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Don't miss the Fountain City Advertisement Auction!

By Mike Steely
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If you are a collector of nostalgic items or simply like to remember your childhood you have got to make plans to attend the Fountain City Auction Saturday at noon. Owner Greg Lawson has been collecting items all year and there's hundreds and hundreds of memorabilia that will be sold to the highest bidder.

This year you can bid online, by phone or in person. The 13th Annual Advertisement and Toy Auction draws people from several states who are looking for that special item or wanting to add to their collection.

You will find everything from a 1950s Coca-Cola School Guard Sign to John Deere items and pinball machines. There are small

cash register banks, all kinds of gasoline pumps and signs, and even a fire truck door from Ladder Company Number One of the Knoxville Fire Department.

"We also have a 1960s Servi-cycle," Lawson said. "It is a rare old bike that is belt-driven with motor. These were used for delivery service."

There are several regular takes—everything from Mello Yellow to Western Flyer, early metal soldiers in boxes, Coca-Cola items, full size and miniature gasoline pumps, a six-foot tall Service Station Man, and kids riding toys. There's even an original Soap Box Derby car, original oil bottles with spouts, and a double-sided parking meter.

Other items include neon signs, thermometers,

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PHOTO BY MIKE STEELY

Fountain City Auction owner Greg Lawson puts the finishing touches on the items for sale at Saturday's annual Advertisement and Toy Auction. "At last year's advertisement sale we had visitors from more than 14 states in addition to online bidders from across the country," Lawson told The Focus.

Hyatt Place ceremonies cap a year of redevelopment

By Mike Steely
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The recent ceremonies opening Hyatt Place Knoxville Downtown ended a year of renovation and construction projects that the City of Knoxville is very proud of. The Hyatt Place is a total renovation of the hundred-year-old Farragut Hotel by a very engaged Dover Development. It is also just one of the many, many improvements taking place in Knoxville.

The first Hyatt-branded hotel in the city will feature the brand's intuitive design, casual atmosphere and practical amenities like free Wi-Fi and 24-hour food offerings. The 165-room hotel will offer a gallery kitchen breakfast, an on-site Starbucks, a Coffee to Cocktails Bar, meeting spaces, a 24-hour gym, valet parking, dry cleaning service and pet-friendly rooms.

The redevelopment also features an open-air rooftop space for special events and the hotel will maintain some of the Farragut Hotel's original features such as the original staircase of pink marble, works from local artists, and will house a Tennessee Theater ticket office and the Legacy Parks downtown office.

"The Farragut Hotel was a place of special memories for many of the people of Knoxville. We're so excited to breathe new life into this landmark property," said Trenton Keelen, General Manager.

The Hyatt Place Knoxville is owned by Dover and managed by Indiana-based White Lodging.

The Hyatt Place was noted by Mayor Madeline Rogero in a lengthy news release of the many projects completed or underway. She hit some major redevelopment milestones that began with the Hyatt and went on to another major milestone, the KUB Building where the Tombras Group is finishing up a \$10 million renovation there.

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MLK Celebration begins Friday

By Mike Steely
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"Transforming the Community by Committing to Service" is this year's theme of Knoxville's annual celebration of the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The celebration started in 1982 and features various events including the popular public march.

Eight days of celebrations starts Friday with a kick-off at the Gallery of Arts at 5 p.m. A juried exhibition is being held to recognize local artists and, most importantly, the legacy of Dr. King.

On Wednesday next week the Mount Zion Baptist Church hosts an Interfaith Prayer Service at 11:30 a.m. to bring all the faith communities together.

Thursday, January 11, is the day of the Leadership Educational Symposium, which will provide a forum for dialogue and an exchange of information about social justice issues. It begins at 8:30 a.m. at the Knoxville Marriott.

Dr. Otis Moss, Jr., a close friend of Dr. Martin Luther King, will speak during the MLK Celebration on Monday, January 15th, at Overcome Believer's Church.

At 11:45 that day is a leadership and awards luncheon to honor special people who have made a difference in the community. Chairman John Hope



A large crowd of elected officials and citizens gathered for the opening of the Hyatt Place Knoxville Downtown Tuesday. The renovation of the former Hotel Farragut has 165 large rooms plus many amenities. (Photo courtesy of Mile Marker Images)

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