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School board recognizes student rep, retiring principal

By Anne Primm

The June 5, 2019 Knox County School Board meeting was called to order by Chair Terry Hill at 5:02 p.m. with all nine districts represented. Fourth District Representative Virginia Babb led the Pledge of Allegiance and the moment of silence. Hill reminded everyone that the deadline for transfers is July 1, 2019.

Chair Terry Hill took the opportunity to recognize the Knox County School Board's 2019 Student Representative, Hannah Selph. Hannah is from Chairperson Hill's own sixth district. Hannah is an academic scholar who was designated as an AP Scholar and member of Mu Alpha Theta, and has been accepted into the University of Tennessee's prestigious Chancellors Honors Program. She also served as a member of the Hardin Valley High school Marching Band, was a Stem Academy Ambassador, was a Tennessee TSA State Official Coach for two years, and volunteered at church, KARM, and at the American Cancer Society. Last but not least, she was nominated for the Hardin Valley Academy Hawk Award, the school's most prestigious award. Kudos and best wishes to Hannah!

Superintendent Bob Thomas was next to give his report. He congratulated retiring L & M STEM Academy Principal Becky Ashe for receiving the Tennessee Stem Innovator Award. Thomas also congratulated Farragut High School for receiving STEM school designation. Farragut High was one of eleven schools in Tennessee to receive such distinction. Thomas also related that he and Mayor Jacobs visited Sam E. Hill School in late May in a joint effort between the mayor's office, Knox County Schools, and the Knox County Public Library System to distribute 6,800 library cards to 17 elementary and middle schools to encourage reading in

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PHOTO BY KEN LAY

Pictured left to right, Nick Pavlis, former city council member District 1; Lynne Fugate, candidate for city council at large seat A; Eddie Mannis, candidate for city mayor; and George Wallace, city council member seat A.

Mannis supporters gather at SoKno Taco Cantina

By Ken Lay

Knoxville Republican mayoral candidate Eddie Mannis made a campaign stop at SoKno Taco late Thursday afternoon where he was greeted by supporters and despite overcast skies and a few sprinkles, spirits weren't dampened.

The gathering was held on the patio of the restaurant and was an

informal meet and greet.

Mannis spoke with supporters individually but did not make a formal address and his schedule, which was extremely packed last week, excluded him from enjoying appetizers with the crowd.

But he wanted to stump in South Knoxville before the August primary election and the gathering was

organized by City Councilman Nick Pavlis.

Councilman George Wallace was in attendance along with County Commissioner Carson Dailey and others.

"It's been a busy week but it was important for me to come here, to

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Meetings allow public input on Knox County greenways

By Bill Howard

Citizens and communities debate many issues, but few people are against greenways.

The paved paths provide numerous benefits by connecting neighborhoods, encouraging walking and biking, and supporting economic development.

In 2009, the Metropolitan Planning Commission (as it was known then) included in a Parks and Recreation Master Plan the approval of an expansion to Knox County's greenway system. It was decided that the public should have a say in determining where, and by how much, the expansion should occur.

On Wed., June 5, the first of four community-input presentations about the greenway corridor was held at Karns Elementary School to educate the public about the issue, and to allow citizen feedback. Of the county's four greenway corridors, Beaver Creek West, which would connect Hardin Valley to Powell, was the focus.

The other three corridors are

Northshore Drive, Beaver Creek East, and South Knox Co.

John Houghton works for Gresham, Smith and Partners, an architectural/engineering firm consulting on the project for Knox County.

"The county's looking to add new greenways throughout the county," said Houghton. "Tonight we're looking at where a new greenway can go in those communities. There's been a lot of demand for additional greenways. They've done some projects (since 2009); this is the next wave of potential projects."

Informational exhibits outlined the health and economic benefits of greenways, and there were aerial photos of the entire county with the proposed construction in color-coded dots.

Visitors could indicate their preference for greenway expansion in three different ways.

One exhibit had 12 photos - six each of locations and features of greenways - and anyone could put an orange sticker on the photos of their choice.

Another exhibit allowed placing a sticker on a least-to-greatest (1-5) scale for each of three different greenway benefits: connectivity, quality-of-life, and economic development. Written post-it notes could be placed anywhere on the aerial photos.

Said Shauna Godlevky, Knox Co. Parks Planning and Development Manager: "We have a grant from the Tennessee Department of Transportation; it's a \$300,000 grant and it has an 80%-20% match, so 20% comes from the county. It's a project that should be done by the end of the year and it will give us a focus on which greenways we should work on for different reasons, whether it's health, economic impact, alternate transportation opportunities, or connectivity."

According to Godlevsky, the information and input gathered at the four meetings will be finalized at a series of meetings currently scheduled for August.

"We have a team of engineers and landscape architects and from all this information they'll

revise these routes based on the comments, along with some of other data they have gathered, and then they'll come up with a revised plan," she said. "We'll then have another round of public meetings to show the final product. At these meetings they're gonna have cost estimates, and then they'll recommend phasing."

Funding, of course, not only will be critical to the entire project, but will determine the pace of expansion. According to Godlevsky, a single mile of greenway can cost up to \$1 million.

"In the near future progress will be slow," said Godlevsky. "We really rely on grants from the TDOT (as well as county funding). They put in heavy requirements on how we have to build and it makes the costs go higher."

But, she says, greenway expansion is worth it.

"Big businesses will come into a city if they have a good greenway system. The value of these greenways, when they're done right, is massive."

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PHOTO BY KEN LAY.

Pictured left to right: Carson Dailey, county commissioner for District 9; Bob Thomas, candidate for city council at-large seat C; Lynne Fugate, candidate for city council at-large seat A; Nick Pavlis, former city council member for District 1; and Kristy Kristi - school board member for District 9.

Mannis supporters gather at SoKno Taco Cantina

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come to South Knoxville," Mannis said. "I wanted to come and see some of my South Knoxville friends and Nick Pavlis is very gracious to have organized this event."

Mannis was obviously pleased with the turnout

in spite of the weather forecast which turned out not to be much of a factor. Pavlis said he is giving his support to Mannis in order to keep Knoxville moving in the right direction.

"Knoxville is in a good place and we want to keep moving in a positive

direction," Pavlis said. "Eddie has a very successful background in business and finance and he'll be fiscally responsible."

Mannis is a lifelong Knoxville resident and aims to make Knoxville's neighborhoods safe and keep the city economically vibrant. He also seeks

to unite Knoxville.

Mannis grew up in a blue collar community. He hails from the Frog Level section of Inskip.

He said that it was his parents that instilled his work ethic that has him campaigning tirelessly throughout the city in his effort to be the next mayor.

Character Witnesses

Occasionally when I meet with clients and we are discussing our upcoming trial, I will run through with them who we want to call as witnesses at trial. When they mention someone, I will ask them, "What are they going to testify about?" Sometimes they will say, "Well, they are going to be a character witness."



By Jediah McKeegan
attorneyknoxville@gmail.com

Friday, but I did not actually see them drunk then."

As you can see, from the quoted portion, there are exceptions to this. In criminal cases as it pertains to the accused and any alleged

Then I have to explain to them that character witnesses are not really a thing in trials. Only in very rare circumstances do witnesses get to simply testify only about someone's character.

Typically, to testify during a case, witnesses will have to have actual knowledge about the facts of a case. However, let's discuss the limited circumstances when character witnesses may actually be allowed to testify.

So, what we are looking to for guidance are the Tennessee Rules of Evidence. The first one we will review is Rule 404, which is titled, "Character Evidence Not Admissible to Prove Conduct." It states that, "Evidence of a person's character or trait of character is not admissible for the purpose of proving action in conformity therewith on a particular occasion, except..."

What that is saying is, someone cannot get up and testify and say, "Well, I saw them drunk the last five Fridays, so they must have been drunk the next

victim, but, remember, the character evidence must also be deemed to be relevant by the court to what is being decided in the case.

Continuing the discussion of character witnesses, lets look at Tennessee Rule of Evidence 608, which is titled, "Evidence of Character and Conduct of Witness." This rule is very lengthy and can be hard for even lawyers to read, but let me try to compress it down to the basics for you.

If you want to attack a witnesses' credibility by having another witness give their opinion or testify as to the first witnesses' reputation, they can only talk about the first witness' character as it relates to truthfulness or untruthfulness, and nothing else.

So while character witnesses can potentially testify, it is not as common of a thing as you may think.

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

School board recognizes student rep, principal

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the summer months.

Items and Contracts

and Board Policies were both passed without discussion. In the Grants

section there were a few questions about 7.B. regarding the 2019-2020 Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Grant from the State of Tennessee. These questions were answered by Dr. Keith Wilson. Dr. Wilson was also given the opportunity to inform the school board about the 1000 industry certifications earned by his students in

2019 across 17 different disciplines. Cheers to both students and instructors!

There were a few questions for Ron McPherson about financial arrangements to pay for the three upcoming school projects. McPherson said he worked with the county to restructure some bond payments that would be advantageous for both parties.

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Publisher's Position

Thank Goodness for Martin Daniel!



By Steve Hunley, Publisher
publisher@knoxfocus.com

The people of Knoxville and Knox County ought to be thankful for the service of State Representative Martin Daniel. All too often the doings of our representatives in Nashville escape our attention because local media fails to report

it. The actions of our legislative delegation in the State Capitol oftentimes has a direct impact upon the people here. Too few people, especially inside the City of Knoxville, recognize the actions of the city council in voting to eliminate the notice provision regarding property rights. The average person's greatest investment outside of his or her children is usually one's home. That is a primary reason homeowners' associations proliferate both the city and county and city councilmen and county commissioners should always pay close attention to the concerns expressed by those organizations comprised by homeowners.

The action of the City

Council was inexplicable in a representative government and downright un-American. Martin Daniel immediately stood up for homeowners and citizens by warning the council-people if they did not restore proper notice to the public with regard to property rights, he would redress the problem with legislation in Nashville. Daniel's actions speak volumes inasmuch as it is a pure expression of representative government and a lawmaker keeping the interests of taxpayers first and foremost in mind. Local governments are, unfortunately thoroughly capable of authoritarian excess and occasionally those excesses have to be overturned by the

state. The fact Martin Daniel was bold enough to send the City Council a warning is indicative of his commitment to the people he represents, as well as the people of Knoxville.

Knoxville city administration has been pushing the Recode changes at a fast and furious pace and the city council has been all too compliant in responding to her demands. Madeline Rogero will cease to be mayor of Knoxville by the end of this year and new members of the city council will be elected this year. One candidate for mayor, Eddie Mannis, has announced his opposition to the Recode proposal in its current form, which Knoxville's longest serving mayor, Victor Ashe, has

referred to as a massive rezoning ordinance. More than 70,000 pieces of property inside the city limits are affected by the Recode proposal. The City Council obliged the Rogero administration when it voted to remove the requirement for notice to property owners when a massive rezoning ordinance is being considered by the City of Knoxville. That passed the City Council twice and unanimously.

