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Fountain City Auction Kicks Off New Year With Huge Advertisement Auction

By Amy Box Felhoelter

You can't put a price tag on reminiscing over a display of vintage Pepsi-Cola wooden crates or a five-cent gumball machine, but coming to the 14th Annual Advertisement Auction at Fountain City Auction will let you relive days of ole with no entrance fee. This exciting live and online auction becomes the largest of its kind in the area this Saturday, January 5.

"This auction brings in a high quality of items and sellers. We collect items for it all year. You can't go out and get this every day. Some of this stuff is hard to find," says Greg Lawson, owner of Fountain City Auction.

Fortunately for customers, an extensive collection of popular items will be available such as antique gas and oil items, retro vending machines, vintage toys and cap guns, bicycles, and a selection of old-fashioned Coca Cola

logo items like a ten-cent soda vending machine, chest coolers, and a five-cent pedal car. Some unique pieces to claim are a World Fair pinball machine, a 1924 antique pair of Tennessee license plates, a Wheelman Big Wheel Bicycle, a Dale Earnhardt Coca Cola machine, and a "Stuart Little" motorized ride-on car. All of these items can be found amid historic TEXACO, SHELL, and SUNOCO gas pumps, a huge selection of pedal cars and tractors, and hundreds of signs in neon, metal, and porcelain varieties.

Lawson says the biggest change in the past 14 years of running the auction is the online element which made this event the sixth most viewed online auction in the nation last year, and the number one most viewed in the state of Tennessee on the AuctionZip website.

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PHOTO BY AMY BOX FELLOELTER.

Greg Lawson of Fountain City Auction is ready for the first big sale of the year. The 14th annual Advertisement Auction is this Saturday at noon.

Ring in the New Year on Market Square

What are you doing tonight?

One way to celebrate is at New Year's Eve on Market Square, presented by Lloyd's Electric Service Inc., on Monday, Dec. 31. The Holidays on Ice open-air ice skating rink, presented by Home Federal Bank, is open 1 - 10 p.m. The all-ages celebration begins at 10 p.m. with The Bicho Brothers performing classic rock favorites on the Market Square stage. The countdown to midnight begins at 11:55 p.m., followed by the ball drop, fireworks and a group sing-along of "Auld Lang Syne."

Frank Murphy from Classic Hits 93.1 FM and Kelli Smith of WATE Channel 6's program "Living East Tennessee" will emcee the event. Party favors, including foam "2019" hats and inflatable "thunderstick" noise makers, will be available while supplies last. No mobile food or alcohol sales will take place on the square on New Year's Eve. However, downtown restaurants, including those participating in the Peppermint Trail, will be open and offering specials; it's always a good idea to call ahead for hours and dinner reservations.

Visitors should be aware of temporary closures around Market Square. Parking on Wall Ave will be prohibited starting at 3 p.m., and the road will be closed 5 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. Parking on Union Avenue between Walnut and Gay streets and Market Street between Union and Clinch avenues, ends at 7 p.m. Those streets will be closed between 9 p.m. and 12:30 a.m.

Free parking after 6 p.m. is available in all City-owned garages, including Market Square, Locust Street, Langley, City County Building and Dwight Kessel. Public parking spaces are currently limited in State Street garage during the construction project that will increase its capacity by 570 spaces. For a map of available garages and lots, visit DowntownKnox.org/Parking.

Visit www.knoxvilletn.gov/christmas for more details on New Year's Eve on the Square and www.downtownknoxville.org/holiday/peppermint/ for a list of Peppermint Trail participants.

'Violins of Hope' coming to Knoxville

By Mike Steely
steelym@knoxfocus.com

"They once asked a Jewish musician why are there so many Jewish violinists. He looks at the violin, how small it was, and said 'It's one of the only instruments you can grab and run. Unfortunately too many times we have to do that.'"

Those were the opening words of Rabbi Yossi Wilhelm of the Chabad of Knoxville when addressing the Knoxville City Council recently.

"Violins of Hope" is a collection of over 50 violins," he continued, "that were rescued, saved and restored from the holocaust era. Some were played during the holocaust, in ghettos and concentration camps. The Nazis had symphonies so that when Jews arrived at the death camps the symphonies played and they thought 'How bad can it be?'"

"Some of those who played— their lives were actually saved. After the war when they looked at the violin they couldn't play it any more. Many of them stored it in their attic or some drawer," the rabbi said.

Rabbi Wilhelm was



Violins that survived the Holocaust have been reassembled and restored by Israeli master violin-maker and founder of Violins of Hope, Amnon Weinstein. His son and a co-founder of Violins of Hope, Avshi Weinstein, will be making the trip from Israel to visit middle school and high school students in East Tennessee schools with the violins and will be accompanied by musicians who will play them. Students will have the opportunity to ask questions and touch the violins.

speaking on the request of Mayor Madeline Rogero who had appropriated \$2,000 from her budget to assist the Stanford Eisenberg Knoxville Jewish Day School bring the Violins of Hope to Knoxville.

"Violins of Hope: Strings of the Holocaust" will be on exhibit January 4 through January 27 at the UT Downtown Gallery, 106 Gay Street. Additional information can

be obtained by calling (865)245-0202.

Concerts are scheduled for January 23 and 24 at 7 p.m., at the Tennessee Theater and will feature some of the restored violins being played by the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra. The Jewish Day School is sponsoring the event and information about tickets is available at www.violinsofhoeknox.com.



Rabbi Yossi Wilhelm tells the story of "Violins of Hope" a display and Knoxville Symphony event coming to the Tennessee Theater in January. Photo by Mike Steely.

Happy New Year!

Social Security Disability Basics



By **Jedidiah McKeenan**
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Social security is a system that our government has set up to pay individuals who retire a certain amount of money each month. Social security is also designed to pay individuals a monthly amount if they become disabled and are unable to work.

to be disabling, and the condition that the applicant is alleging keeps them from working must be on the list or must be as debilitating as the conditions on the list.

Social security disability is an area of law unto itself, but let's go over the very basics of it.

When you apply for social security disability, you can do so by yourself, or with an attorney. If an attorney represents you, his fee will be contingent upon you receiving disability, so you do not have to pay that attorney anything upfront.

When you apply for disability, your application will undergo a review by the social security office. Very often, your initial application for disability is rejected and then your disability application is set for a hearing in front of a federal administrative law judge who only hears social security disability hearings.

In order for a judge to rule that you are disabled, he must work through a five-step process before making that determination. The first question the judge asks is, "Is the applicant currently working?" If they are, then obviously the applicant is not disabled and unable to work.

The second question the judge asks is, "Is the application's condition severe?" That means that the condition has persisted for 12 or more months and prevents the applicant from working.

The third question the judge asks is, "Is the applicant's disability something that is listed on the federal government's list of disabling medical conditions?" The government maintains a list of conditions that they consider

The fourth question the judge asks is, "Can the applicant do the work they previously did?"

The judge must determine based on the testimony of the people present at the hearing whether the applicant can return to work they previously performed prior to their alleged disability date. Obviously, if a judge believes they can return to their prior work, then an applicant will be determined to not be disabled.

Finally, the last question the judge asks is, "Can the applicant do any other type of work?" So its not good enough that an applicant cannot do their prior work, they must be unable to do any other type of work, including work that would keep the applicant sedentary (sitting down) most of the time. There is an exception to this. If an applicant is 55 years of age or older, they are considered "untrainable" and unable to learn a new skill set or job, so the judge's questions end after question 4 for applicants who are 55 years of age or older (as insulting as that may be to those over 55).

So there it is, those are the questions that the judge will put to applicants to determine whether an individual is disabled.

Jedidiah McKeenan is an attorney practicing in Knox County and surrounding counties. He works in many areas, including criminal, divorce, custody, personal injury, landlord-tenant, civil litigation and estate planning. Visit attorney-knoxville.com for more information about this legal issue and other legal issues.



PHOTO BY AMY BOX FELLOEHLER

A preview for this Saturday's Advertisement Auction will be held Friday, Jan. 4, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Fountain City Auction Kicks Off New Year With Huge Advertisement Auction

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Customers can preview each item and its current bidding price before the sale begins. As of last Friday, Dec. 28, over 500 auction items became available for online bidding through HiBid.com which can be linked through www.fountaincityauction.com and the AuctionZip App.

Lawson explains, "I want to make it easy for customers to imagine how an item

would look for their space." This gives reason to why he and his staff meticulously inspect every piece to list specifications and pictures in the online descriptions.

As the sale runs live online and in-house simultaneously, Fountain City Auction serves its shoppers well by providing 250 seats, all which have a great view of a 9x16-foot projection screen displaying every piece to be sold.

The heated facility even has concessions and is located at 4109 Central Avenue Pike near the Merchants Drive Exit off of Interstate 75.

If you're a Knoxville picker, weekend wanderer, or simply looking to start a new family tradition, come be a part of the audience experience. Check out the items for yourself during the preview times this Friday, Jan. 4, from 10 a.m. to 4

p.m. and Saturday, Jan. 5, from 9 a.m. until the sale begins at noon. It only takes a few minutes to register for a bidder number and then you are ready to bid on those vintage items you just can't live without.

For questions or to bid absentee, call Greg Lawson at (865) 603-3468 or email auctioninfo@fountaincity-auction.com.

State BEP funding subject of Joint Ed Committee meeting

By **Mike Steely**
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Members of the Joint Education Committee had a lesson in Tennessee's Basic Education Program recently. Maryanne Durski, executive director of the department of education's local finance department, spoke for about 90 minutes during a committee meeting.

Durski explained that the sales tax moneys generated in Knox County go to the state to be calculated and some of the tax comes back to local funds. The amount that is returned depends on the amount generated.

Knox County, one of the four major school systems in the state, basically gets back about 60% of the funds while other small systems can receive

as much as 70%. The funding is determined by several elements including the state budget and a study by the BEP Review Committee made up by school, county, legislative and state agencies and private citizens.

That state committee meets in the spring and often in the fall as schools begin but there is not a member from Knox County on the decision group.

She also said that the state now requires one nurse for every 3,000 students and noted that the BEP funding amount is being reduced each year and will eventually disappear. She said many factors go into calculating the amount and percentage each county receives. She added that the BEP program was revised in 2007 and again in 2016.

One of those factors is the number of at-risk and handicapped students.

Chairman Larsen Jay asked if the factors are considered on a yearly basis and Durski said that was correct. She also said that the salaries of custodians and assistants follow teacher pay increase allotments with the same percentage of raises.

She noted that BEP funding is based on the number of students attending class and the square foot allotted to each student, but not the number of school buildings in a county. She confirmed that if the number of students increase or decrease during a school year that can affect state funding.

Durski said the state requires at least a 3% fund surplus in local budgets if a system expects to spend more than is budgeted and, if the extra funds are not there, BEP funding is withheld until the funding is corrected.

Commissioners Randy Smith and Evelyn Gill asked several questions. Smith noted that Knox County is a "donor county" contributing more money to the state than it receives back

in BEP funding. Durski responded that the sales tax goes into a pot and is spread out across the state. She also noted that two large county school systems have filed suit questioning the unequal distribution of funds.

She called the BEP policy "free and appropriate funding" and urged the commission and board of education to consult their local state representatives concerning the policy.

Durski said that the state average distribution per student is about \$9,900 and said a new report, available soon, will show what the average is in Knox County.

The Joint Education Committee plans to meet again on February 20th to take a look at the current school system budget and Jay asked the system to provide information prior to the meeting.

The local committee consists of Commissioners Jay, Smith, Gill, and Michele Carringer. School Board members include Patti Bounds, Virginia Babb, Susan Horn and Evetty Satterfield.

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2018 A Very Political Year Part Three of Three

By Mike Steely
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September

The month of September began with oath-taking by several new county officials. Sheriff Tom Spangler was featured as he took the office. County Mayor Glenn Jacobs was sworn in. Other officers taking office included Charlie Susano, Sherry Witt, Nick McBride, and among those re-elected were Trustee Ed Shouse, Criminal Clerk Mike Hammond, and school board members Evetty Satterfield, Virginia Babb, Terry Hill, Patti Bounds, Kristi Kristy, and student board member Hanna Selph.

The Northside Christian Church celebrated 60 years and the planning commission completed an update to the Major Road Plan.

