

Standard Knitting Mills may be purchased

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
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It is possible that the largest eyesore in Knoxville is being sold and, if so, what do the buyers plan to do with it? Deputy Mayor Bill Lyons announced last week that Standard Kitting Mill,

which has stood abandoned for many years on Washington Avenue, may sell to WRS Inc. from SKM Holdings, which bought the property for \$55,000 in 2012. WRS Inc. is an investment company located in South Carolina and has developed projects like

Underground Atlanta and Mayberry Mall in Mt. Airey, N.C. The company owns mixed use and shopping centers in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. On Wednesday C3 Studio of Knoxville released the following statement: "The building

will be re-purposed as a community center with and emphasis of 'Live, Work, Play.' The space is planned for art space, tech lab, concert hall, event space, and more. This building is the anchor to redevelopment in the Magnolia corridor." Councilwoman Gwen

McKenzie, who represents that area of East Knoxville, told The Focus that it "is an ideal location for redevelopment." "Standard Knitting was once a thriving business and I'm very excited to see it become an asset again in the community. I hope the plans will include retail

space as well as housing. I'm looking forward to hear more about the project in the near future," McKenzie said. The old factory played a huge part in the Knoxville economy and at one point had more than 3,500 employees. It produced

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Tyree honored at World's Fair Park

By Mike Steely
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Current and former elected officials turned out Wednesday to honor former Mayor Randy Tyree with the dedication of part of the World's Fair Park in his honor and the unveiling of a marker and plaque.

Mayor Madeline Rogero recognized the officials and said that when the renovation of the Performance Lawn was completed it was obvious to her that it should be named for Tyree. The \$2.5 million renovated lawn will host events and festivals.

"In the 37 years since the

World's Fair, since Knoxville and Mayor Tyree hosted 11 million visitors, the momentum of the fair really got us moving," Rogero said. She said Tyree is a "really great role model of how a mayor should be." Gary Wade, former State Superior Court Judge who was mayor of Sevierville while Tyree was Knoxville mayor, couldn't make the dedication but spoke to the audience via cell phone. He teased his old friend and noted that Tyree's time as mayor had an impact on Sevier County, boosting tourism there, and how Tyree

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PHOTO BY MIKE STEELY.

Knoxville Mayor Madeline Rogero and former Mayor Randy Tyree share a hug at the new Randy Tyree Performance Lawn marker. Rogero praised Tyree's effort to bring the 1982 World's Fair and Tyree spoke of the boost the fair gave the city, with benefits existing yet today.

Morning Pointe residents' spirits rise with Oak Grove student visit

By Amy Box Fellhoelter

Besides the many activities of passing out candy to trick-or-treaters for Halloween, eating Thanksgiving dinner with family members, and an upcoming "Breakfast with Santa" event, the residents of Morning Pointe Assisted Living & Memory Care also enjoyed "Game Night" with local students from Oak Grove Homeschool Cooperative. Approximately fourteen residents from the assisted living and Alzheimer's memory care community came together to play games such as Quirkle, Sorry!, and Yahtzee either working together on teams or as opponents. Students from pre-kindergarten to second grades look forward to seeing

their "grand friends" at the monthly event. "It's rewarding on both sides. The same kids come each month and are building relationships with the same residents," explained Oak Grove parent Hona Stovall. As a mother of four children, she coordinates the school students to visit Morning Pointe of Knoxville on Westland Drive

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Residents of Morning Pointe Assisted Living and Memory Care and students of Oak Grove Homeschool Cooperative came together to build friendships while playing games at the Westland Drive location in November.



Science center, homeless shelter and business park on city agenda

By Mike Steely
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The current city council has a plateful of things to do before the new council takes office on December 21. Two more meetings are left for four members: Vice Mayor Finbarr Saunders, George Wallace, Marshall Stair and Mark Campen. Coming up in Tuesday's meeting are final readings on amending the operating budget and appointing Dennis Owens to the pension board and Tiara-Lady Wilson to the

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Songwriters to perform free Christmas Concert Dec. 3 at Fountain City Library

Members of the Knoxville Songwriters Association will perform a free Christmas concert from 5:30-7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 3, at the Fountain City Library, 5300 Stanton Road.

KSA President Edna Riddick said the concert will feature original songs of the season as well as familiar tunes and sing-along holiday favorites. "In addition to

performing, writers will tell the stories behind the songs they present," Riddick said. "Because we hold our weekly meetings in the Fountain City Library, we're especially glad to share these songs as a gift to the library staff and the community that hosts our group," she said. KSA is East Tennessee's largest and most inclusive songwriting organization. Founded in 1983, the

group helps area songwriters develop their musical talents and broaden their understanding of the music business. KSA holds a jam session at 5 p.m. on Tuesdays in the Library's community room, followed by a meeting from 6 to 8 p.m. that includes writing lessons and song critiques. After a holiday break following its December 17 Christmas party, the group will resume its weekly meeting schedule at the library on Jan. 7, 2020. KSA's annual membership dues are \$30 (\$15 for writers under 21 years of age). Prospective members are welcome to attend up to two meetings at no cost to jam, have a song critiqued, and get to know KSA members.



Christmas Concert Past—Performers at the 2018 Knoxville Songwriters Christmas Concert at the Fountain City Library included (from left) Stephen Ferguson Sr., Karen Bowles, Tammie Dischner, KSA Past President Bobby Johnston and Betty Williams.

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Job titles in a law firm

As my wife often tells me, lawyers use funny words and phrases that are unnecessary, just to make themselves seem important. Well, sometimes I agree with her. Even some of the job titles we give out for those people



By Jedidiah McKeehan
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what the difference is between an attorney and a lawyer. The answer is, nothing. These are interchangeable terms. Lawyers will put “Esq.” behind their names on documents they draft. Again, esquire is an interchangeable word for an attorney or lawyer. Why are there different names for the same thing? I have no idea.

Paralegal – A paralegal has some amount of legal training, but is not a lawyer. They can do initial drafts of documents that will be filed with the court before they are reviewed and signed by a lawyer. A paralegal is a different position from a secretary or assistant as they will generally have greater training and abilities than an assistant. If a lawyer is busy enough, they may have both a paralegal and an assistant working for them

Law Clerk – This bugs me. A law clerk is the lawyer

term for “intern.” When someone has started law school and they are working for a lawyer, they are called a law clerk instead of an intern. Again, I am not sure how this became a thing. When I am introducing my law clerks to clients, I typically just call them my interns because most people understand what an intern is, and most will not be familiar with what the title of law clerk.