Eddie Mannis is the only candidate running for mayor of Knoxville who opposes the Recode ordinance; Indya Kincannon and Marshall Stair both support it and Stair is one of the council members who has voted twice to remove the notice requirement. Thank

goodness for Martin Daniel who is willing to fight for the property rights of the people of Knoxville. Daniel has always been an effective and useful member of the Tennessee General Assembly, but the people of Knoxville and Knox County owe this outstanding representative a debt of gratitude for refusing to be cowed by a city administration determined to have its way at the expense of the rights of its own citizens. It is difficult for me to imagine anything more un-American than the actions of the city administration and council, but Martin Daniel's own actions are a perfect illustration of an elected official living up to his responsibility to the citizens who voted for him.

Way To Go Rick Staples!

By Steve Hunley, Publisher
publisher@knoxfocus.com

Presently the fake news media in the State of Tennessee are trying to perpetuate the myth a Democrat in the General Assembly cannot get anything done due to the Republican super-majority dominating our legislature. That fails to explain the remarkable success of State Representative Rick Staples, a Knoxville Democrat. Staples has enjoyed a number of accomplishments

in the immediate past session of the Tennessee General Assembly and Governor Bill Lee just signed into law a bill sponsored by the Knoxville Democrat. Many Knoxville will remember the tragedy of JaJuan Latham.

JaJuan Latham was a twelve year-old who was gunned down by a drive-by shooter while sitting in his father's vehicle at Danny Mayfield Park in Knoxville. To date, no one has been charged with the murder of JaJuan Latham but if

local law enforcement officials are able to charge and convict the culprit(s), he or they will face harsher penalties due to Representative Rick Staples. The bill sponsored by Staples increases the penalty for drive-by shootings.

Staples has proven to be an effective voice for the people he represents, which includes East Knoxville and South Knoxville neighborhoods. Representative Staples has enjoyed several successes with legislation

he has sponsored in the Tennessee General Assembly with a winning personality and an approach that is less confrontational than cooperative. Rick Staples has shown he is willing to work with others to pass legislation that is beneficial to the people he represents and his bill on behalf of JaJuan Latham has been praised by Knoxville who wish to see a decrease in violence in our community, as well as showing young people they have other options

besides gangs. Staples also sponsored a resolution intended to highlight the tragedy of teen suicide, which has been praised by mental health professionals and educators.

While some state legislators yap and yowl, Rick Staples has been busy translating community needs into legislation that is meaningful for the quality of life in Knoxville and Knox County. Way to go Rick Staples!

Commission approves Mayor Jacobs' Budget

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appropriation as the program is reviewed.

"A drastic impact," was the way Anders said cutting the funds would affect the program. The Health Department administers the program through funding Cherokee Health.

Finance Director Chris Caldwell said restoring the funding would affect the Lonsdale school construction and the proposed Reading Program. The difference between the current budget and the Jacobs proposal is about \$1 million.

Commissioner Larsen Jay asked recalled that the mayor's original proposal included an even greater cut in health department funding. He said Dr. Martha Buchanan consulted with Cherokee and the hospital and reported to the mayor. The mayor increased the funding a bit and Buchanan reported the recipients "can handle the cuts." He also said Jacobs promised no future cuts to

the indigent program.

He said the cuts were to encourage funds to be used more effectively. Jay said the hospital have been operating for years on a retainer and added that the payment for indigent care is "unfair to the taxpayers."

"It's not about hurting people, it's about making things better," he said.

Dr. Buchanan told the commission that the health department annually uses all the budget allotted to it. She said that the department's program gets a 10 to 15% charge in actual cost at hospitals but pays full price for equipment.

Commissioner Carson Dailey noted that the allocation for the program will be discussed again at regular meetings on the 17th and 24th and more public input is needed. Two Cherokee Health employees were present during the meeting but didn't speak.

"It is a budget priority to me," said Commissioner

Evelyn Gill and called the cuts "a lesson in disparity."

Commissioner John Schoonmaker noted that Knox County is the only county in East Tennessee to provide such a program and deemed the indigent care funds "a financial assist" to the providers.

Commissioner Michele Carringer, whose family works at UT Hospital, at first talked about recusing herself from the vote but then said that Mayor Jacobs "cares about everybody." She said there's no audit of the health department program and said that over the next fiscal year the mayor is pledging to look at the indigent care program each quarter.

"Somewhere we need to tighten the belt," she said.

"You can't serve the same amount of people with less money," Anders said and he agreed that the program should be audited.

"No other department is getting cut as much as this

one," he said.

Mayor Jacobs told the commission that funding the indigent care program is "throwing money at something and expecting it to get better."

He also said that the 30-day residency requirement for people to qualify for the health care program is unfair.

"They come here, get a utility bill or a form from a provider and they're covered," he said, adding that he feels that is "unfair to taxpayers."

When the matter came to a vote only Anders, Gill and Chairman Hugh Nystrom voted "Yes" to restore the funds. Although that portion of the budget was approved with the cuts it apparently will be discussed again in the next two commission meetings. All the commissioners voted "Yes" to approve the mayor's proposal but some who voted "Yes" have many more questions about the cuts and want to



PHOTO BY MIKE STEELY.

Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs told the Knox County Commission that funding the indigent care program is like "government throwing money at something and expecting it to get better." The commission passed the mayor's proposed budget after much discussion about the health department's funding cuts.

hear from the hospitals and Cherokee Health.

The commissioners then moved quickly to approve the tax rate for next year, which remains unchanged at \$2.12, and approve the five-year Capital Improvement Plan.

They also voted unanimously to allot \$6.7 million

to non-profit organizations during the next fiscal year which begins July 1st. The commission also approved the County Mayor's Organizational Chart with the request the council be given the names of each of those people who will serve him.

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Candidates for At-Large Seat C respond to Focus questions

By Mike Steely
steelym@knoxfocus.com

The Knoxville Focus is asking the City Council candidates for At Large Seat C, currently held by Vice Mayor Finbarr Saunders, a series of questions. Five people are in the race but only two will progress to the General Election after the August 27th Primary.

The other three seats on city council have only two candidates each and both will appear on the Primary and General Election Ballot. To the only disputed council seats, which involve the five candidates seeking the Seat C position, we asked a series of questions and have selected one of those to publish.

Answers appear in the order they were received. The Focus is accumulating answers as the race progresses and this week we are asking the following:

Should city funds be used to secure a minor-league sports team?

David Williams

"Sports stadiums should be privately funded. Examples include AT&T Park in SAN Francisco and the new LA Rams and Golden State Warriors stadiums. The city can provide infrastructure (roads, utilities, etc.). Knoxville can do the same using the creativity of our residents and businesses."

Amy Midis

"I would love to see baseball back in Knoxville! My support for the construction of a stadium would be primarily based on the financial cost to Knoxville for its construction, the projected economic impact it would have for the local economy. I value the many intangible benefits provided to our city by having a sports team which we can rally behind. I would also hope that the surrounding neighborhoods and business owners will see it as a positive addition for their community."

Bob Thomas

"The city of Knoxville, once upon a time, had an MLB AA team and an ECHL Hockey team. The ECHL is now the most successful minor hockey league ever with NHL contract players throughout the league. The Knoxville government did not give the support that other cities did to assist and help support their minor league teams, for example, like a percentage of parking, concession sales and discounted rental fees. Eventually due to this lack of this support, both teams found other cities that DID give concessions to the teams. Sports teams are a pillar of growing cities.

We need an administration that will support and seek to build a strong sports representation for Knoxville. As for funds being used to secure a team, that needs to be evaluated by people that know the sports business. For 8 years I owned the ECHL Knoxville Cherokees. I was the ECHL Expansion Committee Chairman. I understand the "ins and outs" of what a sports franchise needs from my

experience of promoting over 300 games and bringing in over \$25M to the Knoxville economy. I believe, like myself, many people would like to see sport teams return."

Hubert Smith

"Limited public funds should be used to secure a minor league baseball team. It all depends upon what will be the use of a stadium. Mixed-use is one thing. Strictly for baseball is another. I do not subscribe to publicly funded stadiums that are the sole benefit of owners. I'm all for a stadium and the city improving infrastructure and such, like the Street Scapes Improvements around the city. Taxpayers should not pay for a private stadium, and as a council member, I would not vote in favor."

Amelia Parker

In April, after the mayor announced at the State of the Cities address that Knoxville has money to bring baseball back to our city, I conducted a poll on my campaign's Facebook page to survey the community regarding their thoughts on the use of public funds for a stadium for a privately owned sports team. Of the 551 people who took the poll, an overwhelming 83% were against public funds being used for a baseball stadium. I also spoke with neighbors in person throughout the city and many people were excited by the idea of a baseball stadium downtown if the city did not have to pay for it either directly or through tax incentives. Many residents felt the city has more important priorities to address such as a 3,000 person waiting list for affordable housing and were skeptical of the city's ability to generate enough revenue from a minor league stadium to cover its costs. Others were open to the idea of the city building and owning a stadium if the development could be guaranteed to directly benefit the immediate neighborhoods where a stadium would be built.

Multiple studies on the economic benefits of subsidized baseball stadiums have shown that these projects have more cultural value than an actual economic impact on a city's finances. Baltimore's Oriole Park cost \$225 million to build and \$450 million to pay off, which the state of Maryland will do this year after a 30 year bond is fulfilled. Much debate has taken place regarding the economic benefits of Oriole Park. The Maryland Stadium Authority reports that the stadium has cost the state as much money as the stadium has brought to the state each year. Additionally, development around the stadium has not moved forward as envisioned 25 years ago. If the city of Knoxville were to pursue a similar deal with a sports team, the residents of Knoxville should be consulted and assurances would need to be put into place to guarantee a return on the city's investment that directly benefits the residents closest to the proposed site.



PHOTO BY KEN LAY

Members of Emerald Academy's first graduating class at a ceremony honoring their achievements Wednesday night at Overcoming Believers Church in East Knoxville.

Emerald Academy celebrates first graduating class

By Ken Lay

Emerald Academy celebrated the accomplishments of its first middle school graduation last week.

The graduation ceremony for Knox County's first charter school was held Wednesday night at Overcoming Believers Church in East Knoxville. The school is part of the Emerald Youth Foundation, an inner city youth and family ministry.

Emerald Youth Foundation Director of Marketing and Public Relations John Crooks said that it represented a special occasion for the school.

