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Early voting for city council seats underway

Are you registered?

By Mike Steely
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Early voting to elect five new Knoxville City Council members began Wednesday and continues until Thursday, November 2. The general election is November 7 and it's too late to register for this election.

Not sure if you're a registered

Knoxville voter? You can easily check by going online to www.knoxcounty.org/election/, the Knox County Election Commission site, and clicking on "Am I registered to vote?" That links you directly to the state site where you will answer a few easy questions.

You'll be asked your last and

first name, the year of your birth, and the last four digits of your social security number. If you are registered you will be given your voter ID number, polling location and district information.

You can get the same information at the GoVoteTN website, www.govotetn.com.

The Knoxville Election Commission site also can give you locations of early voting, times, and a sample ballot.

You can access "Officials and

Candidates" there and see candidate petitions for office and financial disclosure information. The website also lets you access the candidates' contact information.

Early voting locations include the City-County Building, Downtown West, the Love Kitchen, New Harvest Park, and the Cecil Webb Recreation Center, a new location behind Old South Knoxville High School.

The hours vary during Early

Voting but basically from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. Monday through Friday and 11 a.m. until 5 p.m. on Saturdays. Early voting hours are extended until 7 p.m. on the last two days, Wednesday and Thursday, November 1 and 2.

All registered Knoxville City residents may vote in all five elections. The top two candidates were selected to run during a primary where only district voters could cast a ballot. Now everyone

Continued on page 3

County Commission to vote on unauthorized school system purchase

By Mike Steely
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The Knox County Commission meets this evening at 5 p.m. to take up an agenda they reviewed during their workshop last week. Among the items is an unauthorized \$450,000 purchase for renovations to the Karns High School Culinary Arts Department.

While the commission normally does not question expenditures by the school system the agenda item drew some comments and a talk by Superintendent Bob Thomas who took the blame and said the "internal controls were not enough" to catch the purchase.

The resolution calls for the commission to approve \$450,000 in a contract with Shelton General Contractors. Thomas said the agreement was signed prior to his taking office and without any approval by the school's business office. He said that "probably a half a dozen policies were violated."

"I apologize it ever got to this point," the superintendent told the work session. He described the initial contract agreement as a "failure to provide oversight of the individual who took on this project."

Payment authorization may be voted on today as questions continue about possible action to be taken by the school system or the county law department against the unauthorized purchase.

The commission may also discuss renting a parking lot at the school system's 5th Avenue Building for \$45,045 next year with a 3% increase each year thereafter. Russ Oaks, the system's Chief Operations Officer, told the council's work session that the facility is "landlocked" and needs the three-acre parking lot, which includes a small storage building.

Also up for discussion is a \$450,000 school agreement with Mobile Fixture to purchase and install dishwashing machines in school cafeterias with an option for four more years, one year at a time. The idea is to replace the machines that have been leased.

The commission is also being asked, by the sheriff's

Continued on page 2

First tournament trip nets state title for Berean Christian



State Champions. Berean Christian celebrates its first-ever state volleyball championship. The Lady Eagles claimed the Class A Title by sweeping South Greene in Murfreesboro Thursday afternoon. See this week's Sports for more state results from last week. Photo Submitted.

By Ken Lay

MURFREESBORO --- Berean Christian Academy made its first-ever trip to the Class A State Tournament and the Lady Eagles came home with the ultimate prize.

Berean Christian swept South Greene 25-17, 25-23, 25-16 Thursday afternoon before a boisterous crowd at Middle Tennessee State University's

Murphy Center. The Lady Eagles (32-4) had a relatively easy time with the Lady Rebels in the opening set despite the fact that the inaugural game was tied three times. The Lady Eagles, however, never trailed in the set.

Game 2 was a different story and it may have been the most competitive set of any in the championship round. The set was tied 16

times and the lead changed hands on eight occasions. But when the dust had settled, Berean prevailed and from there, the Lady Rebels would go relatively quietly in the third set.

"That second game was big and I think it might've taken the wind out of their sails a little bit," Lady Eagles coach Cory Felts said. "That game really could've gone either way

and it was big for us to win.

"We only have about 125 kids [enrolled in the school] and the team that comes in during the summer is my team. I've never made the cut. These kids have really worked hard because I have them play a tough schedule against great teams. I'm extremely proud of these kids."

Continued on page 3

Three new ethics members to be chosen

By Mike Steely
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The search to fill three empty seats on the Knox County Ethics Committee continued last week as four candidates spoke before the Knox County Commission. Vying for the two open commission-selected seats are Anthony

(Tony) Brown, Michael Covington, Billy Stephens and attorney Jed McKeehan.

County Mayor Tim Burchett has chosen Jennifer Roche as his appointment.

Today's commission meeting might see the committee seats being filled.

The Ethics Committee is made up by an appointed commissioner, a representative of the mayor's office, a sheriff's representative, three citizens chosen by the county mayor and three citizens chosen by the county commission.

Changes involving the ethics

group's power have evolved in recent years so that the County Law Department now reviews cases and presents valid claims to the committee. The committee may make recommendations back to the law department or other departments of county government involving complaints

after a public hearing on the complaint.

Armstrong told The Focus Tuesday that the Ethics Committee, which normally meets each quarter, can be called into a special meeting. He said it's time for the committee to reorganize and choose officers.



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