I came in to look, I found a penny in the window seal. I knew this house would become my home. The penny remains there," she added.

Wendi's Grandmom, Tessie, taught her how to "love life and just be happy." That is advice a lot of folks could benefit from in today's stress-filled world. Nowadays, every time Wendi and

her three daughters find a penny, it makes them feel like Grandmom Tessie is with them.

A stroll through Wendi's home reflects her bubbly personality and tasteful touch—from the gorgeous pink Christmas tree (because it makes her happy) to the unique decor in every room. "Believe," Wendi's favorite word, and family photos adorn the walls. "My treasures in life are my girls and their families, my true friends, wonderful neighbors, and my new friends," Wendi said. We got to meet some of those precious treasures. She has three beautiful daughters, a little grandson who is her pride and joy, and two sons-in-law. After raising three girls, Wendi enjoys babysitting a little grandson. He certainly captured our hearts while we played ball and helped him empty a dump truck



full of toys!

The day my Mother and I visited, Wendi served refreshments and gave us each a gift. "My love for Christmas came from my Grandmom. I loved going to her home and opening the back door to the kitchen with the smell of Christmas everywhere," Wendi said. "I never meet a stranger because everyone is special." The lady with all of the pink decorations certainly made us feel special when she opened her heart and home to us!

During this blessed Christmas season, may you find much joy in

the celebration of the season—giving gifts, watching a nativity program, decorating a tree, singing "Silent Night," or visiting friends. Wendi said of her Grandmom Tessie, "she adored Christmas and made it very special for me and all her family." We can say the same of Wendi, who has made Christmas special, as well. If you drive by 214 Adair, look for the pink sleigh, pink ornaments, Santa Claus hanging from the roof, and the pink bows on the white picket fence. It will lift your spirits, because it truly is a happy place!

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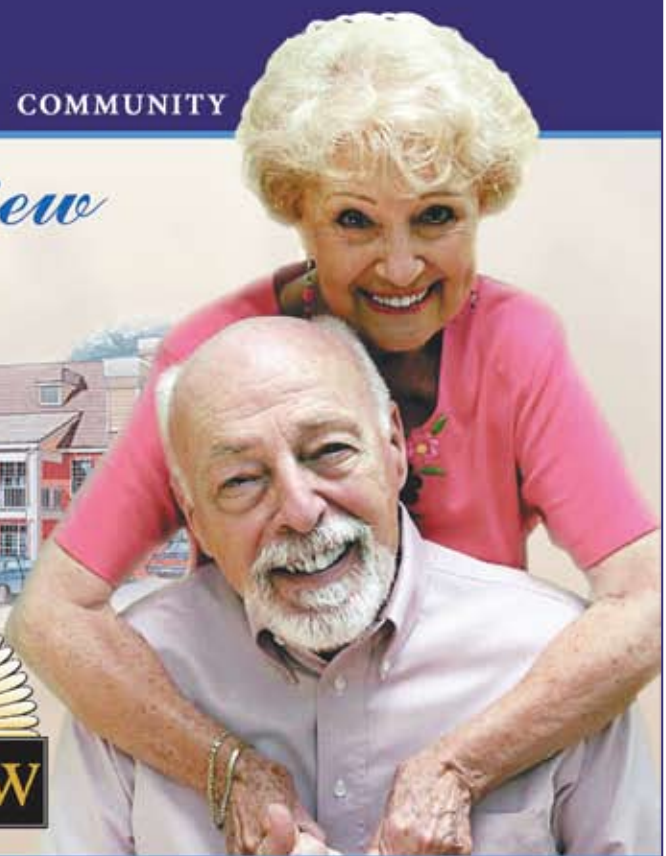
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Getting in the Christmas Groove

The Christmas season has officially begun.

This year I dragged the Christmas tree and outdoor lights out early. Amy came to the rescue to adorn the tree with something more

than ornaments not necessarily hung in the correct places. By the time she finished, the entire house took on a holiday glow. Outside, the lights ran along the front and wrapped around the screened porch. I never hang too many, just enough to cast that glow of Christmas colors that look



By Joe Rector

nice both outside and in.

One of the first things I did this season was download Christmas music to my iPhone. All was on an iPod, but the battery is dead, and I don't have the

small fortune necessary to replace it. The collection includes old favorites by Bing Crosby and Andy Williams, as well as plenty of traditional songs by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and The Gaither Vocal Band. Of course, what music library would be complete without Alvin

and the Chipmunks, barking dogs performing "Jingle Bells" and Porky Pig singing "Blue Christmas?" Nothing is more enjoyable than sitting back, looking at a lighted Christmas tree, and listening to carols.

The shopping was easy this year. Amy and I agreed to back off on our spending. We'll save our money to take a trip sometime before long. Still, she needs gifts, and the challenge becomes finding nice things on a much smaller budget. I've chosen several items and am keeping my fingers crossed that she will like them.

My dear wife is a practical shopper for the kids.

She wants to get them gifts that they'll like. I, on the other hand, want to shower them with all sorts of stuff. Over the last few years, my job has been to shop for stocking stuffers. That's had me searching the shelves at Dollar General or Big Lots for "unique" things to cram in those stockings. In addition, I buy bags of candy to pour in as well. I've always said that the real fun of Christmas morning doesn't come from the gifts. Instead, it's the simple act of opening presents that brings on joy and excitement. Most people look forward to attacking presents and ripping festive paper to shreds. Oh,

we are hoping for all sorts of things, but most of the time, we like what has been given to us. Even the smallest toddlers break into smiles as they destroy the wrappings hiding gifts, and many times they enjoy the boxes in which the things have come most of all.

Another thing I always enjoy is visiting the malls and shopping areas during the last couple of weeks of Christmas. People are frantic in their searches for those last couple of gifts or are still looking for the perfect present for a loved one. They sometimes are panic stricken as they move from one store to another, and some folks have short

fuses when it comes to dealing with crowds. For the most part, though, it's this one time of the year when most everyone is a little kinder to others, when each person's awareness of blessings are keenest, and when spending time with family and friends is most enjoyable.

I'm "psyched" about Christmas. Before long, the family will assemble and we'll laugh and talk and eat and exchange presents. Then the time will come for us to return to our busy lives. We will do so, however, feeling a bit warmer in our hearts. That glow of love is what the season is all about anyway.

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The Senate's Dandy

James Hamilton Lewis of Illinois

Pages from the Political Past



By Ray Hill

rayhill865@gmail.com

It seems highly unlikely anyone could be elected to any office today if he or she exhibited just a few of the eccentricities that were a part of James Hamilton Lewis. Lewis was even for his time somewhat eccentric in his appearance and dress, but he certainly made an impression and was highly popular in his adopted state of Illinois.