"This is the first graduating class from our upper school," Crooks said. "We have a longer school year and we have a longer school day. This is special because most of these kids

have been with us since sixth grade. Most of them have been with us for three years."

The graduates may be finished at Emerald Academy but Crooks said that the administration and the foundation will track the students' progress.

"They'll move on and go to a traditional high school and it will likely be the high school that they're zoned for," Crooks said. "We'll track and keep up with their progress as closely as we can."

The graduates had ribbons pinned on them as a reward for graduating from the academy, which will expand to K-8 next year.

"We had about 60 graduates and the ribbon signifies their graduation," Crooks said.

The school's motto is "Scholars into Leaders."

Valedictorian Ellie Arwe spoke about what it meant to be an Emerald Scholar. She was one of several students to be recognized Wednesday night.

Other honorees included Founder's Award winner Omar Connelly and Salutatorian Annabel Slate.

Student Deron Sackie gave the welcome and opening remarks.

OBC pastor Daryl Arnold officiated the ceremony and teachers Deangelo Adams (who directed the Emerald Academy Choir at the graduation) and Christy Bennett also received Founder's Awards for their contributions above and beyond the call of duty.

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All 97 seniors having chosen to pursue higher education, threw their caps high after the May CAK graduation ceremony

2019 Class of CAK Warriors Break Capstone Ground

By Amy Box Fellhoelter

Calling the Christian Academy of Knoxville graduated class of 2019 “stellar” might be an understatement—not because the students earned more than nine million dollars in scholarships and accumulated more than 6,000 hours of community service, but for the reason that all 97 graduates will continue higher education at either a two-year college or four-year university in the fall.

Some of the colleges those new CAK alumni will attend are Dartmouth College, Palm Beach Atlantic University, Vanderbilt University, Wake Forest University, Emory University,

Baylor University, and, of course, University of Tennessee Knoxville.

The graduated class also included two national merit semifinalists, Sam Klauer and Eli Oaks, and four Advanced Placement scholars, Davis Brady, Claire Brock, Eli Oaks and Molly Grubb. An AP Scholars with Honors was awarded to Cole McDaniel and an AP Scholars with Distinction was granted to Sam Klauer.

Since 80 percent of the CAK students play sports, it’s not surprising that several class athletes were chosen and autographed collegiate-level contracts on National Signing Day. Claire Brock signed with Emory University for basketball, Annalise Cole signed

with Wheaton College for softball, Jack Flynn and Luke Simpson signed with Carson Newman University for football, Annie Lukens signed with Berry College for soccer, Cade Russell signed with UTK for golf, Caroline Joy signed with Palm Beach Atlantic University for lacrosse, and Will Sterchi signed with Berry College for football. Baseball players Zane Keener signed with UTK, Hunter Loyd signed with ETSU, and Jacob Tate signed with University of Kentucky. Not to mention CAK took the state title in baseball, men’s golf, and the 4x400 and 4x100 Relays of which many seniors led their teams like Cade

Continue on page 2

Indigent care, jail diversion center and Supreme Court tax break on county agenda

By Mike Steely
 steelym@knoxfocus.com

While the Knox County mayor’s budget proposal exceeds the current budget, the funding for indigent care for its poorest citizens is proposed to be decreased. The agreement with the Knox County Health Department is on the agenda for next Monday’s Work Session.

The amendment, according to the agenda, “reduces the total amount of money available

for services during the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 and provides for other revisions to the Reimbursement for Services section in the agreement.”

Cutting back on funds for health care for poor citizens has drawn criticism from citizens and some commissioners. Dr. Martha Buchanan, director of the Knox County Health Department, had originally asked for \$200,000 more for

Continue on page 4



PHOTO BY MIKE STEELY

The city’s two chiefs pose for The Focus during Tuesday’s City Council Meeting. Police Chief Eve Thomas and Fire Chief Stan Sharp pause their chat for the photo.

Vice mayor comments on Recode, city passes multi-million bonds for KUB

By Mike Steely
 steelym@knoxfocus.com

Before four multi-million dollar bond issuances were approved, Vice Mayor Finbarr Saunders opened the Knoxville City Council meeting Tuesday with several statements about Recode.

Saunders, filling in as chair for Mayor Madeline Rogero, called Recode “a comprehensive update” of city regulations but added it “is not a massive rezoning.” He said Recode is being designed to “protect the rights” of property owners.

“We’ve held close to 90 meetings and notices were sent to every property owner,” Saunders said, reading from a prepared statement.

Saunders said that the council has completed its review, noting the 9.5 hour meeting

recently, and the altered version goes back to the planning group to be reviewed in a June 13th meeting. He urged each council member to meet with Planning Director Gerald Green to review the Recode map, Draft 5, before the final Recode version comes back to council.

The council has set aside upcoming meetings on July 16th and 30th to again discuss the code changes or possibly, if not approved, other review dates on August 5th and 12th may see special called meetings to consider the changes.

While there was some expectation that Recode might be considered to be on a ballot in a referendum the public could vote on, the matter never surfaced in either the council dinner or the regular public meeting Tuesday

evening. A comment by one of the council members prior to both events was that a referendum would probably fail because the public doesn’t understand the changes.

In three different resolutions the council voted to approve KUB bonds of \$26 million for the Water System, \$20 million for Waste Water, \$17 million for the Electric System. Those passed unanimously after Mark Walker, chief financial officer of KUB, said the 30-year bonds carry no city obligation.

The fourth bond resolution saw some discussion as council members Seema Singh, Gwen McKenzie and Marshall Stair questioned KUB’s practice of passing along fixed fees to low income residents.

City Finance Director Jim York

spoke of the issuance of \$70 million in bonds in General Obligation Bonds. He said the bonds may be issued later this year and the city may not need all the money and probably would use about \$62.75 million.

“We won’t borrow until we reach a certain debt,” York said. He also said the issuance of the bonds will “take several more actions” and be approved by the state.

The \$70 million was approved by council with only Singh voting “No.”

The council also approved a sidewalk study, \$156,250 in funding as the city’s portion for elderly and disabled housing, and a \$74,500 agreement with Helen Ross McNabb for early diversion programs dealing with getting people out of prostitution.

A grant application with the

state of \$20,000 with a like match was approved for the purchase and installation of trees.

The City Parks and Recreation Department received a track and field coordinator and cross county services for \$15,651 in an agreement with Knoxville Youth Athletics.

Also approved were several appointments requested by the mayor. LaKenya Middlebrook and Frank Shanklin were reappointed to the Police Advisory Committee and Leticia Flores was approved to join that group.

Robert Graves was approved to join the Knoxville Tree Board and Andre Canty was approved to sit on the planning commission along with the reappointment of Tim Hill, Gayle Bustin and Patrick Phillips.

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Treasured Moments & Memories on Father's Day

25 Years!
August 31, 2019, will mark a special date in the life of our family. It will be 25 years ago on that day that our father was called to his heavenly home. The year was 1994. I seldom "go back" in my mind to that day when he left us, though the sight of a sunflower will sometimes spark a memory. He was 68 years old and making plans for the fall. Father's Day is certainly one of those times for remembering, and his birthday falls during that week as well. He would have turned 93.



By **Ralphine Major**
ralphine3@yahoo.com

school to serve in the United States Army. After the Army, he returned to school at the urging of Professor "Prof" H. G. Loy to get his diploma. His great respect for teachers and his emphasis on education was passed on to my brother and me. Ralph was a dairy farmer, and he passed down his love for animals to us as well. For his entire life, he called Harbison's Crossroads home. I thought the name sounded quaint back then; but today, I use those same words. He served as a deacon and parking lot attendant at church. Though not a

public speaker, he shared his personal testimony on a Sunday night on Men's Day. At age 39, our father developed an enlarged heart that beat irregularly. Doctors wanted to perform surgery. That was in 1965 and with children ages ten and seven, he declined the surgery. He had to give up his livelihood while dealing with heart disease. For the next 29 years, he enjoyed gardening and gave most of the vegetables away. He loved riding his tractor on the farm. Upon his death, his cardiologist sent us a quick handwritten note explaining what happened to his heart and assured us he did not suffer. The next day after Ralph passed away, a little six-year-old girl named Emily told her father that she had



Picture of **Ralphine, Ralph, and Wayne Major** on Father's Day, 1965, courtesy of **Juanita Major**

thought about Ralph all day. Emily would be 31 today, and I often wonder if she still remembers Ralph. Through the years, kind words and gestures from so many have

given us much love and support. And the thoughts of a little six-year-old girl. On this Father's Day, treasure the special moments with fathers who

are still living. For those whose fathers have passed on, cherish the memories. Be blessed! Happy Father's Day!

2019 Class of CAK Warriors Break Capstone Ground

Cont. from page 1

Russell who placed as the golf state champion. CAK took the state runners-up spot for seven other sports. Although these statistics and students' accomplishments are complimentary to the 2019 class, it doesn't showcase a unique element to their education as well as a graduation requirement. Setting apart the 97 graduates from those of other high schools is a program that sets them apart. It is called the Capstone Project which began in 2012. It is an opportunity for upperclassmen to practice their studies and faith by volunteering to help others.

Beginning the junior year, students decide on how to best serve the community with the skills and talents they have acquired. Two years of planning and implementing a project with a minimum of 40 service hours that is designed "not so much for them to follow their passion, but to find their calling," said Susan Stanford, CAP Capstone Class and Bible teacher, as she explained the program. The hope is for students to discern what God is calling them to do and to be transformed on their own in the process.

"It is affirming and empowering for these students to complete the project. Many times, the projects don't look at all like what they were first decided upon. It's about serving people, using your gifts and your talents to do something and see 'I really made a difference,'" added Stanford. Four Capstone Project Awards are given to seniors each year who displayed a 'bigness.' "We want the project to be bigger than anything the student has done before," she explained.

Baseball lover Christian

Cate worked more than 150 hours on his Capstone Project. "The idea was simple enough...get some people together and teach the kids a little baseball, have some devotionals and snacks, and have fun. Little did I know how impactful this project would be...for the kids, the volunteers, the inner-city neighborhood... and for me," he said. Cate conducted a free, one-week baseball camp for at-risk kids served by the Wesley House last summer as a rising senior. Fifteen volunteers worked beside him, including several professional coaches from other area schools, who were all dedicated to helping the players succeed in their own skill set.

In preparation, Cate petitioned the city to fix up a local neighborhood field. The day before the camp was to start, Cate knew he had made a difference when he went to the field to paint lines on the dirt and saw the neighborhood kids had discovered the field already and were using it.

"I have decided to do the camp again, and build on the work we did last year," said Cate. This summer, he

is directing another camp for 25 elementary aged inner city kids from June 17 to 21. To learn more, volunteer or donate equipment, reach out to: <https://uk.gofundme.com/2019-wesley-house-baseball-camp>.