Runner – I am not sure if any other professions employ runners, but none

come to mind right away. Lawyers are often filing documents at the courthouse and sending documents to other lawyer’s offices. Delivering those documents is the job of a runner. This is usually a part-time position. In the afternoon, a retired individual, or perhaps a college or high school student, may come to the office, pick up what needs to be filed and delivered, and do just that. The job of a runner can also get rolled into another position, or if it a small law firm, the lawyer may do his

own filing and delivering of documents.

Those are some of the legal jobs at a prototypical law firm with unique or confusing titles.

Jedidiah McKeehan 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.

Standard Knitting Mills may be purchased

Cont. from page 1

Heatknit brand undergarments and was part of 13 knitting mills in the city. Founded in 1901 it became the largest employer and thrived until the 1980s when Asian factories began to supply the U.S. market.

It was sold in 1988 but closed a year later. More recently SKM bought it with no announced plans for development.

“At this point our understanding is that WRS is in the final stages of closing on a purchase of Standard Knitting Mill property,” Lyons told The Focus, adding, “They plan on developing the property for mixed use.”

“The City is supportive of their development, which will involve participation in infrastructure and support for an application for tax abatement,” he said.

“Knox Heritage is certainly excited by this news. For a long time, our organization has encouraged the redevelopment of the mill. We have envisioned a mixed-use development that combines office, retail, restaurant, and

residential activities as the perfect complement to the renaissance already underway in the surrounding historic neighborhoods,” said Todd Morgan, executive director of Knox Heritage.

“Knox Heritage has completed a National Register nomination for the site which has already been deemed eligible by the Tennessee Historical Commission. If all goes well, it could earn that designation sometime next year. National Register designation would open the door for using rehabilitation tax credits to finance a project,” he said.

Commissioner Evelyn Gill told The Focus “We are excited about the potential development of this property. This investment is a catalyst for changing the Park City community and city.”

“This property will promote economic development, enhance property value, promote entrepreneurship and add value to the community’s quality of life,” she said.

Mayor Randy Tyree remembers 1982 World’s Fair

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
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Former Knoxville Mayor Randy Tyree was honored Wednesday when the city named the Performance Lawn at the World’s Fair Park in his honor. Tyree took a few minutes to talk with The Focus and recalled what an effort it took to bring the fair to Knoxville and about his life since then.

“It took seven years to get the fair to Knoxville,” he said, giving much of the

credit to former Mayor Kyle Testerman and Jim Haslam and Jake Butcher’s work on a feasibility study.

“That was the first olive out of the bottle,” Tyree said, adding, “When I took office it got to be an issue. The original date had been set at 1980 as an exhibition, but that was too short a timeline. We moved it to May 1, 1982, and got into a different category, as a World’s Fair.”

“We had many challenges like fixing malfunction junction, getting

the country’s permission, etc. But back then there was unity in Washington between Democrats and Republicans and they recognized the importance to our community,” Tyree said. He added that the city didn’t suffer the serious recession that hit the rest of the county in 1981 because of the momentum created by the fair.

“It saved our bitty,” he said, adding that momentum protected the city “from going into a tail spin.”

Tyree has one daughter,

three sons, and one grandchild. He volunteers here and there and is proud to be one of the founders of the East Tennessee Veterans Memorial Association, originally formed under Governor Phillip Bredesen.

“I make the rounds politically, stay active in the Democrat Party and, being blessed with good health, have many community interests,” he said.

Asked what his favorite meal is Tyree said “country

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Science center, homeless shelter and business park on city agenda

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Public Stakeholders Advisory Committee.

Possibly the most important and anticipated vote will involve a resolution to sell property above the Civic Auditorium to the Clayton Family Foundation for development of a “world class” science, education and learning museum.

The council will also be asked to put an additional \$126,000 into the renovation and retrofitting of the former Salvation Army store at 409 Broadway

to become an overnight low-barrier shelter for the homeless. It brings the entire amount committed by the city to \$371,000.

More than \$4.2 million may be allotted in an agreement with the Community Development Corporation for improvements at Austin Homes, along Summit Hill Drive, Harriet Tubman and Bell Streets as part of the Austin Homes Master Plan.

Farmer Morgan LLC may be hired for \$27,258 for an analysis of Fair Housing Choice and Bruce Goff may

be allowed to buy property at 1127 Colonial Avenue for \$34,000 as part of the Homemaker Program.

MBI may be hired to do a design service for Loraine Street Heavy Shop and the Lakeshore Storage Building roofs for \$30,375. Just over \$5.4 million may be approved in an agreement with Jones Brothers Contractors LLC for the I-275 Business Park Access Improvements Construction Project.

Property at 528 Lamar Street may be transferred

to Helen Ross McNabb Center and three surplus police K9 unit vehicles and two surplus fire department vehicles may be sold to McMinn County.

The council may also approve \$34,360 in community grants for The Muses to pay for expenses and services. A grant of \$250,000 may also go to the Metro Drug Coalition.

The name of part of Stonewall Street between New York and Ohio Avenue may be renamed in honor of Gloria Garner.



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Publisher's Position Obama's Words of Wisdom



By Steve Hunley,
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Who would have thought I would agree with every single word spoken by former president Barack Obama? Certainly not me, but yet I did. Former president Obama, speaking at a symposium at his foundation in Chicago, basically told the “politically woke” to get over it.

For those readers as old as I am, “woke” refers to a particular awareness of social and racial issues. Again, for readers of a certain age, “cancel culture” is basically ostracizing someone from social and professional circles. The New York Times spoofed cancel culture by showing a

woman in the Middle Ages being herded by a mob to a gallows to be “cancelled” by hanging. The video showed the crowd demanding a properly abject apology to save one from hanging. The cancel culture is also referred to as the “call-out culture” by some. It allows some superior folks to identify those who have committed some offense against a particular community by calling them out for their sins. Some believe the origins of the call-out culture came about on college campuses where students began insisting words were a form of violence, along with ideas or people espousing contrary views. This caused the need for “safe spaces” for college students.

Obama spoke directly to those young progressives who consider themselves properly and perfectly “woke.” Speaking in terms blunt enough for even the slowest amongst them to understand, Obama said these folks were too ideologically rigid and downright judgmental. The former president said, “This idea

of purity and you’re never compromised and you’re politically woke and all that stuff, you should get over that quickly.” Obama pointed out the reality of the world as it is for the young wide awake wokesters. “The world is messy. There are ambiguities. People who do really good stuff have flaws. People who you are fighting may love their kids and share certain things with you.”

The former president also issued what amounts to a warning. After having visited college campuses with his daughter Malia, Obama said he had noticed a disturbing trend. That same trend Obama described as a “danger” which he believed has been “accelerated by social media.”

Obama said it was readily apparent too many young people think the way to bring about change “is to be as judgmental about other people as possible, and that’s enough.”