Lewis was born in Danville, Virginia on May 18, 1863. As a very small child, he moved with his parents to Augusta, Georgia. After attending the University of Virginia, Lewis studied the law privately in Savannah, Georgia. Lewis decided to move west to find his fortune and relocated in Washington State while it was still a territory of the United States. Lewis arrived in the Washington Territory knowing virtually no one and almost penniless, yet it proved to be a wise move for young Lewis as within a few years he had been elected to the Territorial legislature and when Washington achieved statehood, J. Hamilton Lewis was elected to Congress as Congressman-At-Large. Lewis only served one term in Congress, losing his reelection bid, although his ability as an orator made him so formidable in debate that even the famously acerbic Speaker of the House Thomas Reed preferred not to tangle with the freshman Congressman.

Lewis was the Democratic nominee for the United States Senate in 1899, at a time when legislatures still elected senators; Lewis lost his race for the Senate. America was then engaged in the Spanish-American War and Lewis volunteered and while not seeing actual combat, emerged from the conflict with the rank of Colonel.

Following the Spanish-American War, J. Hamilton Lewis moved yet again, settling in Chicago in 1903. Once again, his personality and ability brought him recognition and prominence. Lewis was made Corporation Counsel to the City of Chicago by the Mayor, which was a very lucrative position. By 1908, a mere five years after he had moved to Chicago, J. Hamilton Lewis was a serious, albeit ultimately unsuccessful candidate for governor. Lewis was again a candidate for the United States Senate in 1912 at a time when the national Republican Party was deeply divided between the regulars who supported President

William Howard Taft and the progressives, who favored former President Theodore Roosevelt. Lewis was elected to the Senate from Illinois, making him one of the very few individuals to serve in the Congress representing two different states.

Known affectionately as either "Ham" or "J. Ham", Lewis was the first to serve as a party "whip" in the Senate. The whip was responsible for helping to line up votes for party measures in the United States Senate, as well as keeping an accurate tally for how a pending vote might go. Lewis proved to be a skillful legislative strategist and did much to help along President Woodrow Wilson's agenda.

In 1918, Lewis had to make his appeal directly to the people of Illinois, as the legislature no longer had the power to elect members of the United States Senate. Lewis faced wealthy Republican Medill McCormick, brother of Colonel Robert McCormick, powerful publisher of the staunchly Republican and isolationist Chicago Tribune.

J. Hamilton Lewis was an excellent speaker with a flamboyant appearance. A man of slight proportions, Lewis sported a busy Van Dyke beard that was likely dyed as he aged; many contemporary reports refer to the "pinkish" color of his whiskers. Lewis also wore a toupee; evidently J. Hamilton Lewis made no effort to purchase a hairpiece that was life-like, as his own was quite obviously a toupee. In fact, there are instances where Lewis would appear inside the Senate chamber without his toupee on very hot days, although he didn't seem to ever allow himself to be photographed without his hairpiece.

J. Hamilton Lewis was also something of a clothes-horse and many enjoyed waiting for his appearance on the Senate floor to see what he was wearing on a given day. Lewis frequently wore spats long after they were out of fashion. Senator Lewis clearly enjoyed adding color to his wardrobe and might appear inside the Senate Chamber wearing a dark suit with a cream-colored waistcoat, a bright green tie and matching socks. A silk handkerchief of some sort would be carefully tucked into his breast pocket.

Lewis was once cautioned to tone down his dress before attending a political meeting in a poorer neighborhood, dominated by the laboring class. J. Hamilton Lewis arrived that night in full evening dress of top hat and tails. He told the assembled working people he came to pay his respects and wore his finest clothes, as he felt they deserved the best he had. Lewis left the hall to the cheers of his new supporters.

After narrowly losing his reelection campaign to Medill McCormick, Lewis



FROM THE AUTHOR'S PERSONAL COLLECTION.

U. S. Senator James Hamilton Lewis of Illinois

remained quite active in the Democratic Party and politics. He ran for governor in 1920, but lost. A recognized authority on both the Constitution and foreign affairs, Lewis concentrated on international law in his practice and earned a handsome living.

J. Hamilton Lewis bided his time, waiting for the opportunity to make a comeback. That opportunity came in 1930 when the Illinois Republican Party tore itself asunder. Lewis's successor, Medill McCormick, had been defeated in the 1924 Republican primary by former Governor Charles Deneen. McCormick was so distraught over his defeat he committed suicide, a fact that was carefully hidden from the public. McCormick's widow was Ruth Hanna McCormick, daughter of the legendary Mark Hanna, an extremely wealthy industrialist, alter ego of the late President William McKinley and a senator from Ohio. Ruth Hanna McCormick had been elected Congressman-At-Large from Illinois in 1928 and proceeded to settle her political grudge with Senator Deneen in the GOP primary. As a woman, Ruth Hanna McCormick was something of a novelty candidate and received widespread publicity in her Senate campaign and she spent freely from her vast personal wealth. She managed to beat Deneen decisively and faced the

most formidable foe the Democrats could nominate: James Hamilton Lewis.

Although sixty-seven years old at the time, Lewis had shown impeccable shrewdness in selecting the timing of his political comeback and campaigned vigorously. McCormick was haunted throughout the general election for her enormous expenditures and although she pumped even more of her personal fortune into the general election contest, Lewis beat her badly, ending her electoral career.

James Hamilton Lewis returned to the United States Senate in 1931 and quickly resumed his old position as Democratic whip. Chicago Mayor Anton Cermack promoted Senator Lewis as a "favorite son" candidate for the presidency in 1932, largely to keep Franklin D. Roosevelt from winning the Democratic nomination and giving the powerful boss leverage in naming the eventual nominee. Senator Lewis himself had no desire to block FDR's nomination and to the Mayor's dismay, released the delegates pledged to him, many of whom backed Roosevelt. Cermack's stubbornness in opposing Franklin Roosevelt later cost him his life; the Chicago Mayor was in Miami, Florida standing near Roosevelt when a would-be assassin

started firing, missing FDR, but hitting the bulky Mayor Cermack. The seriously wounded Cermack was bundled into Roosevelt's automobile and rushed to the hospital where he died several days later.

With Franklin D. Roosevelt's election to the presidency in 1932 and the Democrats taking control of the United States Senate, J. Hamilton Lewis assumed even greater importance inside the Senate. Lewis was a warm-hearted person for all his elaborate dress and he tried to befriend a little man from Missouri when Harry Truman came to the Senate in 1935. Truman himself later told an aide that he arrived "under a cloud" due to his ties to the notorious Prendergast machine of Kansas City. Senator Truman was treated with astonishing rudeness by many New Deal officials, not the least of whom was President Roosevelt himself. It took FDR more than five months to find a fifteen minute appointment to allow the Missouri Senator to come and pay his respects and Truman

barely spent half the allotted time in FDR's office, although he later remembered Roosevelt as being as nice as he could be. Author David McCullough, one of Truman's best biographers, recorded a comment made to Truman by J. Hamilton Lewis.

Harry Truman was in awe at being a member of the Senate, despite the rude treatment he received from much of official Washington and his fellow senators. Lewis wisely told Truman, "For the first six months you'll wonder how the hell you got here. After that you'll wonder how the hell the rest of us got here."

