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Bob Thomas feels at home anywhere in Knox County

By Mike Steely
steelym@knoxfocus.com

"Everywhere I visit in Knox County, the people always make me feel so welcome and right at home," said Knox County mayoral candidate Bob Thomas Thursday.

Thomas was addressing a large crowd of local citizens and political supporters at the Corryton Senior Center. On hand to support his candidacy were several elected county officials and candidates for local and state office.

"The next ten years can be some of the greatest years for Knox County. We're going to have growth but we need to do it correctly. We have a great opportunity for good jobs," Thomas said.

The Republican noted that military veterans "made our country and our county" and pledged to continue to support programs for them.

Currently Thomas serves as the At-Large Commissioner, Seat 10, which is a county-wide position. He

was elected three years ago along with his long-time radio personality friend Ed Brantley. The two hosted the "Ed and Bob Show" for many years in Knoxville. Thomas has served as chairman of the Knox County Cable TV Committee and the Disability Committee. He's served on the County's Pension and Retirement Committee, the Parks and Recreation Board, the Metro Drug Coalition Board and the Dogwoods Arts Festival Board.

He has also served on the Young-Williams Animal Center Board, the American Cancer Society Board, the Arts and Cultural Alliance and the Thompson-Boling Arena Use Committee.

He and his wife, Kim Simms Thomas, who was a local television news anchor, have three children and five grandchildren.

Thomas pledges to keep taxes low, get the most from our tax dollars, make sure our children receive the best possible education, keep our neighborhoods



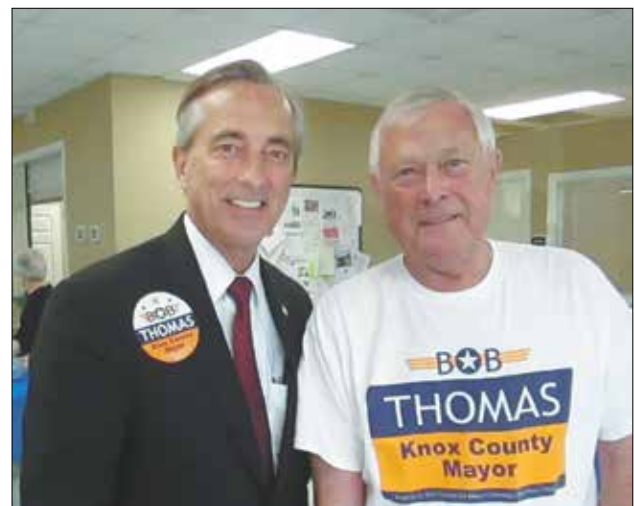
PHOTOS BY MIKE STEELY.

Above, County Commissioner Bob Thomas' visit to the Corryton Senior Center drew a huge crowd Thursday. Thomas is running for Knox County Mayor and spoke briefly to the audience of local citizens and the many county elected officials who turned out to support him. Right, Candidate for Knox County Mayor, Bob Thomas, greets former Commissioner Jack Huddleston at last Thursday's event.

safe and, above all, listen to citizens.

"I have over 40 years of involvement in our community and I hope you'll join me

and help move the county forward. Together we can make great things happen for all of Knox County," Thomas said.



Town Hall meeting hears about school security

By Pete Gawda

"Our primary role is to protect these children," said George Paidousis chief of security for Knox County Schools. "We do not get involved in school discipline." Paidousis made these remarks in a speech Monday evening, March 12 at a Town Hall East meeting.

Paidousis was appointed chief of security in 2013 by then superintendent Dr. Jim McIntyre after 30 years with the Knoxville Police Department (KPD).

Paidousis described the difference between school resource officers (SROs) and school safety officers (SSOs). He said that SROs in the Knoxville school system are full time police officers employed by either the KPD or the Knox County Sheriff's Office. (KCSO). The school system employs SSOs who are armed, uniformed security officers who only work 10 months a year during the school year.

"We could not do it without the KPD and the KCSO," Paidousis said. "We have a great partnership."

The school system is authorized 103 SSOs. However, Paidousis said it is hard to keep that number. His security force is augmented by SROs. The SROs from the KPD provide security at a fixed point. The SROs from the KCSO work fixed points as well as having rotating assignments.

It is the goal of Paidousis to have two security people, either SSOs or SROs, at each high school, one at each middle school and one at each elementary school.

The school system's security division has a 24 hour a day dispatch system. The security division is the only component of the school system that has psychological screening, background checks by the KCSO and a required physical fitness level. In addition, SSOs have to qualify on firearms twice a year. Paidousis said his security force is made up of young people who are starting their careers as well as retired military and police officers.

"We evaluate our people four times a year," Paidousis said.

Continued on page 3



PHOTO BY MIKE STEELY.

Sometimes it "takes a village" to get something done and Friday's ribbon cutting at the Behavioral Health Urgent Care Center saw dozens of public official, citizens and health care professional help to cut the ribbon on the new facility.

Behavioral Center opens today

By Mike Steely
steelym@knoxfocus.com

The Behavioral Health Urgent Care Center takes in its first patient today as the doors open on a facility that took about 10 years to develop. The three-day treatment center for mentally ill offenders charged with minor offenses is the first in the state and resulted in a combined effort by the county, city, local and state elected officials, the governor and individuals who rallied the community.

Helen Ross McNabb Center President Jerry Vagnier hosted a ribbon cutting at the renovated facility just off Western Avenue Friday and speakers included Marie Williams, Commissioner of Tennessee's Mental

Health and Substance Abuse Services, and Mayors Tim Burchett and Madeline Rogero.

While many of those present were mentioned for their efforts to establish the facility Commissioner Williams specifically mentioned community activist Vivian Underwood Shipe for her success in rallying the community and public officials.

Also mentioned as principals in getting state and local funds to help renovate the facility were Sheriff J. J. Jones, Knoxville Police Captain Don Jones, District Attorney Charme Allen, Stephanie Carter, Candace Allen, Lori Ramsey and Leann Human-Hilliard of Helen Ross McNabb.

Knox County Mayor Tim Burchett

told the story of a mentally ill friend who has prospered and Knoxville Mayor Madeline Rogero spoke of a relative with similar difficulties. Following the introductions, brief speeches and a prayer from Rev. George Doebler of the UT Medical Center, tours of the Care Center were given.

The Center has 16 beds and law enforcement officers can divert mentally ill offenders, including those with drug problems, there. Officers will bring the patients there and a sheriff's deputy will be present at all times. When discharged the patients will be assigned a case worker and treatment will continue beyond the care at the center.

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What Happens During Mediation?

You may have heard of the legal term, "mediation." What is it? What happens during a mediation?

A mediation is an informal process that is used in a large number of lawsuits to try to settle the cases before they go to

trial. When a lawsuit has been filed, but before it reaches trial, the attorneys for the parties will typically discuss trying to resolve the case early. Sometimes the attorneys are able to have discussions between themselves and come to a resolution. However, often the case involves enough disputed issues that the parties will attend a mediation.

A mediation is conducted by a mediator. A mediator is someone who has specialized training in dispute resolution and is paid by both parties to act as a go between them in an attempt to get the parties to agree to a resolution. The mediator will do this by discussing strengths and weaknesses of each parties' case, talking with each side about the pros and cons of going to trial, and what some



By **Jedidiah McKeenan**
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of the benefits may be for resolving the case right then and there.

It's important to note that a mediation does not take place at the courthouse, a mediation usually takes place at an attorney's office. Also, if you are asked to participate in a mediation and you are worried about seeing the other party at the mediation, do not worry, normally you do not even see the other side during a mediation. It will just be you and your attorney in a conference room, and the mediator (who is almost always an attorney), will come in and meet and discuss issues with you, and then go to the other room. And the mediator will continue to go back and forth until an agreement is reached or they give up.

If an agreement is reached, the mediator will type up the agreement, and all parties and their attorneys will sign the agreement. And hopefully, this agreement will effectively end the lawsuit to which you were a party.

Keep in mind, you are not

required to reach an agreement. If you are at a mediation and you feel the other side is being completely unreasonable, then you can get up and leave at any time. Mediations are an important and effectively tool and a large percentage of cases are resolved at mediation. This is because the uncertainty of trial and the massive expense of preparing for trial while still having an unknown result is so risky. At a mediation, you may not get the exact result you want, but you are getting to decide what the final outcome of your case will be.

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Publisher's Position

Republicans Need Better Congressional Candidates



By Steve Hunley, Publisher
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"All politics is local." – Thomas "Tip" O'Neill, late Speaker of the House.

As this is written, the special Congressional election in Pennsylvania is too close to call. It appears Democrat Conor Lamb may have won. The contest between Lamb and Republican Rick Saccone has been hailed as evidence of the unpopularity of President Donald

Trump. It is no such thing. Pennsylvania's 18th District has had a Republican congressman for quite a few years, although the voters have a Democratic tilt. It is certainly true Donald Trump carried the district in 2016 handily.

Conor Lamb admittedly was a highly attractive candidate --- young, handsome, a former Marine, and articulate. Frankly, Conor Lamb has provided Democrats with a blueprint if they really want to take the House of Representatives away from Republicans this fall. There was little difference between the candidates on some very important issues; both Lamb and Saccone support President Trump's tariffs on foreign-made steel and aluminum. Both candidates support the rights of gun owners. Lamb swore up and down he would never vote for Nancy Pelosi to be the Democratic leader in the House of Representatives.

The Washington Post has taken pains to rededicate Conor Lamb as not a real conservative. Certainly, Conor Lamb is

conservative for a Democrat. How many Democrats in the Senate voted for the tax cuts? Not a single Democratic senator voted for the tax cuts, which put more money into the pockets of working people and has helped boost the economy. Just how many real "moderates" are there amongst the Democrats in Congress? They are harder to find than snipes in downtown Knoxville.