Former president Obama gave an example, “If I tweet or hashtag about how you didn’t do something right or used the wrong verb,

then I can sit back and feel pretty good about myself, because, man, you see how woke I was?” Obama observed attacking some poor soul for the mistake or poor choice of words was giving the attackers a sense of self-satisfaction. The former president said public shaming is not the equivalent of activism.

“That’s not activism. That’s not bringing about change. If all you’re doing is casting stones, you’re probably not going to get that far. That’s easy to do.”

It seems to me those folks calling out others, insisting the offender be banished from social circles, fired from their jobs and the like, must consider themselves perfect. “Ye who is without sin cast the first stone” and the rocks have been flying now for some time. Certainly long enough for a former president to call out those who delight in calling out others.

The desire to call out these people and the venom oftentimes behind the insistence for “justice” is all too often a barely disguised mob mentality of

angry villagers, replete with torches and pitchforks and I would remind you nothing good ever came out of a large group of disorderly and mad people who have largely lost their collective minds.

Barack Obama did the country a service by bringing this to the attention of fellow Americans because, after all, just what is the point of the call-out cancel culture? What exactly does repeated, oftentimes incredibly harsh, denunciation serve? Exiling people or consigning them to the seventh level of a proverbial Hell for the crime of disagreeing with you is a scary thing. Every totalitarian regime on earth has punished those who did not fall into line or agree with the ideals of that particular regime. Too many of these young people who derive pleasure and self-satisfaction from piling on and calling out no longer believe in free speech; they don’t believe people of an opposing opinion ought to be allowed to state it. The piling on by digital mobs is all too reminiscent of

lynchings or public murders.

People are called “Nazis” constantly now, largely by people too young and ignorant to understand just how terrible those folks really were. Yet Nazis would be the first to agree that opposing opinions and ideas different from theirs should be stamped out or eliminated. The worst excesses and brutalities known to mankind were birthed in that belief.

Barack Obama deserves the thanks of every American who believes in the healing touch of forgiveness and love. Former President Obama deserves the thanks of those Americans who still believe in free speech for all. President Obama deserves the thanks of every person who believes in civility. As we have observed Thanksgiving, I can say I am truly thankful for what Barack Obama had to say and hope we, as a society, take it to heart.

Morning Pointe residents’ spirits rise with student visit

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and National Healthcare Corporation in Farragut. Stovall was a former nursing home activities director, and is “super, super passionate” about the program because she witnessed first-hand how visitors positively impacted the demeanor of the residents. Another activity to involve residents this holiday season is the Senior Angel Tree. The tree, made by Reed Ellis, husband of internal community relations director Lisa Ellis,

gives residents the chance to spread some extra cheer by helping others through buying gifts. Items collected will support the Office on Aging for the Senior Companion Program. Senior companions serve homebound elderly individuals who need assistance with small tasks such as cooking, housekeeping, or personal care, and more importantly, they provide friendship. Since companions receive a small stipend for their service, the tree program allows for them to receive a gift of appreciation at Christmas. Alongside the Powell

Morning Pointe location, the staff hopes to collect enough items to make 200 gift bags.

“I took some angels off the tree and they were ten packages of peanut butter crackers, and ten lip balms. I just got them and put them in a Christmas bag and took them to the front desk,” said resident Martha Armstrong. “Mine was soap,” said resident Mary Witt.

Residents are not the

only ones taking angels. Guests, staff, family members of residents, and professional partners have been supporting the cause as well. To become involved, collect a senior angel off of the tree and bring in the gift items before Dec. 5.

“Through our outreach programs our seniors get to give back to our community through sharing their life stories, their challenges, their abilities to overcome obstacles. Benefits to the

students are a wealth of knowledge from the stories shared and their wisdom being passed down to their generation from our seniors. Our seniors can benefit by overcoming loneliness, learning new skills,

laughter through games and conversations with the students. Both groups make memories and friendships that will pass the age of time,” said Morning Pointe Executive Director Kristy Ritch.

For more information about Morning Pointe, visit morningpointe.com. To learn more about the Oak Grove Homeschool Cooperative, check out oakgrovecoop.net.



From left to right, resident Martha Armstrong, Morning Pointe Internal Community Relations Director Lisa Ellis, and resident Mary Witt appeared beside the Senior Angel Tree which supports the Senior Companion Program with gifts for the holidays.

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Mayor Randy Tyree remembers 1982 World's Fair

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cooking“ without hesitation. “I’m pretty good at it, like pork loin, country beans and cornbread,” he explained. “When I dine out it’s often at Bonefish Grill or Chesapeake’s.

Asked how he’d like to be remembered he said “I don’t think about it, but in a nutshell, as a community activist that was granted the opportunity to make a difference in a lot

of people’s lives.”

“The World’s Fair helped us get our act together. It was a defining moment that keeps on giving to this day,” Tyree said.

He said that he has few regrets and mentioned he probably should not have gotten into the boxing ring with Big John Tate. He also said he probably would not have entered the 1982 race for governor.

Tyree said he’s proud of the values he learned on a

farm as a youth and urged anyone interested in public service to get involved. He said his biggest blessing is being born in a nation where anything is possible.

Randy Tyree and his family gather at the new marker at the World’s Fair lawn. Tyree spoke with The Knoxville Focus about his eight years as mayor and effort it took to bring the fair to our city. Photo by Mike Steely.



Area Parades

WIVK Christmas Parade
Friday, December 6, 2019
7:00 p.m.

Everyone’s favorite parade, the WIVK Christmas Parade, is this Friday! Bands, dancers, lighted floats, characters and Santa Claus parade down Gay Street and brings fun holiday spirit to all! Parade will start on Church Avenue near the Coliseum, then turn right onto Gay Street and will disband at Gay St & Magnolia.

Karns Christmas Parade
Saturday, December 7, 2019
9:00 a.m.

The Karns Christmas Parade is coming! On Saturday, Dec. 7, participants will line up starting at 9 a.m. in the Ingles parking lot. Prizes are given for the best floats in several categories. The parade will proceed west on Oak Ridge Highway and end at Karns Elementary School where the Christmas in Karns event will start after the parade ends. At this event, there will be holiday vendors, children’s crafts, and pictures with Santa. Oak Ridge Highway will be shut down shortly before the parade begins and will re-open shortly after the parade is completely over. The road is typically closed for about an hour, so plan ahead if this road closure will impact your plans! For more information, contact Cassie Kiestler at (865) 382-8846.

Powell Lions Club Christmas Parade
Saturday, December 7, 2019
5:00 p.m.

The parade will step off at 5:00 p.m. and proceed from Powell Middle School parking area to Powell High parking area behind the school.

26th Annual Seymour Chamber of Commerce Christmas Parade
Saturday, December 14, 2019
3:00 p.m.