Residents organized to oppose expansion of a subdivision just north of New Harvest Park and an agreement to open the Twin Creek Road and clean up the large roadside dump was announced.

The Tennessee Valley Fair opened with ceremonies and the city held a 9-11 memorial.

A long hearing before Judge John Weaver on the sheriff department's uniformed officers' pension plan was held and Fourth District Commissioner Hugh Nystrom was elected commission chairman. Knox County's newly elected commissioners, Larsen Jay and Justin Biggs, were seated.

Potential sale of the Andrew Johnson Building was again postponed on the commission's agenda and would be postponed through the rest of the year as the county and school system continued to look for a new location for the school's administrative offices.

The Neighborhood Advisory Council began looking for new members and the planning commission approved a concept plan for Post Oak Bend over neighborhood opposition.

With the county elections completed candidates for mayor of Knoxville began picking up petitions for election and naming treasurers.

The police advisory committee celebrated 20 years and the county ethics committee began seeking members. Five local companies were recognized for diversity.

Tennova Medical Center, just off Broadway, began being eyed as a possible location for the Knoxville Police and Fire Departments. A \$50,000 contract was awarded to a firm to evaluate the former Baptist Hospital site. At the close of the year, Tennova would announce: All services at Physicians Regional Medical Center, formerly known as St. Mary's Hospital, and Lakeway Regional Hospital will permanently end at 11:59 p.m. on December 28, 2018.

Burns Mailing and Printing was highlighted in a Focus feature.

October

The City of Knoxville celebrated its 227th Anniversary. County Mayor



Volunteers wrap up after placing wreaths at the Lyonsview Veteran Cemetery. Turnout for the annual event on December 15 was good. Wreaths were also placed at the National Cemetery, Downtown, and at the State Veterans Cemetery on Governor John Sevier Highway. Photo courtesy of Ronnie Collins.

Jacobs cut the ribbon on the Carter Convenience Center, a project sponsored by Commissioner Dave Wright.

The Fountain City Episcopal Church volunteers assembled more than 20,000 pasta and tomato sauce packets for Second Harvest.

The City's Recode project was revised a third time and saw some opposition to some of the original language and changes. The Oakwood-Lincoln Park neighborhood began looking at a Neighborhood Overlay designation to help preserve the area.

School board member Jennifer Owen was named as Outstanding Community Advocate.

Early voting for state and national offices began including U. S. Senate, Congress and Governor.

The Knoxville Focus's sports writer, Steve Williams, was honored by Careacter Star Athletes and the newspaper began a series called "Getting to Know" with an interview with County Mayor Glenn Jacobs. The series would continue the remainder of the year with interviews with Gerald Green, Eve Thomas, Charles Susano, Jr., Ronnie Collins, Patricia Robledo, Betty Jo Mahan, George Bove, Jim Sturgeon, Molly Gilbert and David Brace.

The 10th Annual Pink Ribbon Celebration for breast cancer survivors was held at the Grande Event Center and featured comedian Leanne Morgan, Knoxville's Chris Blue, and Dee Dee Brogan.

Mayor Jacobs called a special session of the Knox County Commission

to get approval of his settlement in the pension board lawsuit. The commission, after first declining agreement, voted with the approval of the two new members to agree to the settlement. The law department was told to settle the dispute and eventually Chancellor John Weaver would rule that the county mayor and the commission were the clients of the law director and removed him from the suit.

Central High School honored four alumni by adding them to the Wall of Fame. They were Sandra Martin, Susanne Matheny, Jack Lee Thurman and Stuart R. Worden.

November

Early voting saw a large turnout and total voting was expected to pass the 2016 numbers.

The city announced it would hire Volkert, Inc., to serve as an outside consultant in plans to purchase the Tennova Medical Center.

Since the law director was removed from the pension suit the Knox County Commission voted to hire an outside law firm to represent the county in the remainder of the case.

Rumors began spreading that a new sports arena may be built near downtown and Mayor Madeline Rogero threw her support behind the effort. The city council also paused to remember the shooting victims at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh.

Dave Wright was elected to the Tennessee Legislature with the highest



Richie Beeler takes the oath of office from Judge Kristi Davis. He was selected from several applicants to fill out the 8th District term of Dave Wright who was elected to the Tennessee Legislature.

percentage of votes than any other candidate on the local ballot. Wright would go on to resign from his commission seat and the commission, after interviewing various candidates to serve out Wright's term, voted to seat Richie Beeler as the 8th District representative.

Senator Ben Atchley Jr. passed away and was remembered by Focus Columnist Ray Hill.

Three attorneys for retiring uniformed officers with the Sheriff's Office told the Knox County Commission they wanted about \$190,000 from the county to cover their fees. The matter was resolved the next month.

Wreaths Across America's Knoxville effort was assumed by the Vietnam Veterans of America with Knox County Mayor Tim Burchett moving on to congress and a fund raising and volunteer effort was in place.

Dave Wright was honored by the Knox County Commission.

The city council approved creating 53 affordable housing units with about \$ 6 million in federal, state and local funds.

Commissioner John Schoonmaker resigned from the Knox County

Retirement and Pension Board after being in conflict with their inclusion of vacation days in retirement payments. He was replaced by Commissioner Randy Smith.

December

The Central High School Bobcats Football Team won their first ever State Championship. The TSSAA Class 5A championship came after defeating Henry County with a 14-0 victory.

American Legion Post 2 paused to remember Pearl Harbor Day on December 7th in a service at the rotunda of the Lyons View Veterans Cemetery.

Richie Beeler was sworn in as county commissioner, replacing Dave Wright. The county hosted its 20th Festival of Lights at The Cove on Northshore Drive.

Volunteers were sought and then responded with large numbers to help place wreaths on veteran graves in Knox County's three veteran cemeteries. Three very special moms held a birthday party, organized by Bambi Pelham, for their special daughters.

Former "Heartland" host Bill Landry spoke at the East Tennessee

History Museum and was featured as The Focus caught up with the popular personality.

Halls High School cheerleaders and Bearden's basketball team were among volunteers to benefit the East Tennessee Children's Hospital.

The city council met to consider the Magnolia Avenue Streetscapes project, the future of Chilhowee Park, and extending the Riverwalk from Suttree Landing Park to Island Home.

The Knoxville Transit Authority announced a feature for cell phones that permits a waiting passenger to know when the trolley or bus will arrive.

U. S. Senator Lamar Alexander announced he will not seek re-election and speculation turned to possible candidates including Mayor Rogero and Governor Bill Haslam. Rogero said she would not seek the post and Haslam indicated he may be interested.

The number of people interested in replacing Mayor Rogero continued to grow including Indya Kincannon, Marshall Stair, Eddie Mannis, John Bevil, Mike Chase, Rev. T. Allen Clough, and W. Fletcher Burkhardt.



PHOTO BY MIKE STEELY.

Knox County Sheriff Tom Spangler spoke at the Knox County Commission October meeting warning the body that a future expansion of the jail is needed because of overcrowding.

Tales from an old journalist



By Mike Steely
steelym@knoxfocus.com

I've been in media a long time, around 50 years. I've been a newspaper reporter, a radio ad person, a newspaper advertising manager, a publisher's rep, and a televising advertising and production person.

Basically every position I've had involves some type of writing or promotion. Given that, I thought I might share a few stories of people and encounters I've had along the way. I've learned a bit from each experience and several people have asked me to share some of the stories.

Much of these stories are as true as I can remember although I probably added some color and deliberately failed to use names or locations.

Thrown Out of Jail

I was working as a news bureau chief for a large East Tennessee newspaper, back when daily newspapers were truly responsible and read widely. I got a call from the editor telling me that the local sheriff was reportedly selling confiscated beer out of the back of the jail house.

A company photographer and I stood about a block away and waited some time before the back door of the jail opened. Sure enough the sheriff stepped out with two six packs of beer and the two men waiting handed him some cash and he gave them the beer. I think that was on a Friday.

I wrote the story and the editor told me the story would appear in Tuesday morning's edition. I took my two kids over to see my mom three counties away

and my wife and I got back home late Sunday night. The rolled up Sunday edition was on my doorstep and I simply picked it up and took it inside, too tired to read it.

The next morning, a Monday, it was my routine visit with the sheriff and I was going to tell him of the upcoming story and get his comments. I walked into the jail and was followed into the sheriff's office by two large deputies.

I sat down across from the sheriff, a burly smaller man, and was about to speak when he threw the front page of the newspaper on the desk in front of me, the photo and story of his beer sale on the front page.

"What the hell is this?" he yelled.

I was trying to tell him that I was going to interview him and the story wasn't supposed to appear until the following day. When I stood up, he went behind my chair, and grabbed me by my belt and my shirt collar behind my head.

The sheriff picked me up and carried me to the front door, throwing me out across the concrete steps. I was lucky enough to hit the sidewalk still on my feet. He was removed from office but went to trial on the charge, before a local jury, and was acquitted.

I went up and shook his hand.

I've said that I may be the only journalist, at least in Tennessee, to be thrown out of jail instead of into jail.

The Elderly Traveler

It was coming to deadline on a large weekly in Virginia where I worked about a year as Associate Editor. As I was leaving for home one evening the editor called me in and told me to be on the lookout for a good feature to help fill space.

I thought nothing about it until I was driving home and saw an elderly man walking slowly along the road with a cane over his shoulder and a bundle of belongings hanging from the cane.

I went by and then thought, that could be interesting.

I stopped and asked if he needed a ride and when he got in I drove and interviewed him. Seems he was from out west and was spending the last of his days just traveling. He told me his name and several stories about his long travels. I asked him if I could publish the story and he agreed, so when I dropped him off down the road I got a photo of him beside the road.

"Now that's a good feature," I told myself. The next morning I turned in the story and photo and went about my routine news coverage. The paper came out the following day and, when I arrived in the office back from lunch, the editor called me in to his domain.

He was smiling and I thought he was really pleased with the story. Turns out I was totally wrong, not only about his attitude but the story I wrote.

Turns out the old man wasn't a wandering traveler but was actually a local elderly family man who was running away from home and had a history of doing that. All the stories he told were false but at least he gave me his correct name.

His relatives saw the story and called the newspaper. I thought my job was on the line with the editor but he smiled again and told me to write a follow up, correcting the story. He said something like "it happens" and told me to go back to work.

On the Left and On the Right

The first full-time newspaper I worked on was as a news editor for a small Kentucky weekly in a county seat. We published each week and the owner was also the publisher. I was fresh out of the military, where I had been an enlisted journalist, and my politics were much more progressive than the publisher's opinions.

I reported on local meetings, did features, laid out the offset pages, took

photos, etc. It was a great training for later reporting positions. I started an editorial column which some folks found too left field for their tastes and the publisher was among them.

So the publisher decided he would review my columns each week and write a counter point. He placed my column on the left of the editorial page and his on the right, calling the columns "On the Left" and "On the Right." It was very appropriate. I've got to say that he never once refused to publish my juvenile opinions, since I was about 22 years old at the time, and I always read his response with interest.

"No, You're Busted"

While at that small Kentucky newspaper lots happened that I won't write about, including some threats against me and my family, but there's one story worth sharing.

Seems a group of Appalachia Volunteers had arrived in the county to help with the War on Poverty (remember that?) and were traveling about with local volunteers to organize their effort. Two of these were an African-American local fellow and a white Appalachian Volunteer woman.

The pair were pulled over by the local sheriff's department and charged with things like 'indecent exposure.' Everyone knew the charges were bogus and, after a few hours in jail, both were released.

The following week it happened again, when an African-American woman and a white man were driving. The sheriff himself pulled them over and, on approaching their car, told them they were under arrest. The pair got out of the car, produced FBI badges, and arrested the sheriff.

The story was that when they went to the sheriff's cruiser and opened the glove box a large amount of Seconal pills fell out, so they also got him on drug possession.

On a side note: That

sheriff's brother, it was widely known, had a home just outside city limits across a river bridge in a small community. The brother was a known bootlegger and operated out of his home, which had a large circular drive that lead to and from the road. Customers would pull up to his window underneath a carport, purchase beer through a window, and drive off.

The \$100 stack of dollars

I got to know several attorneys over the years in various communities. I was interviewing one of the lawyers once when he told me an unusual case he had tried. Seems he was defending a man on theft charges and had the client in the attorney's office for a chat.