The seventy-three year J. Hamilton Lewis intended to stay in the Senate and sought reelection in 1936. His Republican opponent was Otis F. Glenn, himself a former member of the United States Senate. Glenn was still a supporter of the unlamented and unpopular former President Herbert Hoover, while Lewis was an unabashed advocate of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. 1936 was the same year FDR carried every state in the union in his reelection campaign, save for Maine and Vermont. Lewis easily won another term in the Senate.

J. Hamilton Lewis and his wife, fondly known as "Gypsy" to friends, remained fixtures on the social circuit in the nation's Capitol. Senator Lewis continued serving as the Democratic Whip in the Senate until his sudden death on April 9, 1939. A funeral service was held for James Hamilton Lewis inside the Senate Chamber and he was buried in a mausoleum beside Arlington National Cemetery. That mausoleum was later torn down and Senator Lewis's remains were moved, although no one seems to know just where his earthly body rests currently.

Gypsy Lewis tried to keep her late husband's memory alive as best she could, donating an imposing portrait of J. Hamilton Lewis to the United States Senate where it remains on display to this very day. Lewis was fondly remembered by those who knew him, but as the years have passed, this colorful figure has been largely forgotten.

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Lady Wolves battle, down Holston 39-28

By Ken Lay

West Valley girls basketball coach Alex Comer again has one of the county's best teams but despite an early gaudy record, the young Lady Wolves have had to earn every victory.

West Valley's latest game was another struggle but the Lady Wolves (6-2 overall, 6-1 in the Knox County Middle School Basketball Conference) came out on top when the dust had settled.

The Lady Wolves used a big fourth quarter to claim a 39-28 victory at Holston. West Valley

blew open a close game thanks largely to a big effort from sixth grader Tytiara Spikes.

Spikes scored all nine of her points in the final six minutes and provided the spark that the Lady Wolves needed to earn a hard-fought victory.

"We're playing so many young people that we're going to have to struggle and compete in every game," Comer said. "We're happy to have a 6-1 [conference] record.

"We're proud to have that record but we have to understand

what got us there."

What got West Valley there Thursday night was some stellar fourth-quarter defense that led to some easy transition buckets.

The Lady Wolves opened the third quarter with an offensive miscue. West Valley committed a turnover before Spikes went to work with the game in a 23-23 deadlock. She scored the first four points of the final stanza to give the Lady Wolves a 27-23 lead with 5:09 remaining.

The Lady Hurricanes would

answer as Katie Bailey made two baskets, including a 3-pointer that gave Holston a 28-27 lead. After that, however, the home team's offense was completely silenced as the Lady Wolves closed the game with a 12-0 run over the final four minutes.

Even in defeat, Holston coach Alex Walker was pleased with his team's effort.

"We played hard tonight and for us, that says a lot because we haven't always played hard," Walker said. "We left a lot of points out there because

we missed some layups and didn't take advantage of some things."

Bailey scored 19 points to lead all scorers.

"She was the player of the game," Comer said of Bailey.

Bailey might have stolen the show but the Lady Wolves won with a balanced attack.

Trinity Lee led West Valley with 10 points. Annaka Hall added seven and Jenny Thompson finished with six for the Lady Wolves, who led 16-14 at half-time.

South Doyle takes Rugby Sevens Title

By Ken Lay

MURFREESBORO--- The South Doyle rugby club ended a six-month journey with a State Championship at Middle Tennessee State University recently.

The Cherokees played in a grueling Tennessee Rugby Association Olympic Rugby Sevens title on Saturday, Dec. 8. It was South Doyle's second championship in three years. The Cherokees, who were the 2011 runners-up, also claimed the 2010 title.

South Doyle won five matches to claim its most recent title in one of East Tennessee's fastest growing sports.

The 'Kees, who began training and practicing in June, won the championship with a 29-7 victory over Knox County rival Farragut. That victory culminated a grueling day that saw South Doyle, which has compiled a gaudy 107-10 record over the last three seasons.

"Every guy on our team played better than they were capable of playing," Cherokees coach Matt Lance said. "We've got guys who have played football and wrestled but they take pride in their rugby

Continue on page 2



Members of the South-Doyle rugby team hoist the 2012 Rugby 7's State Championship Trophy. The Cherokees won their second championship in three years recently at Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro.

Fulton survives 'dogfight' against Patriots

By Ken Lay

Fulton High School boys basketball coach Jody Wright got exactly what he expected Tuesday night.

"I knew that we were going to be in for a dogfight," Wright said after his Falcons outlasted Union County 56-45 in a District 3-AA contest at Fulton's Jody Wright Arena. "This was another rough grind and I think there'll be a lot of those.

"There are no two teams that are head and shoulders above the rest and I knew that Union County was a well-coached team. I have a lot of respect for [Patriots] coach [Shane] Brown and what he and his team bring to the table."

The Falcons (5-2 overall, 3-1 in the district) rarely trailed in this crucial early-season conference tilt. Fulton, however, wasn't able to pull away until the fourth quarter when Union County was bitten by the turnover bug.

The two talented squads were locked into a tight affair until things took a turn early in the final stanza.

Fulton, which led 38-35 heading into the fourth quarter, was ahead 43-37 when things finally began to go its way.

The Patriots pulled to within 43-39 when Seth Norris scored with 5 minutes, 57 seconds remaining. Union County got a defensive stop and had an opportunity to draw closer.

But the Pats turned the ball over when Landon Muncey was called for an offensive foul. Fulton, however, didn't take advantage of Union County's miscue. UCHS blew another opportunity when Norris got whistled for another offensive foul on its next possession.

The Falcons did score after that turnover and took a 45-39 lead on a bucket by Blake Golden with 5:01 left. Fulton extended its advantage to 47-39 when Golden nabbed an offensive rebound and scored with 4:30 to go.

The Patriots committed another miscue their next time down the floor before Brown called time out.

The Falcons took a 10-point lead when Micah

Continue on page 3


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I hope you and Mrs. Claus and all the elves at the North Pole workshop are doing well and on schedule as the big day is fast approaching. You all bring a lot of joy to so many, young and old.
Continuing Russ Bebb's tradition, I have a list of gift ideas for those we know in the world of sports and also some holiday messages and wishes, too. Hopefully, readers of *The Knoxville Focus* will enjoy taking a peak at these as much as I did when Bebb started writing to you when he was Executive Sports Editor of *The Knoxville Journal* in the 1970s.
Before you look at the list below,



By Steve Williams

I'll go ahead and tell you my biggest wish, that's to give University of Tennessee football fans – and there's not a greater, more passionate fan base anywhere in this land – a winning football season next fall!
Have a safe trip Santa. We'll be watching for Rudolph's bright, red nose in the sky.
Here's my list:
Give Jon Gruden an Orange and White tie to wear on ESPN's Monday Night Football.
Give Derek Dooley a certificate recognizing him as The Unluckiest Coach in America and a new mirror to replace the one that's broken.
Give new UT Coach Butch Jones and wife Barb an all-expense paid three-day, two-night getaway to Boulder, Colorado for realizing its a nice place to visit, but you wouldn't want to coach there, at least right now.
Put a lump of coal in Tee Martin's stocking with a note that we still hope he will return to coach the Vols someday when the time

is right in his career.
Give Pat Summitt our best wishes.
Give the Lady Vols another game against Chattanooga.
Give Charlie High a UT scholarship.
Give our Falcons, Spartans and Warriors a tip of the hat for winning state football championships and making us proud.
Give the Southeastern Conference some modesty.
Give college football a geography lesson and take back conference expansion. Give its fans an eight-team playoff format and take back 6-6 bowl teams.
Give Georgia Bulldogs one more down.
Give Army a win over Navy.
Give Bill Snyder another season.
Give major league baseball more class acts like R.A. Dickey.
Give Peyton Manning our admiration and another Super Bowl win.
Give Chase Headley a Gold Glove.

