



*School board member Amber Rountree (left) hosted a re-election campaign kickoff Tuesday night at Three Bears Coffee Co. in South Knoxville.*

#### By Ken Lay

Knox County Schools Board of Education member Amber Rountree hosted her re-election kickoff party Tuesday night at a South Knoxville coffee shop.

Rountree, who represents the 9th District and serves as the school board's vice chair, played a vital role in hiring current Knox County Schools Superintendent Bob Thomas. She felt compelled to head the search for a new superintendent in 2017,

County Mayor Tim Burchett and the county commission to address sidewalk and traffic issues at South-Doyle High School. She's also worked with the Great Schools Partnership and worked to expand community schools and pushed for new athletic fields at South-Doyle Middle School.

She's a proponent for the promotion of literacy and encouraged those who attended last week's gathering to donate new or gently-used books which will be distributed

"Growing great readers is a key to growing great schools. School libraries are a place where students can borrow, return and give books within their school community. Reading is the foundation of success for our students and more access to books will help strengthen that foundation."

Rountree is an advocate for public education and she has served the people of South Knoxville proudly.

that problem. On the economic side, Eric Wolburg of Commerce Bank and Doug Lawyer of the Knox County Chamber of Commerce spoke of economic development. The program was rounded out by Commissioner Bob Thomas, who is running for Knox County Mayor. Thomas spoke of his childhood days growing up in East Knoxville and his hopes for the future of the area.

"Homelessness is not an acceptable circumstance in our community," Dunthorn said. He said the city tries to prevent homelessness, reduce the time a person is homeless, and end homelessness if possible. To achieve those goals the city council has adopted a plan to deal with homelessness and the mayor has a quarterly round table meeting with agencies dealing with homelessness. While it is good to give things to people under the bridge, Dunthorn said it is more important to get people off the street than to make