The campaign was largely about which party could brag about winning as the newly elected congressman will have about 9 months in office before having to run in a new district as the congressional map in Pennsylvania has been redrawn. Republicans need to remember when casting votes in primaries it really does matter who carries the GOP banner in the general election. When the Democrats nominate an attractive candidate, it helps when Republicans have one of their own. Clearly one thing the special election in Pennsylvania has amply demonstrated the far-left positions

taken by many Democrats throughout the country aren't going to win many general elections. The national news media, utterly wrong about Republican prospects, especially those of Donald Trump, in 2016 continue to yap and write as if they have any credibility left. Most recently all we heard about was the "blue" tidal wave coming in Texas, which proved to be more of a ripple.

Every vote cast in special elections becomes fodder for the mainstream media who rush to interpret every little thing as a rebuke to President Trump. In the maelstrom of media comment, few stop to remember these are the very same people who insisted Donald Trump could not win under any circumstances. These are the very same people who disdained the people voting in Pennsylvania's 18th Congressional District as the kind of Democrats they did not need. One only has to recall Barack Obama's comments at a fundraiser in San Francisco when he faced Hillary Clinton in the

Pennsylvania presidential primary in 2008. Obama said about these Pennsylvanians, "And it's not surprising then they get bitter, they cling to guns or religion or antipathy toward people who aren't like them or anti-immigrant sentiment or anti-trade sentiment as a way to explain their frustrations." No less an elitist than Hillary Clinton immediately pounced on Obama's comments to denounce him as an "elitist." Clearly, most of the Democrats voting for Conor Lamb are not Obama Democrats, much less Hillary Clinton or Bernie Sanders Democrats. While certainly Conor Lamb will not vote for many Republican priorities in Congress, he surely will not be the sort of Democrat most congressional Democrats will like.

A Democratic candidate who supports at least some of Trump's agenda is hardly a thorough repudiation of the president. Despite all the talk in the mainstream media about national "unity" and bipartisanship, that usually means the Republicans must cave in

to whatever the national Democrats want. Conor Lamb's election certainly doesn't mean working Americans are swinging the pendulum back to the current icons of the Democratic Party: Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton.

Unemployment in the African-American community is at all time low, which certainly never happened under President Barack Obama, nor would it have happened under a President Hillary Clinton. The economy is recovering and coming back strong, which also never happened under Obama, who liked to remind us America could never reclaim its greatness. Of course Obama and his ilk never believed America was great in the first place. Conor Lamb never campaigned on a platform that the majority of national Democrats would approve of and the mainstream media can't hide that fact.

The truth is there are enough lessons for both Democrats and Republicans to ponder before the fall elections.

New safety requirements for festivals, special events

Organizers of festivals and other public events are invited to a March 22 meeting to learn details of new City safety and security measures.

The public meeting will be held at 9 a.m. Thursday, March 22, at the Civic Coliseum Ballroom, 500 Howard Baker Jr. Ave. Attending will be Fire Chief Stan Sharp, Deputy Police Chief Kenny Miller, KPD's Homeland Security representatives, and Office of Special Events staff.

The new requirements include communications and evacuation plans, to be implemented in the event of emergency situations due to weather or other public safety concerns. The emphasis on more extensive, proactive planning will allow public events to continue to operate smoothly and safely.

"The diverse range of cultural celebrations, music festivals, parades and rallies have contributed to the uniqueness of our city – and these events will continue," Mayor Madeline Rogero said. "However, we are now living in a new era, and added steps are needed to provide security and assure everyone's safety at large public events."

A key component of planning a successful public event is selecting the right venue that can accommodate the size of the crowd. Some events have become so popular that they've outgrown the available space at Market Square and Krutch Park.

The Office of Special Events will continue to help event organizers make their public

Cont. on page 4

Town Hall meeting hears about school security

Cont. from page 1

The schools system's SSOs have to undergo a 9-week training program which includes first aid, among other things. Upon graduation, they earn between \$14 and \$15 an hour. Since they only work ten months out of the year, Paidious said he tries to give them as much overtime as possible covering after school activities.

The number of SSOs has increased about three times since Paidious became security chief. Therefore, he said management procedures and the organizational chart have been changed accordingly.

"We are real proud of what we have been able to accomplish," he said of his security force.

Turning to another topic, Paidious said the school system has a 110-page security plan which is a generic plan for the entire school system. In addition there is a specific security plan for each school in Knox County since each school is different and has different security requirements. The individual school security plans contain such things as the number of students, the number of teachers, floor plans of the school and an

evacuation plan. The district and school plans are updated every year, based in part on recommendations from law enforcement agencies. Law enforcement agencies have ready computer access to these plans

When asked about school bus security, Paidious said it is a shared responsibility

between his office and the transportation division. While the transportation division maintains cameras and GPS on most buses for security, his division has a person assigned to oversee security outside of those two areas.

When asked about the idea of arming school teachers, Paidious expressed a

negative opinion.

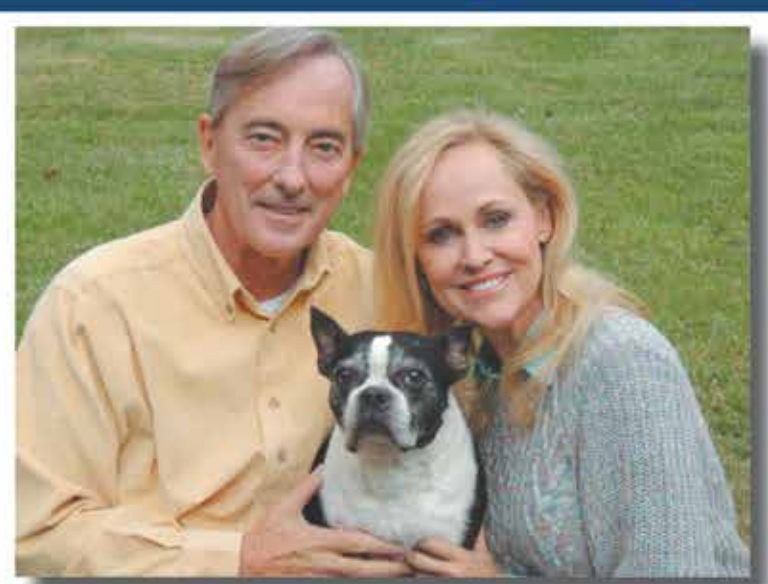
"My personal view is we want our teachers to teach and let us protect them."

"We have a lot of folks with character," Paidious said. "Our guys know we care about them." He said the priorities of his office were "faith, family and job. Faith and family come first."

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Diversion program, street light purchase, code boards consolidation

By Mike Steely
steelym@knoxfocus.com

"Our goal is to help as many as we can," said Knoxville Police Chief David Rausch Tuesday as the City Council voted to re-establish a three-year program to curb prostitution. The \$74,500 funding agreement with Helen Ross McNabb Center passed unanimously but not without opposition from one speaker.

Chief Rausch said the program may have reduced the number of prostitutes in the city by 20% and said that the McNabb Center is a "great partner" in helping the police with the early diversion program for prostitutes.

Rausch said the cooperation in the program not only includes the McNabb Center but also an advocate for justice worker on the scene during arrests or raids. While the Community Development Department made the request to fund the program again, Mayor Madeline Rogero said the police department has asked also for the funding.

Barbara Cook of the Northwest Community Association spoke against the funding. She has been a continual spokesperson against funding the unrelated Early Diversion Center just off Western Avenue and said that the former three-year funding should have produced a database

of known prostitutes.

Although Cook said that people charged with prostitution are "being treated over and over again," the vote passed to renew funding.

The council voted to permit negotiation with Rick Dover of Dover Development for the old South High School building to permit payment in lieu of valorem taxes and to correct the name of the company to "South High, LLC."

Just over \$5.6 million was authorized by the council for the purchase of all the city street lights and poles from KUB as the city moves to LED lighting. The council then voted to hire Service One, Inc., for \$840,000 to

provide maintenance services to the street lights through 2018. Mayor Rogero told The Focus that city-owned street lights and poles might benefit from cellular companies looking to locate smaller units on the poles.

In other action the city voted, on first reading, to consolidate several appointed boards dealing with city codes into one body. Peter Ehrens, Director of Plans Review and Inspections, told the council that most of the boards haven't met in some time and one codes review board can take on the various codes dealing with everything from electrical to plumbing enforcement.

Another first reading saw approval to permit anyone holding a valid beer permit to apply for a special "with dancing" permit. Mayor Rogero and Councilmember George Wallace asked for the change.

The contract with Design and Construction Services, Inc. for the Sidewalk Replacement Project was increased by more than \$128,000 with the new contract to total just over \$1.2 million. The council also voted to permit part of Sanitary Laundry to encroach onto the right of way west of the North Broadway and North Central Street intersection.

The Knoxville Convention and Exhibition Center's

name was changed to the World's Fair Exhibition Hall and sale of a property at 2744 Tarleton Avenue was approved to Debra Haynes under the city's Homemaker Program for \$22,500.

A grant from the U.S. Department of Justice was approved with the Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police to coordinate Internet Crimes Against Children investigation training. The \$82,782 grant approval was requested by the police department.

The council also honored two local children, Lilly Bitner and Johnny Sawyer Dyer, who were selected as the Boy and Girl of the Year by the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

What Should Investors Know About Recent Volatility?

As you may have heard, the stock market has been on a wild ride lately. What's behind this volatility? And, as an investor, how concerned should you be?

Let's look at the first question first. What caused the steep drop in stock prices we experienced on a few separate days?

Essentially, two main factors seem to be responsible. First, some good economic news may actually have played a significant role. A 17-year low in unemployment and solid job growth have begun to push wages upward.

These developments have led to fears of rising inflation, which, in turn, led to speculation that the Federal Reserve will tighten the money supply at a faster-than-expected rate. Stocks reacted negatively to these expectations of higher interest rates.

The second cause of the market volatility appears to be simply a reaction to the long bull market. While rising stock prices lead many people to continue buying more and more shares, some people actually need to sell their stocks – and this pent-up selling demand, combined with short-term profit-taking, helped contribute to the large sell-offs of recent days.

Now, as for the question of how concerned you should be about this volatility, consider these points:

Sell-offs are nothing unusual. We've often experienced big sell-offs, but they've generally been followed with strong recoveries. Of course, past performance is not a guarantee of future results, but history has shown that patient, persistent investors have

often been rewarded.