(Never mind, he has one) Congratulations on a super season!
Give Sal Sunseri back to Nick Saban.
Give Bruce Pearl another chance to coach.
Take back one-and-done players.
Give Cuonzo Martin a healthy Jeron Maymon to help boost the UT basketball team's offense, and while you're at it, Skylar McBee could use a hot hand.
Give Dave Hart better communication with UT fans in tough times.
Give Vol fans another season to enjoy Cordarrelle Patterson.
Take back picky taunting rules in NCAA football.
Give UT baseball a SEC tourney berth next spring.
Give Lady Vol softball another Monica Abbott.
Give Tennessee Titans the good old days.
Give the NHL a season and the NBA and major league baseball shorter ones.

Give the TSSAA a football playoff format that's not confusing.
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Give Tyler Summitt a chance to assist Holly Warlick someday.
Give Gus Manning, our treasured link to General Neyland, many more happy birthdays.
Give us more sportsmanship and less showboating at all levels of athletics.
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Lady Falcons run past Union County 69-16

By Ken Lay

Fulton High School's girls basketball team kept its perfect District 3-AA record intact with a 69-16 victory over Union County Tuesday night at Jody Wright Arena.
The Lady Falcons (6-1 overall, 4-0 in the district) darted to an early 9-0 lead and cruised to an easy win over the Lady Patriots. Fulton led 20-3 by first

quarter's end and continued to apply a strong pressure defense that pounded Union County into submission.
But all was not well for the Lady Falcons in the first half.
"We weren't pleased with our effort in the first half," Lady Falcons assistant coach Sir David Pettus said. "We challenged our girls at

halftime and we did continue to build our lead."
Fulton led 37-10 at the break and from there, things would only get worse for Union County. The Lady Falcons scored the first 12 points of the third stanza and opened a 49-10 advantage before Madison Brantley scored for Union County.
Brantley, who scored all

of the Lady Patriots points in the second half, stopped a long scoring drought. She scored six points after the break and was the lone bright spot for the visitors after half time. Fulton's pressure defense forced multiple Union County turnovers and the Lady Falcons dominated the young Lady Patriots on the boards.
The Lady Falcons missed

a few lay-ups on the night but still had enough to force the game to be played with a running clock in the fourth quarter thanks to a balanced scoring attack.
Jayda Johnson and Moneisha Thomas each scored 18 points for Fulton. Tyanna Castle added 10 while Nataya Roller and Victoria Griffin finished with six points apiece.

Brantley's six points paced the Lady Pats. Sierra Clabough finished with four. Shaylinne Flatford and McKenzie Edds had three points each.
Edds hit a 3-pointer that represented all of Union County's first-quarter offensive output.

Powell Middle School's Amari Rodgers attempts a lay-up as Bearden's Dawson Anderson in the Panthers' 41-38 victory over the Bruins last week at Powell Middle School.

South Doyle takes Rugby Sevens Title



Cont. from page 1

record.
"It's good to see these kids win because they're all great kids and great students. They work hard and they play hard."
Lance obviously admires his club's work ethic. He couldn't, however, have expected what he saw after his bruised and battered squad beat the Admirals on a day that began at 9 am.
"I told them that they needed a break because they'd been at this since June," he said. "And I couldn't believe how mad they got at me.
"They were so mad at me that I almost didn't get

out of the room."
The Cherokees will take their break. They'll return to the field in January to prepare for the 15-man season that opens in the spring.
"We'll enjoy our time off," said Cherokees senior co-captain Gabe Harris, who was named the State Tournament's Most Valuable Player. "We were mad when he told us to take some time off.
"We love to practice. In other sports, you don't like to go to practice."
The Cherokees' stay at the Midstate proved to a tough one as South-Doyle opened a long Saturday with a 33-26 victory over

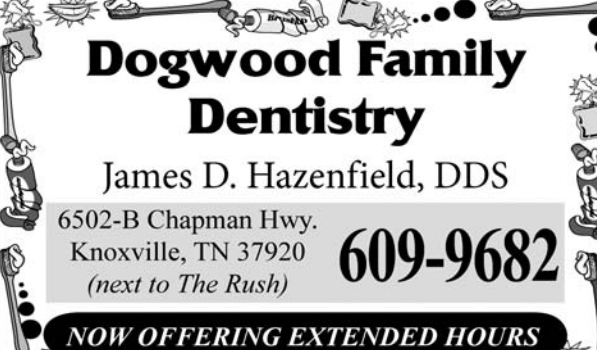
Ravenwood. The Cherokees then knocked off Germantown 29-5. A 38-12 victory then put the 'Kees in the semifinals.
No rugby match is easy but the semifinal match against Sumner County was especially trying for South Doyle, which trailed 14-0 at halftime before storming back. The Cherokees scored 19 unanswered points to capture a thrilling 19-14 win in the match's waning moments.
Lance had high praise for his players, who spent time between matches icing leg injuries.
"We had guys, who couldn't walk between matches," Lance said. "They were at the gas station buying ice. They spent the time between matches icing down."
Harris might've been named MVP but the Cherokees got significant contributions from seniors Seth Ohle (a co-captain), Colton Warner (who play every minute of every match) and Jacob Rule,

who battled multiple injuries. Freshman Jonathan Doster also made big plays for South Doyle.
Harris said the State Championship was a total team effort.
"It was all about the team the whole time," he said. "Coach Lance doesn't keep stats. We want to win.
"I've been playing since my sophomore year and I don't have any idea how many points I've scored."
Lance added that unselfishness has always been a key to his team's success.
"These kids love to play for each other," said Lance, who is an assistant football coach and teacher at the school. "They don't care about [individual] stats and they don't care if there's nobody in the stands.
"They love to practice and they love each other and that's great to see in 2012."




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Do Vols fans still love Tee Martin?

By Alex Norman

In the modern era of Tennessee football, there are few players that mean more to Vols fans than Tee Martin.

That's because without Martin, the Vols don't win the SEC and BCS National Championships in 1998.

