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The Old Time String Band was a crowd-pleaser at Festival. Photos by Pete Gawda.

Vestival offers family fun

By Pete Gawda

South Knoxville's heritage and the benefits offered by that area were showcased in the 17th Annual Vestival, held Saturday in the South Knoxville neighborhood of Vestal. This year's theme was "Live, Work, Play, South of the River." The event was held on the grounds of the historic Candor Marble Works which supplied East Tennessee marble for public buildings throughout the country.

Despite the overcast start to the day, organizer Chelsea Voelker was expecting 12,000 people to visit the 56 vendors who had booths for the event.

Vestival started with a Mothers' Day brunch to honor the mothers of the community. The event was held on the grounds of the historic Candor Marble Works which supplied East Tennessee marble for public buildings throughout the country.

Continued on page 4



Colorfully dressed Mercedes Olanca was painting faces at Vestival on Saturday.

Lonsdale Sports Complex questioned at City Council

By Mike Steely
steelym@knoxfocus.com

Mayor Madeline Rogers' city budget passed its first reading during the Knoxville City Council's meeting Tuesday along with continuing the tax rate at \$2.7257 per \$100 of appraised property value. Councilman Nick Della Volpe explained that the passage on the first reading was traditional and that the public will have an opportunity to comment before a second and final council vote.

The council also heard an exchange between Mayor Rogers and Maurice Clark concerning the city's involvement with a proposed Emerald Youth Sports Complex in Lonsdale. Clark spoke during the public forum at the end of the meeting, asking the mayor to "halt discussion of the sale" so

opponents can be heard.

Rogers said she has invited Clark to meet with her on the issue but Clark said he'd prefer to speak in public. He asked that the opponents of the proposed agreement between the city and Emerald Youth stand together and then there may be better use of the land there. Clark said that a number of Lonsdale people question the idea and he said they feel "like it was dropped in their lap."

The mayor responded that the current process includes Emerald Youth talking with about 200 people in Lonsdale adding, "So now we can have a discussion."

"We have to come up with a proposal, the school has to give up the property and the school board must approve," Rogers said.

"There's been lots of mischaracterization and false information out

there," she said.

Clark, asked if the mayor would meet with the community about the project and Rogers said, "Set a date and invite the broader Lonsdale community."

Earlier in the meeting the city council honored the memory of the late James (Jim) Thornley Bleher, a former city council member, coach, UT concession and promotions director, and community activist. His wife, Donna, spoke briefly thanking the council for the honor.

The planning commission's historic preservation planner, Kaye Graybeal, gave a summary of the annual Preservation Report and noted that Knox Heritage will announce its Fragile 15 list today at 11 a.m. at the Old Knoxville High School. She also highlighted several local projects completed

Continued on page 2

MPC sends short-term rental ordinance on to city council

By Ken Lay

The Knoxville Metropolitan Planning Commission voted to send the proposed ordinance on short-term rentals to the city council without a recommendation to approve or deny it at the commission's monthly meeting on Thursday afternoon at the City-County Building.

The ordinance would require Knoxville residents who rent all or part of their houses to visitors to obtain a permit and possibly pay a hotel taxes and have a person on call to handle issues.

Should city council pass the ordinance, homeowners who rent out rooms in their residences could no longer do so in R-1 or R-1-E residential areas.

The ordinance will come before city council sometime next month.

Bill Lyons, Deputy to the Mayor of Knoxville said that the city wanted to protect

the fabric of neighborhoods and make sure that no harm was done.

"We have 200 or 300 Airbnb houses in Knoxville and we wanted to make sure that we did no harm to the neighborhoods," Lyons said.

Opponents to the proposed ordinance said that it would exclude these homes from being rented on a permanent basis.

Proponents, meanwhile, said that the short-term rentals would provide guests with an alternative to hotels.

Metropolitan Planning Commission Chairperson Rebecca Longmire said that she felt that short-term rentals have their place in Knoxville.

"Sometimes, when a family has a wedding, you need to find a place for everybody to stay," she said. "Some people don't want to stay in hotels."

Continued on page 2

'Give A Day Knoxville' event to celebrate volunteer spirit

Tapping into the famous Tennessee volunteer spirit, Knoxville Mayor Madeline Rogers and Knox County Mayor Tim Burchett invite the people of greater Knoxville to participate in a new community-wide volunteer initiative called "Give A Day Knoxville."

From Sept. 2 to Sept. 8, 2017, everyone in the community - from local businesses to city and county residents - is encouraged to give back during this week-long event by volunteering, donating to United Way or simply sharing a small act of kindness.

"Give A Day Knoxville comes at the perfect time," said Knoxville Mayor Madeline Rogers. "With the extraordinary efforts made by our community to help victims of last year's wildfires, it's pretty clear that Knoxvilleans are compassionate people, ready and willing to jump in to provide help when it's needed. Give A Day is an opportunity to spotlight that compassion and bring the entire community together to celebrate it."

"Tennessee is called the Volunteer State for a reason," said Knox County Mayor Tim Burchett. "Faring Give A Day Knoxville with the United Way Campaign is great way to underscore that even a simple act of kindness can go a very long way. Year after year, I know this week-long effort will remind us all why we are proud to call Knox County home."

Give A Day Knoxville will be supported by Scripps Networks Interactive, whose Chairman, President and CEO, Ken Lowe, is this year's United Way Campaign Chair. Volunteer East Tennessee, a regional volunteer action center that connects volunteers with community organizations in 25 counties throughout East Tennessee, will coordinate all volunteer activities.

Those interested in participating can find more information about sponsorships at VolunteerETN.org. Give A Day Knoxville projects will be publicized in July.



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