Fundamentals are strong. While short-term market movements can be caused by a variety of factors, economic conditions and corporate earnings typically drive performance in the long term. Right now, the U.S. economy is near full employment, consumer and business sentiment has risen strongly, manufacturing and service activity is at multi-year highs, and GDP growth in 2018 appears to be on track for the best performance since 2015. Furthermore, corporate earnings are expected to rise this year.

So, given this background, what's your next move? Here are some suggestions:

Review your situation. You may want to work with a financial professional to evaluate your portfolio to determine if it is helping

you make the progress you need to eventually achieve your long-term goals.

Reassess your risk tolerance. If you were unusually upset over the loss in value of your investments during the market pullback, you may need to review your risk tolerance to determine if it's still appropriate for your investment mix. If you feel you are taking on too much risk, you may need to rebalance your portfolio. Keep in mind, though, that by "playing it safe" and investing heavily in vehicles that offer greater protection of principal, but little in the way of return, you run the risk of not attaining the growth you need to reach your objectives.

Look for opportunities. A market pullback such as the one we've experienced, which occurs during a period of economic expansion

and rising corporate profits, can give long-term investors a chance to add new shares at attractive prices in an environment that may be conducive to a market rally.

A sharp market pullback, such as we've seen recently, will always be big news. But if you look beyond the headlines, you can sometimes see a different picture – and one that may be brighter than you had realized.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor, John Daniels. Office address: 762 Briarcliff Ave, Oak Ridge, TN 37830. Phone number: 865-483-3643.



New safety requirements

Continued from page 3

gatherings and cultural celebrations safe and successful. Special Events staff will work with event planners, giving them choices of venues, including some new options:

- **World's Fair Park.** The Festival Lawn (North Lawn) has long been a popular venue for charity events, 5K runs, food festivals and special events, including the City's Fourth of July celebration. Beginning with the 2019 Festival on the Fourth, the new Performance Lawn (South Lawn) will open with a stage, drainage infrastructure and a total of \$3 million in upgrades.
- **Mary Costa Plaza at the Civic Coliseum.** This venue hosted several large outdoor events in 2017. It's a large semi-shaded venue with 2,500 adjacent garage parking spaces.
- **South Waterfront.** The newly-opened Suttree Landing Park offers a one-acre festival lawn with access to electricity. Parking is limited, so shuttling to and from garages might be necessary for many events. Also,

a new 37,500-square-foot public event space is under construction at Blount Avenue and the Henley Bridge, adjacent to the new South Waterfront riverwalk that's being built. Free public parking (250 spaces) is available on evenings and weekends on Levels 6 through 8 of the garage on the former Baptist Hospital site.

"Plain and simple, these new measures are a matter of keeping everyone safe," Police Chief David Rausch said. "We appreciate that festivals bring vibrancy to Knoxville, and we don't want to do anything to diminish that. The new safety measures and venue choices will actually increase the capacity of downtown to host public events."

Judith Foltz, Director of Special Events, agreed.

"We're excited about the newly renovated, updated World's Fair Park South Lawn opening next year," she said. "The Special Events team is eager to continue to work with festival and concert organizers in selecting the best venue for their public events and maximizing their guests' enjoyment."

R. LARRY SMITH

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Police chief speaks out on drug abuse

By Pete Gawda
 "One person a day, on average, dies of an overdose in Knoxville," stated Knoxville Police Chief David Rausch in an address to a senior citizens' group at Black Oak Heights Baptist Church on Tuesday, March 13.
 "It started because of money," the chief said of the today's drug problem. He claimed big pharmaceutical companies started the problem when they tried to convince the public that Oxycodone is not addictive.
 "Addiction is a brain disease," Rausch said. "It is not a moral failure, the brain has a desire for drugs."



Knoxville Police Chief David Rausch addresses a senior citizens' luncheon at Black Oak Heights Baptist Church on Tuesday, March 13.

people increased the dosage on their own that trouble begins.
 Part of the problem, the chief said, comes from leaving unused pills in the medicine cabinet. He said guests to a person's house could go into the bathroom and look into the medicine cabinet.

He urged that prescription drugs be locked up and counted then disposed of properly when there was no longer any reason to take them.

The chief stated that the drug problem has moved beyond the opioid crisis. He said the price of prescription drugs has gotten so high that the market has adjusted resulting in the sale of illegal drugs. Consequently there has been a resurgence of heroin and cocaine use. Illegal drugs are now coming into this country from China and Mexico.

On the local scene Rausch said his department has been criticized for the use of Narcan to prevent overdose deaths. He said critics claim that the police are saving the same people over and over. However, Rausch said that less than 17 percent of the persons who are given Narcan are repeat offenders.

He said his department has a task force that deals with drug dealers. If a drug dealer's client dies of overdose the dealer is charged with second degree homicide.

"We are working toward trying to get people help rather than just jailing them," Rausch said of people dealing with such things as drug addiction and mental illness. However, he said that people guilty of crimes of violence will still be jailed.

In answer to a question about how his officers deal with the stress of the violence they deal with daily, Rausch replied that there is peer support, a chaplain program and an employee assistance program.

When asked about arming teachers, Rausch said, "We really don't need to go there" and he urged the funding of more school security officers.

Unwanted Medication Collection Saturday, March 31

Members of the East Tennessee Regional Medication Collection Coalition will be on hand to collect and properly dispose of unwanted medicines on Saturday, March 31 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the South Knoxville Food City parking lot at 7608 Mountain Grove Dr.

Medicines can be dropped off at this location ONLY during the event. At all other times, residents can bring old or unused medicines to the Knoxville Police Department Safety Building at 800 Howard Baker Jr. Ave. The Safety Building is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

For more information, including a list of other drop-off locations in the area, visit www.medicationcollection.org/.

Historic Zoning approves modifications to two houses in Old North Knoxville

By Pete Gawda
 At their meeting on Thursday, March 15, the Knoxville Historic Zoning Commission considered renovations to two houses in Old North Knoxville.

The HZC considered a request for a gabled window at 412 E. Scott Ave. This action would allow for a bedroom in a former attic space. Other work at this address had been approved at an earlier meeting. The HZC looked at other houses in historical districts which were approved for windows in gables. Discussion centered on the size of the window and how the window's size would affect the diamond shaped vent in the gable. This gable was determined to be a character-defining element of the house.

James Pierce, representing Old North Knoxville, said that if the vent were raised on the side gable in question, it would be higher than a similar diamond shaped vent in the front gable and thus be out of proportion. He also feared that because of the age of the vent, it would be damaged if the owner tried to move it. He said moving the vent is not supported by historic guidelines.

After some discussion the HZC agreed to a 34 by 34 inch window which would require that the vent be raised.

At another house in Old North Knoxville at 401 E. Oklahoma Ave., the HZC approved the addition of a decorative porch railing which would be in harmony with a similar house next door. Also, at the rear of the house the HZC gave approval to removal of modern windows and their replacement with slightly larger windows which were more appropriate for a house of that era. They also approved replacement of the front and back doors with wooden and glass doors that are historically appropriate.

Upon recommendation of staff the HZC approved installation of a decorative porch railing at 1704 Washington Ave. in Edgewood-Park City. There was no public comment on this action.

Staff reported on three petitions that were acted upon at staff level and did not require action by the commissioners. At 1806 Jefferson Ave. in Edgewood-Park City, staff approved roof and gutter work and porch repair. At 102 Eleanor St. in the Fourth and Gill neighborhood, staff approved reconstruction of a rear landing and installation of vinyl siding in a small area. Staff also approved replacement of existing awning and placement and wording on a sign at 13 Market Square.



Candidate for Sheriff Tom Spangler chats with Bonnie Peters prior to the Fountain City Business and Professional Association's meeting Wednesday.

Sheriff candidates answer questions

By Mike Steely
steelym@knoxfocus.com

Last Wednesday both candidates, Tom Spangler and Lee Tramel, spoke before the Fountain City Business and Professional Association and answered questions submitted by the membership and audience.

Spangler and Tramel, both with many years in law enforcement, were given a few minutes to relate their backgrounds before taking questions. Spangler noted that he started the Knox County Regional Training Academy and instigated the aviation division.

"My experience matters and we need leadership from the top down and bottom up," he said.

Tramel said he began the Senior Citizen Awareness program and called his years with the Sheriff's Department "most rewarding."

When asked about boosting patrols Spangler said he would look at the budget and see where we can pull things before we go to commission. Tramel said there are more officers on the streets than ever and there are new precincts in Halls and Farragut. Both men agreed that the current

12-hour shifts for deputies are not acceptable.

"I'll do away with that," Spangler said. Tramel said the department should return to the six hours on and four hours off policy.

Both men spoke of reported low morale in the sheriff's department. Tramel said that includes the correctional officers and said he would ask for employee input.

"The mayor has been stingy with the purse strings," Tramel said and promised he would have regular monthly meetings with patrol.

Continue on page 2

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Sheriff candidates answer questions

Cont. from page 1

When asked about the sheriff being involved with the community, Tramel said that with 445,000 residents in Knox County a sheriff is "pulled in a lot of directions" but added a sheriff should be accessible and pledged to be more visible.

Spangler also wants to be a more accessible sheriff. "People want to talk to you. You need to get out and about and not just send a patrol officer or the command staff," Spangler said.

Asked if a former county official should be hired by the sheriff's office, Tramel said that "if they have a worth and are a benefit to the county."

Spangler said he is "not the guy to bring outside people in if I have someone in house that can do the job."

Tramel said he has worked well with city police, school security officers and the fire department, adding "I've never seen it better."

Spangler said he has a good friendship with City Police Chief David Rausch and the fire and ambulance service. "We will all work well together."

Speaking on school safety, Spangler said law enforcement "can't wait until something happens." He said there are school security officers in every school but a sheriff's officer covers two to three schools.

"I went to a school recently, buzzed in, and was let in without any questions. It's going to take a collaborative effort," he said.

"The rules have changed. These (security) officers are trained and need to go to the threat," Tramel said.