And while that is the top of the mountain, look at what else he accomplished in his time at Tennessee.

In his two years as the UT starting quarterback (1998 and 1999); the Vols compiled a 22-3 record. Tennessee advanced to its only two BCS bowl games during those seasons. And Martin did all of this with class. He had a lot of responsibilities as the offensive leader of this team, and he never embarrassed the University.

So why do some Vols fans label him as a traitor?

Well, the short answer

is that some Vols fans are idiots. But they aren't alone. Check out the message boards for Alabama, Ohio State, Texas, etc... idiots help fill out the fan base of every team in America.

But in this specific instance the reason is because last week Martin was offered the Vols wide receiver coach position on new UT head coach Butch Jones' staff.

And he had the audacity to make a decision that he feels is best for him and his family. He's staying in Los Angeles.

If you didn't know, Martin spent last season as the WR coach at Southern California. Yes, the same Southern California where Lane Kiffin, still public enemy #1 in Knoxville, hangs his visor.

In a statement release by Southern Cal, Martin said the following:

"...My decision to remain at

USC was the toughest I have ever had to make because Tennessee is such a special place to me. At the end of the day, I am a man of my word. I promised Coach (Lane) Kiffin when I was hired at USC that I had goals I wanted to accomplish here. We still have work to do here to reach those goals. I see a great future at USC with the players on our roster and the recruits we have coming in."

Martin added, "I have so much love and respect for Tennessee. But at this time, the right decision was to continue at USC and I am looking forward to doing that."

Yes, there is some irony in the fact that Martin is remaining loyal to a guy that showed no loyalty to Tennessee in January of 2010, but I digress...

Let's remember how Martin got to USC in the first

place.

In 2010 and 2011, Martin was the WR coach at Kentucky. Yes, he was the WR coach at UK on a day when a WR played QB and Kentucky beat the Vols for the first time in 27 years.

Following the Vols disastrous 2011 season, Tennessee's assistant coaches bolted in droves, fully understanding that the Vols football program was a dumpster fire under then head coach Derek Dooley. 7 of his 9 assistant coaches left for mostly lateral moves.

Despite the issues on Rocky Top, Martin wanted to come home. He wanted to be a coach at his alma mater.

And Dooley wanted nothing to do with him. This shouldn't come as surprise considering that lack of "enthusiasm" Dooley reportedly had

towards Vol lettermen. I've always wondered if Dooley would have made Al Wilson call ahead before returning to campus. Seriously... I wonder...

Also, according to Erik Ainge, former Vols quarterback and weekday morning talk show host on Tennessee Sports Radio (WVLZ 1180AM), Tennessee athletic director Dave Hart wouldn't even return Martin's phone call.

So when Martin was then offered the same job at USC last February, there were Vols fans that were angry that Martin was heading west to work for Kiffin.

In their warped mindset of those fans, Martin should have turned him down, and waited by the phone for a job offer that wasn't coming back in the winter.

And it is the same insanity

that has those fans ripping Tee Martin on the twitter. A simple search of the @TeeMartin17 mentions calls up some very rude comments.

It isn't everyone... a majority of Vols fans sent Tee their best wishes. But the buffoons that insulted Martin on social media and local sports talk radio were enough to make you notice.

Would the vitriol spewed from Vol nation be as bad if Tee wasn't at USC? Probably not.

Maybe I have a higher standard I'd like to hold fans to... maybe it's my fault for expecting more...

But when one of the most revered athletes to ever wear the Orange and White is treated this way by a vocal segment of fans...

Is it any wonder why he isn't moving back East?

Wolves nab key road victory at Holston

By Ken Lay

Things haven't been easy for the West Valley Middle School boys basketball team early this season.

But the Wolves got on the winning track last week with a 46-41 victory at Holston Thursday night. The win was the second consecutive one for West Valley.

The Wolves (2-6 overall, 2-5 in the Knox County Middle School Basketball Conference) knocked off South-Doyle on Monday, Dec. 10 and coach Chuck Comer is hoping that his squad can now string together some more victories.

"We had a win at South-Doyle and now have two wins in a row," Comer said. "I think the kids played really hard tonight."

Thursday night's win didn't come easily for West Valley but in the end, that didn't matter.

"In the end, we had enough to win," Comer said. "It was a gritty win."

"I was really proud of our kids and I was glad to see them show some grit. We've had some games where we've been soft."

Early on, the game between two struggling teams was a roller-coaster affair. The Hurricanes

and Wolves played evenly and were deadlocked in a 13-13 tie after the first quarter.

Holston (2-6, 1-5) held a 19-17 lead at halftime and opened a 33-31 lead by the end of the third stanza before West Valley gained the upper hand in the final frame.

Konnor Kah scored 16 points for the Wolves, who converted some layups and free throws in the final frame. Kah also got plenty of help from a supporting cast.

Cam Whaley, who has seen limited playing time due to an extended football

season, was big late for the Wolves. He scored all 11 of his points after halftime and dropped six in the fourth quarter. Nick Rogers and Alex Majoras contributed eight points each.

"We have a guy in Cam Whaley who just finished playing football last week," Comer said. I'm really hoping that he can help us.

"He's been missing practice on Friday and you can't play a guy much who misses practice."

It was a big win for the Wolves. The Hurricanes, however, saw their early-season struggles continue.

Holston scored just seven points over the final six minutes.

Despite all that, Hurricanes coach Todd Atkins found plenty to be happy about.

"Our kids played hard and I can't fault their effort," Atkins said. "We played hard and that's what we talk about every day."

"We have some size but we don't have enough of it and our kids gave it all they had."

Quez Glover scored 14 points for Holston. Tanner Rhodes, who was an inside force for the Hurricanes, finished with seven points, many on second chances off offensive rebounds. Dalton Rodgers, Holston's other key inside player, also scored seven points. Troy Martin scored six, including five in the fourth quarter to keep the home team within striking distance.

Fulton survives 'dogfight' against Patriots

Cont. from page 1

Goss buried a shot midway through the final frame.

Norris pulled the Patriots to within 59-51 with a bucket at the 3:57 mark before the Falcons all but put the game away. They took a 62-51 lead when junior guard Josh Nance

buried a 3-pointer a short time later.

"They had some turnovers and we were able to convert and score when things were still tight," Wright said.

Union County got to within nine twice down the stretch but couldn't come any closer.

Nance scored nine of his 15 points in the fourth quarter. He hit a pair of 3-pointers in the final frame. Golden, who finished with 12 points, scored four down the stretch to help Fulton capture a crucial win.

Tayte Kitts scored 13 for UCHS. Brady Nease scored

all eight of his points before halftime to keep the Pats within striking distance.

Muncey kept the Patriots close down the stretch with four fourth-quarter free throws.



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By Ken Lay

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Edds hit a 3-pointer that represented all of Union County's first-quarter offensive output.

Lady Warriors Shoot Down Lady Eagles

The CAK Lady Warriors set out to prove it is not just the men's side of the CAK program which can win big.

