



Republicans call for unity heading to November election

Knox County Sheriff-elect Tom Spangler addresses the crowd at the Crowne Plaza on election night last Thursday. Photo by Ken Lay.



By Ken Lay

Area Republicans celebrated a big night at Thursday night's election return party in the Tennessee Ballroom of the Crowne Plaza Hotel.

The election brought an end to a pair of hotly tested primaries that became contentious at times. The winners, however, are looking to create unity for the party as it heads into November's General Election.

Glenn Jacobs, Tom Spangler and Justin Biggs won general elections Thursday and each called for unity

during their respective acceptance speeches. Spangler, who will be Knox County's next sheriff due to his victory over Lee Tramel in May's primary, and Biggs won the At-Large Seat 11 on county commission.

Jacobs, who had a tough race in May against Bob Thomas and Brad Anders, won in a landslide over Democrat Linda Haney and he'll succeed Tim Burchett as Knox County Mayor on September 1.

Burchett, who won the hotly-contested primary for District 2 in U.S.

Congress, will face off with Democrat and environmental activist Renee Hoyos in November's General Election.

In the other hotly-contested race, Bill Lee won the Republican governor's race, upsetting frontrunners Randy Boyd of South Knoxville and Diane Black.

Lee will run against Democrat and former Nashville Mayor Karl Dean.

"We have to put aside our differences for the good of the country,"

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Students, parents and interested citizens lined up to tour the newly constructed Gibbs Middle School during Eagle Fest, the grand opening of the school which was held on Friday, Aug. 3

Eagles of all ages flock to Gibbs Middle celebration

By Pete Gawda

Since the eagle is the mascot of the new Gibbs Middle School, it was only appropriate that a real, live eagle be the featured guest at Eagle Fest, the grand opening celebration of the newly constructed school.

Mr. Lincoln, a bald eagle, was the star of the event which was held on Friday, August 3. The new school is located at 7625 Tazewell Pike, near Gibbs High School. Eagle Fest was a fun occasion because, in addition to Mr. Lincoln, there was music, food trucks, and booths representing various campus organizations and local businesses and churches, as well as tours of the new school.

Clear Springs Baptist Church gave away hot dogs served on Frisbees. The youth group from Fairview Baptist Church had a booth with games for children. There was a raffle to benefit the girls' soccer team, and folks could buy Gibbs T-shirts and other Gibbs merchandise to show their school spirit. The brand new school, which opens for classes on Wednesday, August 8 has a



Mr. Lincoln is handled by Spencer Williams of the American Eagle Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to protecting the eagle and other birds of prey.

among other amenities, a well-appointed band practice room, art rooms, well furnished classrooms, a modern media center, an attractive cafeteria, and an impressive gymnasium and theater.

Everyone wanted to have their picture taken with Mr. Lincoln who was hatched at the American Eagle Foundation's Eagle Mountain Sanctuary in Pigeon Forge.

Ethics Committee may change procedure rules Wednesday

By Mike Steely
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For the second time in recent years the Knox County Ethics Committee is considering changing its rules of procedure. Complaints against three commissioners and a sheriff's candidate during election season is prompting the ethics group to consider changes that would prohibit complaints filed by citizens from being considered within 60 or 90 days of a pending primary or general election.

The committee is also looking at placing a one-year time limit on filing ethics complaints against county officials and

candidates.

The major change in procedure being considered when the committee meets Wednesday at 8:30 a.m. is allowing ethics decisions to be determined by a majority (7 of 9) members present. Currently it takes a unanimous vote to find an ethics violation.

The committee may also consider requesting an interview with people making the complaint prior to a public hearing on the matter and the committee may vote to allow the chairman to require documents and other evidence prior to a hearing.

Surprises in Thursday's election

By Mike Steely
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Even the day-long rain didn't stop Knox County from voting in the August 2nd Primary and General Election. A total 81,165 voters cast ballots, close to the estimates hoped for by the Knox County Election Commission. Of those, 45,547 were early or absentee votes. Chris Davis, assistant administrator of the election commission, told The Focus Friday morning that the Democratic Party "came out in force" and offered the voters more candidates in more contests than in many years.

Probably one of the biggest surprises was the victory of Justin Lafferty for the Republican nomination in House District 89. Lafferty bested two well-known

political figures, former state Senator Stacey Campfield and former Sheriff Tim Hutchison. Lafferty pulled 30% of the party vote, Hutchinson got 26% and Campfield got 21%.

Lafferty, a Farragut High School and UT graduate, goes on to face Democrat Colleen Martinez in the November election.

Libertarian Republican, insurance agent and professional wrestler Glenn Jacobs handily defeated Democrat Linda Haney to become Knox County Mayor. That victory garnered a lot of state-wide and national attention. Oddly enough the larger Democrat Party turnout gave Haney 26,224 votes in the race compared to fellow Democrat Phil Bredesen's 21,918 votes in his

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