Charles and Donna Temple will be the Grand Marshals of the 2019 Seymour Christmas Parade on Saturday, December 14. “Tennessee Christmas” will start at Valley Grove at 3 p.m. and end at Kroger.

Halls Community Christmas Parade
Saturday, December 14, 2019
6:00 p.m.

Sponsored by the Halls Business and Professionals Association, the 2019 Halls Community Christmas Parade is happening Saturday, December 14 at 6:00 p.m. The parade leaves Halls High School and travels south on Maynardville Highway to Crippen Road. Family, Floats and a whole lot of Fun to kick off the Christmas Season!

Tyree honored at World's Fair Park

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was a role model for him.

“Because of the World’s Fair, dramatic economic impact took place,” he said, adding that Tyree is a “wonderful ambassador” for the city of Knoxville.

Sixth District Councilwoman Gwen McKenzie, the first African-American woman elected to Knoxville City Council, thanked Tyree for his leadership and his friendship with her family.

“Randy Tyree has been like family,” she said. She explained that her father moved to Knoxville to open the Urban League during turbulent racial times and her father and Tyree became “like brothers.”

“Together they both worked to bring racial healing to Knoxville,” she

said, adding that when her father passed away in a traffic accident people like Tyree embraced her family.

“They took us under their wings and let us know that Knoxville was still home to us,” McKenzie said. She said that Tyree has known her since she was a little girl and hopes he is proud of her accomplishments.

Mayor Rogero invited the Tyree family to help unveil the tall marker and plaque and, following that, Tyree spoke.

He was obviously honored by the event and spoke to the well-wishers. He read a humorous note from former city council members and said the naming of the Performance Lawn in his honor was “extremely gratifying.”

Speaking despite his laryngitis, Tyree thanked the many people who helped him prepare and present the 1982 World’s Fair. Ever the politician, he noted that 2020 is an election year and that the city now has seven women on the upcoming city council and the second woman that will serve as mayor.

“I found something why women are so successful in politics,” he said, quoting the first woman mayor in Canada. “Whatever women do they must do twice as well as men to be thought half as good. Luckily this is not difficult.”

“The World’s Fair was a gift that kept on giving and will continue to give. Thank you for this honor and thank you for attending,” he said.



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For information on run schedules for Fun Run for Beer (above) and other area running groups, please visit 865running.com

Fun Run for Beer among Knox area’s many running groups

By Bill Howard
(Disclaimer: the author of this story is an active member of the running group highlighted.)

Bruce Fox is 75, owns his own business, and is soon to retire. Gary Gray is 52 and works in the retail meat industry. Jordan Bryant is 32 and works in health care. These three individuals might otherwise have little reason to cross social paths, but in fact they regularly do. And the reason

is because all are dedicated runners, and are among 25 or so members – some regular, some not - of one of the many running groups in the Knoxville area.

According to the website 865running.com, there are dozens of such groups in Knoxville and the surrounding area, and there’s a place in them for any runner of any background. The parameters of all the groups vary widely.

Some have official names, some don’t. Some meet once a

week, some more often. Some run maybe three to four miles when they get together; some run 10 miles or more. For all, the workout is obviously important, but the social aspect is equally so. Rare is the group run that isn’t followed by cold beers and camaraderie. Parties and various other get-togethers among members are common.

Fox, Gray, Bryant (and this scribe) are all regular participants, in a running group that meets

every Tuesday and Thursday in the Farragut area. Fun Run for Beer is the group’s name, and while running and fitness are its foundations, the social bonds among the members, as the name implies, are equally important.

“The group helps me get motivated to run,” said Fox, who, by his estimate, has run some 505 road and trail races. “It’s too easy to sit home and say ‘maybe next time.’”

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Jim Farmer is a writer and author of several books. He’s a member of the Authors Guild and often attends the Writer’s Workshop at the O’Connor Senior Center. He’s known for his folksy humor and vivid memories. He wrote this account for The Knoxville Focus.

How True It Was: Memories of Regas and Dave Thomas of Wendy’s

By Jim Farmer

I was 18 years old when I graduated high school. For three previous summers I had worked the counter at Regas, the popular restaurant in downtown Knoxville on the corner of Gay Street and Magnolia Avenue.

Regas was founded in 1919 by two Greek brothers, Frank and George Regas. Frank had three children, Bill, George and Acima, known as “Frankie.” She married a prominent Knoxville businessman.

George became a minister and Bill became involved with the restaurant until it closed in 2013.

You could say I grew up with the Regas children because our backyards were almost joined. That was a long time ago back when we had neighborhoods.

The senior Frank Regas, or Mr. Frank as he was called, installed a badminton court with lights, so we played at night. His children were important to him and so were their friends.

Bill and I worked together on the night shift from 8:30 p.m. until 6:30 a.m. seven days a week. Occasionally we would go to the Dale Avenue 24-Hour produce market and buy fresh produce, one reason that Regas remained a success for almost half a century.

Regas was host to local, state, national and international politicians, movie stars, sports figures, opera stars, famous music makers and anyone else looking for a friendly atmosphere and a good meal. I had the privilege of meeting many of them.

One night I met a new employee. His name was Dave and he quickly became part of the crew.

Continue on page 2

Many Preservation Honors awarded

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
steelym@knoxfocus.com

Each year Knox Heritage and the East Tennessee Preservation Alliance gathers to recognize people, projects and organizations that work to preserve our region’s historic heritage. The honors were presented recently at the Bijou Theater as members and guests came together.

Honors went to various counties where efforts were made to preserve, restore, or highlight efforts to keep our past moving into our future.

Knoxville Mayor Madeline Rogero was

honored with the Partner in Preservation Award for the creation of the city’s Preservation Fund. She, in turn, honored Ignite Solutions LLC for the restoration of the Keeton Jewelers Building in the Burlington neighborhood. That East Knoxville neighborhood is getting lots of attention as restoration of the business hub there is ongoing.

The town of Farragut’s restoration of the Campbell Station Inn was honored by Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs. The town bought the property in 2013 and it became a

centerpiece of a new park.

The restoration of the General John T. Wilder House at 2027 Riverside Drive received the Spirit of Kristopher Award. Dianne and Peter Osicky were presented the award, who brought the 1894 home back to life.

Honored as the Volunteer of the Year was Kyle Lang who served on the Knox Heritage Special Events Committee.

Elizabeth Sims and Leslie Ackerson, of WBIR TV, were presented the Media Award for that station’s Abandoned Places digital series, which

features places and buildings that were left behind in our area.

The Adaptive Reuse Award went to Smee & Busby Architects for the renovation of the 1930 Marble City United Methodist Church on Sutherland Avenue. Millie and Elder Brown were awarded the Stewardship Award for Craiglen, a historic home they bought in 2018. The home was designed by Charles Barber, one of Knoxville’s noted architects.