CAK welcomed Sacred Heart to their gym Wednesday with an impressive 24-8 victory. The Lady Eagles took a brief 3-2 lead at the end of a mistake-filled first quarter. This proved to be the needed wake-up call for the taller and faster Lady Warriors. Their pressing defense and relentless rebounding held Sacred Heart to a mere six points the final three quarters while racking up twenty-two points of their own. The majority of those points coming off of an amazing thirty-eight forced turnovers.

CAK head coach, Clark Bowling, was proud of his team's overall effort stating everyone contributed to the victory. He pointed out his leading scorers, Claire Brock with six points and Kennedy Smith with four, are six graders which bodes well for the program's future.



A Record Turnout for the 2nd Annual Santa Hustle

Early Sunday December 9 morning, the parkway in Sevierville was filled with thousands of Santas taking part in the 2nd Annual Santa Hustle at Wilderness at the Smokies resort. Nearly 2,500 runners from around the country came to take part in one of the most unique holiday-themed events of the year.

Runners took part in either the half marathon or 5k run/walk and received a Santa hat, beard and a customized shirt to wear while running, and were treated to cookie and candy cane stations on the race course. Following the race, the holiday party continued with a huge after party at the resort, featuring milk and cookies and plenty of holiday music.

"It was a beautiful morning for the race and we enjoyed playing

host to such a fun and unique event once again," said Steve Cruz, General Manager of Wilderness at the Smokies. "The growth from last year to this year was incredible and we are already looking forward to next year's event, which we anticipate will be even larger."

Along with their holiday cheer, runners and spectators were asked to bring a new, unwrapped toy to donate to Toys for Tots in Sevier County, the chosen charity for this year's race. This comes at a critical time for the organization as they have experienced a large shortage this year. In addition to what was collected from participants, Wilderness at the Smokies also made a sizable donation to the group.

"After hearing of the Toys for Tots shortage here in Sevier County, we wanted to get involved



and try to help as many local kids as possible," added Cruz. "Hopefully our donation along with what was collected from the race will help in putting a nice dent in

their current shortage."

For more information on Wilderness at the Smokies, please visit www.wildernessatthesmokies.com.

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a weekly column by
Dr. Jim Ferguson

Traditions only last as long as they work. When the air goes out of a tire it goes flat and no longer serves its purpose. Most of us honor traditions, sometimes longer than they're useful. The trick is to recognize when it's time for a change and replace something staid with something new and vibrant that again captures the reason for the season.

This year the Fergusons are initiating a new Christmas tradition that hopefully will strike a chord and resonate within our family. Above you see Old Glory, but I direct your attention to the smaller flag recently raised over our small farm and homestead in the heart of Knoxville. This year

our extended family will be with us on the land we're developing with my daughter and her family.

We bought our property in 1977 when Becky and I came back to Knoxville. We eventually built a home and then a family and many traditions over the last thirty plus years. But this year my extended family will join us on Christmas Eve at Thistle Farms. Becky and I acknowledge that we've been blessed, even though it hasn't always been easy. The Scottish emblem of the Ferguson Clan says much about our journey. The crest has a thistle and a bee and the motto, "Dulcius ex asperis," – sweeter after difficulty.

Traditions help to

refocus us in this Christmas and Advent Season, and many of our old traditions will continue. Cutting our own Christmas tree (like Chevy Chase in Christmas Vacation) is one I especially like. Ringing bells for the Salvation Army was especially memorable this year because Oakley joined us dressed up like an elf. He was, I assure you, a lot cuter than Will Farrow. Our nine year old grandson, Noah, introduced me to his tradition of the Elf on the Shelf. Have you heard of this one? Santa moves his elf from room to room every night during December to watch out for who's been naughty or nice. Santa, the Spirit of Christmas, is a very resourceful fellow.

I have a friend who loves old movies. She is an expert on these old screen gems and their sirens. My weakness is Christmas movies which range from "It's a Wonderful Life" and "White Christmas" to modern classics like "Home Alone" and a "Christmas Story." My son-in-law's favorite (and sometimes mine) is "Christmas Vacation." How ironic

that Randy Quaid, who played Cousin Eddie in the National Lampoon movie, has become his namesake in real life.

Even though old movies are not my cup of tea, there's something different about Christmas movies that affects me in some mysterious way. Each year beginning at Thanksgiving as we enjoy them again my mood is transformed. When I was a boy in grammar school we would all go to the gymnasium, sit on the floor and watch "A Christmas Carol." As a mischievous little boy, perhaps in some way I identified with Ebenezer Scrooge who was given a second chance. Thankfully, in those days schools didn't have to be concerned about political correctness and the ACLU.

I still reflect on that old movie and its lessons. One of my favorite renditions of Dickens' immortal tale is "The Muppet Christmas Carol." Before you snicker I challenge you to watch Kermit the Frog play Bob Cratchit and lead his family in Paul Williams's beautiful and Spirit-filled song, "Bless Us All." You will tear up.

I also like Bill Murray's shtick in "Scrooged."

However, as I watched Patrick Stewart play Scrooge in another version, it came to me why Christmas movies resonate with me. As I watched Scrooge's transformation I realized that Christmas movies melt my heart just as the Christmas Spirits melted Scrooge's. And at a deeper philosophical level, Scrooge at one point asks his dead partner why "Spirits walk the Earth." Jacob Marley replies that "It is required of every man that the Spirit within him should walk abroad among his fellow men...and if that Spirit goes not forth in life it is condemned to do so after death." Marley then says "I wear the chains I forged in life."

We all know how the story ends through many tellings, but Stewart's powerful performance of Dickens' message refocuses me on what's important in this life. Another mentor of Scrooge tells him that "when happiness shows up always give it a comfortable seat." Good advice to us all as we

experience the troubles
of our modern times.

Scrooge was given a unique gift, like George Bailey in Capra's, "It's a Wonderful Life". Most of us don't get magical do-overs, but we can make amends.

The Master of this season is the author of forgiveness and only asks that we bend a knee to Him rather than to power or man's latest idol. The elitists of our day tell us that these stories and lessons are for saps and that they are not bound by the lessons of history or His Majesty. I feel sad for these lost souls whom I suspect may one day see things differently as they walk alongside Jacob Marley through eternity.

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**By Lisa Lawson
The Medicine Shoppe,
Chapman Highway**

If you have not received your flu (influenza) vaccine this year, now would be a good time to go. The flu season has hit hard and hit early this year with high activity in Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee and Texas according to the CDC.

The good news is that this year's flu shot seems to be a 90% match. That means that getting the flu shot will severely decrease your chances of getting the disease and most insurance companies will cover the cost both in doctor's offices, clinics, and pharmacies.

Vitamin D3 supplementation is also a good idea. Studies have shown that nursing home residents

given 2000U a day along with their influenza vaccine were half as likely to get the flu compared to the residents just given the influenza vaccine. Vitamin D3 has antiviral properties against influenza A and B if given in pharmacological doses for three days with efficacy similar to prescription antivirals and can be obtained at the local pharmacy for a reasonable cost.

