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Happy 227th, Knoxville!



The Blount Mansion, home of the only governor of the Territory South of the Ohio and future U. S. Senator from Tennessee. The house is original and open to tours and there's a museum on the same grounds. It's at the southern foot of the Gay Street Bridge.

By Mike Steely
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Knoxville's 227th Birthday is Wednesday, October 3, and the East Tennessee History Center and Historic Homes of Knoxville are hosting a luncheon at 11:30 to celebrate.

The Civil War battles in East Tennessee will be the subject of a presentation by Steven E. Woodworth, an American history professor at Texas Christian University. City and county key leaders have been invited and Knoxville's historic

properties will be featured in the celebration.

Featured will be James White Fort, John Sevier's Marble Springs, Blount Mansion, The Ramsey House, Crescent Bend House and Gardens, and Historic Westwood. The event begins at 11:30 a.m. with lunch following at noon. WEIR's Robin Wilhoit will act as master of ceremonies for the event.

Knoxville's history goes much further back than the city's founding. By 1787 James White was living on

the site and owning most of the land that would become the city. He founded "White's Fort" on the hill above where First Creek enters the Holston River, now known as the Tennessee River.

The current James White Fort is a reconstruction of the original fort, using some logs from the original cabin which were stored for years before the current fort was built across the James White Parkway from its original location.

In 1790 North Carolina

gave up its claims of land west of the Alleghenies and the "Territory South of the River Ohio" was formed. President George Washington named William Blount as territorial governor and Blount chose White's fort as his capital. He named the settlement in honor of General Henry Knox and the town site was surveyed and laid off in lots by White.

On the hill above the river a fort or blockhouse known as The Barracks, was built

Continued on page 2

Austin-East Alumnus Honored



Austin-East High School is celebrating its 50th anniversary and alumni Fred Lowery was honored by Mayor Madeline Rogers for his career, success, and philanthropic efforts at last week's council meeting. Family members, fellow alumnus, and the audience gave Lowery a standing ovation. State Representative Rick Staples presented a plaque from Governor Bill Haslam. Pictured, left to right, are Councilwoman Gwen McKenzie, Mr. Lowery, Mayor Rogers and Representative Staples. Lowery is senior vice president of Thermo Fisher in Boston, a world leader in serving the science industry. He continues to support the ALS Foundation, the Boys and Girls Club and his high school Alma Mater.

Golfers brave rain to play for Knoxville's Youth

By Ken Lay

A little rain couldn't dampen spirits at the Rick Barnes Emerald Youth Golf Classic Presented by Regal early last week.

More than 120 golfers braved some intermittent showers to play in the tournament at Holston Hills Country Club on Monday, Sept. 24. The tournament, which has now been played for two decades, is one of the largest fundraisers for the Emerald Youth Foundation, a ministry which strives to help the community's youth largely through sports and education.

"People come to play golf but they realize this is about more than just golf," Emerald Youth Foundation Chief Executive Officer Steve Diggins said. "They know that they are helping our kids and golf is a fun way for these people to get involved."

Continued on page 2

Westland Drive developments highlight zoning hearing at commission

By Mike Steely
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Vacant land is becoming a prized possession in Knox County and more and more of the empty or almost empty lots are prime targets for development. Whether for single homes, townhouses, duplexes or apartments the zoning requests to build on what was once agricultural land flow from developers to the Metropolitan Planning Commission and then to the Knox County Commission. The housing boom in West Knoxville isn't limited to Hardin Valley, Deane Hill, Lakeshore or along Pellissippi

Highway. Westland Drive meanders from Lakeshore Park all the way to rejoin that busy street near Concord Park. Along the westward trek it crosses Morell Road, Ebenezer Road, and Pellissippi Parkway. Along the way the number of housing subdivisions and neighborhoods are increasing and the number of vacant sites are shrinking.

Last week the county commission's zoning hearings saw three Westland Drive proposals to increase the density of homes along the once rural route.

Craig Allen was before the commission asking to change

the zoning on the south side of Westland and east of I-40 (Pellissippi Parkway) from low density residential to Commercial (CA) and Office Park (OA). Commissioner John Schoonmaker represents the area and applauded the developer for working with the neighboring communities in advance of the application. The proposal was modified slightly, according to Schoonmaker, to satisfy some concerns prior to reaching the commission. The change was recommended by the planning commission in an 11-3 vote and was approved easily by the county commissioners.

Eric Moseley for S & E

Properties asked for a change from agricultural to planned residential for a small track on Westland Drive east of Gothic Manor Way. The request was to add 1/3 of an acre to an existing development for up to 5 dwelling units. The request had passed the MPC with a unanimous vote and did so in the commission.

Developer Scott Davis has plans to expand a housing development along Westland Drive northeast of Heritage Lake Way. He wants to change the Planned Residential Zoning there to allow for 14 units per acre. The MPC had voted to deny the change

Continued on page 4



University of Tennessee men's basketball coach Rick Barnes spent time with golfers early last week at the Rick Barnes Emerald Youth Golf Classic Presented by Regal. The tournament was held on Monday, Sept. 24 at Holston Hills Country Club. Barnes has been involved with Emerald Youth Foundation since arriving in Knoxville. Photo by Ken Lay.

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