Steve Cotham was presented the Preservation Service Award for his

time as a Historic Zoning Commissioner, serving more than 10 years.

Awards also went to Reagan Design and Construction for restoring a 1905 Victorian cottage; the Kingston Pike-Sequoia Hills Association for restoring the Sunhouse Fountain and Kathy Hayden Horn for restoring a Spanish-eclectic house in Lindbergh Forest.

Other awards and recognitions went to Nathan and Jessica Brewton-Turnbough, Johnson Architecture and the Christman Company.

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A Glimpse of Heaven

At first glance, there seemed to be a divine aura about it. The country road looked like it was leading straight up into the heavens. The mountains, barely visible above the fog, added to the unusual setting. I looked



By Ralphine Major
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from the mouth of a child. The angels, God’s messengers, caught him. I believe him. We sing about angels. We read about angels. Sometimes, we may even see angels! They are more than ornaments on a tree or figures in a church program.

Angels were an important part of that first Christmas as told in Luke 2:15 (KJV): “And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.” Even as they were a vital part of the first Christmas, angels are still a part of our lives today. A little child told us as much.

It was a follow-up to the heart-wrenching report that captivated the world a few months ago when a little boy was thrown from the balcony at a mall. Now, the five-year-old is telling that the angels caught him! How amazing! As we prepare to celebrate the birthday of the Christ Child who was sent to save the world, a real-life story emerges

If a person lives long enough, he can find himself smack dab in the middle of bunches of different folks. With a little luck, he might even build relationships and friendships with folks in those groups. From first grade to retirement, those people make meaningful impacts on our lives.

Elementary school was a scary time for lots of us, especially those children who had spent most of their early years confined to their yards with occasional trips to church. My first cousin, Brenda Balch, was in my classroom that first day, and I was glad to see a familiar face. Before long, I’d made friends with Steve Buffalo, Cathy Prater, and others. Those three were much smarter than I was, and they always sat in the advanced reading group. However, at recess, all of us were equal.

A group of grubby boys formed in our Ball Camp neighborhood. My brother Jim and I spent hours playing football and baseball in one of the yards. Among those boys were Joey Wallace, Pat Wright, Tommy Robinson, Clebert Roberts, and Steve Ritter. It seemed that part of each game was spent with a couple of boys fighting, but no one ever held a grudge too long. Regardless of the



By Joe Rector
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fits of anger, we were good buddies and stayed that way for years.

Of course, high school is where some memorable groups were formed. I was never an athlete, so, for a couple of years, my time was spent as the manager for the football team. Wayne Pearman, Carl and “Spud” Weatherspoon, Wayne Norman, Mike Hill, Mike Guinn, and Joe Kennedy were just a few of the players that became friends. Those guys were heroes back in the day as they won plenty of ball games and county championships.

During my senior year, I left football for band. Since my mother had sold my cornet to buy a better clarinet for my brother (he was a serious musician), I became a band manager. We went to football games and marching competitions. In that organizations, I made some of the best friends of my life. Ken Mills, Mark Large, Randy Allen, along with Jim, formed a close-knit group that enjoyed hours of fun, legal and illegal, during that year. Today, I still count them as close friends, even though we see each other rarely.

I made no real friends in college, other than my wife, whom I began dating my senior year. However, during the year I began my first

teaching job, I developed friendships that still are precious. Bob Shoemaker was the closest friend, but plenty of other folks were in that circle. Linda Lyle and John Gilbreath were two fellow English teachers. We ate lunch most days in the tea room where culinary arts students prepared and served food. Jim Pryor, Bobby Campbell, Jim Talley, and Robby Howard walked to the baseball field every day during lunch. There we smoked or chewed tobacco and “shot the bull.”

At Karns High School, I joined an even larger circle of friends. Terri Runger was my next-door friend for more than twenty years. Amy Jennings became like a daughter to me. Dwight Smith, Dowell Bales, Geoff Davis, Lee Henson, and a whole bunch of other guys sat in the commons area each morning. There we talked about sports and funny stories from classrooms. The major topic of discussion one day each week was the matches that aired on WWE.

Yes, this column has listed lots of names, but I’m sure I’ve omitted some important ones. The point of the whole thing is that I’ve been blessed with being a part of several groups over my life. The people in them have made my life fuller and for that I am eternally grateful. Yes, I have much to be thankful for this and each Thanksgiving.

How True It Was: Memories of Regas and Dave Thomas of Wendy’s

Cont. from page 1

Soon after I graduated I received a letter from Uncle Sam requesting my presence at Fort McPherson,

Georgia.

Bill Regas and I have been friends for many, many years. He called one day about a parcel of land

he owned. A man named Dave had inquired about building a hamburger place on the property.

Yes, it was the same Dave, Dave Thomas. I built the first two “Wendys” in Knoxville, on Kingston Pike and Clinton Highway. I was a building contractor in those days.

Being a waiter at Regas may not have been the best job I ever had but, at ages 16, 17, and 18, it gave me a perspective of the real world and the meaning of

real friends.

The original Regas building featured a long counter with stools, booth, a few tables and 24-hour service to everyone. The entire area was air conditioned and there were two separate entry doors. Between the two, on a transparent glass wall, was the following message in gold leaf: “The Best People on Earth Pass Through These Doors, Our Customers.”

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Murder On Gay Street

The Strickland Case

Pages from the Past



By Ray Hill
rayhill865@gmail.com

"I'm guilty," were the only words spoken by William "Billy" Strickland, a fresh-faced twenty-eight year old when he revisited the Knox County Court House. Strickland had been engaged in a bitter battle for custody of his four year-old son with his pretty twenty-three year-old wife, June. Six months after the case, which involved a former congressman, three of the four principals in the trial would be dead.

June Strickland had hired "Judge" John Jennings, Jr. as her attorney to fight for custody of her son. Jennings had represented Tennessee's Second Congressional district in the U. S. House of Representatives from 1939 until 1950 when he had been defeated by Howard H. Baker. Jennings had been superintendent of the Campbell County schools and a judge of the Criminal Court and retained the title for the rest of his life. John Jennings, Jr. was an excellent speaker, a raconteur of some ability, and a good lawyer. When the case began in 1955, Jennings was seventy-four years-old and successful. The former congressman owned a very nice home on Kingston Pike and operated two "farms", although he would be the first to confess he rarely went over the accounts as he didn't want to know how much money he was losing.

The loss of his seat in Congress had been a bitter blow, but Jennings gamely came home to Knoxville and resumed his law practice. The Strickland case would be the last case he tried as a lawyer. Jennings had been successful in representing Mrs. Strickland and she had been awarded custody of her son, but her husband would have the last word. As June Strickland walked to the entrance of a parking lot on South Gay Street near Main Avenue, she should have been perfectly safe. There were "hundreds" of men who were delegates to a convention of the Fraternal Order of Police which were pouring out of the Bijou Theater.