The attorney had, on his desk, a sealed plastic cube with 100 one-dollar bills inside. The attorney had to leave the office for a moment and when he returned he completed preparations for the man's trial. After the client left the attorney noticed his cube was missing.

He reported it to the police and the man was arrested and the stack of bills returned. The attorney told me that he went on to defend the man on the other charge and then prosecuted him for the theft.

The man was charged with a felony because he thought he had stolen \$100. In fact, the attorney told me, the cut only had a one-dollar bill on the top and bottom with paper in between.

A Ringer in Court

I was covering a trial of the son of a prominent local business family who had been charged with the sale of illegal drugs. The charge came after an undercover sting and the long-haired young man was swept up in the operation. At his hearing the young man appeared in shabby clothing and with a beard and long hair. He was sandy headed and about 6 feet

tall. At his trial the accused appeared clean shaven, his hair neatly cut, and dressed in a suit. The jury was told of the arrest, how it occurred, and a woman who was a law enforcement officer and active in the sting was called to testify.

When she was seated there was a commotion in the back of the courtroom and a young man with sandy long hair, a beard, and poorly dressed came in and sat on an aisle seat in the last row. The witness told her story and the defense attorney asked her to describe the person she arrested.

She gave the description and the attorney asked her if there was anyone in the courtroom that resembled the man she busted. Then the attorney asked the long-haired man in the back to stand up, basically so the jury could get a look at him.

The prominent family's son was acquitted by the local jury.

The Old Reporter

In my thirties I was running a state desk at a daily paper and, as such, was responsible for reviewing stories submitted by several community correspondents. Those local folks wrote now and then and, on occasion, I'd assign stories.

One of the correspondents was a grand ole community woman know widely in the area and she wrote about community clubs, church events, etc.

I came to know an elderly man who was a retired newspaper reporter and was covering one of the outlying counties for the paper. He was slow but thorough and very accustomed to using the AP style of reporting. His stories were accurate and went beyond the normal social stories as he also covered his county government meetings and wrote features.

I remember thinking how sad, an old man who still is a reporter and still working. Recently, as I turned 72, I realize why old reporters still report.

What's happening locally in 2019?

By Mike Steely
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As 2019 begins there are several unresolved issues facing Knoxville and Knox County. Some of these matters have been going on for years and some popped up in 2018.

The homeless situation downtown continues to be a problem and the city's creation of a day-shelter beneath the Broadway Bridge wasn't as successful as was hoped. Winter may reduce further the numbers of homeless visiting the unheated location.

The city's proposal to purchase the former Baptist Hospital just off Broadway is still in limbo and a consultant firm has been hired to help. The relocation of the police and fire department there or somewhere else is holding back a proposed project on the grounds of the current Safety Building behind the Civic Auditorium.

Knox County's sale of the Andrew Johnson Building is also in limbo, with authority to approve the facility postponed last year month after month. The \$6 million offer hinges on relocating the Knox County School Board's administration offices. The proposal to lease one of the TVA Towers downtown is the latest

possible location for the offices.

How well County Mayor Glenn Jacobs will work with the commission is unknown. His push to approve the pension board suit settlement frustrated some of the commissioners. The commission will soon face a decision as to which county budget the funds will come from. The Mayor has created a division between his office and the law department.

The year could see a local challenge to the pension board's decision to include vacation pay in the monthly retirement checks of the sheriff's department employees.

The final sale of the former Supreme Court Building still is pending, with the developer coming back to the city council for alterations to the proposal.

Sheriff Tom Spangler has said he will need to ask the commission for expansion of the county jail and that may happen this year. He may see the push for one-on-one visits at the jail continue.

Divisions between the county commission and the Metropolitan Planning Commission will probably continue. Commissioner Brad Anders has asked the state legislators to look into the state law concerning the county and the MPC with some developers and commission members quietly

discussing pulling out of the city-county planning group over disputes on new subdivisions.

The year won't be as political as last year but the city has a primary and general election for several offices.

Knox County Mayor Madeline Rogero begins her last year as Knoxville's first female mayor. Her progressive approach to business development and neighborhood involvement may leave the office with her. Despite rumors that she might run for the U. S. Senate she has said she will not run.

Depending on who wins the election several Rogero administration staff members' employment will be in limbo, with many hoping to stay on and serve a new administration.

Several candidates have indicated they plan to seek the city mayor's office and the voters will also choose some new council members. Leaving the council because of term limits are At-Large Councilmen Finbarr Saunders, George Wallace and Marshall Stair plus Mark Campen who represents the 5th District.

Commissioner Carson Dailey, sidelined with a knee replacement, will probably be out a few county meetings and the active South Knox County member will

be missed. Richie Beeler, chosen to replace Dave Wright, will begin his first full year on the commission.

Congressman Tim Burchett begins his first year. Elected to replace Congressman John Duncan, Jr., the former Knox County mayor is promising military veterans he'll focus on their issues.

Dave Wright faces his first year as the North Knox County state representative in Nashville. So does Gloria Johnson as she returns to the Tennessee State House.

Local media personality and founder of the "Motley Crew" luncheon, Hubert Smith, continues his recovery from a stroke. All his fans and friends wish him a quick recovery.

Renovation and restoration of the historic Cal Johnson Building on State Street should be underway as the old structure is converted to retail and apartments.

The transit authority is promising a telephone app that will inform people waiting for a bus or trolley where the vehicle is and when it should arrive.

The Magnolia Streetscape project is expected to begin and then move into Phase Two as the city moves ahead to modernize the

western portion of the route. Construction will continue on Chapman Highway and a study of the future of Governor John Sevier Highway will be on-going.

Changes downtown will include the opening of a new hotel, improvements along Jackson Avenue, and retrofitting of the street lights in the city to LED bulbs.

Knoxville's Change Center opened in December and the city hopes the public center will help reduce crime in East Knoxville and provide a variety of things for children to do. The city and county are looking to the future of Chilhowee Park and a study will be underway.

The city and planning commission have been pushing to totally revamp zones and zoning classifications. Recode will probably see even more changes before it is adopted.

The school system's collection of student fees from parents who are able to pay may get some more attention from the county auditors.

The year will end with a new city mayor, four new council members, and what could be a major change in direction for Knoxville.

Davis has his 'best Christmas' thanks to friends, Courtyards Senior Living

By Ken Lay

A resident at The Courtyards Senior Living of Knoxville recently had his Christmas wish come through.

A steady rain didn't mar the day for Gene Davis on the morning of Thursday, Dec. 20 as he received his Christmas Gift Wish from the Northwest Knoxville retirement home.

Davis, 85, once owned a farm where he raised and broke horses. This was his profession and became his passion when he first rode a horse more than eight decades ago.

Davis still walks without assistance and still looks like he could do a little farming today. He has a great knowledge of farm and country life.

He's been a resident at Courtyards for the last year but still has a desire to connect with this aspect of his life.

The Courtyards Knoxville was able to grant Davis his wish of riding a horse one more time while other residents of the retirement home were on hand to witness what Davis called his best Christmas ever.

"It's been a long time since I've seen or ridden a horse," Davis said. "I first rode a horse when I was three years



PHOTO BY KEN LAY.

Courtyards resident Gene Davis prepares for his recent Christmas ride. A little rain couldn't dampen his 'best Christmas.'

old and now, I'm about 85."

The Courtyards set up the ride with the help of Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders Exhibitors Association and long-time friend Charlie "Junior" Beeler, who was formerly a horse farrier.

Beeler supplied horses for a ride.

The TWHBEA was represented at the event by Chris Helton, who presented Davis with a hat and an honorary TWHBEA membership.

"I'm happy to be here for this. It's great," Helton said. "I'm glad to be part of it and I'm glad to be representing us here."

Davis was noticeably

emotional as he took his short ride around the property as part of the biggest surprise of his life.

"Buddy, it's something else," Davis told the residents after he mounted the horse and donned a cowboy hat.

After his ride, Davis lit a cigarette as he strived to

calm his nerves. He was obviously thrilled despite being overwhelmed and a bit nervous.

"I'm going to have to smoke a little bit to calm my nerves," Davis said. "This was a big surprise and this is the best Christmas I've ever known."

School fund, River Sports reports before ethics committee

By Mike Steely
 steelym@knoxfocus.com

The Knox County Ethics Committee heard two reports earlier this month: one an update by the external auditor on Knox County schools' activity funds and a report by Internal Auditor Andrea Addis concerning an audit of River Sports Outfitter's operation of The Cove boat rentals.

Accountant Ted Hotz said the audit of the activities funds is nearing final completion. He said the report will indicate a corrective action plan and involve the 90 schools who report to the board of education about funds raised and how those funds are spent.

He suggests a separation of duties at the schools to decrease the opportunity for missing funds and said that 64 of the schools had discrepancies but most of those were "primarily documentation issues."

Hotz said that sixteen outside fundraising

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Getting to know

City of Knoxville
 Deputy Mayor & COO

DAVID BRACE

The Knoxville Focus continues our series of interviews with interesting people in our area. Some are public officials and others are community leaders, volunteers, and people who are notable for their efforts in our area.

David Brace wears two hats for the City of Knoxville, as deputy mayor and as chief operating officer. Brace has a master's degree from the University of Tennessee, was a firefighter and EMT with Rural /Metro and worked as a consultant in industrial rescue and safety. He began with the community development

department 15 years ago and moved to the public service department before being named deputy mayor.

How is your position working for you?

The position of deputy mayor and chief operating officer (COO) is inherently a demanding and challenging role as most of the work/projects I focus on rarely fit into a "neat and tidy box." The hours are long and often exhausting, but Mayor Rogero is an incredible leader and it's an honor and pleasure to be a member of her executive team.

She believes in collaboration, leadership and public process and we are fortunate she is in the role of mayor.

How does it affect your family, business or other interests?

The demanding nature of the COO position definitely requires active management and discipline in order to maintain a healthy balance. Gina (my wife) and I have three children (8, 12 and 14) so prioritizing tasks at work and being fully committed when I am with Gina and the kids is the real challenge. The COO position by nature is a 24/7 job

so that is probably the most frustrating aspect for my wife and children. There are times when I have to step away from the family and address an immediate problem (phone call, e-mail, text, etc.). My phone sits by the bed at night and is with us on vacations. Fortunately, my prior life in emergency services as a firefighter and Gina's career in women's health as a labor and delivery nurse has us both well trained on the concept of being "on call."

Tell me a bit about your family.

Gina and I have three children and live in the Island Home

neighborhood. Our son Wyatt is 14 years old and is a freshman at West High School. Wyatt loves soccer and is a goalkeeper on a competitive team at Emerald Youth. Gianna (Gi Gi) is 12 years old and a 7th grader at Bearden Middle. She loves dance and is a member of the Appalachian Ballet, the organization that puts on the Nutcracker each year. Our youngest, Olivia, is 8 years old and is a 2nd grader at Beaumont Elementary. She's also a dancer!

In addition to our kid's activities

Continue on page 4

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It's not a park, it's a private cemetery

By Mike Steely
steelym@knoxfocus.com

"We've spent years getting this cemetery in shape and now this," said Ruthie Kuhlman, executive of the Old Gray Cemetery Education, Historic and Memorial Association. She was talking about the increasing litter, vandalism, sex trafficking and drug abuse at the historic Knoxville graveyard.

"My husband and I and our church feed the homeless through KARM. I bake bread for them every other week. I feel for them," Kuhlman told The Focus.

She said that when the city was considering creating a "Day Park" beneath the Broadway Bridge no one consulted them.

"None of us were asked what we thought," she said. "If you can't deal with

a problem you should let it alone," she said of the city's actions.

Kuhlman added that the cemetery can always use funding and volunteers, especially to keep it clean. She also said the cemetery board is planning to use some funds they will receive in a will to construct an 8-foot wall all around the cemetery.

"The police have been wonderful," she said about cooperation in helping get vandals out of the historic landmark.

"It is not a park, it's a private cemetery," she said. Kuhlman said visitors are always welcome during the day. She also wants visitors to remember to not deface or attempt to clean a grave stone or monument. She said attempted cleaning can harm the stones.

David Brace, Knoxville's chief operating officer, said Wednesday that he understands Mrs. Kuhlman's concerns. He said the Day Park is a "puzzle piece" that fits into an ongoing program to help the homeless. He said the city is planning to add potable water at the Broadway day center.