Since the vaccine may take up to two weeks to develop immunity, if exposed, you may need to receive a prescription anti-viral medication to help prevent symptoms in those at greatest risk such as the elderly, patients with respiratory and heart disease, children, and those who have compromised immune systems.

There are currently four medications to treat influenza, although only two treat both influenza A and B. These two medications are zanamivir (Relenza) and oseltamivir (Tamiflu). Resistance has been seen with the other two medications amantadine and rimantidine and their use is limited. Due to concerns about resistance and high cost, prevention is preferred. Always practice good hand washing techniques and get plenty of rest since stress can decrease the body's immune system. There are also other natural products that have had some success in prevention and treatment and would be glad to talk to you about those products at The Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy.

Middle school students who are more physically fit make better grades and outperform their classmates on standardized tests, according to a newly published study from a professor at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

The study is among the first to examine how academic achievement relates to all aspects of physical fitness including endurance, muscular strength, flexibility and body fat.

It appears in this month's issue of the *Journal of Sports Medicine and Physical Fitness*.

“Not only does improving fitness have physical health implications for the child, it also has implications for their academic achievement,” said Dawn Coe, assistant professor in the UT Department of Kinesiology, Recreation, and Sport Studies, and the lead researcher on the study.

"We know a lot of schools are cutting out physical education classes and physical activity opportunities throughout the day. Some of my previous research showed that if kids have one

hour of physical education during the day instead of an academic class, they did not show a decrease in academic achievement compared with students who received an extra hour of academic instruction per day. By being active, they could potentially raise their grades."

Coe, who conducted the study while a doctoral student at Michigan State University, examined 312 sixth- through eighth-graders from a single public school in western Michigan. She conducted a series of assessments on the students including shuttle runs, curls-ups and push-ups. She then measured the children's academic achievement in four core classes over the course of one school year as well as their performance on a standardized test.

She found that the students with the highest fitness levels performed better on the standardized exam and earned better grades.

“Youth who are engaged in a physically active lifestyle reap benefits not only in their physical health but also

Continued on page 2

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Faith

History of Christmas

(Part One of Two)

Christmas stirs emotions in all of us. For some it is painful due to the absence of a loved one. For others, it creates headaches trying to figure out what to buy for everyone with a limited budget. For still others, it is a festive time of year where Santa Claus, gifts, food, singing, parties, and family bring smiles on the face. For many Christians, it is a time to talk about and celebrate the birth of Christ. But I do know Christians who choose to ignore or at least deemphasize the birth of Jesus aspect



By Mark Brackney,
Minister of the
Arlington Church
of Christ

to Christmas. Some of us grew up being told that Christmas has pagan roots and should not be celebrated. Is that true?

Christmas has always been controversial. It was slow to catch on in the Christian world. The Catholics accepted it first. The Protestants took much longer, into the mid-1800's for most of them. To find the origins of Christmas, we must go back to visit what was happening for this mid-winter celebration to begin.

Mesopotamians celebrated 12 days at the midwinter to assist

their god, Marduk, in this battle against the monsters of chaos. The Greeks had a similar belief and celebration to encourage the god of time, Kronos, to fight the darkness away. Rome had Saturnalia (who gives his name to Saturday), a feast that began in mid-December and continued until January 1st. It included masquerades, big meals, visiting friends, and the exchange of good luck gifts with friends. They placed laurel and green trees in their home and kept candles on all day.

In Northern Europe, the people lived in constant fear of catastrophe, disease, hunger, or sudden violence. When the dark

times came, they needed something to give them hope and a reason to hold on until spring. In Scandinavia and Scotland, where the sun can disappear for days at a time, they would send out scouts to the highest mountains. When they saw the sun they would return with the news. A great festival would be held, called the Yuletide, and bonfires would be lit all around the region. Some tied dried apples and fruit to trees to hasten the return of spring.

Among all the Celtic, German, and Scandinavian peoples were common elements to their mid-winter celebrations.

Evergreens – a symbol of life.

Mistletoe – since it grew high in the trees, it was considered a gift from God assuring us that life goes on despite the dead of winter.

Gifts were given as a way of saying “you are treasured; you will live through this dark time and prosper again one day.” To give a gift was a real sacrifice; a statement of faith.

Lights were put out for display whether from bonfires, Yule logs, candles, or shiny things hung in evergreens. It was a way to bring light back into the home and hope back into the heart.

Trees were originally hung upside down from the ceiling and decorated with food and shiny things to represent the goodness of God. It later was used to explain the Trinity.

Songs have always been used to drive back the power of darkness. You have the rebel yell, rocky top, bonsai, to spirituals sung by slaves, to carols in the dark.

Next week we will continue our discussion on the history of the celebration of Christmas.

Church Happenings

Beaver Ridge United Methodist Church

Beaver Ridge United Methodist Church, 7753 Oak Ridge Hwy (The Church With a Heart in the Heart of Karns) will start a new session of Weight Watchers on Jan. 2, 2013. These classes will go for 10 weeks. New or Renewing Members cost will be \$125, Continuing and Transferring Members cost will be \$120, and Lifetime Members Over Goal cost will be \$110. Lynda is a great leader and this group has lost over 600 pounds since starting last Feb. 2012! Payment must be made before the first meeting on Jan 2. Payments can be left at the Church Office in an envelope, please write “Weight Watcher” on the envelope. For more Information please call Jane Damiano: 938-4768 or the church office: 690-1060

There will be two Christmas Eve Candlelight Services: at 5:00 p.m. there will be an informal service with young children in mind and at 8:00 p.m. there will be a traditional service with trumpet, choir and candlelight. See us on the web: www.beaverridgeumc.com.

Central United Methodist Church

Central United Methodist Church, 201 Third Avenue, Knoxville, TN. will be hosting two Christmas Eve Services, one at 5:00 p.m. and another at 11:00 p.m. Each service will feature special music, scripture, lighting the Christ Candle and will close with a candlelight service

Grace Baptist, Seymour

Wednesday, Dec. 19. A group is going caroling to visit those who cannot join us. There will have two Caroling teams; one led by Choir Director Danny Jett and the second, led by Asst. Choir Director, Tom McCarter. The youth will be joining both the caroling teams. We will leave the church at 7:00 p.m. Everyone is welcome! Come and join in this very happy and reverent event.

Tuesday, Dec. 24. The Christmas Eve candlelight service starts at 5:30 p.m. The short service will end with singing carols outside the church with candles glowing. If your church isn't having this service, come and join us.

Seymour United Methodist Church

on Wednesday, the Parents Day Out program will hold a Christmas Program and Cookies with Santa beginning at 7 p.m. Contact PDO Director, Angie Stafford for information and details.

The Praise Band will hold their regular weekly rehearsal at 7:45 p.m. on Wed., 12/19/12 under direction of Cliff Kee.