Like many young couples, Billy and June Strickland had their problems, which had been aggravated by Billy's jealousy of his wife. Billy Strickland was convinced his wife was seeing another man. There was an altercation between them on July 20, 1955 and June filed an assault warrant against her husband and left the home they shared together. During the custody hearing, June Strickland said she left their home in Wilmington, North Carolina after her husband beat her on July 20. Billy seemed contrite and asked to take their son, David, to the

coast for a fishing trip. June Strickland agreed, not knowing Billy brought the boy to the home of his sister in Knoxville.

David Strickland was described by Mrs. Nellie E. Johnson, superintendent of the Knoxville Children's Home as a "sensitive" boy with "brown curly hair, large brown eyes and dimples" and concluded the child was "cute as a button."

That was the beginning to the custody battle which ended so terribly for all concerned. Ten minutes after winning custody of her child, June Strickland lay dead in a parking lot in a pool of her own blood. Billy claimed he had waited for his wife near her parked car because he "wanted to talk to her." June was with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Jonas A. Pugh and her sister, Betty Lou, when they noticed Billy Strickland. June and Betty Lou turned to walk away when Strickland pulled out a 38-caliber gun and fired a single shot, which struck Mrs. Strickland in the head, killing her instantly.

A tearful Betty Lou Pugh said, "June didn't say a word. She slumped to the ground as soon as the shot was fired."

When Mr. and Mrs. Jonas Pugh followed the ambulance carrying June the few blocks to Baptist Hospital, Coroner Roy Hickam was there awaiting them. The Coroner sadly informed the Pugh family June's body had already been taken to Berry Funeral Home. Mrs. Pugh screamed once and began to tumble to the floor before she was caught by her husband and surviving daughter.

Several of the Fraternal Order of Police delegates, horrified, ran after Billy Strickland, who was apprehended by an Ohio detective and officers from the Knoxville Police Department. Strickland had been nonchalantly walking away from the scene of his crime and offered not the slightest resistance. Pearl R. Hollis, a forty-two year-old detective visiting from Reading, Ohio saw Billy Strickland walking away as a woman screamed, "He shot her!" Billy Strickland never altered his pace as Hollis barreled after him. Billy still held the gun in his hand.

"I called to him to stop, but he continued on, still walking," Hollis recalled. "I followed and overtook him and told him to give me the gun."

"I shot her," Billy Strickland told Pearl Hollis. "I'm not trying to run away."

Hollis admitted he worried the young man might turn and shoot him, but Billy Strickland merely handed over the gun without a word. Hollis and two



FROM THE AUTHOR'S PERSONAL COLLECTION.

Former Congressman John Jennings, Jr. The Strickland Case was the last case of John Jennings' long legal career.

Knoxville detectives escorted Billy to the Monroe Hotel, which was next door to the Bijou Theater to wait for a police cruiser to arrive. Detective R. C. Crawley asked Billy why he had killed his wife and Strickland replied because "she took my boy away from me and was running around with other men and telling lies about me."

It wasn't Billy Strickland's first scrape with the law. Evidently Billy had been something of a delinquent in his teenaged years; Strickland had been convicted on July 7, 1945 of "attempted felony and housebreaking and larceny." Billy Strickland had been sentenced to serve one year and a day and three years for the larceny with the sentences to run concurrently.

Murder had most certainly been on Billy Strickland's mind. Strickland said he had planned to kill June as early as August 2 when he and David had flown to Knoxville. Yet, he claimed he had hoped for a reconciliation with his wife. "I started toward her to talk to her," Strickland told a reporter from his jail cell. "She turned and started walking away. I lost my head."

"I feel bad about it," Billy Strickland added. "I wish it hadn't happened."

Strickland explained the trouble between he and June had erupted over a letter she had written while visiting Knoxville in June. Billy claimed he asked his wife about the letter to another man and she had insisted there was nothing "wrong" about the letter. Billy disagreed. "It was a love letter," he said.

Once home in North Carolina, Billy said he "started checking" and discovered "they had been going together for six months." Strickland said the other man "had even been to my house while I was in the hospital to have a tumor removed from my shoulder."

"I found out they had been together when I had been out fishing. I went fishing several times at night," Billy explained.

Strickland told the reporter from the Knoxville News-Sentinel he had

talked to the other man who had initially denied any relationship with June, but admitted the affair after Billy and his wife had separated.

Billy Strickland had thought his home had been a happy one before he found out about the alleged affair. June and Billy Strickland apparently were living a life that was common for most Americans during the 1950s. They had their own home, had recently bought a new car and unusual for a woman at the time, both Billy and June worked. Once separated, Billy quit his job in Wilmington and came to Knoxville where "wrote, wired or phoned" June every day. Billy tried to convince June to move to Knoxville and on August 5, she telephoned to say she was headed to Knoxville and told him to wait for her to arrive. Strickland said the "next thing I knew she had filed a habeas corpus (writ) for our son."

Strickland claimed he had been desperate to talk to his wife, but couldn't discover where she was staying in Knoxville and she refused to speak to him once they were inside the courtroom.

In the courtroom as Billy Strickland admitted his guilt and the details of his murder of June were recounted, the Pughs looked sadly at the empty chair that had been occupied by their daughter during the nine days of the custody trial.

Judge Kelly had announced his decision awarding June Strickland custody of David and before he had finished his remarks, Billy Strickland bolted from his counsel's table and was seen going down the courthouse steps. It was 10 or 15 minutes later before June Strickland left the Court House with her family. Among the remarks made by Judge John Kelly in his courtroom was the observation June had been the "victim of a progressive violent rage and unrestrained, uncontrolled, and seething and violent jealousy." Kelly mentioned testimony taken during the trial that Mrs. Strickland had been forced by her husband at gunpoint

to pen no less than three suicide notes and confess to adultery. That same day Billy beat June "unmercifully and broke her ear drum." Judge Kelly said William Strickland was a fugitive from justice as he had fled to Knoxville before facing a charge in Wilmington for having beaten his wife.

Neither of the Stricklands looked especially happy that last day of the court case and, as it turned out, of June's life. Billy contented himself with glaring at Judge John Kelly while June "looked as if the whole matter was distasteful to her."

"There is not a court in the land that wouldn't rather hear 100 damage suits than try one custody case," Judge Kelly growled. "You have to tear the heart strings from somebody when you are in no way responsible for it."

Kelly opined Billy Strickland wanted his son solely to deny his wife custody to punish her for her infidelities. Mrs. Strickland, Kelly reasoned, wanted the boy because of Billy's brutality and temper.

