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Opposition growing to 'grading' neighborhoods

By Mike Steely
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Several neighborhood leaders are upset with the City of Knoxville's Office of Neighborhoods over a proposal to evaluate neighborhood organizations and also require a lot of paperwork that would include information on membership, leadership, etc.

The idea that the city would grade neighborhood groups at different levels, such as Start Up, Informal, Organized, Proactive, Outstanding or Exemplary doesn't set well with some people, even those who are members of the most active neighborhood organizations.

"It is especially important to know if a group follows best practices and represents the citizens of the neighborhood," the Office of Neighborhoods published in its June 18th newsletter. The city department maintains a list of recognized neighborhoods and that list may be seen on their website.

The question of which neighborhoods groups are recognized by the city came up in April when the Office of Neighborhoods failed to add an organization to their published list of such groups. The group was added back to the list and the Office of Neighborhoods and the Neighborhood Advisory Council began looking into various ways to certify neighborhoods.

"The most unsettling thing is that the city bureaucracy could bury volunteer groups with information requests and all that information is then public record and available to developer's lawyers to peruse," said Lisa Starbuck of the Northeast Knoxville Preservation Association.

Starbuck asked, "Is this effort to get control of neighborhood groups connected to potential fallout from the Recode process?"

"It appears as the move to decide who is a legitimate leader of a neighborhood group is

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Inaugural Class of 2019: 1 - Russ Rutherford, 2 - Dean Craig, 3 - Cameron Sharp, 4 - Tammy Echolz Akard, 5 - James Ralph "Red" McMillan, 6 - Chris Vandergriff, 7 - Jason Julian, 8 - Randy Hall, 9 - Missy Rutherford, 10 - Donnie Cooper, 11 - Ashley Cox, 12 - Stephanie Humphrey Sayne.

A dandy dozen travel Halls High's Road to Fame

By Steve Williams

No telling how many thousands of boys and girls have participated in athletics at Halls High School since it was founded in 1916.

But there are 12 being announced today as the school's very best of all time. They comprise the inaugural class of the "Halls High School Athletics

— Road to Fame."

Drum roll, please ... or maybe it would be more appropriate to boot your horn, since this new sports pantheon chose to be called a Road to Fame instead of Hall of Fame like most others. And with one of the area's oldest high schools being in Halls Crossroads, naming it Road to Fame was a natural fit, too.

So without further ado, in alphabetical order, the inductees are (with their main sport in parentheses): Tammy Echolz Akard (volleyball), Donnie Cooper (golf), Ashley Cox (girls basketball), Dean Craig (baseball), Randy Hall (football), Jason Julian (football), James Ralph "Red" McMillan (football), Missy Rutherford (track), Russ

Rutherford (baseball), Stephanie Humphrey Sayne (softball), Cameron Sharp (boys basketball) and Chris Vandergriff (wrestling).

"They are a cross section and a wonderful representation of the athletes that have performed at Halls down through the years," said Jerry Julian, the

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Inskip Elementary ribbon cut on expansion

Lynn Jacobsen, Inskip Elementary principal, addresses a large gathering of elected officials, teachers, staff, parents and students during the ribbon cutting Thursday. She spoke about all the new classrooms and features of the 29,000 square foot expansion, which replaces portable classrooms that were used for many years. There's also increased parking, a new playground, and separate bus and car entrances.

Photo by Mike Steely.



By Mike Steely
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The ribbon cutting of the expanded Inskip Elementary School Thursday celebrated the disappearance of the temporary classrooms and the addition of eleven new classrooms plus a new library, media room, music and art room. Add to that a renovated playground and a new place for school bus parking and the school is ready for first day of school this week.

The history of a school in the

Inskip neighborhood goes back to 1912 when two schools, Tindall and Woodlawn, were consolidated and the new school then included grades 1 thru 10. Today more than 500 students attend K-5 grades and the school is among the most diverse in the county. Some 57 percent of the students are African American and a large number are Hispanic.

Many notable people have attended Inskip over the years including HonorAir founder and

Knoxville mayoral candidate Eddie Mannis.

"My time at Inskip will always be one of the most memorable of my life," Mannis said, adding, "Two things stick out from my childhood and I am still intrigued by them today. The sloped hallways were always really cool as a child. It was the first thing you see as you walked in the front door. My favorite is the large circle hand washing fountain right outside the cafeteria."

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