"It's too early to judge the success. Homelessness is not solved but is an ongoing effort," he said.

Brace said the city has lots of partners in the effort including nightly housing at KARM and other places. He added that Volunteer Ministry Center has a concept about additional nightly housing that the city wants to learn more about.

"All the puzzle pieces will fit into the big picture," Brace said.



PHOTOS BY MIKE STEELY.

Above, founded in 1850 the Old Gray Cemetery on Broadway is having a growing problem with homeless people and vandals.

Left, a homeless man prepares to eat his lunch beneath the Broadway Bridge in a day park created by the city. The rest of the facility appears to be empty but other homeless people were outside on the sidewalk with no intention of coming into the fenced enclosure.



New Directions

With the Christmas presents opened, decorations placed safely back in containers, and the chaos of the holiday in the rear-view mirror, the time to look forward comes.

No, this isn't so much about making resolutions that will more than likely be dropped within weeks; instead, I'm thinking about

what kinds of directions people will choose for their lives.

First off, high school students keep coming to mind. I'd left them for so long when I finished my teaching career years ago, but since I've begun substituting, they're right back with me. I see so many teens who have no drive. Yes, I goofed off in high school



By Joe Rector
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and did as little as possible to get by. However, I made sure I produced enough to make it to college where I had to hit the books extra hard to make up for my failings in the years before.

Too many young people today are just plain lazy. My mother would call them "trifling." They are the students who show up at

school but have no intentions of working in classes. They spend their time causing problems in class and keeping others students from being able to learn. Discipline is weak in too many schools due to restrictions placed by the systems. Overcrowded classes have several of these disrupters that thwart teaching

efforts.

My advice to them is to discover a passion toward which they can turn their attention. No, college isn't for everyone. Plenty of trades need skilled workers, and that fact offers more opportunities to young people. Whatever the path, each of these persons needs to educate himself to be able to make a living wage.

If they refuse to take charge, many of them will face lives of minimum wage jobs that are long on work hours and short on money. Even if a person makes \$10 an hour and works a 40-hour week, 52 weeks a year, his gross income will be \$20,800. If a person makes the federal minimum wage of \$7.25, that income drops to \$15,080.

Folks in the workforce must face the fact that retirement will

be difficult if plans aren't made now. That means that every person must set aside some money, even if it's no more than \$5 per pay period, and invest it in some program that will earn profits. The more a person can put away now, the better off he will be later, and he won't have to worry about whether or not Social Security is available. No one should count on it surviving. If a person wants to retire at some point, he simply must invest in his future. Belt-tightening now will prevent future financial uncertainties or working forever to make ends meet.

If a parent wants his children to have money for college, she must save now. Teens should also be encouraged to work to save for education as well. Borrowing money should be kept to a

minimum. That means a student might have to take advantage of free tuition at community colleges for two years and then attend an in-state university where costs are much less. After a student earns a degree and secures a job, he can then go after an advanced degree.

I hope that folks take some time to think about the future and their financial security. This new year can be the turning point in the way young people view education and career choices. People in the workforce can take steps to secure a better future. Doing these things requires hard work, but in the end, a happier future will shine brightly.

Happy New Year! I hope your lives are filled with joy in the days ahead. Peace be with you.

Living in Light of Jesus' Arrival

There is an area of study called "alternative history." This is where historians imagine what life would be like if real events had turned out differently. For example, what would life be like if Adolf Hitler and the Nazis had won



By Mark Brackney,
Minister of the
Arlington Church
of Christ

the war. It is all speculative, but likely life would be much different. Imagine how different life would be if Jesus had not been born. George Sarton has said, "The birth of Christianity changed forever the face of the Western world" (Introduction to the History of Science, 1927, 236). Jesus was unlike any other religious leaders. There were actually ten messianic movements in Palestine that failed within about one hundred years before and after Christ. Unlike these other movements, Jesus was not a political figure. He did not take any political action and his followers were for the most part uneducated. Despite this, according to church historian Philip Schaff, he changed millions more than Alexander the Great, Mohammed, and Napoleon put together (The Person of Christ: The Miracle of History, 40-49). This happened because after Jesus' physical resurrection, his followers did not pick up the

sword to defend themselves. Thousands willingly suffered a martyr's death. Jesus' followers loved others regardless of their race, sex, ethnicity, poverty, or wealth. They did this because they believed Jesus

was the light, and they reflected that light to their world. Jesus was not just another Messiah. He was the Messiah who rose from the dead.

Let's consider some of ways the arrival of Jesus has changed culture for the better. Consider the value of human life. Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these" (Mt. 19:14). In the ancient world, children were not treated well. When Christianity spread, the value of children was raised. In the ancient world, if an infant was weak or deformed, they were killed. People would leave unwanted children, especially girls, in the woods or drown them. Christians would open their homes to these unwanted children. A half century after Christianity attained legal status, Valentinian, a Christian emperor, outlawed infanticide in A.D. 374. Orphanages were

started by Christians in the 4th century.

Consider the example of charity and compassion. Jesus said, "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me" (Matthew 25:35-36). The early church father, Tertullian, informs us that the early Christians had a common fund that people gave to voluntarily which supported widows, the physically disabled, orphans, the sick, prisoners incarcerated for their Christian faith, and teachers requiring help; it provided burials for poor people and funds for the release of slaves. And Jesus and his followers didn't just meet spiritual needs, also physical needs. The first hospital was built in Caesarea in A.D. 369. We could go on with things like how Jesus elevated the status of women, the promotion of education and literacy, the influence of Christians on art, architecture, and music. Nathan Soderblom said accurately that "the entire history of the world since the coming of Christ would have to be fundamentally altered" if Christ did not come.

Christmases Past



By Ralphine Major
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On a Sunday morning in November, gift bags would be passed along each row of the congregation. Church members were to take out a packet of tickets, go out in the community, and invite people to The Living Christmas Tree service. It was a creative way Dr. James McCluskey devised to distribute thousands of free tickets with a personal invitation to a special worship service. As Pastor Emeritus, McCluskey would give the welcome at the service, always wearing his signature red vest that he had worn for every Living Christmas Tree service since it started more than 40 years ago! He was this writer's main contact for The Living Christmas Tree series of articles in The Knoxville Focus in 2011. On Christmas night this year, I watched on television a wonderful Living Christmas Tree service from Fellowship Chapel in Bristol, Virginia. The service was a great mix of traditional Christmas carols and new, contemporary Christmas songs. After a brief, inspiring message by Pastor Scott Price, the tree lights went dark as

a lighted cross appeared on the tree. At that moment, I could almost hear McCluskey's voice--"This Tree, That Tree"--which I had heard in the first Living Christmas Tree service I saw more than 40 years ago at Wallace. This week, I learned yet another amazing story about Lib and Jim McCluskey who served at Wallace for 37 years. I know Focus readers will enjoy reading about a McCluskey Christmas memory below as told by Jim McCluskey, now 88 years old.

"Our celebrations on Christmas Day have been in many different places. We escorted the Knoxville Tours Christmas Tours for sixteen Christmases from 1998-2014. We celebrated from Orlando to Quebec City. Twice we were in Canada. Twice in New York City. Twice at the Greenbrier Resort. Twice with the Von Trapp Family at their lodge in Stowe, Vermont. We were in the Poconos. In Boston. Many wonderful memories.

"But perhaps the most memorable was our Christmas in Spain in 1988. (30 years ago!) That December we 'filled in' for Joyce and Howard Clark who were serving as missionaries in Zaragoza, Spain, so they could come home for Christmas. For a month we lived in their apartment and used their car. We supplied at the church they pastored. We spoke no Spanish. The church was English speaking. I studied Spanish for a couple of months before we went. I 'learned' some

commonly used words and phrases but I could never make them understandable to the locals.

"We became addicted to magdalenas (Spanish cupcakes). And flan. And fresh bread. We heard Feliz Navidad! at least a thousand times. We celebrated Christmas Eve in a Catholic Church located across the street from our apartment. We took a Christmas Tree with us and left it for the Clarks. Joyce told me recently that she still has and uses the tree.

"We attended the Christmas Parade in Zaragoza. Big deal! No Santa Claus. The Wise Men are the feature and climax of the parade. They throw candy to the children. Great memories!"

The McCluskey's special memory is a great way to close this Christmas season. I hope yours was a blessed Christmas making lots of memories with family and friends. Happy New Year!



Picture of young Lib and Jim McCluskey, courtesy of Jim McCluskey

Tennessee Governors & the Path to the US Senate Part Fourteen

Pages from the Past



By Ray Hill

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Thomas Clarke Rye was twice governor of Tennessee. From rural West Tennessee, Tom C. Rye had little formal education, a fact he readily admitted. "Subscription schools were the only ones we had then, so I didn't go very regularly and stopped altogether when I was 17 years old," Rye said. The future governor must have been quite bright as he went to Charlotte, Tennessee where he studied law with his uncle, Thomas C. Morris. Rye's uncle was quickly impressed with his nephew's ability as Morris and another lawyer were arguing about fine points of real estate one Sunday morning. The conversation awakened young Rye and his uncle came into his room and said, "Tom, you've been reading Washburn's text on real property. Maybe you can help us out, but be sure to shave and dress before you come out." Tom C. Rye later recalled, "They must have thought I was a slow dresser, because before I put in an appearance I slipped out the window, ran to the law office, got the book and looked up all of the answers to the questions under discussion. Then I casually settled all their problems, practically quoting from the very words of the book."

Uncle Tom Morris stared at his nephew and finally said, "I don't see how you remember that material, boy. I always thought it rather dull." The future governor chuckled, remembering his uncle "bragged about it for weeks, and I felt nothing short of a genius."

Tom C. Rye enjoyed a lengthy legal career and while it was hardly unusual for an attorney to do well in politics, the future governor was not the typically colorful politician of his time. Dignified, although retaining a homespun air that served him well when meeting people, Tom C. Rye had a serious way about him. While many successful politicians were expert in the art of ridicule, Tom C. Rye had a self-deprecating humor; he liked to say he quite nearly never became a lawyer. He took his oral examination for the Bar on his 21st birthday and recalled, "They asked me three questions and I got so mixed up I missed four."

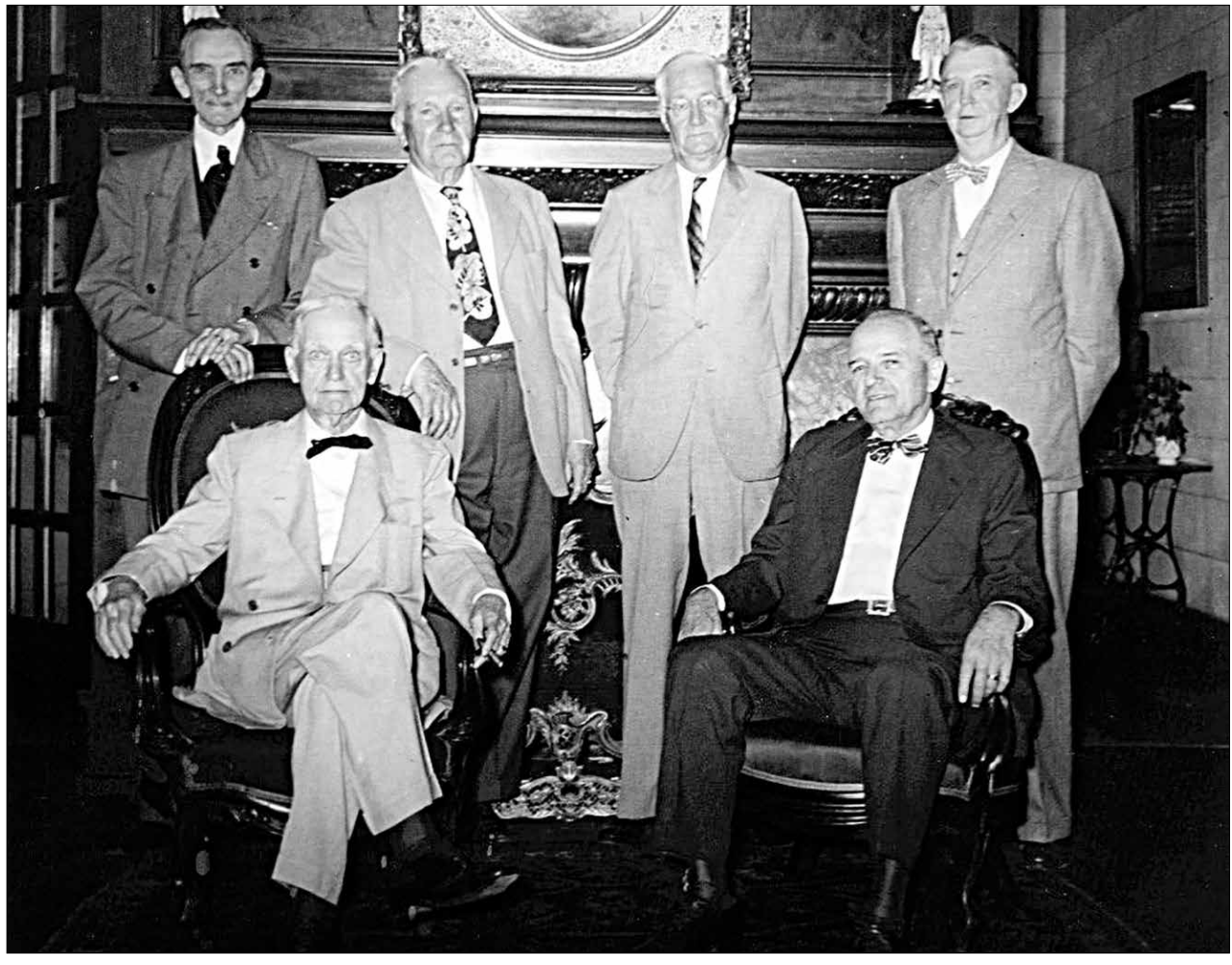
When Tom C. Rye returned to Camden, Tennessee, he married seventeen-year-old Bessie Arnold and they were together for the rest of his life. "But do you think we had a honeymoon?" Bessie Rye wondered years later. "Tom only had