Captain Carl Bunch of the Homicide division said, "Strickland made up his mind to kill his wife on Aug. 6, when she came here to get the child back." Bunch said Billy Strickland had been carrying the gun "every day since the custody hearing had started." In fact, Billy had the pistol in his pocket while sitting in the courtroom. Captain Bunch added the murder of June Strickland was the first killing on Gay Street since a man had stabbed his wife to death in front of the Woolworth's store fifteen years earlier in broad daylight.

Little David Strickland had been taken to the Children's Home on Cecil Avenue where he remained during the custody fight between his parents.

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David remained unaware of his mother's murder when Judge John Kelly granted custody to his maternal grandparents. The little fellow had been "overjoyed" to see his grandparents and Aunt Betty Lou. David hugged his grandmother and began to cry softly. "Now don't cry, honey," Mrs. Pugh soothed, "grandmother is here." Apparently, Mrs. Pugh was a strong woman, as she never once lost her composure. Before leaving for his grandparents' home in Wilmington, David Strickland turned to the other children at the home, smiled "broadly and waved goodbye to his little friends and the attendants at the home."

Jonas Pugh when asked by a reporter, said he and Mrs. Pugh would be honest with David and tell the boy his mother was dead.

Sadly, within six months of the trial, the two attorneys representing the Stricklands would be dead. John Jennings would never recover from gall bladder surgery and died from complications on February 27, 1956. Andrew J. Hartman, the attorney for Billy Strickland, had been a chairman of the Knox County Republican Party and an assistant attorney general, died in a bizarre accident in his downtown law office. Hartman had been cleaning a pistol when it had discharged, struck him in the head and he died 25 hours later. William Strickland went to prison for having murdered his wife.

One can only hope David Strickland grew up to have a happier life than his parents.

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Fun Run for Beer among Knox area’s many running groups

Cont. from page 1

Said Gray: “I started running with the group because I’d much rather go to the gym and work out, but at the gym, everyone has their earbuds in, and no one talks to anyone. Two and a half years ago when I started running with the group, I didn’t have that many friends in Knoxville, and now I have quite a few.”

Mike Mann joined the group a year ago. “When I started last December, I would just run a 5k (3.1 miles) occasionally. When I first came, people would say ‘how many miles do you run a week?’ I don’t. ‘What’s your pace?’ I don’t know. I just run how I feel. So then it progressed into running more days a week, then running races. I had never run more than seven miles in my life, and now here I’m about to run my first half (marathon).”

Generally when a group meets to run, a specific route and distance have been laid out. But any runner can run wherever and however far s/he wants. Some FRB members arrive earlier than the scheduled meeting time, because they walk more than run. Starting early allows them to finish about the same time as the runners.

An indication of FRB’s close-knit bonds is a recent trip 11 members made to Mt. Airy, NC, to run in races of various distances and take in that weekend’s festival. Mt. Airy is the birthplace of Andy Griffith, and several members of the group are huge fans of The Andy Griffith Show. Three members won first in their age division, and another won third.

The Mt. Airy weekend happened to include the 57th birthday of FRB member Sharon White, who, along with her partner, Sam Thomas, 55, are the group’s nucleus. Thomas completed an Ironman Triathlon in 2014. He also is a pilot and owns his own plane, and he, White, and two others from the group traveled to Mt. Airy by air.

“The biggest thing is helping you to stay motivated,” said White, who hails from

Michigan. “Sometimes when it’s rainy or it’s 97 degrees, you really don’t feel like going out. So you all gather up and run ... misery loves company.”

After his Ironman, Thomas drifted somewhat from training. The group brought back his interest and participation. “I had been a runner but I wasn’t running much,” said Thomas. “Then Sharon told me about this group, and I came out to the group and I’ve been here since about day number one. Then Sharon started running with us, and she’s pretty much the leader. And I’ve met these people through Sharon and we’ve all been friends ever since.”

When this author performed in “The Man from Earth” at Theater Knoxville Downtown in May, several FRB members were in the front row on opening night. One was Connie McCormick, 60, an accounts payable manager who’s been running for 23 years. “It’s the social events we do outside of running,” said the Minnesota native. “The pool parties, your plays, going to concerts... running isn’t our only focal point.”

White and Thomas host the pool parties McCormick referenced at their home in Lenoir City in the summer, and in January this year hosted the first annual Polar Plunge. Participants (author included) jumped into the pool’s frigid waters and swam from one end to the other. A few minutes in the hot tub was followed by a party.

Sometimes the friendships formed go way beyond a run, a beer, or a party. Phil Barber was an FRB mainstay (and from whom this author found out about the group). A regular marathoner, Barber shocked the group in May this year by announcing on its Facebook page he had Stage 4 pancreatic cancer.

Unable to work, he fell on hard times and was approaching destitution. White and Thomas took him into their home and provided not only daily care, but transportation and help navigating his medical treatments and hospice care.

When Barber, who’d been active in many running groups around town, died on June 24, the memorial and party that followed four days later were attended by dozens of Knoxville runners, along with family and friends. Tears, tributes and funny memories abounded.

Amy Scott, 48, recently earned her doctorate in Psychology. For the last eight months she’s been an FRB stalwart. “I talked to a couple members of the group and they said ‘we’re all different levels, we’re all encouraging,’” she said. “Even though my times are way slower than everybody else’s, everyone is like ‘that’s

great, that’s a great pacing you have.’ I was just really blown away with the acceptance of the group. It just blew me away the generosity the running community had when he (Barber) got diagnosed ... the generosity Sam and Sharon had in taking him in.”

Barber, along with Christina Adkins, who runs with various groups throughout the area, started 865running.com.

“The 865running website started because of Phil,” said 35-year-old Adkins, a teacher in Loudon. “I wanted to get a list for every day of the week. All the social runs before, it was all

word of mouth. So I talked to all the runners because I used to go to all the runs with Phil, and I would ask them ‘what runs are you a part of...what days of the week...what times do they start... how many people are a part of it’ ... so I wrote all those down on a Google doc. And when Phil would find a new run, he would say ‘hey, add this to the schedule.’ And then I created a blog with a running schedule.”

All of that evolved into the 865running.com website. The site coordinates events and connects the thousands of Knox-area runners.

While acceptance of

different running abilities is the norm, FRB, like most any group, has its share of competition and repartee. But it’s always in good fun.

“This group is so diverse” said White. “There are walkers, there are couch-to-5k, all the way up to an Ironman. and everything in between. People have their own agendas here. Never would we try to outrun each other.” The obvious sarcasm of this last comment brought laughter all around, as the group sipped beers recently after a run at Admiral Pub in Farragut.