"We've got to stay fluid."

Tramel said that the opioid epidemic is the greatest threat to Knox County. "We need to reach down to the 4th and 5th graders and educate them," he commented.

Spangler said the greatest threat is not doing anything about the opioid situation.

When asked about patrol resources, Tramel said he would look at moving some of the patrol zones and if you "cut addiction it cuts crime."

Spangler said that training is important. He noted that technology has changed but "boots on the street" and investigative work is also needed to fight crime.

In summary Tramel said that he has a plan to expand "what we've done" and use outside the box thinking within the Knox County Sheriff's Department.

Spangler said he has "been there and done that" since he served with the department and served as interim sheriff.

"Look at both candidates and vote," Spangler said.

Want to visit Tennessee's newest state park?

A DAY AWAY
By Mike Steely
steelym@knoxfocus.com

There's a large new park in the Tennessee State Park systems and it is in East Tennessee in rural Unicoi County. As I've written before, my wife and I have visited every state park in Tennessee except this one and we're planning a summer trip there.

"You can't get there from here" isn't actually true but it seems like it. Rocky Fork State Park is more than 2,000 acres and 30 miles from Johnson City or Asheville, N.C., and 10 miles from Erwin, Tennessee. Access to the park is provided by a narrow one-lane road with pull offs here and there. Parking within the park is said to be limited and the state is suggesting carpooling into the park.

One of the interesting historic notes is that John Sevier successfully attacked a Chickamauga Cherokee camp there by surprising the Native Americans. The victory earned Sevier the nickname "Nolichucky Jack" and the battle took part on Flint Creek.



One of the many streams and falls in Rocky Fork State Park, the state's newest park located south of Johnson City. The park's open and an office, parking, and visitor center are being planned. Photo from Tennessee State Parks.

The park is promoted as the home of wildflowers, streams, waterfalls, large trees, wildlife management, and isolation. Part of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail passes through the park. Being planned are a visitor center and gift shop, improved parking, a ranger station, campground, biking and horseback trails.

A side trip to Erwin, Unicoi County's county seat and a little mountain valley town of about 5,000 residents, would be interesting. Founded by D.J.N. Erwin, who donated land there in 1879, the town was named "Erwin" due to a spelling mistake that was accepted and remains yet today.

Erwin is probably best known in state history for an incident in 1916 when a circus was in town and an elephant got loose and trampled some people. The citizens captured the elephant and hung it to death by enlisting a railway train to hoist it high enough to be effective.

The nearest community

to the entrance to Rock Fork is Flag Pond, Tennessee, an unincorporated settlement with a post office. The easiest way to get to the park is by taking Interstate 81 to I-26 through Johnson City, past Erwin, and on to Flag Pond on Highway 352, also known as Old Asheville Highway. Follow 352 to Rock Fork Road and go east. Eventually you'll get there.

All streams in the park drain into the South Indian Creek which flows into the Nolichucky River. The park and the surrounding Cherokee National Forest have many abandoned logging roads. Hickory, beech, oak, pine, hemlock and rhododendron are just a few of the variety of trees in the park.

You can find the park on the internet or call for information by dialing 423-271-1233. You can also Google Friends of Rocky Fork State Park to get an update on the park, events, etc.

Among the wildlife in the park are Peregrine Falcons, jumping mice and bears.



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Old Time Congressman

Joe L. Evins of Tennessee

Pages from the Past



By Ray Hill
rayhill865@gmail.com

Perhaps the best lesson for aspiring politicians is that fame and success are fleeting; despite whatever heights one might attain, once out of office, one usually receives little attention and it is not long before one is forgotten. How many Tennesseans remember Congressman Joe L. Evins? Likely very few, but Joe L. Evins enjoyed a successful and long Congressional career before retiring in 1976 to make way for a young Albert Gore, Jr.

Joe L. Evins was born October 24, 1910 in DeKalb County, Tennessee. Evins was born into fortunate circumstances, as his father, Edgar Evins, was both a successful politician and businessman. Evins' fortunate circumstances allowed him to attend Vanderbilt University and the Cumberland College of Law. Evins commenced the practice of law in 1934 in Smithville, Tennessee.

Edgar Evins was a state senator and a strong supporter of Tennessee's powerful senior United States senator, Kenneth D. McKellar. When young Joe L. Evins was named as a staff attorney for the Federal Trade Commission in 1936, the appointment was almost certainly made through the influence of Senator McKellar. Evins eventually became an assistant secretary at the FTC, a promotion also probably made possible by McKellar. Edgar Evins's ties to McKellar went back years and once when young Joe was traveling, McKellar's Senate office helped with the arrangements.

Joe L. Evins interrupted his career in Washington, D. C. to enter the Army with the coming of World War II. Evins, with his legal background, was assigned to the Judge Advocate General Corps. Evins remained in the Army until 1946, when he returned home to Smithville.

That was also the same year Joe L. Evins began his political career in earnest.

The incumbent Congressman for the Fifth District was Harold Earthman. Earthman had been first elected in 1944 and had not yet established a hold on the affections of the people he represented and Joe L. Evins sensed an opportunity.

Evins announced his candidacy and began an energetic campaign to win the Democratic primary. Evins, realizing McKellar had been quite friendly with Congressman Earthman, did his best to

keep the senator out of the primary contest.

Evins was successful in neutralizing McKellar, who was very fond of Joe L. Evins's father.

Earthman was something of a controversial figure and had a very strong personality. Joe L. Evins could talk to anybody and made friends everywhere he went.

Evins won a smashing victory over Harold Earthman and would remain in Congress for the next thirty years. Evins demonstrated his popularity by defeating an incumbent with 58% of the vote.

Evins was to become one of the more powerful members of Congress and proved to be enduringly popular inside his Congressional district. Evins was routinely reelected with little or no opposition.

A compact, well-groomed man who favored double-breasted suits even into the 1970s when they were long out of fashion, Joe L. Evins remained something of a figure from Tennessee's past. Still carrying a hat, his hair carefully combed and slicked back, Joe L. Evins, a charming man, was the quintessential old-time Southern Congressman.

Congressman Evins could certainly tell a story and I well recall his telling me the 1952 senatorial campaign gave him some trouble. Senator McKellar was seeking an unprecedented seventh term and was challenged by Congressman Albert Gore, a good friend of Evins. The Congressman's father, Edgar, was according to his son, an absolute "McKellar man."

"He would have supported McKellar as long as they both lived," Joe L. Evins told me with a laugh.

When Edgar Evins found out his son was very quietly supporting Albert Gore, he was "mighty mad."

"I thought Dad was going to stop speaking to me for a while," Evins said.

Eventually Edgar Evins got over being mad and remained intensely proud of his son until the end of his life.

Congressman Joe L. Evins, in the tradition of Senator K. D. McKellar, watched over his district and his people carefully. Evins used his perch in Congress to bring back projects and dollars for the Fifth District. His home city of Smithville, for instance, was the smallest city in the country included in the Model Cities Program, one of President Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society initiatives.

Evins had a seat on



Congressman Joe L. Evins of Tennessee

the House Appropriations Committee and used it effectively. At various times, Evins headed important subcommittees of the House Appropriations Committee, which he used to help his district. Evins promoted not only projects inside his own Congressional district, but helped along other projects important to Tennessee, including needed appropriations for the Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

Evins had originally been on the Veteran's Affairs Committee and was not eager to change assignments. He had risen to the ranking member of the committee, but when Congressman Albert Gore was elected to the U. S. Senate in 1952, Tennessee was left without a member on the House Appropriations Committee.

Congressman Evins was urged by his colleagues in the Tennessee Congressional delegation to seek a seat on the Appropriations Committee and he reluctantly agreed. It proved to be very beneficial for Evins's district and Tennessee.

Congressman Evins was one of the few Tennessee Congressmen who refused to sign the infamous "Southern Manifesto" in the 1950s, despite being one of the more conservative Democratic members of Tennessee's Congressional delegation.

Evins was the sponsor of the national Vocational School Act, as he realized not every student had the potential or interest in attending an institute of higher learning. That particular act provided federal funding in more than 3,000 counties in the

United States where school systems did not have an operational vocational program.

Congressman Evins also believed an improved vocational program would not only help young people, but those adults who had lost their jobs and needed a new trade and allow them to once again enter the job market. It also afforded other adults the opportunity to improve their own skills and get a form of continuing education.

Although a strong Democrat, Joe L. Evins worked closely with Republican Congressmen Jimmy Quillen and John J. Duncan. Evins was not a political partisan when it came to doing things for Tennessee.

Congressman Evins also found the time to pen a book, Understanding Congress, which was a remarkably good book in describing the workings of Congress.

Evins could indeed be a partisan Democrat and by the 1960s the Republicans were beginning to challenge the long domination of Volunteer State politics by the Democratic Party. In 1964, both of Tennessee's Senate seats were up for election, due to the death of Senator Estes Kefauver. Both Albert Gore and Congressman Ross Bass faced determined opposition from Memphis businessman Dan Kuykendall and Huntsville attorney Howard Baker, respectively. Joe L. Evins managed the Tennessee campaign for the Lyndon Johnson - Hubert Humphrey ticket. He also did all he could to help both Senator Gore and Congressman Bass.

Tennessee had voted for the GOP presidential candidates in the last three elections; Eisenhower had carried Tennessee in 1952 and 1956 and Richard Nixon had won the Volunteer State in 1960. Evins was delighted when his friend Lyndon Johnson defeated Barry Goldwater in 1964, winning Tennessee along the way. He was also pleased with Senator Gore and Ross Bass's victories in the Senate races.

Tennessee's politics were changing and the 1964 election would be the last big victory for Democrats for sometime. Although Buford Ellington returned to the governor's mansion in 1966 after a bitter primary with John J. Hooker, Howard Baker defeated Governor Frank Clement for the United States Senate after Clement had beaten incumbent Ross Bass in the Democratic primary. By 1971, Republicans would occupy the governor's office and both of Tennessee's seats in the United States Senate.

By 1973, Republicans held a majority of Tennessee's Congressional seats.