Gavin Lyell broke new ground also by making an impact on teen fathers through developing a Capstone Project called "Journeys: Missions for Young Men." He wrote the curriculum for an eight-week program for teen dads with classes teaching parenting, CPR, and child health, financial planning, and job planning. The program included mentoring, support groups, legal advice, and involved charity work, and spiritual guidance. "If you do a Google search on teen pregnancy, nine out of ten times you will discover than any programs out there are geared toward teen moms. Society seems to forget that there had to be a teen father as well," said Lyell.

After looking into churches and organizations to implement his program with no luck, he came across the possibility for first

responders to fill the gap. A masculine diaper bag filled with child-care items and Lyell's 'Journeys' curriculum provide the much needed information for teen fathers. They are handed out by first responders, some of whom, Lyell learned, were teen dads themselves.

Lyell chose to create this program because one out of three children live without their biological fathers according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Statistics show that children of absent and especially teen fathers are more likely to become at risk individuals and later continue the cycle of teen fatherhood with their children. Through his mom's stories as a juvenile prison principal, and meeting one of the men fifteen years after leaving the prison, he was inspired to make a difference in the lives of teen fathers. To donate, volunteer, or learn more email Journeys4YoungMen@yahoo.com or call 865-654-4368.

Molly Grubb's Capstone embodied the CAK standard of servanthood too. After experiencing several CAK mission trips herself, she wanted the same for her fellow students. Grubb decided to raise \$5K for students to attend mission trips but her campaign resulted in raising \$15K!

In a school of 350 students, community service starts young at CAK with older students modeling their passion to help others to the younger students.

During the 2018-19 school year, sixth graders took on "H2O for Life," a fundraiser in which students

walked the school track carrying jugs of water like the children living in Guatemala or Kenya. The money raised went to the Nasaruni Academy in Kenya. These are two countries the students conduct fundraisers for and visit on mission trips to serve others.

CAK Development Director Craig Collier describes his experience with the school as having "other people infusing Jesus into my kids." As a father of four children who have either graduated or are attending CAK, he adds, "For our family, it has been community with like-minded families and friendships that go beyond these walls."

CAK is a multi-denominational covenant school that represents 140 churches and nine denominations. "We encourage students to find their similarities, not their differences," says Julya Johnson, CAK director of communications, when explaining why the school doesn't teach in-depth doctrine.

The moto for students is to be CAK warriors as servants, scholars and disciples. This is possible in activities such as Broadway productions in musical theatre, mountain biking club, student senate, missions, and scholars bowl. CAK fosters excellence in its more than eighteen clubs, fifteen sports, 21 AP courses, and four dual enrollment classes through Bryan College.

For more information about Christian Academy of Knoxville, visit www.cakwarriors.com, or call 865-813-4CAK.

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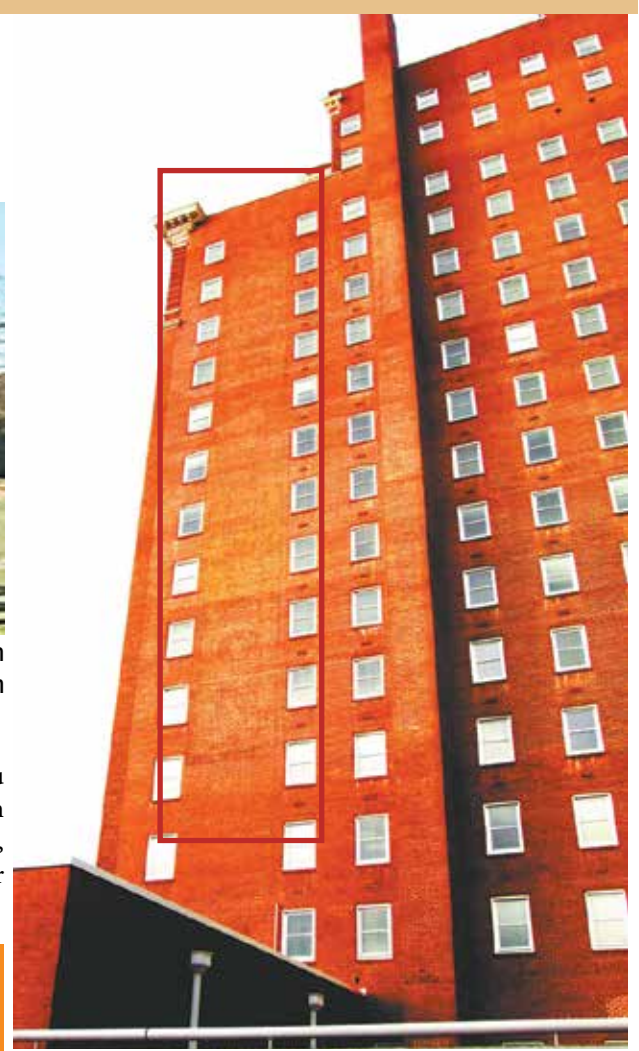
HISTORY peeking at YOU



The original sign for the **Chapman Highway Drive In Theatre** now stands on a farm on West Emory Road near Rutledge Pike. The sign was saved from destruction when the old theater closed.

All around Knoxville the city's history is winking at you although you may not have noticed. Here and there on some of the older buildings, if you look closely enough, you can see the past appearing as faded or painted-over business names or advertisements on the brick walls.

Our readers are invited to send photos of historic building signs, unique advertising signs and signs that have been repainted and restored. Photos and information should be sent to steelym@knoxfocus.com and the submitter will be credited with the photo.



Barely visible now but at one time the **Andrew Johnson Building** advertised on the back side of the building to lure travelers into the historic hotel. (Photo by Mike Steely)

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Congressman Robert Crosser of Ohio

Pages from the Past



By Ray Hill
rayhill865@gmail.com

For so many of us, members of Congress from other states are of little interest, yet so many of those faceless individuals have compelling stories and remain in the House of Representatives for decades, accruing seniority and power. Robert Crosser served in Congress for thirty-eight years and it would likely have been longer still had he not held fast to his own beliefs and bucked a president of his own political party by opposing the draft in wartime. The son of poor Scottish immigrants, Robert Crosser was born in Lanarkshire, Scotland and came to the United States when he was seven years old. Eventually, Crosser attended Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio where he worked his way through school as a dormitory janitor; he also played right tackle on the football team.

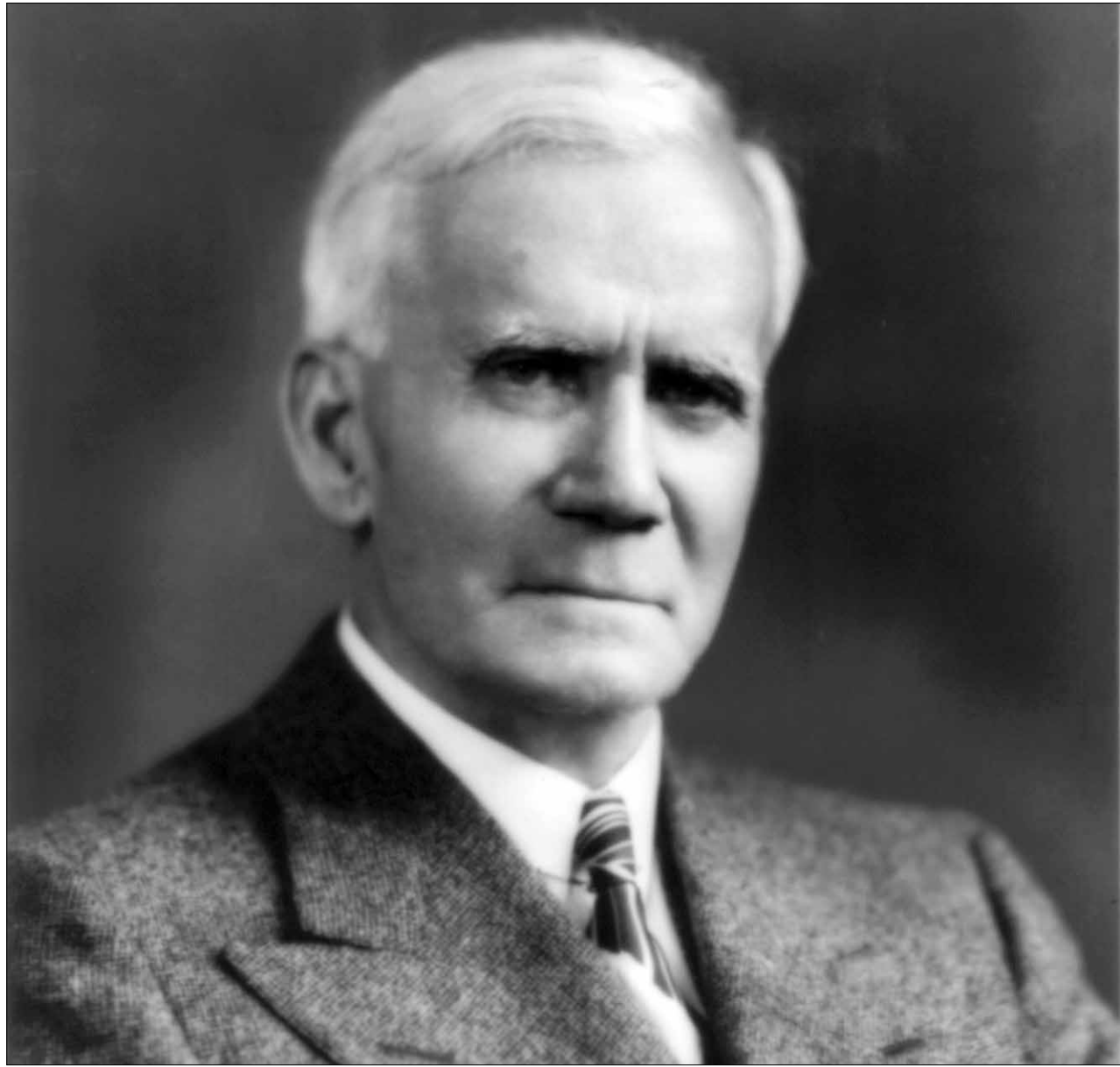
When Robert Crosser announced for Congress in 1912, the Republican Party was split asunder by a bitter fight between incumbent President William Howard Taft and his predecessor, Theodore Roosevelt. Roosevelt refused to accept the results of the Republican National Convention, which renominated Taft. Roosevelt bolted and ran on a third-party ticket, which aided the campaign of the Democratic candidate, Woodrow Wilson, the governor of New Jersey. Few gave the young Cleveland lawyer much of a chance, especially as Crosser was running for Congressman-At-Large, meaning if elected, he would represent the entire state in the House of Representatives. Crosser ran as a supporter of Wilson as well as the working man even though he had been taught the law by William Howard Taft. Earning a reputation as "Fighting Bob" for his game campaign, Crosser made it quite clear he was the friend of the laboring man and organized labor. Robert Crosser spoke all over Ohio, discussing the tariff and denouncing the "trusts" of great corporate wealth. Much to the surprise of virtually everyone, Robert Crosser became the first person ever to be elected as Congressman-At-Large from Ohio. Crosser ran for reelection from the Twenty-First District of Ohio in 1914 and was popular enough that he defeated the incumbent, Robert J. Bulkley, in the primary. Bulkley had enjoyed the support of Newton D. Baker, the mayor of Cleveland and the congressman's defeat was considered a setback for the city machine. It was also a tribute to Congressman-At-Large Robert Crosser's own personal popularity in his home city. The Cincinnati Enquirer noted Bulkley had

been the "personal choice" of Mayor Baker while Crosser was affiliated with the "ultra-radical element" of Cleveland. Newton Baker had wanted Crosser to run in Ohio's Twenty-Second Congressional District, so as not to oppose Congressman Robert J. Bulkley, but Crosser, proving to be as stubborn as many a Scotchman, refused and insisted upon running in the Twenty-First. Crosser won the general election and was reelected in 1916.