50 cents in his pocket and it took that to move my trunk from my mother's house to a friend's home, where we stayed a couple of weeks before setting up housekeeping."

The Ryes moved to Paris, Tennessee in 1902, but Tom Rye remembered Camden fondly. He thought Camden "a great little place, that started improving as soon as I left."

Only eight years after moving to Paris, Tom C. Rye was elected district attorney general. Rye's political rise was swift. Tennessee's Democratic Party had been coming apart at the seams for several years, first over the question of prohibition and then during the administration of Governor Malcolm R. Patterson. Patterson was an unapologetic believer in local option, rather than prohibition. Patterson was regarded as the leader of Tennessee's "wets" and his political opponents denounced him as a tool of the liquor lobby. A brilliant orator, Malcolm R. Patterson gave as good as he got. Former U. S. senator Edward W. Carmack, the white knight of the prohibitionists in Tennessee, challenged Patterson for reelection inside the Democratic primary in 1908. Carmack had defeated Patterson's father to win a seat in Congress and the two men cordially hated one another. As might be expected, it was an especially bitter battle for the nomination, which Patterson eventually won. Carmack resumed his profession as the editor of the Nashville Tennessean.

The redheaded editor delighted in dipping his pen in acid and excoriating his political enemies in editorials. One of his victims, a former employer, Colonel Duncan B. Cooper, the publisher of the Nashville American, did not especially care to be spit roasted in print and issued a dire warning to Carmack. Feelings were so heated, both Carmack and Colonel Cooper traveled about Nashville armed. A chance meeting between Carmack, Colonel Cooper and Cooper's son Robin proved to be fatal for the editor. Shots were exchanged and Edward W. Carmack lay dead in the gutter, hit three times. A court acquitted Robin Cooper, and Governor Patterson boldly pardoned Duncan Cooper. If the killing of Edward W. Carmack had caused outrage amongst many Tennesseans, Patterson's pardoning of Colonel Cooper led to a furious frenzy of almost statewide



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Sitting from left, former Gov. Tom C. Rye and (right) Gov. Jim Nance McCord, circa 1947.

hysteria. Patterson was forced to withdraw as a candidate for a third two-year term as governor and while Democrats turned to the most popular Democrat in the state, U. S. Senator Robert Love Taylor, the unthinkable happened. Independent Democrats joined with Republicans and elected a Republican governor, Ben W. Hooper. Worse was still to come; the same combination of "fusionists" elected a new United States senator in 1911, promoting Luke Lea, owner and publisher of the Nashville Tennessean to the nation's Capitol. Democrats tried to dislodge Governor Hooper in 1912, nominating Benton McMillin, "the old warhorse" of Tennessee Democracy. Hooper beat McMillin and the fusionists elected another United States senator, John Knight Shields, who was Chief Justice of the Tennessee Supreme Court and an Independent Democrat. Within two years, Tennessee Democrats had lost the governorship and both seats in the United States Senate.

When Governor Ben Hooper sought a third two-year term in 1914, it was imperative to Tennessee Democrats to heal old wounds and find a candidate who could garner the support of all Democrats in the state. They nominated Tom C. Rye.

Rye proved to be a unifying candidate for Tennessee Democrats and narrowly defeated Governor Hooper in the general election. Even former fusionists like Luke Lea gave hearty support to Rye's campaign. Tom C. Rye proved to be a popular governor and won reelection in 1916. As governor, Rye proved to be a stickler for enforcing the law. Rye supported the "ouster bill", which helped to remove E. H. Crump as mayor of Memphis for not enforcing prohibition laws. It seemed only logical that Rye would run for the U. S. Senate in 1918.

The incumbent, John Knight Shields, was an irascible East Tennessean

and many Democrats believed the senator was not supportive enough of President Woodrow Wilson. Much of the senatorial campaign would center around which candidate would be more supportive of President Wilson and his administration. Governor Rye ran as an unabashedly pro-Wilson candidate. The United States was fighting on the side of the Allies in World War I and Governor Rye's son Paul was serving overseas as a first lieutenant. Most Tennesseans were filled with patriotic fervor supporting the war effort as well as President Wilson. Rye announced he would be a candidate for the Democratic nomination for United States senator on May 28, 1918. Rye's announcement acknowledged he would conduct his campaign "in such manner as to comport with the true ideals of Tennessee" and vowed he would not forget "that the hearts of our people are with the boys in the line of duty."

Politics being politics, not everyone was pleased with Governor Rye's declaration of candidacy. The Crossville Chronicle grouched "in the face of so much talk of laying aside politics" why would Rye decide to run for the Senate and "muddy the waters"? The Chronicle sniffed, "Gov. Rye was never a big man, but he has tried as best he knew how to serve the people as governor." The Chronicle thought that no real achievement as "his party is with him and no active opposition is in evidence from the opposing party." The Crossville Chronicle supported Senator Shields who, in the Chronicle's opinion should simply be returned to Washington without a fuss.

Tom C. Rye had every reason to believe his campaign for the United States Senate would be successful; he had twice been nominated and elected governor of Tennessee. John Knight Shields had never been popularly elected to the U. S. Senate, as he was the last man ever elected

by the legislature to the Senate. Rye was well known for his rectitude, sense of fairness and had been an able chief executive. Shields was cantankerous, a poor public speaker, and had managed to antagonize not only President Wilson, but also many of his own political appointees. Advertisements prominently displaying the governor's picture began appearing in newspapers across the state. The campaign broadside featured the slogan: "He has made good every pre-election pledge. He has kept faith with the people. He will stand by our President."

It was Kenneth McKellar who likely saved John Knight Shields from defeat that year. Senator Shields telephoned McKellar from his home in Tennessee and urged him to see President Wilson. Shields had heard Wilson was going to publish a letter stating the senator had not been his friend nor a friend to his administration. Wilson's popularity was such that an open letter to the people of Tennessee would have been catastrophic to Shields's reelection campaign. McKellar hurried to the White House and the President confirmed he intended to write a letter flatly stating John Knight Shields was not his friend. McKellar begged, pleaded and cajoled Wilson not to write the letter. McKellar left and got what he thought was a commitment from Senator Shields to support the President. McKellar returned to the White House and reiterated a promise made by Senator Shields to support Wilson. President Wilson gently insisted John K. Shields would never be a friend to him or his administration, but he did not write the letter and Tom C. Rye lost the Senate race, 66,389 to 55,845.

Rye left office in 1919 and returned to his home in West Tennessee. Years later, Rye admitted, "Being governor is the most thankless job on earth and I never did like it very much." At the time, the

governor's mansion was located near where the War Memorial Building stands today. "I can count on the fingers of my hand all the nights I slept during the war," Tom Rye remembered. "I answered the telephone as many as 25 times during the night. People who didn't want to go up the hill to the capitol would wait to call on me at night."

After his defeat in the Senate race, President Wilson offered Rye an appointment to the Court of Customs and Appraisals, which the former governor turned down. In 1922, Rye was elected Chancellor of the Eighth Judicial District. In 1940, Rye agreed to have his name entered once again to seek reelection as Chancellor, but drew an opponent in J. B. Avery of Alamo. Rye's only condition upon running once again was that he have no opposition; when Avery qualified to run, Rye withdrew. Seventy-eight years old at the time, Rye said, "I realize at my age I cannot afford to enter into a campaign." Avery was defeated by another former governor, Gordon Browning.

Tom Rye had repeatedly broken his hip in his twilight years, once while alighting from a street car when he was hit by an automobile. Rye was content in retirement, sitting on his porch or looking out the window while he smoked his "smelly old pipe." During his final illness, the former governor fell once again and was thought to have broken his hip for a third time. The ninety-year-old governor was too weak to move to a hospital and quietly died in his bed.

Aside from the Wilson administration, another point of contention between the senatorial candidates was the issue of women's suffrage. Tennessee's junior senator, Kenneth McKellar, was an ardent supporter of voting rights for women. Governor Rye, like McKellar, believed in giving women the right to vote. Senator Shields was far from enthusiastic over the idea.

DAVID BRACE

Cont. from page 1

we love to be outdoors, camping, hiking and traveling. My son and I also scuba dive and all our kids love to be in the mountains.

Where were you born and why Knoxville?

I was actually born in Boston, Massachusetts, where my father was completing his residency. Both my parents grew up in California – my dad in Los Angeles and my mom in Sacramento. They graduated from UC Davis. My dad completed veterinary school at UC Davis and followed that up with the Boston residency. We then moved to Columbus, Ohio, where my father taught at Ohio State. He was recruited to Knoxville when the University of Tennessee started their veterinary program.

We moved here when I was six and I've absolutely loved growing up in Knoxville.

What are your hopes for the city or county?

Man, that's a tough answer as there are many! But all of them are based on my desire that Knoxville continue to be authentic. My hope is that we continue to have authentic growth and focus on making Knoxville a great place for the people that live and work in Knoxville and Knox County first! If you make it great for residents, others will want to come and enjoy our community.

I have been incredibly fortunate to have worked with four different administrations starting with Mayor



PHOTO BY MARK CAMPEN

Deputy Mayor David Brace chats with Knoxville Focus reporter Mike Steely as The Focus continues to interview interesting people in our area.

Ashe, Mayor Haslam, Mayor Brown and Mayor Rogero. It has been a real pleasure to see our city stop looking for that one "destination attraction" that will "make" Knoxville something special. What makes Knoxville unique is our culture, downtown, the urban wilderness, the University of Tennessee, the Tennessee and Bijou Theatres, Market Square and the list goes on.

What is your main hobby or interest in your private life?

It's funny, hobbies ebb and flow and I have a lot of them, although most of them are outdoor based. When I was young, before

kids, I did a lot of caving, canyoneering, backpacking, trail running, scuba diving and mountain biking. Now that I have three active kids, much of my time I spent supporting their activities. I coach for Emerald Youth (my son plays on the team) and I'm often running my daughters to their dance classes. Gina and I also really enjoy traveling and camping with the kids.

What's great is that as the kids have grown, I am now able to return to the outdoor activities I used to enjoy with my kids like hiking, backpacking, canyoneering, etc. It's pretty

cool to come full circle on some activities that I loved before kids and to now be able to do those activities WITH my kids.

What do you see as your main accomplishments in life?

A strong, daily relationship with God and my family. I also hope that my efforts in our community as an active volunteer and professionally in my work as a firefighter and public servant are seen as having a positive impact on Knoxville and Knox County.