That would change in 1974, a disastrous year for the GOP following the Watergate scandal and the fall of Richard Nixon.

Joe L. Evins decided against running again in 1976 and announced his retirement from Congress. At the time he held the record for the longest continuous service of any Tennessee Congressman. Evins's retirement allowed Albert Gore, Jr. to begin his own political career and he won a hotly contested primary to succeed Joe L.

Evins.

Evins briefly served in the administration of Governor Ray Blanton and then retired from public life, although he continued to be active. Even as a former Congressman, Joe L. Evins continued to promote his home of Smithville and Middle Tennessee. Evins worked just as hard to promote festivals native to Tennessee as he did to recruit businesses to Tennessee and jobs for Tennesseans.

Joe L. Evins had also married well; his wife Ann was the daughter of a judge and their union produced three beautiful daughters. Joe's brother was very prominent in the banking industry in Middle Tennessee and a nephew later founded the Cracker Barrel restaurant chain. By all accounts, his personal life was a happy one.

Joe L. Evins, after a very active and productive life, began to slow down.

He died on March 31, 1984.

Joe L. Evins was truly the last of the old time Congressmen from Tennessee.

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Mamaws

My two grandmothers were as different from each other as were their families. They've both been gone for a long time, but their memories linger.

Mamaw Balch was a small woman. She bore three sons and a daughter. She was a Cureton, and as such, her approach toward life seemed to have been one of no-nonsense. Mamaw worked hard just keeping up with cooking food for hungry boys and her husband. They lived on a large farm in Ball Camp for a while. The boys were up early to milk the cows,



By Joe Rector
joerector@comcast.net

and when they returned home, the table was covered with eggs, bacon, biscuits, and gravy. As soon as the meal was finished, she jumped into the middle of her daily chores and lunch preparations.

I don't remember the woman smiling. She wore a permanent scowl. It seemed that her joy came from her bible and the radio located in the small living room of their house. She read scriptures each day, and she studied the words of comfort that they offered. Although I've not spent anywhere near the amount of time that she

did in reading the "good book," I have taken a different meaning from it. Mamaw saw life as something hard; people endured their time on earth and kept their fingers crossed that the next life would be better. Her religion was hard as well. Christianity was filled with guilt and self-deprivation. Woe unto those who enjoyed life too much because they surely must be doing something sinful.

This small woman suffered with heart trouble and passed in the early 1960s. I was sad when she died, but that was more because my own mother was so grief stricken. Mamaw's death left my grandfather lost, and I realize that small woman was, in fact, the strongest person in the family.

Mamaw Rector was

much different. She wasn't as short as my other grandmother; she was a bit taller and heavier. Her frame supported a generous amount of flesh, and I recall that her arms were round and flabby. Her nose was in a shape that the Clevengers (her maiden name) passed to each generation. Mamaw wore a frown most of the time, but she was apt to be talkative when company came calling. Her stockings reached only to her mid-calf where she neatly rolled the rest of them.

I'm not sure just how much work she did. At one time, Mamaw worked at the porcelain factory at the edge of Lonsdale, where she lived, and yes, she cooked. Other than that, I never saw her do much of anything. From what I heard

from other relatives, her family had tough times. My dad quit school after the sixth grade to help make ends meet. Maybe she'd worked so hard for so long that she didn't have the energy to do anything else.

This second grandmother was a bit more fun. She had a sense of humor and loved to tease with us boys. On a couple of occasions, she traveled out to the country to babysit. For the whole day, we sat at the kitchen table and broke a bushel of beans. She'd tell stories and listen to our silliness with the patience that I've never mastered. Mamaw knew my older brother smoked, and she gave him money so that he could walk to a nearby store to buy cigarettes.

Mamaw Rector watched

her soap operas every day. She would sit in her chair and watch for hours. Beside her at all times was a gallon tin can. In it she spit the makings from a lip loaded with Bruton snuff. With her lips coated with the dark liquid, she always demanded a kiss before we left. She also made a point of always complaining. We rarely asked her how she was because the question caused her to recite a litany of ailments.

It's been fifty-plus years since my Mamaws were alive. I see them much differently now and have more admiration for them. They were women who loved family and did their best. I hope my grandson will remember his grandparents as fondly fifty years from now.

The Promise of Easter

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." John 10:27-28 (KJV)



By Ralphine Major
ralphine3@yahoo.com

branches. Good Friday marks the crucifixion of Jesus. But, the day Jesus rose from the dead, which we celebrate as Easter, is the most important event in all of history!

In recent weeks, the promise of salvation

has been shared again and again in the media with the passing of America's Pastor, Dr. Billy Graham. It is the same message Dr. Graham shared for over half a century with people all over the world.

As we celebrate this most special season of the year with new growth and new life all around, may you experience Easter anew with family and friends and with the One who bore the cross for our sins that we may have eternal life. Whether you worship in a traditional church setting, in a contemporary church service, or at a satellite campus of a mega church, may you find immeasurable joy this Easter in God's house. Easter--the hope, the promise of eternal life in Christ Jesus. Rejoice! He is risen!!



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TSSAA BOYS' STATE BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT



Another comeback puts Falcons in Class AA finals

By Steve Williams

Fulton continued its come-from-behind prowess to earn another appearance in the TSSAA state boys' basketball tournament finals.

Trailing by eight points at halftime, Coach Jody Wright's Falcons caught up and then held on for a breath-taking 73-72 double-overtime win over Nashville Stratford in Class AA semifinal action Friday night at Murfreesboro.

Fulton (25-8) was scheduled to play tourney favorite Memphis Hamilton (35-2) in Saturday night's championship game at MTSU's Murphy Center.

Since region tournament play, Fulton had posted three sizeable second-half comeback victories, including its region semifinal win over Carter and region title victory over Alcoa.

Fulton trailed Stratford 30-22 at halftime.

Wright said the Falcons don't scoreboard watch. They just go after stops and buckets and the score takes care of itself.

The winning edge over Stratford clearly came at the free throw line, where Fulton made 18 of 23 foul shots, while the Spartans converted only 9 of 19.

Trey Davis led the way in that department for the Falcons as he was a perfect 11 of 11 at the line.

Davis, a 6-foot junior wing, had an outstanding game overall as well, scoring a game-high 23 points and recording eight assists.

Sophomore teammate Edward Lacy also was a perfect 4 for 4 on his free throws and totaled 20 points. Deshaun Page worked inside for 17 points and eight

rebounds. He also had five steals.

Stratford (25-7) had a balanced attack, with four players scoring in double digits, including Jahari Reed and Ivan Buford with 14 points each. Juwon Carpenter tallied 10.

Michael Wallace (10 points and 12 rebounds) was a force inside for the Spartans but fouled out in the first overtime period.

Carpenter also picked up his fifth foul in the second OT and another starter, Kevonte Boyd, appeared to be hobbled by leg cramps down the stretch. But Stratford continued to battle.

Fulton trailed by four points with 1:56 left in regulation play. Josh Berry pulled the Falcons within one with a rebound basket and one. Two free throws by Trey Davis put Fulton ahead by one.

Continue on page 2



Sophomore guard Edward Lacy goes inside to put up a shot against Jackson South Side in a Class AA state quarterfinal game Thursday at Murfreesboro. Lacy scored a game-high 23 points to lead the Falcons' 61-52 win. Photo by Luther Simmons.

Bearden makes Memphis East sweat before bowing 72-60

By Steve Williams

Anfernee "Penny" Hardaway took off his sports coat and coached without it in the second half.

Bearden was responsible for that. The Bulldogs gave his nationally ranked Memphis East Mustangs all they wanted before bowing 72-60 in the TSSAA Class AAA state semifinals Friday at Murfreesboro.

The final score was not indicative of the exciting battle in Murphy Center on the MTSU campus.

Hardaway, a former NBA player, was a little amused when questioned about his missing sports coat in the media interview session after the game.

"I got a little hot because we went into halftime down three," replied Hardaway with a slight chuckle. "I'm not used to that. We're used to being up 20, 30 or 40."

"But I told the guys at halftime I was going to see what we were made



Bearden Coach Jeremy Parrott instructs his team at the TSSAA Class AAA state semifinals Friday at MTSU's Murphy Center.

of. We're a championship team. We'll turn it around. But I got a little hot."

Bearden, going up against one of the most physically-gifted teams in state tournament history, led 33-30 at halftime and extended its lead early in the third period.

When 6-8 junior Drew Pember drilled in a 3-point

shot from the top of the circle and Memphis East responded with a turnover, the Bulldogs led by eight points (38-30) and had the ball with 5:50 on the clock.

But then the Mustangs revved up the pressure and went on a 14-1 run in less than two minutes to take a 44-39 lead, forcing Bearden coach Jeremy

Parrott to call a timeout at 4:11.

A rebound basket and one by reserve Kordell Kah stopped the bleeding and the third period eventually ended in a 52-all tie.

Memphis East started the final period with six straight points, but a goal-tending call on the **Continued on page 3**



Bearden's Roman Robinson works to make an in-bounds pass with 6-6 freshman guard Johnathan Lawson defending for Memphis East in the Class AAA state semifinal game Friday at Murfreesboro. Memphis East overcame a strong effort by the Bulldogs to win 72-60.



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Admirals claim second State Cup with 4-2 win over Ice Dawgs

By Ken Lay

The Farragut High School and Bearden High School hockey clubs have become extremely familiar with one another throughout the 2017-18 Knoxville Amateur Hockey Association High School League season.

The two squads met several times during the regular season and during the Moore Cup Playoffs, so it appeared only appropriate that the two teams would meet one more time in the State Championship Game.

They did. And the Admirals left the ice with a 4-2 victory over the Ice Dawgs on Sunday, March 11 at the Icearium. With the victory, Farragut wrote a storybook ending to the perfect season and won its second consecutive State Championship.

"It's amazing," said Admirals goaltender James Brinkley, who made six saves in the contest. "It's hard to win a state championship and it's harder to win two in a row. But we came out ready to play."

"We came out fighting."

The Admirals also came out shooting --- and scoring.

Farragut was ahead 2-0 early.