Robert Crosser's political independence cost him dearly in 1918 when he voted against the wartime draft, as did his colleague from Cleveland, William Gordon. The refusal of Congressmen Crosser and Gordon to support the wartime draft infuriated the most important daily newspaper in Cleveland: the Cleveland Plain Dealer, which promptly editorialized, calling for the defeat of Robert Crosser and William Gordon at the polls. "One unmistakable duty confronts the voters of Cleveland this year," the Plain Dealer thundered. "It is to defeat William Gordon and Robert Crosser in their effort for re-election to Congress." The Plain Dealer did not quite call the two errant congressmen German sympathizers, but certainly insisted they were hurting America's war effort. "From the beginning of America's controversy with the German imperial government these two Sixth City Democrats have done about everything in their power to hamper their own government," the Plain Dealer editorial said. "Whatever have been their intentions, the effect of their actions has been to assist the Kaiser in his outrages against America and to impede the progress of the United States government in retaliation." The Plain Dealer said it should be the "duty and pleasure" of every Democrat to defeat Crosser and Gordon in their respective primaries; failing that, the "loyal" voters could defeat the congressmen in the general election.

When asked why he wished to run for Congress, Robert Crosser gave a concise and logical reason for his political ambitions. "I sought a seat in Congress because I believe the best place for a man who has a philosophy of things is in the lawmaking bodies where he may speak openly, and freely advocate principles believed by him to be right."

With most Americans solidly behind both President Wilson and the war, the Cleveland Plain Dealer's campaign against Congressmen Crosser and Gordon, with the support of the Cuyahoga county machine, was successful. Both Robert Crosser and



FROM THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

Congressman Robert Crosser of Ohio in 1948

William Gordon lost their respective primaries. Crosser was succeeded in Congress by Democrat John J. Babka, but the former congressman ran again in 1920. It proved to be a banner year for Republicans with Ohio U. S. senator Warren G. Harding at the top of the ticket. Both Babka and Crosser lost to the Republican candidate. The irrepressible Robert Crosser ran again in 1922, won the Democratic nomination and defeated the GOP incumbent Harry Gahn. Like Crosser, Harry Gahn did not give up easily and would attempt to return to Congress four more times, the last being in 1944. Robert Crosser kept a stranglehold on the Twenty-First Congressional District, remaining in office until 1955. Crosser's views on the wartime draft never changed and he voted against similar proposals under presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry Truman. Nor was Bob Crosser done feuding with the Cuyahoga Democratic machine.

Crippled by severe arthritis, Robert Crosser was confined to a wheelchair after sometime in the early 1940s. As he aged and became more infirm, opponents inside his Congressional district tried to run him out of office, a notion he strenuously resisted. Crosser once again ran afoul of the local Democratic party machine in 1948 when he refused to approve the nomination of a particular local to be the Postmaster of Cleveland. That refusal brought him serious opposition in the form of Emil A. Bartunek, the personally popular Executive Secretary to Cleveland mayor Thomas A. Burke. Two years previously, Bartunek, then a state senator, had pressed Crosser hard. Once again, Bartunek ran hard against Congressman Crosser, but lost the primary by just over 3,000 votes. Undeterred, the machine ran Bartunek again in the 1950 Democratic primary with the same result.

Almost eighty years old when he began his

last reelection campaign, Robert Crosser, like many another aging incumbent, bristled at the notion age and infirmity had diminished his ability to serve his constituents. Referring to his wheelchair, Congressman Crosser joked, "All I need is a little axel grease and I can outrun the young fellows." If pressed further, Crosser would angrily bark, "I'm as active as the best of my colleagues!"

Congressman Robert Crosser employed his daughter Barbara from 1929 until he left Congress in 1955. Two of Crosser's four children, Justine and James, died quite young. Justine left a husband and two very young daughters when she died at age twenty-nine. Barbara Crosser married Charles Sweeney, who had been married to her older sister Justine. Barbara Crosser Sweeney helped to raise her late sister's two daughters and legally adopted them in 2005 when she was ninety-four years old. While Crosser's son and namesake, Robert, Jr. was also employed in his Congressional office, it was Barbara Sweeney who was his closest aide. Mrs. Sweeney wrote press releases, news columns, and ran her father's reelection campaigns, which became more difficult, at least physically when Crosser was confined to a wheelchair. In 1954, Congressman Crosser was facing several opponents inside the Democratic primary, including Stephen M. Young, who had served four terms as Ohio's Congressman-At-Large in 1932, 1934, 1940, and 1948, as well as John Holly, a leader in the local African-American community. Mary K. Sotak, a local city councilwoman, was running against Crosser, as was Charles A. Vanik, a local municipal judge who had been a member of the Cleveland school board and an Ohio state senator before the World War. Vanik had run against Crosser in 1946 and lost decisively and the Congressman seemed not

to be worried, especially with his opposition divided. Crosser announced his daughter Barbara would once again return to Cleveland to run his reelection campaign and serve as his surrogate in the district while he remained in Washington, D. C. "She knows my views so well she can do a better job than any other person."

Over time, the population of a Congressional district changes. Ohio's Twenty-First District in 1954 was almost evenly divided between blacks and whites, with the white folks largely being Democrats and the African-American population still largely supporting the Republican Party. The eventual Republican nominee inside the Twenty-First District was seventy-eight year-old Francis E. Young, a former state representative who had helped to found Cleveland's local chapter of the NAACP and had been active in the postal workers' union. Local allegiances were also beginning to change, as evidenced by the candidacy of John Holly inside the Democratic primary. Holly was the founder and head of the Negro Future Outlook League in Cleveland. Eventually, the district would become a majority black district and elect Louis Stokes to Congress.

Congressman Crosser confidently expected to be renominated in the Democratic primary and was surprised to be upset by Charles Vanik by just over 500 votes. The weather on Election Day was terrible and many voters were complacent and many of Crosser's supporters did not bother to go to the polls. Robert Crosser was reputed to be bitter at his defeat and clearly did not wish to retire. In late November of 1954, Crosser made the announcement he would run for Clerk of the House, a statement which was greeted by a deafening silence. Nothing more was heard about Crosser's candidacy to become Clerk of the House.

As Robert Crosser's time

in the House was coming to an end, colleagues began paying tribute to his service. John Shelley, a California Democrat, praised Crosser for what the Ohioan had done for railroad workers. "The Railway Labor Act of 1934 and Railroad retirement acts of 1934 and 1935 were something more than enlightened legislation for the special benefit of railroad labor," Shelley said. "In writing those measures and securing their enactment, Bob Crosser blazed the trail for much of the great social welfare legislation which came into being in succeeding years of Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration."

Perhaps the most fitting tribute came from Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn, who said, "I never knew a man in or out of public life that I thought had a higher sense of justice, a greater devotion to public service and trying to serve his day and generation well and make this country better while he lived and leave it better for those who came after than Bob Crosser."

In his own farewell speech to Congress, Robert Crosser said as he looked back over his own career, he was proud he had stuck with his own beliefs, irrespective of the political consequences. "We often hear sentimental balderdash about dying for one's faith," Crosser said. The old congressman then softly quoted from a poem by Ernest Crosby, which began:

"So he died for his faith. That is fine.

"More than most of us do.

"But say, can you add to that line.

"That he lived for it, too."

Robert Crosser retired to his home in Bethesda, Maryland where he spent the two years of his retirement reading and writing. Until the very end of his life, his mind was clear and he died four days before his eighty-third birthday. Robert Crosser had lived for his faith and beliefs, too.

Taking the Sunbright loop

Would you like to take a drive to someplace you've probably never been? Small towns in East Tennessee are often overlooked and there are several that

A Day Away



By Mike Steely

surrounded by low mountains that are foothills to the larger mountain range. It's not far from Frozen Head State Park and Brushy Mountain Prison and

are worth a drive. Sunbright in Morgan County is one of those places.

The small town was originally called "Pine Top" and later it was known as "Stapleton" after the Staples family who ran the first post office there. When railroad tracks came through the little community the railroad named it "Sunbright."

The little town has only about 577 residents and sits atop the Cumberland Plateau. Sunbright is

located between Oliver Springs and Oneida. Other nearby places include Rugby and the small communities of Glenmary, Elgin, Robbins and Helenwood.

You can drive to Sunbright from Knoxville by way of 27 North from Oliver Springs. After reaching South Oneida you could come back to Knoxville through Huntsville, Pioneer, and the old coal town of Royal Blue to South I-75.

Sunbright has a youth club, fire hall public library



Sunbright is in the Cumberland Mountains. The little town has only about 500 residents but has its own police department, fire hall, and library. The Sunbright School has a very high participation of the students in sports.

and city hall. It also has a K-12 school and their sports teams are always active and well known among the schools they play.

You can find Sunbright on the internet or call the city at (423)628-5260.

Morgan County is one of the more rural counties

in our region. It is home to the Obed Wild and Scenic River and the Cumberland Trail State Park passes through its Catoosa Wildlife Management Area. The county shares the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area with Scott, Fentress and Pickett

counties in Tennessee, and McCreary County in Kentucky

Wartburg became the county seat when, in 1870, the local seat of government was moved from the now-disappeared town of Montgomery.

On your way back to

Interstate 75 beyond Pioneer you might want to stop by Huntsville, the home of the Howard Baker family. Huntsville also has a historic old bank building, courthouse and jail, and an interesting community that's actually off the main road, Highway 63.