How do you think other people see you?

My hope is that people view and respect me as

hardworking, honest, caring and straightforward. That being said, I'm in a position that requires me to take on challenging and often contentious projects and/or issues. That's not always easy and requires listening, patience and a good amount of instinct. I hope I am thought of as someone who is thoughtful and someone who is community-focused and not self-focused. I hope I'm seen as a hard worker and a servant leader.

If you had to do one thing over in your life what would that be?

Two things. I wish I would have done ROTC in college

and I've yet to obtain my private pilot's license.

What do you think of a metro-form government in the future?

Who and how we govern matters and I am all about systems of government that are efficient, equitable and provide for quality public process. It's hard to discuss in detail with, well, no details.

If you chose one thing in your position that is very satisfactory what would that be?

Working to support the mayor and her team in moving Knoxville forward in a collaborative, engaging public sector leadership. We have been fortunate over the past 14 years to have city and county leadership that is honest, collaborative and focused on the growth of Knoxville and Knox County over individual political gain.

What's your favorite meal or place to dine?

I love to cook with family at home usually but if I'm going out, it depends. I like Naples as it is local and the owners live down the street from our family. Food truck scene is great in Knoxville and I'm a regular lunch goer at both Pete's and Tomato Head. I regularly eat at Elkmont Exchange, Balter Beer Works and Sweet P's! I also have to admit that I love Waffle House.

How would you like to be remembered?

Someone who lived a life focused on God and family and who was hard-working, honest, caring and straightforward.

School fund, River Sports reports before ethics committee

Cont. from page 1

organizations raised funds without authorization from the school board. He added that those non-profit groups need to register before fund raising.

Commissioner John Schoonmaker asked if the school funds are normally deposited in one bank and Hotz said "primarily one bank" has been used by a school and the county system has suggested three additional banks in the county. Hotz said most schools use a bank near the school location.

The school supervisor of Internal School Funding, Garrett Raiden, told the commission that the schools have paid about \$52,000 in bank fees. The report makes three recommendations: report the amount of negative accounts at the end of each school year; perform periodic monitoring; and request clarification of the board of education's policy.

Internal Auditor Addis reported on her department's takeover of the county Fraud Hotline and said that 331 cases have been or are being reviewed.

"If we find an area of fraud we refer it to law enforcement," she said.

The audit of River Sports Outfitter's operation of rentals at The Cove found the company was not reporting "off season" rentals during non-peak months. She said in September and October about \$298 in rentals were not reported.

Addis said that if boats are sold at The Cove the amount of sale is reported, but if boats are sold at the River Sports Sutherland Avenue location the sales were not required to be recorded. She said eight recommendations were suggested and the company agreed to comply including improving its tracking of all sales at The Cove, which is a county park.

Something is happening in Monroe County

A Day Away



By Mike Steely

Our nearby neighbor to the southeast is preparing to celebrate its 200th birthday. The new county mayor there, Mitch Ingram, has named a Bicentennial Committee and they're talking about having a county fair later this year to celebrate.

To help promote its 200 years Monroe County is seeking an official slogan. There's a form available on the internet for suggestions. The objective is to select a slogan made up of 10 words or less about the Bicentennial Celebration in a way that attracts both locals and visitors to attend upcoming events.

You can find the submission form at www.monroetn.com and submit your idea at that site.

If you've never visited Monroe County or haven't been there in a while the winter is a great time to see the sites, attractions, cities and communities. Founded in 1819 following the Calhoun Treaty with the Cherokee, which gave the former Overhill Towns along the Little Tennessee to the nation, the county today has its courthouse in Madisonville. About half of the county is part of the Cherokee National Forest and the Cherohala Parkway is a drive worth taking.

There are lots of places in Monroe County worth a day's outing and there's events coming.



The Cherohala Visitors Center in Tellico Plans is just one of the many museums and attractions in Monroe County.

The Monroe County Chamber of Commerce has its annual membership meeting coming up on January 9 at the Vonore Baptist Church. The chamber is celebrating 40 years and planning a luncheon and reception starting at 11:30.

Something the chamber and other Monroe County residents may be celebrating is the passage of the U.S. Farm Bill that included protection of 20,000 acres above and behind Bald River Falls south of Tellico Plains. Senator Lamar Alexander announced the protection recently and was joined by other regional congressmen and outgoing U.S. Senator Bob Corker.

The act is the first Wilderness Protection for Tennessee since 1986 and includes the forests in Monroe and Polk County.

Monroe County includes the historic county seat in Madisonville, nearby Hiwassee College, and the homes of former Senator Estes Kefauver, William Heiskell, Ray Jenkins, Charles McClung McGhee, Gen. John C. Vaughn and many other notables.

It was also the birthplace of

Sequoyah, the developer of the Cherokee Alphabet, who was born in the Overhill Cherokee Towns near Vonore. The Sequoyah Birthplace Museum recounts his life and that of the Cherokee. Vonore also is the location of Fort Loudoun State Park, a reconstructed pre-state military fort, a Vonore Museum, and Tellico Block House.

The villages of the Overhill Cherokee were flooded by Tellico Lake but there are monuments to several villages including Chota, the principal town.

The west end of Monroe County has the Lost Sea cave, Sweetwater, Sweetwater Valley Farm, and the Sweetwater Flea Market. Downtown Sweetwater has emerged as an "antique" showcase and the Duck Pond Park there is a great place to visit. Developed along the railroad Sweetwater is a bit unique among East Tennessee towns.

South Monroe County has Tellico Plains and Coker Creek, the Cherohala Skyway, Bald River Falls and the Cherokee National Forest. Tellico Plains has campgrounds, two museums, a visitor center, and a bed

and breakfast inn.

Coker Creek was a gold-mining community and people can still pan the creeks there for the precious metal.

Other communities in Monroe County include Ballplay, Hopewell Mill, Hopewell Springs, Jalapa and Mount Vernon.

About 49,000 people call Monroe County home. The drive to Madisonville and Vonore along Highway 411 takes you past the entrance to "The Dragon" loved by motorcycle riders and past Greenback.

Just beyond Madisonville is Highway 68. To the north it brings you to Sweetwater and, to the south, to Tellico Plains.

You can get more information about visiting Monroe County this winter, or any time, by emailing the Monroe Chamber of Commerce at info@monroecountychamber.org or calling 423-442-4588. The same is true from the Monroe Department of Tourism in Tellico Plains by calling 423-253-8010 or by emailing info@monroecounty.com.

Feisty Roadrunners stop streaking Catholic, 60-56

By Steve Williams

One win streak was snapped while another continued in a Knox County high school boys' basketball showdown Friday night.

Homestanding Knoxville Catholic had won 11 games in a row, but Austin-East put an end to that with a 60-56 victory in the Safe T Security Christmas Classic.

It was a tall order, but A-E got it done.

Good guard play and quickness carried the Roadrunners to their sixth win in a row in an exciting game that matched two of Knoxville's top teams and squads with different strengths.

The tall and talented Irishmen are now 13-2, with their only other loss coming at Maryville 58-53 on Nov. 20. A-E improved to 11-2 and will look to avenge one of its losses when it hosts rival Fulton Saturday.

Senior Ronny Pierson (20 points) and junior LaRon Dixon (19) gave Austin-East a 1-2 punch against Catholic. Seventeen of Pierson's points came in the second half. Jaohn Foster chipped in seven points and Dereke Upton six.



PHOTO BY LUTHER SIMMONS

All eyes are on the basketball as Austin-East and Catholic players battle in a matchup of two of Knox County's top teams Friday night. A-E won 60-56.

Akeem Odusipe, a 6-9 junior power forward, and senior guard Ryan MacDonald led Catholic with 15 and 14 points, respectively. The Irish also got

nine points from sophomore guard Sam Sompayrac, eight from freshman guard Brian Edwards and seven from 6-11 freshman center Handje Tamba.

"This is our biggest win this season by far," said Austin-East Coach Marcus Stanton. "Catholic was a team we didn't match up with at all. You could tell

that by the size, but our guards played hard and probably their best game of the year. They played hard and they played fast and they hit some big shots

down the stretch." Catholic Coach Mike Hutchens praised the Roadrunners and said the loss will be a good one for
Continued on page 3

A look at 2019 in sports

By Alex Norman

2019 is here... or, almost here depending on when you are reading this article.

I'm going give you guys a sneak peek at the 12 months ahead in the world of sports... in Knoxville and beyond.

(Editor's note: You shouldn't take all of these predictions seriously... nor should you wager on any of these prognostications. The writer obviously ate too much over the Christmas holiday and it has gone to his head. Some of these are meant to be tongue in cheek so please don't send us angry telegrams.)

January 2019

Tennessee's men's basketball team jumps to the number one overall ranking for only the

second time in program history. National player of the year candidate Admiral Schofield celebrates by reading to kindergartners.

Tennessee's football program continues to search for an offensive coordinator.

February 2019

The New Orleans Saints beat the Kansas City Chiefs 70-68 in the Super Bowl. Former Vol Alvin Kamara scores four touchdowns. Former Tennessee head coach (and current Maryland tight ends coach) Butch Jones tweets that he knew Kamara would be a star in the NFL, which causes thousands of Vols fans to respond with angry messages for weeks.

National signing day comes and goes as the Vols put the finishing touches on a top 15 class. Head coach Jeremy Pruitt announces

the offensive coordinator search will continue into the spring.

Tennessee's men's basketball team loses a close game at Kentucky. National player of the year candidate Grant Williams is so saddened he refuses to play a board game on the trip back to Knoxville.

March 2019

Tennessee's men's basketball team beats Kentucky to clinch its first outright conference championship since 2008. They then lose to LSU in the SEC tournament title game because it is the SEC tournament and that's just what happens to Tennessee in the SEC tournament. The Vols do receive a number one seed in the NCAA tournament. Head coach Rick Barnes celebrates by eating an entire candy bar.

Tennessee's women's basketball team advances to the Sweet 16 before losing to Notre Dame. Head coach Holly Warlick gets a 17 year contract extension from athletics director Phillip Fulmer.

April 2019

Tennessee's men's basketball team advances to the Final Four for the first time in program history. The Vols are eliminated in that round by Duke 67-65. Tennessee is called by 44 more fouls than Duke, which leads to an invasion of Durham by angry UT students. Durham is returned to North Carolina after the National Guard enters the city limits.

Jarrett Guarantano throws three touchdown passes in the Orange & White Game in front of 95,000 fans. Pruitt tells reporters that he's disappointed that

more fans didn't attend. When asked for an update on the search for an offensive coordinator, Pruitt says that he expects a hire to be made by SEC Media Days in July.

May 2019

Tennessee's baseball team makes it to the SEC tournament. Students celebrate by tearing down the left field foul pole at Lindsey Nelson Stadium.

June 2019

The Toronto Raptors win the NBA title and the Toronto Maple Leafs win the Stanley Cup. Unfortunately Toronto's celebrations are held in check after two feet of snow fall in 36 hours.

Continued on page 3



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The Hardin Valley Academy dance team with the "Jr. Hawkettes" at the annual December mini-clinic.

Hardin Valley girls help bring joy to holidays

By Steve Williams

Kaiya Cruze, a member of the Hardin Valley Academy girls' soccer team, played a key role in a fundraising event for the Arthritis Foundation during the holidays.

"Kaiya has JRA (Junior Rheumatoid Arthritis) and she was selected as the teen keynote speaker for the Jingle Bell Run Saturday, Dec. 8," said Jessica Stephens, the head coach for the girls' soccer program at HVA. "Her team was able to raise over \$4,200 for the Arthritis Foundation."

The team for the race was called "Kick it for Kaiya," said Stephens.

Several members of the Hardin Valley coach's soccer team participated in the Empty Stocking fund on Friday, Dec. 21, sorting food and gifts to give to

people.

Meanwhile, another group of girls from Hardin Valley brought smiles to many faces during the holidays as the dance team had its fourth annual mini-dancer clinic on Dec. 11 and then delivered blankets and new Teddy bears to East Tennessee Children's Hospital the week-end before Christmas.

The HVA dance team hosts a clinic every December that's open to feeder elementary schools.

The "Jr. Hawkettes" got to perform during halftimes of the basketball games.

Each year, members of Coach Meshon Crateau's dance team purchase blanket kits and make blankets at their Christmas Party.