Corey Lindsay, a Farragut High School junior scored the game's first goal less than two-and-a-half minutes into the game. Christian Callahan and Ryan Preiss assisted on the first marker of the contest, which gave the Admirals a 1-0 lead with 10:36 seconds remaining in the opening frame.

"It felt great to get that first goal and set the tone for the game," said Lindsay, who missed the first half of the season while nursing an injury. "It's an awesome experience to come out here and win two [state championships in a row.]"

And the Admirals were far from finished putting pucks into the back of the Ice Dawgs' net.

Farragut went up 2-0, just 12 seconds later when Jason Kinneary beat Bearden starting netminder Mathieu Senechal. Preiss and Davis Luna each picked up an assists on the game's second marker.

Farragut, which outshot Bearden 7-2



PHOTO BY JOHN BRINKLEY.

The Farragut Admirals celebrate their second consecutive State Championship. The Admirals recently claimed the title with a 4-2 victory over the Bearden Ice Dawgs at the Icearium.

in the first period, scored again late in the stanza when Davis Eichelberger tallied of an assist from Callahan, a junior who had a stellar postseason run for the Admirals, with 3:54 remaining.

The Ice Dawgs (7-8-1) clawed their way back into the contest in the second period. Coach Mike Raleigh lifted Senechal in favor of freshman Jobe King. Together, the duo kept Bearden in games all season.

"We left Mathieu in the game as long as we did because we knew things weren't his fault," Raleigh said. "He played well."

Admirals coach Jeff Lindsay agreed. King, who appeared in both days of the state tournament, didn't surrender a goal all weekend. The Ice Dawgs beat Christian Brothers High School (the lone team from West Tennessee) and the Knoxville Warriors to advance to the title tilt.

They showed signs of life in the second frame.

Malachi Bargiel scored a power play goal early in the period. The goal, which came with 10:08 left, was assisted by Jack Ingeneri.

Ingeneri also assisted the second marker by the Ice Dawgs. Will Haney scored that one, which made the score 3-2, 10 minutes into the period.

Farragut never trailed in the game, but the Admirals had to endure some tense moments. They finally salted the game and the championship away when Emerson Southern buried the puck into the empty net in the waning moments of the game after Raleigh pulled King in favor of an extra attacker.

"It was great to score that empty netter and seal the game and the championship," Southern said. "I thought we really passed the puck well today."

Coach Lindsay was obviously pleased.

"We pretty much dominated the game and I think we came out and we showed our character," he said. "That's why we have two straight state championships."

"Bearden has a good young team and they're building for their future."

Raleigh couldn't complain about the effort that Bearden put up in the final game of the season.

"We're really proud of them," he said. "This is a product of how hard these guys have worked in practice and the attitude that they've had in games."

"They work hard and they really support each other. They rise to the occasion and I couldn't ask for anything more from them."

Farragut boys soccer team has high hopes for 2018 campaign

By Ken Lay

Farragut High School's boys soccer team made it to the Class AAA State Tournament in 2017 and the Admirals, who won the District 4-AAA Tournament as a No. 3 seed, also brought home the Region 2-AAA Championship on their way to Murfreesboro.

Farragut, which went 18-6-1 in 2017, lost district matches to Maryville, Hardin Valley Academy and Bearden.

District 4-AAA remains the one of the toughest leagues in Tennessee, but has undergone a bit of a facelift as longtime members Bearden (the 2016 State Champion) and West High, which also boasts a solid program, have no departed for District 2-AAA.

The new district that Farragut calls home now has six teams including Maryville, the Hawks, the Admirals, William Blount, Heritage and Lenoir City. Previously, the regular-season champion received an automatic bid to the Region 2-AAA Tournament.

The coaches did away with that but Dover said he and the Admirals still want to finish first and get the No. 1 seed in the District 4-AAA Tournament.

"The regular-season winner no longer automatically qualifies for the region tournament," Farragut coach Ray Dover said. "We got rid of that because it just didn't make sense."

"But your goal is still to win the championship in the regular season because that way, you don't face Hardin Valley or Maryville in a knockout game in the semifinals."

"We have a cohesiveness," Dover said. "These guys all get a long and that's really important in soccer because it's such a team sport and there's a lot going on all the time."

The coach said that he would like to make a return trip to Murfreesboro but in order to accomplish that feat; he knows that the Admirals must stay healthy.

"If we can keep these guys healthy and together, we have a chance," Dover said. "The district is still tough and we have to stay healthy."

Key returners for Farragut include: Wes Jeter (junior, midfielder); Aaron Smalling (junior, defender); Pablo Herrera (junior, midfielder); Dillon Bihlmeyer (junior, defender); Zach Shopovick (senior, forward); Andy Taylor (senior, defender); Nathan Miller (sophomore, defender); Rivaldo Hill (senior, forward) and Brandon Keane (junior, goalkeeper).

Farragut enters the season with overall depth and the Admirals are especially deep at the goalkeeper spot. Keane returns after helping his squad make a state tournament run last season. Newcomer Shayne Miller joins the fray this year.

Continue on page 4

Webb baseball has lofty expectations in 2018

By Ken Lay

When Webb School of Knoxville opens its 2018 baseball season

Wednesday at Rhea County, coach Jordan Wormsley and the Spartans will have high hopes.

"I'm really excited about this group," said Wormsley, who will begin his seventh season coaching on the diamond at his alma mater. "They're excited to get going."

"We'll play a tough schedule and Rhea County is a good team so we'll find out where we are in a hurry."

From the looks of things, the Spartans will have plenty of reasons for optimism once they hit the field for their first game against the Golden Eagles. Webb, which opted not to play last week during Spring Break,

has a bevy of talented returners from the 2017 squad that won 22 games and reached the State Sectional Round of the Division II-A Playoffs.

The Spartans (who went 22-11) last season have depth on the mound. They also have several position players back; although some will play different roles for Webb in 2018, according to Wormsley.

"We're definitely going to have some players that are going to play different roles this year," he said.

The coach also noted that fans will see a heavy dose of small ball as the Spartans will attempt to take advantage of their

team speed, which Wormsley said may be their biggest weapon.

"Speed will definitely be a strength for us. We have a lot of guys who really run well," Wormsley said. "We're going to bunt and take advantage of our speed."

The coach also said that he expects his team to play good defense and that he has high hopes for his deep and experienced pitching staff.

"It sounds cliché but pitching and defense will win games for us and those things will also keep us in games," Wormsley said.

Offensively, Wormsley said that Webb will have success if they collectively buy into the approach that he's espousing this season. The Spartans will also need to develop consistency and good habits at the plate.

"We want our players to always take a solid approach," he said. "A lot of it depends on how well the

players buy into small ball."

Top returners for Webb include: Thomas Saliba (senior, pitcher); Stokes Needham (senior, outfielder); Reed Noyes (senior, catcher); Peter Schaefer (junior, outfielder/pitcher); Mason Patel (junior, pitcher/infielder); Carson Slagle (senior, infielder) and John Morrow (senior, outfielder).

Key newcomers are: Collin Barczak (senior, infielder/pitcher); Grissim Anderson (sophomore, pitcher/utility player) and Jackson Musrock (freshman, infielder).

While the Spartans are no strangers to deep post-season runs and success on the diamond, their league has a different look this year. Webb competes in Division II-A East Region District 1.

The Spartans will be joined by a pair of familiar opponents this season as Christian Academy of Knoxville and Grace Christian Academy move from

Division I. The Warriors won a Class AA State Championship in 2017. They also won in 2014.

The Rams won a Class A Title in 2015. Grace also reached the state tournament in 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2016. The Rams posted runner-up finishes in 2014 and 2016.

Webb has played both CAK and the Rams regularly over the years. But those meetings will take on a special significance this season.

"We've played both of them over the years. They both have successful programs," Wormsley said. "We've won some games against them and we've lost some games against them. But we've had good, tough competitive games against both of them."

"I look forward to the competition and I'm sure that if you asked my guys, they'll tell you the same thing. Grace and CAK are both very talented teams."

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Another comeback puts Falcons in Class AA finals

Cont. from page 1

Berry made one of two free throws with 29.1 seconds to go to give the Falcons a 51-49 lead, but a jumper by Reed with five seconds left tied it.

In the first overtime period, Page muscled in a shot, after Lacy grabbed a loose ball, to put Fulton ahead 58-56. But Stratford pulled even again when

Boyd hit a runner with 15 seconds to go.

Fulton led by five points several times in the second OT, but Stratford wouldn't go away and closed within one in the final minute.

Two clutch free throws by Trey Davis gave Fulton a 73-70 lead with 7.7 seconds remaining.

Buford was fouled on a 3-point shot with 2.4

seconds on the clock, but made only two of the three free throws, leaving the Spartans short by one.

In the quarterfinals, Fulton trailed Jackson South Side by one point at halftime and by two points after three stops, but outscored the Hawks 23-12 in the final period for a 61-52 win.

New players look to build upon recent soccer success at Central

By Ken Lay

When Chris Quinn took over as Central High School's boys soccer coach in 2017, he injected a passion into the program, which has had modest success since its inception.

But Quinn took the team to new heights during his first season in Fountain City. Under his direction, the Bobcats made their first trip to the Region 2-AAA Tournament for the first time in school history.

Central went 9-6-1 last season. The Bobcats also finished second in both the District 3-AAA regular-season standings and the post-season tournament. When Quinn took the reins of the program, he instilled an accountability among the players and the Bobcats soccer program is now a brotherhood.

"We play for the crest," he said. "We play for Central High School and we play for the community. We play for Fountain City and we play and we coach for each other."

That bond came to the forefront recently when a CHS soccer player was injured and Quinn was the first to tell the player that the team was there for him.

"We had a kid that was

injured and spent some time in the trauma unit," Quinn recalled. "Before I left, I held his hand and I told him that we would be there for him. He said 'I know, coach, we're a brotherhood.'

"This is a player-led team. You have coach-led teams. But when you have player-led teams, you will eventually play for championships. Right now, we want to play for district championships. We want to put Central soccer on the map. Eventually, we want to play for state championships."