Indigent care, jail diversion center and Supreme Court tax break

Cont. from page 1

the upcoming year.

Dr. Buchanan said recently that the mayor had asked her to look again at her budget proposal and make some cuts.

As the Mayor Glenn Jacobs calls for cuts to that program he is increasing the amount the county will contribute to the Behavioral Health Urgent Care Center. That jail diversion program lost state funding with the election of Governor Bill Lee and is turning to the two local governments to help with funding.

Mayor Jacobs is asking for an increase of \$101,127 to the center and extending the contract with Helen Ross McNabb, which operates the facility, through 2020. The procurement department is asking the commission to approve an amendment to define service contracts for the Urgent Care Center.

The commission, on a motion by Chairman Hugh Nystrom, is being asked to approve a payment-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILOT) for the Knoxville Supreme Court

LLC in two agenda items: one for the proposed multi-family residential complex and the other for a hospitality facility. The city granted the tax break in a recent session.

Knoxville-Knox County Planning is asking for changes in the Knox County Code, on second and final reading, that specifies 23 zoning districts for amendment and adding standards for use-on-review approval for public safety facilities. The Ordinance, if adopted, would also define

the meaning of public safety facilities.

Commissioner Randy Smith wants a discussion regarding burn permits and Nystrom wants a discussion regarding the TSCA meeting held in May.

The commission may also be asked to approve a contract for waste collection services for county agencies, school and the Public Building Authority facilities. A provider has yet to be placed on the company designation.

Mayor Jacobs also has

several appointments on the agenda and the commission may honor various citizens in the work session or upcoming general meeting including

the Bearden High School Soccer Team, the Bearden High School Dance Team and late attorney Arthur Seymour Jr.

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LEADING THE WAY! STUDENT-ATHLETES OF THE YEAR

The Knoxville Focus' annual feature recognizing local TSSAA member high schools' female and male Student-Athletes of the Year continues in today's issue with its second week of honorees.

Each high school chooses a girl and boy who stood out in academics and athletics during the school year and athletic directors were requested to send in the information.

In the spotlight this week are honorees from First Baptist Academy, Fulton, Grace Christian Academy, Powell and South-Doyle.

The feature will continue through the month of June.



PHOTO BY SCOTT SIMMONS

Powell's Allison Farr pitches at Halls in an early season matchup between the two Class AAA softball powers. Farr helped lead the Lady Panthers to back to back trips to the state finals in 2017 and 2018.



Deshawn Page doesn't like to lose, and didn't very often in football or basketball during his high school career at Fulton.

'Competitiveness' drove Page to many wins at Fulton

By Steve Williams

Nearly 10 years ago, Deshawn Page was an offensive left guard on the CCYSP Raiders' 9-year-old Grasscutter team, and he and his teammates knocked off undefeated Central 20-0 to capture a Knox Metro Youth Football League championship at John Tarleton Park.

It was a revenge victory too. The Bobcats had

beaten the Center City team 12-0 in the regular season.

Late in the third quarter of the rematch, the Raiders ran a quarterback and his teammates drew behind Page from the 2-yard line for their third touchdown. Deshawn also was among the defensive standouts in the game at middle linebacker.

Cont. on page 2

Powell honorees headed to East Tennessee State

By Steve Williams

Allison Farr and Riley Bryant, Powell High's Student-Athletes of the Year, will both be continuing their education and athletic careers at East Tennessee State University in Johnson City.

In high school, Farr was a standout pitcher and helped lead the Lady Panthers to the TSSAA Class AAA state championship as a junior in 2018, while Bryant was a key figure in helping Powell begin its return to football glory days.

"Allison has been a vital part of putting Powell back on top as one of the best softball programs in the state," said PHS Athletic Director Chad Smith. "She excelled in the classroom and on the field."

Farr was the 2018 Player of the Year, an All-State pitcher and a four-time All-District 3-AAA performer.

In her sophomore season, Powell also made it to the state finals and finished runner-up.

Farr signed with East Tennessee State in December. "Ali will provide an instant boost to our pitching staff," said ETSU Coach Brad Irwin after the signing.

Farr had 98 career wins in the circle and only 19 losses. She struck out 802 batters in 663 2/3 innings and finished with a 1.13 ERA.

"Allison has had a tremendous career here at Powell," said Powell Head Coach Jeff Inman. "Amazing young lady who has dominated on the mound for the past four years. I'm looking forward to following her journey at ETSU."

Bryant was a dynamic and exciting player for the Panthers' football program. He will be headed to ETSU as a preferred walk-on.

"Riley represented Powell



Speed and quickness are a big part of Riley Bryant's football game. Allison Farr hurled Powell to a state title and is expected to give ETSU a boost.

Football and the Powell Community as a first class example of what a student-athlete should be," said Smith.

"He was a multi-year All-Region 3-5A wide receiver and defensive back and played multiple positions at an all-star level. His commitment to academics and his fellow students define the character we hope all PHS athletes represent."

The 5-8, 165-pound Bryant was a first team

selection on The Knoxville Focus / Coaches' 2018 All-Knox County team and received a scholarship offer from Lindsey Wilson College before deciding to join the Buccaneers.

Riley also was a track and field athlete at Powell, competing as a sprinter and 300-meter hurdler and also as a long jumper and triple jumper. He finished fourth in the long jump and seventh in the triple jump in this year's KIL Championships.

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LEADING THE WAY! STUDENT-ATHLETES OF THE YEAR

Hollifield and Neal known for their involvement at FBA

By Steve Williams

Kelsey Hollifield and Eli Neal were good athletes at First Baptist Academy in Powell during the 2018-19 school year, but they did so much more outside of sports, according to Athletic Director Jay Scarbro.

Hollifield, Class of 2019 and FBA's female Student-Athlete of the Year, played volleyball and was a two-time All-District basketball honoree in Division II-A District 1.

"Kelsey is loved by all of her peers," said Scarbro. "She is very kind and compassionate to everyone at school. Along with playing sports, she has been

involved in other clubs and organizations on campus while also going on mission trips with the school."

Neal, FBA's male honoree, played baseball and basketball and ran cross country his junior year.

"Eli is involved in a lot of things on our campus," noted Scarbro. "He does tech support for our campus chapel services and school drama plays. He participates in many school and church youth activities.

"Eli is a leader who always accepts roles when other people turn them down. He is a hard worker in athletics and academics."



Basketball coach Brandon Clifford called Eli Nordhorn "a brilliant student and a model citizen. He will be missed at Grace in many ways."

An 'incredible athlete,' but Nordhorn will focus on academics at UT

By Steve Williams

One thing is for sure. Eli Nordhorn is not afraid of being hit by a baseball. In his high school career at Grace Christian Academy, he was hit by a pitch 60 times – a state record.

"Eli is an incredible athlete that represents everything GCA stands for on and off the field," said Jonathan Byrd, GCA's baseball coach. "He was huge for us all year hitting in the middle of our lineup."

Nordhorn was a three-time All-District baseball honoree and was named the Division II-A District 1 Offensive Player of the Year this spring.

The 6-4, 220-pounder also did some hitting in football at Grace Christian and was a starter on the Rams' state basketball championship team as a junior in 2018.

For all of his versatility and bruises, plus his academic honors, he was selected GCA's male Student-Athlete of the Year for 2018-19, according to Athletic Director Gene Baker.

"Eli was the center of both our offense and defense this past fall as he was a starter on both sides of the ball," said

Head Football Coach Rusty Bradley. "We knew that whenever we needed a play to be made, we could count on Eli to come through."

Brandon Clifford, who coached Nordhorn in basketball, marveled at his overall talents.

"Eli Nordhorn is a phenomenal young man that has proven to be successful in everything he does. He is a star tight end on the football team, a state champion forward on the basketball team, and a leader on the baseball diamond as well. To cap all of that off, Eli is a brilliant student and a model citizen. He will be missed at Grace in many ways."

Nordhorn had 20-plus offers to play college football and was a USA Today All-Tennessee first team tight end in 2018, but he has chosen to go to the University of Tennessee on a Vol scholarship for academics.

He will study Nuclear or Biomedical Engineering at UTK, noted Baker.

A member of the National Honor Society and National German Honor Society, Nordhorn was a GCA Top 10 Scholar Athlete in 2019.

'Competitiveness' drove Page to many wins at Fulton

Cont. from page 1

That had to be one of the first big victories in Page's football career, if not the first. He went on to enjoy many more at Fulton High before graduating last month.

Winning was always important to Page at Fulton and he enjoyed much success as a football and basketball player.

In his senior year, the Falcons went 6-0 to capture the Region 3-5A football championship and finished 10-2 overall, while the basketball team posted a 28-5 record en route to a second straight Class AA runner-up showing at the state tournament in Murfreesboro.

"Deshawn Page has been a special player for four years here," said FHS Athletic Director Jody Wright in announcing the school's male Student-Athlete of the Year. "He has always had the ability to make special plays and to take a game over when needed.

"Deshawn's biggest attribute is his competitiveness," added Wright, who saw Page perform up close as his head coach in basketball. "One thing that really stands out to me is the fact that he hates to lose."

Page continued to stand out as a linebacker in his prep career and became the Falcons' leading running back in his senior season last fall.

Days of being a left guard were long behind him.

Deshawn received the state's top individual award when he was named the Tennessee Titans' Class 5A Mr. Football. He also was a two-time All-Stater, the Region 3-5A Most



Fulton honoree Kyeisha Dalton is extending her athletic and educational career at Johnson University.

Valuable Player last fall and the 2018 Knoxville Focus / Coaches' Knox County Player of the Year.

In basketball, the 6-2, 215-pound Page was an inside force, earning All-District 4-AA and All-Region 2-AA honors his junior and senior seasons, along with being picked MVP of the region tournament in 2019. He also was named to the Class AA state all-tournament team in each of his last two years.

"Deshawn has proven that you can play at a high

level even being a multi-sport athlete," said Wright.

Page initially signed with Marshall University in football, but changed his mind and will be going to East Mississippi Community College, with hopes of eventually earning a scholarship at a SEC or ACC school.

Kyeisha Dalton is Fulton's female Student-Athlete of the Year.

"Kyeisha has been a great player for us these last four years," said Wright. "She was a leader for us on and off the floor.

"Kyeisha was our playmaker, who we relied on to step up and make plays in crunch time. She's had several accomplishments throughout her athletic career at Fulton, including scoring over 1,000 points, but the one that makes us very proud is her extending her educational career at Johnson University. She is the first one in her family to attend college. She plans to play basketball and get her business degree."

Talented and versatile McReynolds is GCA female honoree

By Steve Williams

Gentry McReynolds made the news in 2010 when she took first place among fourth graders in a storytelling competition during Harvest Day at Grace Christian Academy.