"It is our favorite giving back project," said Crateau.



Members of the Hardin Valley Academy dance team show off the blankets they made and donated to East Tennessee Children's Hospital.



Hardin Valley Academy Coach Jessica Stephens (left) and Kaiya Cruze at the 2018 Jingle Bell Run event.



Bearden High basketball players Kordell Kah (left) and Tyler Nordin with Bullseye, the Target mascot, at Weigel's Family Christmas event.

Holiday helpers

This week and the past two weeks, The Knoxville Focus has recognized local high school student-athletes who have given their time and energy in community service projects during the holiday season.

Athletic directors at four Knox County high schools responded to an email request from The Focus and brought to our attention the helping hands of these young men and women, which included the Bearden boys' basketball team, the Halls cheerleading squad, the Karns softball team and Hardin Valley Academy's dance and girls' soccer teams.

Thank you!



Bearden's boys basketball team helped out again this year in Weigel's Family Christmas Event. Pictured are Tyler Place (Assistant Coach), Trent Stephney, Jacob Morton (Assistant Coach), Eric Sandefur (Assistant Coach), Ques Glover, AJ Pruitt, Preston Ruth, Hayden Treadwell, Izaiha Bredwood, Keiansay Williams, Roman Robinson, Shamarcus Brown, Drew Pember and Jeremy Parrott (Head Coach). Captain Kordell Kah is not pictured. He was still shopping with the kids at Target when the group picture was taken.



Halls High cheerleaders at this year's Fantasy of Trees. Front row: Skye Yanniello, Sydney Hollingsworth, Maddie Conner, Caroline Elliott, Cassidy Gresham, Grace Lawson, Abbey Hopkins. Back row: Maddie Clevenger, Karmen Godfrey, Caroline Dykes, Carly Minhinnett, Maggie Beeler, Taylor Wood, Amelia Drafts, Caroline Sentell.

Area wrestlers to compete at Halls Open

By Ken Lay

Halls High School will host the Halls Open wrestling tournament Friday and Saturday. Friday night's action will include team dual meets for elementary and middle school wrestling clubs and Halls High coach Shannon Sayne said that competition will begin at 6 p.m. "I don't know yet who's going to come and who's going to be here," Sayne said. "But we're going to try to have some dual meets and we're hoping to start wrestling around 6." On Saturday, Halls will host an open tournament and Sayne said that he's hoping to start the competition around 9 a.m. The tournament will be for individual elementary and middle school wrestlers. "Anybody who wants to come and wrestle, come and wrestle," Sayne said. "We'll get everybody in a weight class and we'll match them wrestle." The coach said that he expects Saturday to be a big day. "It should be very exciting," Sayne said. "There's not a lot that's more fun than spending the day watching an open meet. "It should be a lot of fun."

Area middle school teams hit the hardwood at West Valley Tournament

By Ken Lay

Some area boys and girls middle school basketball teams will begin the 2019 calendar year in the West Valley New Year's Tournament. Farragut, Hardin Valley, Bearden and host West Valley will have both their boys and girls teams in action in the tournament, which will be the final tune-up before the James A. Ivey Jr. Memorial Middle School Basketball Tournament, which opens on Wednesday, Jan. 9 for the girls and Thursday, Jan. 10 for the boys. The quarterfinals for the county tournament are Saturday, Jan. 12 at South-Doyle Middle School. The top three boys and girls team will move on to play in the East Tennessee Middle School Regional Tournament and will ultimately get the chance to play for a state championship. The Vine boys and the West Valley girls will be the top seeds

in the county tournament as both went 15-0 in the Knox County Middle School Basketball Conference. This week's tournament at West Valley will also feature both teams from Greeneville, Soldiers Memorial's girls, Liberty Bell's boys, both Robertsville teams and both squads from New Center Middle School. Opening round games in the Ladies Bracket include: Farragut takes on Robertsville, a top team from Oak Ridge at 10 a.m. The host Lady Wolves play New Center at 12:30 p.m. Bearden takes on Soldiers Memorial at 4:15 and Hardin Valley tangles with Greeneville at 5:30. First round game in the Gentlemen's bracket include: Farragut vs. Robertsville at 11:15 a.m. West Valley vs. New Center at 1:45 p.m. Bearden vs. Liberty Bell at 3 and Hardin Valley vs. Greeneville at 6:45 p.m.

TSWA honors top 5A and 6A football players

By Ken Lay

Knoxville Area high school football teams and players brought fans another banner season and Farragut, Fulton and Central all won region championships and the Bobcats brought home a Class 5A State Title. And the postseason honors have already started rolling in. Knoxville recently had 13 players named to the Tennessee Sport Writers Association's Class 5A and Class 6A All-State Football Teams, which were released on Monday, Dec. 24.

In Class 6A, Bearden had two players selected. The Bulldogs, which finished 8-3 and claimed fourth place in the ultra-competitive Region 1-6A, were represented by senior defensive lineman Shamarcus Brown and athlete Caleb Wilkins. Brown, who is also a standout basketball player for the Bulldogs, had 83 tackles and nine sacks. Wilkins was the team's leading tackler as a linebacker. He had 85 tackles and three sacks. He also rushed for 821 yards as a running back and punted

for Bearden. Farragut's Tanner Corum also made the squad as a defensive back. The senior was also one of the area's top receivers. In Class 5A, Central, which went 13-2 and claimed the state championship with a victory over Henry County, had three players named to the squad including linebacker Kalib Fortner, a sophomore and defensive backs Xavier Washington and Demetrien Johnson. Central won 13 consecutive games after starting the 2018 campaign

0-2. The Bobcats were the Region 2-5A Champions. The Falcons won the Region 3-5A title and had linebacker Deshawn Padgett and athlete Jashaun Fenderson make the squad. Catholic had Cooper Mays and Bryn Tucker, both offensive linemen, named to the squad. West High linebacker Drew Francis made the team along with Halls punter Briggs Marcantel and Karns wide receiver Thomas Harper. Harper recently signed to play at Oklahoma State University under Mike Gundy.

Feisty Roadrunners stop streaking Catholic, 60-56

Cont. from page 1

his team to learn from. "That was an in-your-face defensive performance by A-E and I give them a lot of credit," said Hutchens. "They can get after you and they did. "It was the first close game we've had in awhile and it was good for us. We've still got to learn how to execute at the end of the game. That's something we'll be able to work on in practice." An old fashion three-point play by Oduspie gave Catholic its first lead with 2:50 showing in the first period when he scored on a lob inside and added the free throw to make it 10-9. The big guy scored on another lob and then on an in-bounds play to increase the Irish lead to 14-9. It was 14-11 after the first stop.

MacDonald hit a 3-point shot to start the second period, giving Catholic a six-point advantage (17-11), but Austin-East scored nine straight points, capped by Pierson's 3-pointer from the right wing at 4:46. Tamba, however, finished the first half strong and converted three free throws to send the Irish into the dressing room with a 24-22 edge. Oduspie fed Tamba for a basket inside midway through the third period to give Catholic a 33-28 lead. The Roadrunners put together flurry, outscoring the Irish 12-2 and led 40-35 after a short jumper by Dixon. A jumper by Pierson and a rebound basket inside by Upton gave A-E a 44-37 lead at the end of the third period. Catholic battled back and took a 52-51 lead on

a layup by MacDonald with 3:56 remaining. But that would be the Irishmen's last lead. Foster scored on a drive to the basket and a hustle play by Shiyaun Jackson put A-E ahead 58-54 with 1:02 to go. After Edwards made both ends of a 1-and-1 to pull Catholic within two (58-56), Irish senior Connor Kuerschen committed a personal foul and technical foul with 38.9 seconds left. Pierson cashed in both of the technical foul shots to extend the A-E lead to four. The Roadrunners missed the front end of three bonus situations in the remaining time, but Catholic missed shots and couldn't take advantage of it.

Right, Austin-East senior guard Ronny Pierson leaps to the hoop in the Roadrunners' 60-56 win at Knoxville Catholic Friday night. Pierson led all scorers in the showdown with 20 points.



PHOTOS BY LUTHER SIMMONS

Left, Austin-East's LaRon Dickson goes up for a shot against Catholic Friday night. The Roadrunners snapped the Irishmen's 11-game win streak with a 60-56 victory.



A look at 2019 in sports

Cont. from page 1

July 2019

Tennessee head coach Jeremy Pruitt is asked at SEC Media Days about his offensive coordinator opening. He pivots to a discussion about the Vols moving to a 0-7-4 defensive alignment, to better utilize their linebackers and lack of defensive linemen.

August 2019

Tennessee announces the promotion of Joe Osovet to the position

of offensive coordinator. The former head coach at Nassau Community College on Long Island is immediately dubbed "Babylon Joe" by #VolTwitter. Osovet is interviewed once in the preseason and then never heard from again in 2018. Tennessee gets through Fall camp without a single injury.

The Vols open the season with a 51-3 win over Georgia State. A statue of Babylon Joe is planned for the North entrance at Neyland Stadium.

September 2019

Wins over BYU and Chattanooga are followed by a loss at Florida. The Vols enter the bye week with a 3-1 record.

Jon Gruden is winless with the Boise Raiders, as the team was forced to play their 2019 schedule in Idaho when Oakland set all their gear on fire before they make the move to Las Vegas in 2020. Gruden tells reporters that Boise reminds him of Knoxville. Gruden then winks to the

camera and begins to sing "Rocky Top."

October 2019

Somehow, the Vols go 2-2 in October. They lose to Georgia, beat Mississippi State, lose to Alabama and then finally knock off Will Muschamp and South Carolina. They Vols are now 1-6 all-time against Muschamp.

November 2019

Tennessee sweeps their November games to finish

9-3. The Vols offense is ranked 5th in the nation and Babylon Joe is given a key to the city.

December 2019

Tennessee doesn't make it to the SEC title game in Atlanta, but accepts a bid to the Outback Bowl. Jeremy Pruitt leaves unexpectedly when the NFL's Detroit Lions head coach job opens up. Joe Osovet is immediately named the new Tennessee head coach. Fulton High School wins a state championship

in football.

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HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS NOTEBOOK

Scott Cummings comes to 'Red Nation' to lead Halls football

By Steve Williams

The high school football season ended less than a month ago, but Knox County already has two new head coaches.

Earlier this month, Scott Meadows was announced as the new coach at Carter, replacing interim coach Vic Wharton.

Scott Cummings became the second when he was named Halls' coach Thursday. He replaces Jeremy Bosken, who resigned after one season and is now the new coach at Boyd Buchanan.

Cummings is no stranger to Knoxville high school football, having spent 12 seasons as head coach at West, where he guided the Rebels to the Class 5A state championship in 2014. He left West after the title campaign and has been head coach at Cleveland High the past four seasons.

"We are thrilled to welcome Coach Cummings and his family to Halls," said Halls Athletic Director Meagan Booth. "Coach Cummings has proven himself to be a top tier coach. The hiring team decided unanimously that he is the man we need heading the program to take it to the next level."

Halls players will have a chance



Longtime Knoxville West football coach Scott Cummings was welcomed to Red Nation as Halls' new football coach last week. Cummings guided West to the TSSAA Class 5A state title in 2014.

to meet their new coach Wednesday afternoon at 1:30 in the field house.

The Halls administration has invited the Halls community, players and parents to a formal meet-and-greet in the school cafeteria on Monday night, Jan. 7, at 6:30.

"We encourage our youth league coaches, parents and community members to all attend the meet and greet and hear Coach Cummings' vision for

our football team," said Booth. "There are ways to get involved with the program starting immediately, so we hope everyone will come out, rally behind our coach, and get plugged into something special!"

ON THE RISE: Caitlin Hollifield, in her first season as girls' basketball head coach at West, has the Lady Rebels sporting an 8-3 overall record as of

Dec. 27. West finished 5-22 last season. The West girls also have shown improvement in the District 4-AAA standings with a 4-3 record. They ended up 1-15 in the league last season.

MORE TO COME: Some local high schools will still have football signing ceremonies in February, in addition to the recent early signing period.

"We had Isaiah Gibbs (RB) sign with UT-Martin and Tanner Corum (DB) sign with Southern Illinois Dec. 19," said Farragut Coach Eddie Courtney. "We will have our ceremony signing in February and should have six to nine sign that day."