On Sunday, at 7 p.m., the rehearsal for the “Christmas Choir” (Chancel Choir plus all volunteers) will be held.

Looking ahead to Christmas Eve, candlelight worship services with Holy Communion will be offered at both 7 and 11 p.m. Come join us for this celebration of the birth of Jesus!

Students Who Are More Physically Fit Perform Better Academically

Cont. from page 1

in other aspects of their well-being, such as mental health and academic performance,” the report states.

To learn more about the study, visit <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23187329>.

To obtain a copy of the study, email lalapo@utk.edu or dcoc@utk.edu.

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www.meridianbaptist.org
E-mail: webmaster@meridianbaptist.org

Sunday Schedule

9:30 a.m. Sunday School
10:50 a.m. Morning Worship
6:00 p.m. Evening Worship
Wednesday Schedule
6:15 p.m. Prayer Meeting

Holiday Schedule

Sunday, Dec. 2nd - 6:00 p.m. Hanging of the Green Service
Sunday, Dec. 9th - 10:50 a.m. Young at Heart Choir Christmas Music
Sunday, Dec. 16th - 6:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir Christmas Music Sunday,
Dec. 23rd - 4:00 p.m. Candlelight Communion Service

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Wednesday Bible Study - 6:30 p.m.

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The Gold Bug

No vaccine or antibiotic has ever kept the gold bug at bay and in these last few years we have experienced an enormous rise in the price of gold. The old saying “gold is the king of metals and the metal of kings” has been proven true so let’s take a look at the recent trend.



By Carl Sloan

About six years ago, prices for pure gold were fluctuating around the \$600 mark and that was thought to be considered high end. Then suddenly it hit \$700 then \$750 and stalled a bit before hitting \$900 dollars and causing a frenzy that would continue to make history every week before meeting resistance at the \$1200 to \$1400 mark. At this point I was hearing that gold was a hedge for the great recession and could reach the \$2,500 mark before settling down.

With gold near \$1,800 today it looks like they who know could be right. However, “will it last?” is the great question to ask. I say no to this question for several reasons. Gold is still being mined and old tailings from mines are being aggressively recovered with new technology. Gold, like paper money, is a faith based value situation and is highly susceptible to many world views and evolutions even on a daily basis so to invest in any

commodity over the long term can be a significant risk and not something to bet the farm on all at once.

Silver has spiked as well being pulled up as a commodity from its decades old slumber of \$5- \$6 to the \$35-\$40 per ounce range. Be careful as there is a lot of silver out there and silver mines are at work everyday, not to mention the tons of it we personally own in vases, coins, flatware and all sorts of items.

Gold and silver are hoarded worldwide yet there is a time to consider the risk of not selling those metals that one has no real investment in such as coins and such held for years on end. The belief that in a dire circumstance precious metals will be the only thing traded and recognized as currency is foolish in my opinion. I’ve always said that when the going gets really tough and I have a bushel of corn and you have an ounce of gold, it will be me that tells you what your gold is worth and not the internet or market value set in London every day.

If you need a free and honest assessment for your items simply call Fountain City Auction at (865)604-3468. I will get back with you right away as spaces for January sales are limited. I am always glad to meet you at no cost for any assessment.

UT Gardens, KUB partner on Right Tree, Right Place Demonstration

A new tree demonstration garden in the University of Tennessee Gardens is being funded by the Knoxville Utilities Board to educate the public about planting the “Right Tree in the Right Place” around utility lines. Between the design of the garden, plants used, and interpretative signage, the new garden is a great resource in educating the public about how to plant around utility lines to avoid the deep pruning that has been required on many large, established trees in the Knoxville area. The partnership and collaboration between KUB and UT Gardens support the mission of both groups. Both want to promote the planting of trees and ensure their long-term survival in the landscape, and this demonstration garden does just that.

“The UT Gardens is a perfect venue for The Right Tree, Right Place Demonstration since we are a public garden providing educational opportunities for not only UT faculty and students but the Knoxville community as well. Visitors will be able to see firsthand examples of different tree species appropriately planted under and around power lines based upon their long-term mature size,”



A new tree demonstration garden in the UT Gardens, Knoxville, is a partnership with the Knoxville Utilities Board to educate the public on planting the Right Tree in the Right Place. Kneeling (L to R): UT Facility Services Nathan Ownby and Jacob Capps; KUB in safety vests (L to R): Bill Julian, Elizabeth Hannah; Back (L to R): UT Facility Services Ted Murphy, Jason Cottrell, Larry Stalans, Harley Finley, Duane Atkins, Tony Aparijo, Brickey Hearon, Gunaranjan Arepalli, and UT Gardens Director, Dr. Sue Hamilton.

said Sue Hamilton, UT Gardens director.

The demonstration site provides education on protecting trees as a valuable resource and keeping power lines clear. Trees are beautiful and important to our environment, but trees growing near or into power lines are a danger and may cause power outages. Having power interrupted is annoying, and it can also be dangerous. When a tree comes in contact with a power line, it gives electrical current a path to the ground. That

makes it a potential electrocution hazard to crews restoring service and to the public.

“As a public utility, KUB is responsible for providing safe and reliable power to our customers,” said Mintha Roach, KUB president and CEO. “We take this responsibility seriously, and our crews work hard to keep power lines clear and to balance the beauty of trees with our commitment to serving customers. By planting the right tree in the right place, customers can

help keep our community beautiful and help protect themselves and KUB crews who work on power lines.”

If you would like more information on the Right Tree in the Right Place Demonstration, visit kub.org to learn more about tree planting, pruning and other options; view videos or sample photos of pruned trees; and find answers to frequently asked questions. You can also view the “KUB Tree Pruning: A Customer Guide” brochure online.

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Red Velvet Cheesecake Swirl Brownies

Red Velvet Brownie Layer:

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1 cup sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/4 cup cocoa powder
Pinch salt
1 tablespoon red food coloring
1 teaspoon vinegar
2 eggs
3/4 cup all-purpose flour
1/4 cup chopped toasted walnuts

Cream Cheese Layer:

8 ounces cream cheese, softened
1/4 cup sugar
1 egg
1/8 teaspoon vanilla extract

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.
Butter an 8 by 8-inch baking pan, and set aside.
Brownie layer: In a saucepan on medium heat melt the butter. Remove the butter to a large bowl and add the sugar, vanilla, cocoa powder, salt, food coloring, and vinegar, in that order, mixing between additions. Whisk the eggs in a small bowl and stir it into the cocoa mix. Fold in the flour until lightly combined. Stir in the walnuts and pour the batter into the prepared baking pan, saving 1/4 cup of the batter for the top.

Cream cheese layer: Blend together the cream cheese, sugar, egg, and vanilla in a medium bowl. Gently spread the cream cheese layer on top of the brownie batter in the pan. Dollop the remaining brownie batter over the cream cheese layer. Using a skewer or the tip of a knife, drag the tip through the cream cheese mixture to create a swirl pattern. Bake the brownies for 30 minutes. Allow them to cool completely before cutting.

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