And almost nine years later, the headlines keep coming for Gentry, who was selected GCA's female Student-Athlete of the Year for 2018-19.

In May, McReynolds signed to play volleyball and basketball at Johnson University. The multi-talented athlete also played softball for Grace Christian this spring.

"Gentry has a strong work ethic, which is precisely why she has signed to play two sports at the next level," said GCA Head Girls Basketball Coach Kendall McGill. "She believes in doing things the right way for the right reasons the first time around, and encourages those around her to follow suit."

Melanie Morris, Head Volleyball Coach, added: "Gentry has touched many lives with her leadership and work ethic.

I have learned just as much from her as I hope she has from me. She is the type of athlete who goes above and beyond on and off the court. A true leader, fighter and competitor. It has been a true honor to be her coach for the short time I had the opportunity. Johnson University is blessed to have her!"

Softball Coach Dwayne Hunt wishes McReynolds had started playing with the Lady Rams on the diamond sooner.

"Gentry is a great young lady to be around," he said. "She brings a smile and energy to our softball team. She is a great athlete that I would have enjoyed seeing grow more if she had played since a freshman. She has been a great addition to our team in her senior year. I look forward to seeing what Gentry can accomplish at the next level."

The versatile McReynolds also was crowned Homecoming Queen last fall and was very involved in the GCA Theatre Department.

In addition to making



Grace Christian coaches talked about Gentry McReynolds' "strong work ethic and energy."

the Division II-A District 1 All-Tournament team in volleyball, McReynolds was a four-year Academic Scholar Athlete and a member of the National Honor Society and Spanish Honor Society. She

also received the GCA Musical Theatre Best Actress Award and the GCA Choir Outstanding Female Senior Award.

Former players return to Powell Middle to work hoops camp

By Ken Lay

For nearly two decades Darin Courtney has hosted the Powell Pride Fellowship of Christian Athletes Boys Basketball Camp at Powell Middle School.

There, he teaches basketball fundamentals to youth basketball players and he has guests who give their testimonies of their faith.

Courtney, who recently retired from coaching the Panthers after a 17-year run that ended with a TMSAA State Tournament appearance in 2019, has always had help from assistant coaches and the girls basketball coaches at Powell over the years.

But he's also enlisted the help of his former players. Many are in college when they come home to work the camp.

But they can't wait to come home to give their old coach a hand.

Westin Reynolds, who plays at Walters State Community College, returned home for a second consecutive summer to teach young players the game he loves.

This year, he and Courtney were joined by new head coach Steve Waugh (who coached the Lady Panthers last season) and first-time counselors Josh Woods and Jake Majors.

Majors graduated from



PHOTO BY KEN LAY

Powell Middle School camp counselors Josh Woods and Jake Majors prepare to do drills at Thursday morning's session in the Powell Middle Gym.

Powell High School last month and played basketball there. He'll attend Pellissippi State in the fall.

Woods, a 2018 Powell grad, also worked the camp for the first time. He missed out last summer, despite applying.

"My friend got the last spot last year and I wasn't really what you would call hurt when I didn't get it," said Woods, who is

transferring to East Tennessee State after spending last year at Chattanooga. "But this is something that I really wanted to do.

"I really love the game and I love teaching these kids. It's fun."

Woods and Majors both played on Powell's Class AAA State Tournament team in 2018 and they're playing together again but the stakes aren't quite as

high.

"We play on the same team in a men's league at Christenberry Recreation Center," Majors said. "We play once a week and then we play pickup games."

The duo plays pickup games at Tennova North in Powell.

Majors, who roots for the Boston Celtics and free agent player Kyrie Irving, said he relished the

opportunity to work with the community.

"I played here and it's great to come back and work the camp," Majors said. "It really shows how close and tight-knit this community is.

"I'm thankful for this because the community is so close and it helps to keep me involved in the game. Josh and I play together but this is fun

because it's great to see these kids enjoy the game the way we used to."

Woods had aspirations of walking on to play college basketball, but he plays intramural hoops. Like his friend, he enjoys giving back to the game and to the Powell Community.

"It was big for me to get this spot because I actually know a couple of these kids.

"I like coming in here and helping them."

Like Majors, Woods is a fan of the NBA. He pulls for the Los Angeles Lakers. He wore a Black Mamba T-shirt at Thursday's camp sessions as a tribute to the now-retired Kobe Bryant, who held that nickname for much of his professional career.

"My room is all purple and it's a tribute to the Lakers and Kobe," Woods said.

His current favorite player is Portland's Damian Lillard. Both Lillard and Bryant spent their careers with one team.

But Irving, who began his career in Cleveland and has spent the last two seasons with the Celtics.

He likely won't return to Boston and Majors said that his loyalty will follow Irving to his next stop.

Radcliffe, Fowler lead East to all-star soccer victory

By Ken Lay

HENDERSONVILLE--- When Ryan Radcliffe walked off the field as a state championship coach for a second time late last month he didn't have long to celebrate.

He had one more game to coach.

Radcliffe, who guided the Bulldogs to the 2019 Class AAA State Championship on Friday, May 24 in Murfreesboro, was chosen to coach the East All-Stars in the Tennessee High School Soccer Coaches Association's East-West All-Star Game on Saturday, June 1 at the Field of Dreams at Hendersonville High School.

It was the second time that Radcliffe coached in the game in three years. He coached in 2017 and the teams played to a 1-1 draw when the West scored a late equalizer.

He guided the East to a 5-1 victory in 2019 and many of the players on his roster were familiar faces to him. "We smoked them," Radcliffe said. "When I saw the West's roster, I thought we were really going to get beat. Their roster was really stacked. You had players from Station Camp (which won State Championships in 2017 and 2018 before falling to Bearden in the title match last month."

Knoxville had 10 players on this year's roster. They included Bearden's Collin Lewis, Finn Harris, Everett Hauser and Tanner Whited. Farragut was represented by Pablo Herrera and Dillon Bihlmeyer.

Webb School of Knoxville had two players, Will Miller and Cam Fowler, make the squad. Catholic's Adam Curley also played in the game along with Christian Academy of Knoxville's Sam Klauer.

"I had some great players. It was great to get the chance to coach those guys," Radcliffe said. "But I didn't really have to coach all that much.

"It was great to get the chance to watch those boys play up close. I was a lot of fun and there was no pressure on me."

Radcliffe did admit that he wanted to win.

"I coached in 2017, the year after I won the state championship [as a coach] the first time and we tied because they got a goal late," Radcliffe said. "So it was great to go down there and get a win."

Radcliffe won the 2016 Class AAA State Championship as a player with the Bulldogs in 2006.

In the all-star game, Fowler scored two goals and was named Most Valuable Player.

"He's a heck of a player," Radcliffe said.

Harris, Lewis and Bihlmeyer also tallied markers for the East.

By Ken Lay

Hardin Valley Academy didn't have to look far to find its new football coach.

The school announced last week that it promoted defensive coordinator Mike Potter to head coach.

Potter, a 1987 Fulton High School graduate, becomes the second head football coach in school history as he replaces Wes Jones, who had been with the Hawks since the program began in 2008.

Jones left to take an assistant coach's job at Science Hill in Johnson City. Jones resigned in May and made the move to Northeast Tennessee to be closer to his family.

HVA principal Rob Speas, who recently replaced Sallee Reynolds, hired from within.

"I'm just blessed to get this opportunity," said Potter, who served as an assistant coach at his alma mater between 1994-2008. "We have great kids and Wes laid a very solid foundation.

"I'm just looking forward to building on that. We have a great administration and it's always good to know that those people have your back."

The Hawks went 6-5 and made the playoffs in 2018 and Potter knows that life in Region 1-6A, with the likes of Bearden, Farragut, Science Hill, Kingsport, Dobyns-Bennett, Morristown West and Jefferson

County won't be easy.

Add non-conference foes like Oak Ridge, Cleveland, West High and defending Class 5A State Champion Central and you have one of the toughest schedules in the Volunteer State.

"In our league, you don't get any nights off," Potter said. "Our region is tough and our non-region schedule is tough too because we're going to play Central, Cleveland, West and Oak Ridge."

Potter knows about coaching against (and

beating) top-notch competition. He coached on three Class 3A State Championship teams with the Falcons.

During his tenure as a coach in North Knoxville, Potter won state titles in 2003, 2004 and 2006.

Fulton was also state runner-up in 2002 and 2007.

At Fulton, the Falcons enjoy enormous community support. Potter's been at HVA as an assistant coach since 2014 and took over as defensive coordinator in 2015.

And the community is heavily vested in the Hawks and the school.

"The community really gets behind us at Hardin Valley and that's a great thing to have whether you have people helping out with their time or you have people making a monetary donation," Potter said. "It takes more money than running a program.

"In order to have a successful program, you have to have the support of the community."

Potter promoted to head football at HVA



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HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS NOTEBOOK

KFOA's annual Media Day and golf tourney is July 12

By Steve Williams

The Knoxville Football Officials Association's 13th annual Media Day is about a month away and will be held Friday, July 12 at the Three Ridges Golf Course pavilion.

Longtime KFOA supervisor Harold Denton calls it the "unofficial start" of the high school football season. Players and coaches from close to 40 area high schools are expected to be on hand for interviews that will get underway bright and early.

The KFOA's 37th annual Scholarship Golf Tournament also will be held that day and Denton says, "We are looking for golfers to play."

In the past 36 years, the KFOA has awarded scholarships that have paid \$142,000 in tuition at various colleges and universities to 81 scholar-athletes from 25 different area high schools. By the way, Denton says the KFOA Scholarship Fund is a 501(c)(3) group and donations are tax deductible.

In addition to playing in the tourney, there are other ways to help this fundraiser, too.

"You can participate as a donor, prize gather, volunteer, etc.," noted Denton. "Please let me know where you can help. If you have a sponsor in mind, please advise me, I can send them a registration form."

Denton can be contacted at 7140 Government Farm Road, Knoxville, TN, 37920-7522, or by calling 865-256-1948.

TSSAA NEWS: The Board of Control voted last week in Murfreesboro to change the Girls' Soccer / Soccer post-season overtime

procedure. The Board voted to remove the two five-minute sudden victory periods. The post-season tie-breaker procedure will now be the following:

"Teams play two, full 10-minute overtime periods. These periods are not sudden victory. If, at the conclusion of the two full 10-minute overtime periods, a tie still exists, the tie shall be broken by the penalty kick procedure in the NFHS Soccer Rules Book."

In other action, the Board approved Berean Christian School's request to continue their Co-op with Gibbs High School to allow two student athletes the opportunity to finish out their high school careers on the current softball and baseball teams.