The Bobcats are definitely on the map. They had their coming-out party at the 2017 Bearden Invitational. That event plays host to some of the Volunteer State's top squads every year.

There, the Bobcats played area powerhouse Christian Academy of Knoxville to a 2-2 draw. They also knocked off Notre Dame and suffered tough losses to Gallatin and Morristown West. The Bobcats played the Trojans in the back end of a Saturday double header after coming back to salvage a tie against the Warriors.

Quinn was especially pleased with Central's effort at Bearden and the 'Cats will be back at Bearden next

month. Quinn wants to build his program and coach it like the Bulldogs' Ryan Radcliffe.

"The Bearden tournament was big for us," Quinn said. "There, we saw some of the state's best teams. I really respect Ryan and I want our program to be like his. He's a great coach."

Quinn will see his mentor this season as the Bobcats make the shift to District 4-AA. There, they will play Catholic High School, which is coached by Gordon Heins.

"Gordon taught me a lot and I really look up to him," Quinn said. "He's a great coach."

"We will play Catholic on April 11 and that will be a big game for us."

The Irish headline a district schedule that also includes matches against South-Doyle, Carter and Fulton. The Cherokees, Hornets and Falcons have all had recent success on the soccer pitch. Quinn said the schedule will provide some unique obstacles.

"We'll still play teams from our old district," he said. "But this is good. I like it because it's a new challenge."

"It's going to be fun."

Central will open its 2018 campaign when it hosts Sevier County Tuesday at 7



The Central High School boys soccer team will open its 2018 season when it hosts Sevier County Tuesday night at Dan Y. Boring Stadium. Kickoff is slated for 7 p.m. The Bobcats won nine games last season and reached the regionals last season for the first time in school history. Photo submitted.

p.m. at Dan Y. Boring Stadium.

The Bobcats lost eight starters from last year's team, one of the best sides in school history. But Quinn appears eager to see how his new players will fare out of the gate.

Key players for the Bobcats include: Brodie Griffith

(senior, midfielder/defender); Michael Shafer (junior, defender); Trevor Holbert (sophomore, midfielder/forward); Conner Ambler (freshman, forward); Andrew Ramirez (freshman, forward); In Mendenhall (freshman, defender); Erik Richardson (junior, defender); Nathan Brummette (junior,

forward) and Elijah Holden (junior, goalkeeper).

In addition to the new players, Quinn adds assistant coaches Ian Greeley, who played for Heins with the Irish and Ryan Coughenour, who starred at Farragut High. With the Admirals, he played for the late Wallie Culbreth.

Kids from Boys & Girls Clubs have a ball at Smokies Stadium

By Steve Williams

The sky was blue and the sun bright. Had it not been for a brisk, cool wind, it would have been a perfect day for being on a ball field.

Nevertheless, the kids on hand didn't seem to mind the near-40 degree temperatures last Wednesday afternoon as they took part in the fourth annual Pitch, Hit & Run competition hosted by the Tennessee Smokies in collaboration with the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Tennessee Valley.

Around 60 boys and girls from 7 to 13 years old, representing nine different clubs, participated.

"It's an initiative with Major League Baseball to get inner city kids involved in baseball," said Carlye Clark of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Tennessee Valley.

One of the best things about it for the youngsters is walking into Smokies Stadium, said Clark. For some of them, it's their first-ever visit to a professional sports venue.

"The minute they walk in, they are in awe," said Clark. "Their mouths are



PHOTO BY STEVE WILLIAMS

A group of boys in the 7-8 age division sit together and wait their turn to bat in the Pitch, Hit and Run Competition at Smokies Stadium. It was sunny but cool ... a hands-in-your-pockets kind of day!

a gap and they're looking around. They want to go in the dugout and they want to run in the outfield. It's very exciting."

With some warmer weather arriving earlier this year, Clark said quite a few kids went through a "tryout process" at the local clubs, with top competitors

earning the chance to compete at Smokies Stadium.

The PH&R event is always held during Knox County schools' spring break week.

"Last year it was snowing. This year it's a tiny bit warmer, the sun is shining and we don't have snow," said Clark, laughing.

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- Boys 11/12**
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divided into four age divisions: 7/8, 9/10, 11/12 and 13/14.

The top individual finishers at the local level, along with the All-Around Champion in each age and gender group, can advance to the sectional level.

From there, top competitors qualify for the National Finals at the summer MLB All-Star Game.

Clark said Knoxville has never had a qualifier for the National Finals.

HOME OPENER: The Tennessee Smokies will play their first home game of the 2018 season against the Jackson Generals on Wednesday, April 11. The Smokies will start out on the road at Mississippi April 5.

The complete schedule for this season and information regarding tickets can be found online at smokiesbaseball.com or by calling the Smokies' ticket office at 865-286-2300.

Bearden makes Memphis East sweat before bowing 72-60

Cont. from page 1

Mustangs pulled Bearden within three (60-57) with 4:57 remaining.

The game was still up for grabs at that point, but Memphis East went on a 10-0 run led by playmaker Alex Lomax for a 70-57 command as the Bulldogs went cold.

Lomax, last year's Class AAA Mr. Basketball and a Wichita State signee, finished with 18 points, seven assists and three steals. Chandler Lawson, a 6-8 junior forward, contributed 17 points and 11 rebounds. James Wiseman, a 6-11 junior center, added 16 points.

Pember had an excellent

shooting performance and scored 15 points, including three 3-pointers, and also collected 10 boards.

Bearden also got 14 and 11 points from junior guards Jacques Glover and Trent Stephney, respectively.

Hardaway said he was most impressed by Bearden's "toughness and their execution. Those guards are a handful. They're well-coached. They had a great game plan and those guards ran the show. And No. 3 (Pember) is as good as I thought he was shooting the ball."

When asked where he would rank Bearden

among teams Memphis East played this season, he said, "Probably like fourth or fifth because we played some powerhouse teams. I can't put them ahead of the three teams that beat us, but probably fourth or fifth. They're a good team."

Memphis East took a 28-3 record into Saturday's state title game against Memphis Whitehaven. All three of East's losses this season were to out-of-state teams.

In the quarterfinals, Bearden pulled away for a 61-43 win over Mt. Juliet, while Powell (22-12) was eliminated by Memphis Whitehaven 53-36.

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A long road trip by a longtime Volunteer fan

When it comes to being a fan of the Tennessee Volunteers, Jim Tritt doesn't mind going the extra mile. He proved that recently.

Fired up over the success of this season's basketball team, Tritt began planning a road trip to St. Louis five days before the SEC tournament championship game was to be played.

Jim wasn't overconfident. He just wanted to be there if the Vols were, so he could hopefully witness UT's first tourney title since 1979.

It didn't matter who the opponent would be. The fact that it turned out to be rival Kentucky just made it that much better. Being a friend of Jim's,

I was among those to receive a group text message on Tuesday, March 6, at 7:14 a.m.

"Fan's who can car pool Saturday night!! I can do it solo 8 to 9 hours drive and sleep N rest area's?"

My first thought was just how many miles is it to St. Louis anyway? I googled for the answer - it's 485 miles from Knoxville to Nashville to St. Louis. So that would be 970 miles on the road for a two-hour game in a span of 18 hours. Plus there would be the cost for a ticket.

I passed. Jim surely would find some other Big Orange fans he knows to fill up the rental car.

But late in the week he hadn't found any takers. I made a couple of calls to fans I thought might be interested. They too said no thank you.

When I called Jim the

day before the game, he said he was still going and would be leaving sometime that night after he got off work. He would be going solo.

His love and passion for the Vols is that great.

Tritt, 61, makes his living behind a wheel. In fact, last Thursday marked his 33rd anniversary as a delivery man for UPS. Extra driving seems to be no problem for him, as he's also a motor sports fan and often travels on weekends to watch NASCAR races.

His all-time favorite sports' trip memory is having taken the late, great Tennessee coach Ray Mears to a race at Talladega in 1998.

My last text message to Tritt on the eve of the SEC tourney finals was: "Go Vols! ... Have a safe trip."

When I got up the next morning, I saw where Jim had replied:

"Well I'm 60 miles away from St Louis you can sense the spirit on the road Illinois cars with license plate saying UK hoops."

Another text sent later: "I'm getting Goosebumps just thinking about all the spirit that's going to be on that court today and hopefully I can get there early enough to yell at the (Kentucky) team ..."

Jim paid a scalper \$60 for a ticket.

Inside the Scottrade Center Arena that afternoon, he texted that the "Ushers are laid-back and people moved down as the game progressed."

But Tritt later told me he never sat down. He stood during the game at the top of one of the aisles and watched. He could have moved down to a lower seat, but he didn't want to be in the middle of all that Big Blue. He also was too nervous

to sit. Jim estimated the crowd being 90 percent UK fans with Tennessee Orange scattered here and there.

The Vols, as you probably remember, got off to a bad start, fell behind by 17 points in the first half, then put together a gallant comeback and went ahead a time or two before losing 77-72.

Tritt experienced the classic "long ride home" that all fans face after a disappointing loss.

Added to that, most all of the UK and UT fans were heading south and east after the game, causing the traffic flow to slow down at times. "And I was very tired," added Tritt.

Jim was almost back to Knox County but had to pull over one more time at a rest stop near Kingston.

Last week, I ran into another longtime UPS driver who was on lunch



Jim Tritt drove nearly a thousand miles solo in an 18-hour trip and back to support the Vols.

break and said he knew Jim.

He was unaware of Jim's trip, but when I told him about it, he said he could see Jim doing that.

And he added: "I'd have to be a pretty big fan to do that."

Vols/Lady Vols in the NCAA Tournament

By Alex Norman

The first day of the NCAA tournament was kind to Tennessee's men's and women's basketball teams.

On Thursday, March 15th, Admiral Schofield had 15 points and 12 rebounds as the 3rd seeded Vols pounded 14th seed Wright State 73-47 in Dallas.

