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Boat rental vendor at The Cove being audited

By Mike Steely
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The Knox County Audit Committee has asked the internal auditor to look into the previous three years of the contracted vendor at The Cove on Fort Loudoun Lake. The matter came up last week during the audit committee's meeting led by Commissioner John Schoonmaker, who said he is wondering if River Sports Outfitters has paid the county the proper percentage of sales as agreed.

The matter began several months ago when the renting of kayaks and equipment there came up for bids. River Sports, the vendor there for 15 years, won a bid to continue although their bid was apparently higher.

A complaint was filed with Andrea Addis, the internal auditor, and she asked the audit committee if

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Hallsdale-Powell CEO Darren Cardwell holds a sign acknowledging the company's contributions to the Halls Outdoor Classroom at an annual celebration Thursday night. Knox County Watershed Coordinator Roy Arthur (right) was emcee and presented Cardwell with the sign.

PHOTO BY BETH A. LEE

Three Schools Present Dance and Arts Showcase

Three Knox County magnet schools will host a spring showcase on May 4-6 highlighting each of their unique dance and arts programs.

Students at Austin-East Magnet High School, Vine Middle Magnet and Beaumont Magnet Academy will perform during the three-day event, which will be held in the Austin-East

Performing Arts Auditorium at 2800 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave.

Programming will begin at 6 p.m. on May 4-5 with a preschool featuring performances by Beaumont Magnet Academy Theater, Vine Chorus and Austin-East Theater and Chorus. The showcase will follow with performances by

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Halls marks milestone for outdoor classroom

By Ken Lay

The air smelled of barbecue and the Halls High School band's saxophone ensemble played a few classic jazz tunes while the community's schools celebrated a milestone anniversary for the Halls High School outdoor classroom Thursday night.

The classroom benefits students in all areas at HHS, Halls Middle School, Adrian Burnett Elementary School, Halls Elementary School and Brickley-McCloud Elementary School, and it was conceived in 2003 to benefit

students in the Halls Community.

Thursday night's celebration marked the 10th annual party for the classrooms.

The schools' students and teachers may reap the benefits of the outdoor classroom, which was made accessible to students with disabilities after last year's celebration.

Roy Arthur, Knox County Watershed Coordinator, was the Master of Ceremonies and he noted that "there was plenty to celebrate."

This year, those associated with

the Halls Outdoor Classroom, celebrated its corporate sponsors and partners.

"We have numerous partners and there are far too many to mention here," Arthur said before presenting a sign to Hallsdale-Powell Utilities District Chief Executive Officer Darren Cardwell. That sign will soon be seen in front of the Hallsdale-Powell Customer Service Building.

Other partners recognized included

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Plans announced for youth facility in Lonsdale

By Pete Gauds

"This will be a place for children to grow up, have fun and be safe," stated Steve Diggs, CEO of Emerald Youth Foundation. He speaking at a ceremony Thursday afternoon held to announce a proposed \$10 million sports complex that is planned in Lonsdale as a joint endeavor between the city, the county, the school system and his organization.

"We believe every child in every neighborhood should have a full life, the kind of life Christ wants them to have," Diggs said.

The proposed complex will consist of two multipurpose synthetic turf athletic fields for soccer, flag football and other sports as well as a 30,000 square foot multipurpose building housing, among other things, two gymnasiums, a fitness area with weight room, an assembly room and a worship and performing arts

area. It is to be located on Texas Avenue between Stonewall and Sherman Streets near Sam E. Hill Preschool.

The sports facility will be administered by Emerald Youth Foundation, a Christian, urban youth ministry that serves more than 2,000 children, teen, young adults and their families in Knoxville.

"I believe we are standing in a transformative community development project that Lonsdale deserves and the community has asked for," stated Kevin DuBoise division director of community development for Emerald Youth Foundation.

"I think this is a perfect response to the spoken demand of the people," stated Knoxville Mayor Madeline Rogero. She emphasized that the project was just a proposal at this time. The city council, the county commission and



Artist rendering of the proposed \$10 million sports facility for Lonsdale.

the school board must act to make it become a reality. Referring to the children seated before her the mayor said, "We want to give them something outstanding." The mayor said the city's involvement included 10 acres of property worth \$1 million and an additional \$1 million in infrastructure such as sidewalks, streetslights and landscaping. The remaining \$8 million is to come from private investors.

Newly appointed Superintendent Bob Thomas said the children of Lonsdale,

whom he called "the leaders of the future," would be the beneficiaries of the project.

"I am encouraged because this is all about our children," asserted Rev. Joseph B. Smith, Jr., Pastor of New Friendship Baptist Church. "We want to make this the best project in Tennessee." He urged the audience to keep praying.

After the ceremony Diggs said that while there is no schedule for completion of the project he hoped that children would be using the facility in late 2018.

County seeking state funds for litter control

By Mike Steely

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One of the most persistent complaints by citizens directed to Knox County is the increase in litter along county roads. The problem has grown since the state forbade involuntary litter pickup by DUI offenders, cutting back on the number of people manning the three county litter crews.

Last week the Knox County Commission authorized an application for next fiscal year, beginning in July, to the Tennessee Department of Transportation for \$269,000.

Drew Thurman, compliance manager with the Knox County Solid Waste Department, said the trash pickup is now relying on volunteer workers from other courts for offenses like drug possession, and as an

alternative to criminal court fees and jail time.

Commissioner Carson Dailey said the county lost 80,000 man hours after the legislature passed the new DUI rules about using those offenders for trash pickup.

"Trash pickup is one of our most requested services," Thurman said. Dailey said he has spoken with the Lieutenant Governor about changing the law back to require DUI offenders to take part.

Thurman said his department works with residents and neighborhoods, supplies items and urged anyone to adopt a road to clean up. He said his department cannot use funds to clean dumps or do waste cleanup.

Commissioner Michele

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