Bearden Coach Morgan Shinlever did not have anyone to sign in the early period. "We most likely will have a few sign in February," he said.

South-Doyle standout Ton'Quez Ball, a 6-foot, 190-pound WR and DB, signed with the Tulane Green Wave, reported Coach Clark Duncan. Tulane is in New Orleans and a member of the American Athletic Conference.

Other local signees in the early signing period included Austin-East LB Chris Stevenson, Central

WR Demetrien Johnson and Central DB Xavier Washington with Tennessee Tech; Fulton linebackers J Coryan Anderson and Deshawn Page with Marshall; and Karns DB Thomas Harper with Oklahoma State.

PREPS OF THE PAST: Ten years ago, Dec. 30, 2008 – Farragut handed Walker Valley its first loss of the season 59-56 in the Lenoir City Christmas Classic. The Mustangs (14-1) came into the contest averaging almost 80 points per game and had made 19 shots from 3-point range on the same floor a night or two earlier.

Coach Donald Dodgen's Admirals (12-2) held WV to six treys with their man-to-man defense and Waymon McLaughlin stood out in the defensive effort. Sam Watson led the Farragut attack with 21 points. Nate Clark hit two key free throws with 38 seconds to go.

In girls action on the same day, Gibbs' Taylor Mills hit six 3-pointers and totaled 26 points, but the Lady Eagles (11-2) lost 64-60 to Ramapo High of New Jersey in the title game of the Disney Wide World of Sports Holiday Classic in Orlando.

College football bowl lineup has changed, but not the black-eyed peas

The food menu for New Year's Day is still the same, but the TV menu has certainly changed over the years.

I look forward to having black-eyed peas and cornbread tomorrow, with maybe some greens and fried potatoes on the side.

They say, particularly here in the South, that black-eyed peas are supposed to bring you good luck. But that's not why I eat them. I just like them and eat them often throughout the year.

But as I enjoy this tasty dish, I won't be seeing those traditional college football bowl games like I did growing up in the 1960s and '70s – the Cotton, Sugar, Rose and Orange bowls. They were the "big four" on New Year's Day until the Fiesta Bowl came along in 1971.

This season's Cotton Bowl and Orange Bowl have already been played as the hosts of the College Football Playoff semifinal games. You probably watched Notre Dame go against Clemson in the Cotton Bowl Saturday afternoon, followed by the Orange Bowl Saturday night matching Alabama and Oklahoma.

The semifinal winners will play in the 2019 CFP championship game Monday night, Jan. 7, in Santa Clara, Calif.

This New Year's Day lineup includes (I refuse to mention the sponsoring companies) the Outback, Citrus, Fiesta, Rose and Sugar bowls.

It's still a full day of football, and actually even more games than we had back in the day. But it's just not quite the same for us old-timers.

At least the black-eyed peas are as good as ever!

WAIT A MINUTE: When I heard reports that the University of Tennessee might be considering hiring the Atlanta Falcons' Steve Sarkisian as its new offensive coordinator, a red flag went up.

Wasn't he the coach who once had an alcohol drinking problem at Southern Cal? I did some checking and sure enough found out he was that guy.

If Sarkisian is indeed on deck for the job, I wish Tennessee Head Coach Jeremy Pruitt would reconsider.

As I write this, word is the Falcons are expected to clean house after their final game and that includes the removal of their offensive coordinator,

Sarkisian, who previously was fired as head coach at USC in 2015 after reports came out he had an alcohol drinking problem.

In between his jobs at Southern Cal and Atlanta, Sarkisian was on the Alabama staff as an analyst in 2016 when Pruitt was the Crimson Tide's defensive coordinator.

"You can have him," more than one Atlanta Falcon fan might say about Sarkisian.

And for good reason. Under Sarkisian, Atlanta's offensive point production fell off significantly in 2017, dropping from a NFL-best 33.8 points per game in 2016 to 22.1 points. This season, the Falcons are averaging 25.3 points, which ranks 11th in the league.

Sarkisian may check off many of the boxes Pruitt wants in an offensive coordinator – he's a former QB coach, an experienced play-caller and a former college head coach who likes a pro-style offense with a downhill running game – but is he the most deserving?

I don't think so. Sarkisian has had his chances in big-time college football, and things didn't work out. There are plenty of other offensive-minded coaches out there that have paid their dues and deserve a first chance to move up.

Pruitt only needs to look at his own situation. UT AD Phillip Fulmer gave him that first chance to be a head coach in big-time college football because he had paid his dues and been successful. In this case, I think it would be best for Tennessee football if Pruitt were to follow Fulmer's approach.

URBAN UPDATE: It's unbelievable that Urban Meyer, who will step down as head football coach at Ohio State after the Rose Bowl, will be co-teaching a "character and leadership" course at Ohio State's College of Business next year. But it's been announced he will do just that plus work with Athletic Director Gene Smith "in some capacity."

Meyer was suspended the first three games of the 2018 season for lying to reporters at the Big Ten Conference Media Days about his knowledge of repeated domestic violence allegations against his former assistant coach Zach Smith. He had hired Smith at Florida and Ohio State.

I sure would like to be a fly on the wall when a student asks Meyer about that.

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The Doctor is in

a weekly column by
Dr. Jim Ferguson

Resolutions

At year's end, we expect to hear and sometimes make New Year's resolutions. One of my New Year's Resolutions is to pay attention and not forget vacation schedules. Each week columnists have editorial deadlines for the Focus. The problem occurs when the deadlines are moved up to allow The Focus staff to finish early and be with their families during the holidays. This is certainly reasonable, but in the busyness of life, I forgot to write my essay last week until the night before it was due! Coming up with a thousand word essay on the spur of the moment is not advisable.

The word resolution derives from the word resolve, meaning to make

a decision. Becky and I have been happily married forty-three years, and I've learned a husband should resolve to sometimes avoid offering advice. My wife is a beautiful woman and an accomplished manager of our home. Once, in an effort to overcome her frugality, I "encouraged" her to buy some new underwear, joking that some of my nursing home patients had nicer undies. Mark Twain once observed that humor is the highest art form. And some humor, even if well intentioned, falls on deaf ears.

Similarly, husbands should avoid no-win situations or prepare for the dreaded conundrum, "Does this dress make me look plump?" Becky has

maintained her figure, and is neither fat nor plump. However, I've learned that women see the world differently than men. As an example, lots of men see pregnant women as attractive, whereas women see something different in the mirror. Fellows, my New Year's advice is to avoid the no-win situation of painful honesty versus a lie by truthfully observing that for example, "The blue dress looks nicer on you."

In the last several weeks, I've written about different kinds of love. From four decades of personal experience and a medical career of counselling patients and couples, I can certify that marriage encompasses many varieties of love. And in my opinion, The Golden Rule underlies virtually all successful human relationships. In antiquity, the negative or prohibitive axiom was, do not treat others in ways you would not want to be treated. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus changed the famous axiom into a positive context, advising us to treat others as you would like to be treated.

I love pithy quotes

and observations on the human condition. Corrie Ten Boom survived the Nazi death camps which claimed her family. Undisputedly, she has walked the walk and has therefore earned the right to talk the talk. She said, "Forgiveness is not an emotion, but an act of the will." We should all reflect on this in our relationships and especially in our marriages because there are times when forgiveness is necessary and, most importantly, another aspect of love.

My formal education and training was in science, but my continuing informal education has been in the humanities. Of all the professors who broadened my educational horizons, scholar and lay theologian C.S. Lewis stands out. Expanding on Jesus' Golden Rule, Lewis said that we should act lovingly even when we don't feel it, and by so doing we will become more charitable and more loving. I believe this is an excellent resolution for the New Year and the recipe for successful interpersonal relations and a better marriage.

Another of my mentors is writer Philip Yancey. I've

read a dozen of his books. And, whereas C. S. Lewis' thoughts are deep and his prose is tough, Yancey is equally thoughtful and his prose is beautiful and friendly. Resolve, in this next year, to read out of your preferred genre, and try Yancey's "Soul Survivor." You will not be disappointed.

Recently, I was challenged by Yancey in his essay, King David's Spiritual Gift. Most know the story of the shepherd boy, David, who slew Goliath and went on to become king of Israel around 1000 BC. David was a leader, a warrior and a spiritual writer. Half of the one hundred and fifty Biblical Psalms are attributed to David. Though David was God's man, he committed adultery with Bathsheba and orchestrated the death of his consort's loyal husband, Uriah.

Humans place a hierarchy on sinfulness. Most would agree that murderers and child abusers are more loathsome than petty thieves or those who break the speed limit. A friend once shared with me his vision of God's bird's eye view of human peccadillos.

He imagined God looking down from the top of the Empire State Building and seeing people walking around on 5th Avenue. From this perspective all our human attributes and failures might seem comparable.

Yancey imagines David's infidelity and deceit as part of his "outer life." Whereas, David's inner spiritual life, as reflected in his Psalms, revealed a contrite and humble heart which God deemed worthy.

None of us can discern the thoughts of others. We may see in their actions their "outer life," but none knows what beats in the heart of a man's inner life. This doesn't mean that Nancy Pelosi and Trump are not accountable to men for their actions. It does mean that we cannot see into the soul and that "Vengeance is mine..." said the Lord in Deuteronomy 32:35.

So, next year I will pay my speeding ticket if I break man's law. However, in my inner life (my heart, mind and soul) I resolve to stay true to the Master in this coming year and always.

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

Wag More, Bark Less A New Year's Resolution

Wow—what a year 2018 proved to be with its turbulent midterm election cycle, as we bring a close to the year it's time to be hopeful as we ring in 2019. It seems



By Howard Baker, RN BSN

as though a short time ago we were setting goals and making New Year's resolutions for 2018. I admit the holiday season of 2018 has been one of the fastest and most stressful for me. I welcome the close of 2018 as Hobo the Wonder Dog and I prepare to ring in the New Year. 2018 saw more than its fair share of celebrity

deaths: George H. W. Bush, John McCain, Charles Krauthammer, Anthony Bourdain, Joe Jackson, Nancy Sinatra Sr., Charlotte Rae, Aretha Franklin, and Burt Reynolds to name a few. We

also lost quite a few celebrity animals: Zsa Zsa, the world's ugliest dog. Sam, the dog who played Duke in the Bush Beans commercials, Uno, the beagle who won the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show who won became the most popular pooch. Willow, Queen Elizabeth's last beloved corgi.

A New Year's Resolution of losing weight, exercising, or to stop smoking are all great—but, have we kept those well intended resolutions made after a holiday season of overindulging in comfort foods, endless parties, and shopping? Every year I search for the perfect New Year's Resolution until my head hurts and maybe I give this yearly tradition too much effort. I reflected on my 2018 New Year's Resolution of being more like my dogs.

It doesn't matter if I run a quick errand or take a weeks' vacation, on my return Hobo and Skyler greet me with the same enthusiasm. If I step on their paw or hurt their

feelings, they accept an apology and quickly move on. When I bake treats for them, they stand patiently by the stove as if I were creating a masterpiece or the cure for boredom. A ride through the National Parks with their heads hanging out of the window with their ears flopping in the wind is like an exotic vacation. WOW, how a dog reacts with such excitement to seemingly insignificant acts of friendship and kindness—no expectations, no conditions, just tail wagging fun. In return I have their friendship and love, they notify me when the mail runs, warns me of nearby cows and squirrels on our drives, and

seemingly know when I need a friend to lean on.

Last year I suggested a New Year's Resolution of simply doing random acts of kindness? Imagine our actions kind in nature, no expectations or motives, simply just an act of kindness. If we made altruism and giving part of our everyday life, helping a neighbor, buying a cup of coffee for a stranger, or simply volunteering our time and skills to someone in need. Researcher Stephen Post believes you get more health benefits by helping others than you would by smoking cessation or exercising. Researcher Elizabeth Dunn found people who spend money on

others have greater happiness than those who spend it on themselves.

Can you imagine how life would be if we approached family and friends like our dogs, and what a difference this tail wagging attitude would make in our relationships? How do you feel when someone does something kind for you? Now, think how you feel when you do something kind for someone else.

My 2019 New Year's Resolution is going to be to approach life more like Hobo the Wonder Dog and Skyler—bark less and wag more. Let's try it together and see if our new year is not filled with more joy, happiness, health, and fun!



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