"Obviously we're happy with the win and the fact that we felt coming in that Wright State would be as difficult a team that we've played all year in terms of the way they move without the ball," said Tennessee head coach Rick Barnes. "I think this time of year, you're looking for perfection. I thought when we got the lead, even in the first half, I didn't think we defended well in the last five minutes of the first half. I thought they looked up, and I think the score was 23-8, 21-8, something like that, and I just felt

like we let down a little bit defensively."

"Our coaches do a great job of scheduling teams that play different styles like this early in the year," said Schofield. "And our strength of schedule is important, and we get great teams like Lipscomb and different other schools that run different schemes. We usually prepare early in the year, but at this time of year, you've got to be ready because any team can get hot, especially in a tournament like this. Everybody has a special year. Everyone is in good position at this time of year."

Tennessee started the game slowly, but led by 11 points at the break and was never seriously tested. Vols guard Lamonte Turner led all players with 19 points. SEC player of the year Grant Williams had 14 points and 9 rebounds.

The win moved the Vols into

the second round, where they would play Loyola-Chicago on Saturday, March 17th.

As for the Tennessee women, they kicked off the NCAA tournament on Friday, March 16th against Liberty. It was the first time the Lady Vols hosted the NCAA tournament in three years. The 3rd seeded Lady Vols were sloppy in the first half, and only led the 14th seeded Lady Flames by eight points. But in the third quarter Tennessee pulled away, outscoring Liberty 38-20.

Tennessee continued the assault in the fourth quarter, eventually winning 100-60.

"Just don't let up, we were settling for a lot of things... we got on the boards we were giving up too many 3's... just play our game and play together," said Lady Vols head coach Holly Warlick to ESPN. "We did what we were supposed to do. Our defense took

it to another level and that's what we gotta do. We kinda wore them out."

"Freshman Forward Renna Davis had 18 points and 11 rebounds, leading all players in both categories. Red-shirt junior forward Cheridene Green had 15 points and 11 rebounds. The Lady Vols had seven players in double figures in scoring, the kind of balance that could take them a long way in this tournament.

"We got off to a little bit of a slow start, we settled in, got Mercedes and ball and our defense did some good things," said Warlick.

The Lady Vols improved to 30-1 all-time in NCAA tournament first round games, and 57-0 all-time in NCAA tournament home games. The win moved the Lady Vols into the second round, where they would host Oregon State on Sunday, March 18th.

Farragut boys soccer team has high hopes for 2018 campaign

Continued from page 2

Despite never playing high school soccer, he's a club veteran. Miller, a senior, was previously a bullpen catcher for the Farragut baseball team.

"Shayne has played club and I think he knows that he will play soccer in college," Dover said. "He's joined us and he's playing high school soccer for the first time."

Shayne Miller and Hererra will be the team's captains.

Freshman netminder Max Kaplan will likely play on the junior varsity team this season. But he's shined in some varsity preseason scrimmages this year.

Other key newcomers include: Alec Arnold (junior, midfielder) and Keith Williams (senior, forward).

The Admirals opened their 2018 campaign Friday in the Smoky Mountain Cup in Gatlinburg. The three-day event was played at the Rocky Top Sports Complex. Results were unavailable at press time.

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The Doctor is in

a weekly column by
Dr. Jim Ferguson

Something Happened

Historians were intrigued to learn that on July 4th 1776, King George wrote in his diary that "Not much happened today." I'll cut the King some slack because there was no internet, nor phones or even telegraph in the 18th century. It would be months before George learned that the Revolutionary War (1776-1783), which changed the world, had already begun.

By comparison, one might also contend that March 14, has little cosmic significance. It is the day some celebrate the mathematical expression pi, and it is the birthday of Albert Einstein. However, I would not have been aware of these notables except they now coincide with the death of the celebrated theoretical physicist, Stephen Hawking (3.14.2018).

Many have heard of Hawking, but few can fathom his work regarding

black holes, spacetime and cosmology. Most have heard of his fifty-five year battle with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, after the celebrated baseball player who, in 1939, developed this terrible condition. The cause of ALS is not known, and only a small percentage is associated with genetic defects or inheritance. The disease causes progressive destruction of nerve cells leading to profound weakness, spasticity and ultimately an inability to walk, speak, swallow or even breathe. Every year 2-3 persons per 100,000 get ALS and most die in 4-5 years, though 10% survive more than 10 years.

My father was a mechanical engineer and could never fathom why his son did not share his penchant for mathematics. And though I don't have

the aptitude or training to understand the mathematical constructs of Hawking's work, I comprehend some aspects of his cosmology after reading his sentinel book "A Brief History of Time" (1988). The book was written for average people to help them comprehend the universe in which we live. The 2014 biographical movie "The Theory of Everything" chronicled Hawking's life and alluded to his discoveries of the universe. I guess the movie's name was taken from the Holy Grail of physics which is to discover the relationship between the four fundamental forces of our universe (electromagnetism, the weak nuclear force, the strong nuclear force, and gravitation).

There are many stories about Hawking after his death. It is well known he was an eminent scientist and he was an atheist. The basis of science is observational reality, and yet at some level all facts are dependent upon comparison to a standard. This starting place (standard) must ultimately be accepted on faith. Hawking's specialty was the study of black holes - celestial bodies so massive and their gravity so great that even light cannot escape, and consequently they appear black (to us). Hawking admitted that all

observational reality and science break down at the boundaries of black holes and also in the quantum world. Even the Big Bang is an imagined construct because we can only look backward through time to a period 100 million years after our universe sprang forth from somewhere that didn't even exist the instant before it began!

One of Hawking's quotes caught my eye. Paraphrasing his observations, for millions of years humans were like other animals, and then "something happened." Hawking traces this "something" to the development of language. Contrast this with Genesis 2:7. Understandably, it is through language we share our thoughts, and "None of us is as smart as all of us together," goes the old saw.

One of my axioms is that "He who dies with the most books wins." In my library alongside Hawking's book is my collection of Gary Larson's Far Side cartoons. One of my favorite cartoons depicts a gaggle of scientists in lab coats reviewing a colleague's complex blackboard mathematical equation purported to explain the origin of life. Above the equal sign is written the magical ingredient, "Something Happened." And so it did.

Earlier this month on National Geographic's,

Star Talk, Stephen Hawking said he knows what happened before the dawn of time, i.e. before the Big Bang. I don't mean to disparage Dr. Hawking, who is an eminent theorist, but how could he observe or test his hypothesis? He can't, because by definition all our observations are null and void before the moment everything began. At the risk of getting in the weeds, Hawking envisioned our "real time" as linear. An example is a timeline. This western concept envisions a past, a present and a future time. By comparison, ancient eastern cultures viewed time as circular as did the Mayans of mesoAmerica. Using quantum theory, Hawking posits a different dimension of time before the Big Bang and calls it "imaginary time," admitting there is no way this can be tested.

Again, I admit that I'm just one of the hoi polloi, but it amazes me to the extent that some will go to exclude the existence of a Creator. Causality is a notion attributed to Aristotle who argued that something cannot come from nothing. I'm here because of my parents and they existed because of their parents and so on down through the sands of time to the "Genesis" point where everything began.

I can comprehend the quantum world of the very small. I can imagine black holes as representative of the very large. And I realize that these extremes challenge our notions of science, observation, time and even reality. But even the quantum fluxes of electrons which enable my iPhone and computer to work, and the massive black holes which we observe bending the fabric of space and time, exist in our cosmos not in some pre-cosmos or imaginary time.

Scientists believe everything emanated from the Big Bang. Somewhere along the line, "something happened" and we developed intelligence, language, curiosity and then technology. But was it random or inevitable? I don't think so. It is far more plausible that we are part of a majestic plan though it is often mysterious.

Albert Einstein once said, "There are only two ways to live your life: one is as though nothing is a miracle; the other is as though everything is a miracle." I pray that Dr. Hawking has encountered the Miraculous and he is now dancing among the stars.

You may email Dr. Ferguson at fergusonj@knoxfocus.com

Air Travel with Your Pet

Air travel with your pet should not be a risky adventure. Statistically, air travel with a pet is safe. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, "over two-million pets and other live animals are transported by air every year in the United States." U.S. airlines reported twenty-four animal deaths last year, which seemingly are low odds of misfortune. When considering taking Fido or Fluffy along for your next air travel know the risk and prepare



By Howard Baker, RN BSN

accordingly. I decided, to write on this topic after reading about a French Bulldog named Kokito who died recently on a United Airline flight. According to news reports Kokito's family was forced to put their pet in an overhead baggage compartment. Apparently, Kokito suffocated during the four-hour flight. There are many questions to answer as the investigation goes forward. However, no live animal should be stowed in an overhead

compartment. Travel with your pet should be enjoyable, fun, and safe. If you are planning air travel with your pet here are Hobo the Wonder Dog's tips for safe travel. Remember, when you travel with your pet there are always risks. Planning and preparation helps ensure you and your pet arrive happy and safe.

Air Travel Tips

- Before travel make sure your pet is familiar with their crate or kennel
- Make sure all latches and closures work properly

- Do not feed your pet solid food in the six hours prior to flight
- Administer anti-anxiety or sedation medications only as recommended and as prescribed by your veterinarian, and test dose to know how your pet will respond to the medication
- Make reservations in advance for your pet
- When boarding the plane notify a flight attendant you have a live animal with you
- Make sure your pet is wearing an identification tag and the kennel has the same information

written on it, so it cannot be removed

- Check airline policy and recommendations before making reservations

With preparation and planning you can significantly decrease the chances for accidents and help ensure you and your pet arrive safely. You are your pets advocate for safety. Stand-up, speak out when you have questions or concerns for the comfort or safety of your pet.

As you head out for spring breaks and summer vacations, it's a good idea to plan for Fido and Fluffy.

Maybe they would be happier staying behind at a doggy daycare or with a trusted friend or family member. Not all pets love to travel, and all destinations and routes are not ideal for Fido. Knowing when to take your pet—is just as important as knowing when not to.

Life is better with a dog—Woof!

Hobo the Wonder Dog, Your Guide to Travel, Health, and Fun. Please follow Hobo on Facebook @ Hobo the Wonder Dog or contact us at: howard@howardsbaker.com.



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