The Board denied Concord Christian School's request for an exception to the Cooperative Program Rule to allow them to Co-op with another school in football, even though they have had a football team within the last five years.

NEW GCA COACH: Mark White is Grace Christian Academy's new varsity boys' basketball coach, Athletic Director Gene Baker announced in May.

White, who replaces Brandon Clifford, has over 25 years coaching experience and 23 at the collegiate level, having most recently served as head coach at Tallahassee Community College since 2015.

"Mark White checks all the boxes in our list of requirements for the next head basketball coach at Grace," said Baker. "First and foremost he is a man of devout faith who fits our mission to lead, build, and equip our students in a saving knowledge of Jesus

Christ."

Coach White is excited about this new season of his coaching career with the Rams and connecting not only instructionally but relationally with players and students.

"I'm so excited to get to be part of the kids' lives at GCA," he said. "It's all about the kids and I want each kid to love being a student athlete at GCA. Coach Clifford has done a great job of building a championship program and I am looking forward to continuing it."

GCA won the Division II-A state title under Clifford in 2018.

PERCUSSION CAMP: Rush's Music and Halls High have joined forces to present an exciting Yamaha Sounds of Summer Percussion Camp Thursday and Friday of this week (June 13-14).

Featuring nationally known percussion artists working with local educators, Sounds of Summer provides intensive, hands-on instruction to young percussionists from grades 7 to 12. The camp covers drum line fundamentals, basic and advanced techniques, sectional playing, ensemble performance and leadership skills.

The camp will take place at Halls High.

For more information, contact Steve Boyce of Rush's Music at 865-573-4138 or steve@rushmusic.com.



Gibbs Elementary School 5th grade student Mikel Van Pelt is the 2019 recipient of the Larry Graham Physical Education Award. This award is given annually to a student at Gibbs Elementary who demonstrates excellent leadership, physical education skills and character. Mikel was selected by his physical education teachers, Susan Hibbett and Lisa Loftin. He is the son of Josh and Liz Van Pelt of Corryton, TN. Pictured are Susan Hibbett, Kimberly Graham Muller (daughter of Larry Graham), Mikel Van Pelt, Carolyn Graham and Lisa Loftin.

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LEADING THE WAY!

Scott and Deering are South-Doyle honorees

By Steve Williams

Farrell Scott, South-Doyle High's male Student-Athlete of the Year, stood out in the classroom as well as on the football field.

Scott was team captain and a two-year starter for the Cherokees.

A 5-10, 190-pound linebacker, he registered 12 tackles in a Week 5 win over Sevier County last season and that was just one of his season highlights on the field. The following week, he hauled in an 11-yard pass over the middle to help set up a touchdown that gave South-Doyle an eight-point lead in the fourth quarter of a comeback win over Carter.

Farrell also was a member of South-Doyle's bowling team and was selected to receive the Careacter Star Athlete award.



South-Doyle's Phoebe Deering will continue her outstanding soccer career at Maryville College. South-Doyle's Farrell Scott has been accepted into UT's Honors and Scholars Program.

Scott was the recipient of the Retired NFL Players Scholarship and the Salutatorian in the Class of 2019. He had a grade point average of 4.36 along with an ACT score of 34.

Scott also was the winner of the Cherokee Award given out at graduation and has been accepted into the University of Tennessee's Honors and Scholars Program for this

coming fall.

South-Doyle's female Student-Athlete of the Year is Phoebe Deering and she too is in the Class of 2019.

Deering was on the Lady Cherokees' soccer team and earned the Offensive Player of the Year award in District 4-AA. She also was a first team All-Region 2-AA selection.

Phoebe will continue her playing career at Maryville College.

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The Doctor is in

a weekly column by
Dr. Jim Ferguson

Verbicide

As my readers know, I am a stickler for words. After all, words are the only tools beyond body language we have to communicate our thoughts and feelings. Mr. Webster advertises nearly a half million words in his on-line English dictionary, and I doubt this includes all the legalese, medical-ese and other technical terms. Interestingly, the average person's lexicon (vocabulary) is 10-50,000 words.

English is a living language where words come and go. Your grandmother might have used the word frowsy to describe a "slovenly or uncared-for appearance." Twenty-five years ago the word mouse described a scurrying rodent in your basement. Now the definition includes an electronic device which moves the cursor on your computer screen.

In grade school, once called grammar school, I learned the past tense

of the verb wake. Now "hipsters" use the slang term woke to describe someone who is "actively attentive to issues of racial and social injustice." I cringe in disgust when I hear such guttural and divisive verbiage.

More recently, the slang intransitive verb dox has surfaced in web commentary and is now being used and legitimized by TV commentators. To dox someone is to make public their private identity and information "as a form of punishment or revenge." This was recently done to a private user of Facebook who posted a doctored video of Nancy Pelosi. Facebook released the man's private identity and information to the media, apparently as punishment for his parody of Pelosi.

In grade school I often stood Safety Patrol watch at street intersections. Now, the term intersectionality is often heard as the rally cry of the

progressive alt-left. Mr. Webster defines intersectionality as "the complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (racism, sexism and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect, especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups." Apparently, everyone is a victim - unless you're a white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant male citizen of the United States who is actually a perpetrator of injustice.

I love figures of speech. Sometimes the best way to describe something is to compare it to something else with a simile. An example is "green as grass," which works for everyone who is not red-green color blind. Another figure of speech is the metaphor, where "a word or phrase is applied to an object or action which is not literally applicable." A brilliant example was used by historian and professor Victor Davis Hansen in his May 29, 2019 essay in American Greatness. Hansen described Trump as the Democrat Party's Moby Dick, and their hatred of the president has turned them into the delusional and destructive Captain Ahab.

It's hard to comprehend the irrational verbiage streaming from the Democrat presidential

candidates. Incidentally, it is the Democrat party not the "democratic" party. The 2016 suppression of presidential candidate Crazie Bernie by the DNC in favor of HRC proved this. Again, I'm a stickler for words.

As an American, how can I take seriously people who refuse to secure our country's borders and then shelter illegal aliens from codified law in sanctuary cities? I use both reason and emotion to make decisions. Compassion influenced me to make a half dozen mission trips to Guatemala. But logic must dictate when using the metaphorical analogy of a twenty person life raft and a hundred survivors of a shipwreck. All will perish if the life raft (USA) sinks trying to save all one hundred survivors.

Homelessness, lawlessness, drugs, disease and poor sanitation are the results of Democrat management of large cities like Pelosi's San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, Seattle and many more. The mantra of Democrat presidential candidates is to promise a cure with a basic income for everyone, free college, forgiveness of college debts and Medicare for all, including illegal aliens. I might ask, why would anyone go to school or work if you were

to be given money, lodging and food for no effort?

The Democrat candidates advocate a Green New Deal which will bankrupt our country and do nothing to deter China and India's pollution. Progressives/Democrats want to get rid of the Electoral College which gives Tennesseans a say in presidential elections. (Without the Electoral College, presidents will be elected by the most populous states of California, New York, Texas and Florida.)

Democrats even advocate pro-choice after birth, but whose choice? Certainly not the baby's. One candidate even wants to eliminate circumcision! All of this is under foolishness and pandering. These socialist philosophies are the Siren's song. As Margaret Thatcher once said of socialist utopia, it works "until you run out of other people's money."

Actually, like many people, I've quit listening to the major news media because of verbicide, the deliberate distortion of words. We even have a term for this distortion, Fake News. We used to be able to read newspapers like the New York Times or listen to Walter Cronkite and receive news of the day's events. At least I

thought so, but maybe I've been deceived all along. Actually, the first recorded example of fake news was from 1300 BC when Ramses the Great instructed his chroniclers to tell the Egyptian people that his army vanquished the enemy, when, in fact, they did not.

No longer do we have news; we have political spin and commentary. As a free market guy, I'm somewhat ashamed to admit that I object to CNN on airport televisions, even though they purchase the right to project their bilge. But is my liberal intolerance of their illiberal intolerance in some way enabling their continued existence? And CNN has the cable "news" market cornered in the rest of the world. It's no wonder that Trump and America are held in such low esteem.

I have found that it is impossible to get the "unvarnished truth" as Cas Walker once proclaimed in his newspaper the Watchdog. I recommend that you seek the truth widely and apply reason to anything that you hear. I may have become a skeptic, but perhaps I have just lived long enough to be less gullible.

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

New names

It's for sure that I'm too old to deal with high school students. Nothing could make me go back to work a five-day week teaching them; about all I can take is three days of substituting. By the end of the third day, I'm exhausted, and my patience has long been tried to the point of insanity.

Just the other day, my temper was tested. The class had begun, and things were going along well. Students had their assignments and were working. One boy moved,



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and when I asked where he was going, the class told me that they were allowed to work in pairs. I said "okay," but added that the first bit of goofing off or the first time I saw a phone out that I would send the boy back to his original seat.

All worked well...for about fifteen minutes. Then I looked around the room to discover this same student had his head ducked and his eyes intently looking at something. Yes, he had his phone out. He also had

the hood of his jacket up to conceal the ear buds he was wearing.

I quietly walked to his table and called his attention. He looked up and I instructed him to return to his original seat. That's when he exploded. In answer to his question "why," I reminded him of the conditions for his sitting with his friend.

Let's just say the child didn't take kindly to my moving him. He began to mumble under his breath, and when I asked him what he said, the boy mumbled louder a string of profanities. Jumbled in there some place was his announcing that I was a "punk-a** n****r." In all

my 60+ years, no one has ever used those words to describe me. To say an old white man with thinning gray hair was shocked is to understate the situation.

He next called me a term that I found curiously used since the term refers to a female dog. I did, however, understand the intent of the slur, looked at him, and answered, "but I'm not your 'b.....'" Then I instructed him to go to the office. To his credit, the boy did so and was sitting there when I called to check.

Within five minutes, a girl walked to the desk. She asked to leave class. When I asked what the reason was, she said she wanted to go let in a friend

of hers who was locked outside the building. I sat stunned for a couple of seconds. Too many times this year we'd already heard of violence and carnage in public schools, and this girl wanted me to dismiss her to let someone in locked doors. The look on my face must have answered her question, but I told her there was no way a person can release a student so that she can open a locked door for anyone. I added that the person would need to get into the building the regular way...through the front door.

See why I no longer am able to work as a teacher? During those earlier years,

I'd have gone ballistic on the boy who cursed me. I would have personally escorted him to the office to make sure he arrived. No student would have opened a door for another individual because students didn't leave during class time.

I'm a relic who just doesn't fit. However, this subbing job has opened my eyes to the differences in public education, and I don't much like them. Additionally, my job has given me the opportunity to be learn new names for myself. I suppose none of us is ever too old to learn.



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