“Sharon always says she’s gonna beat me, but all she sees

is my rear end,” said the ever-wisecracking Thomas, as the group broke out laughing. Said Mann: “Several times I wanted to stop, and I looked back, people were coming, so I kept going.” Added McCormick, about Barber: “when Phil had to stop at a stop light, and people would catch up to him, he hated that.”

For this Focus scribe, finding FRB at 58 two and a half years ago has been a Godsend. The group not only provides motivation to run, but various members have likely become long-term friends. One can’t ask for much more than that.

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Many Preservation Honors awarded

Cont. from page 1

Dewey Hillard, Jennifer and Black Bookstaff and Jonathan Miller Architecture, and Carol and Jim Hawley and Open Door Architecture.

The East Tennessee Preservation Alliance made regional presentations to the Glenmore

Preservation Society, the Oak Ridge Heritage and Preservation Association, Roane County Heritage Commission, Lindsay Crockett, Dakota Blake Carmichael, Steve Cameron, Preservation Union County, the Great Smoky Mountains Heritage Center, and Rick and Nikki Miles.

Bobcats will represent Knoxville again in state finals

By Steve Williams

Central is the one still standing. In a knockdown, drag out football slobber knocker worthy to be played on Joel Helton Field, the Bobcats walked away with a 10-0 victory over the West Rebels in the TSSAA Class 5A semifinals Friday night.

It was the last battle of Knoxville's own Final Four. Central, Powell, South-Doyle and West all had state title hopes coming into the playoffs this season. After two weeks and three do-or-die contests between them, the team wearing Red and Black was left standing at Dan Y. Boring Stadium.

"Yeah, it was very physical," said Central middle linebacker Tyler Bost, who had his jersey ripped off by a West offensive lineman and had to wear a different jersey for the remainder of the game. "Both of us wanted it really badly. Ultimately, it just came down to who wanted it more, and whoever wanted to push harder and fight for extra yards at the end of it."

Now it's on to a bigger stage. The Bobcats have one fight remaining to claim a second straight state

"It feels good to represent Knox County and such a competitive county within itself," said Bryson Rosser, who is in his sixth season as Central High's head coach. "It's an honor and we're really excited about the opportunity. We've been here a couple of times now, but everything's different and every team's different. We're just looking forward to getting our team prepared and playing our last game of the football season."



PHOTO BY JOHN VALENTINE

Central Coach Bryson Rosser gives senior running back Jason Merritts a hug on the sideline after he scored what turned out to be the only touchdown of the game in the Bobcats' 10-0 win over West in the Class 5A state semifinals Friday night at Central.

championship. Summit High, wearing Navy Blue and Orange, will be in the other corner. The bell rings

Friday night at 7 (CST) at Tennessee Tech in Cookeville.

Both teams are 12-2 coming into

the matchup, but whether or not the Spartans from Spring Hill are as tough as any of Knoxville's Final

TSSAA FOOTBALL
PLAYOFFS
STATE FINALS
At Tennessee Tech University
Cookeville (Times are CST)
THURSDAY
Division II-A: 11 - Davidson Academy vs. USJ
Division II-AA: 3 - CPA vs. Evangelical Christian
Division II-AAA: 7 - McCallie vs. MBA
FRIDAY
Class 1A: 11 - Greenback vs. Lake County
Class 3A: 3 - Alcoa vs. Pearl Cohn
Class 5A: 7 - Central vs. Summit
SATURDAY
Class 2A: 11 - Meigs County vs. Peabody
Class 4A: 3 - Elizabethton vs. Springfield
Class 6A: 7 - Maryville vs. Ravenwood

Four is questionable. The Bobcats will be ready and hungry no matter what.

"We're very hungry," said Bost.

"We've been working all year for this. Every team wants it so bad."

Continued on page 2

West Valley uses defense to edge Admirals 37-33

By Ken Lay

West Valley Middle School's boys basketball team survived a stiff road test against rival Farragut early last week.

And the Wolves, as they've done all season, got a stellar effort from their defense in a 37-33 victory over the Admirals before a packed and spirited house at Bobby J. Henry Gymnasium.

West Valley (7-1 in Knox County Middle School Basketball Conference play) was also stingy early as they held Farragut (4-2 in the league) to just four points over the first six minutes.

"That's always kind of been our calling card, our defense. We're pretty stingy," Wolves' coach Noel Landrum said. "We usually only give up about 22 or 23 points per game."

Fortunately for West Valley, the defense was also clutch down the stretch, forcing five Farragut turnovers in the fourth quarter. Furthermore, the Wolves had their own problems manufacturing points after they darted to a 21-9 lead midway through the second quarter.

The Admirals clawed its way back in the game with a modest 4-0 run just before halftime.

"I don't know if we were really good offensively but we scored enough points to win the game," Landrum said. "And we're 7-1 in the league, so we're having a good season."

After the Admirals pulled to within

21-13 by halftime, they rode a crest of momentum and kept clawing away and actually took a 26-25 lead when Braylon Hall knocked down a shot with 5 minutes, 1 second remaining in the fourth quarter.

For his part, Landrum said that he wasn't surprised to see Farragut make a run.

"I know they have a lot of shooters," he said of the Admirals. "They're tough to defend because they always have five shooters on the floor at one time."

"But I think our length bothered them a little bit."

Meanwhile, Farragut coach Randy Swartzentruber had some high praise for his team after a tough home loss to a rival.

"Our effort was there," he said. "We got down, but then we had that little run before halftime and got it down to eight and then we went ahead in the third quarter."

"The turnovers hurt us in the fourth quarter but I'm proud of our guys."

In addition to its defense, West Valley boasted a balanced scoring attack.

King Hubbard led the way with 10 points. Sam Tummins added six while Drew Parrott and Conner Ruth had five points each.

Eli Evans paced the Admirals with 11 points (including three 3-pointers). Tony Spadafora had nine and Hall finished with six.

Lady Wolves overcome deficit to down Farragut 32-27

By Ken Lay

Josh Ballard says he relishes the chance to play rivalry games against Farragut.

"It's always good to play games against quality teams like this," said Ballard, West Valley Middle School's girls basketball coach. "In these rivalry games, you just never know what you're going to get."

What Ballard and the Lady Wolves got early last week was a 32-27 Knox County Middle School Conference victory over the Lady Admirals on Monday, Nov. 25 at Farragut's Bobby J. Henry Gymnasium.

But it certainly didn't come easily. West Valley notched a key victory to improve to 8-0 in league play. But early, it didn't look like the Lady Wolves were going to beat anybody as they fell behind 10-3 in the first quarter. That left Ballard looking for a spark.

And he got it from eighth-grade guard Sharon Wilson.

Wilson, a key player last season in a season that saw the Lady Wolves go 29-1 and narrowly miss the state

tournament after sweeping the KCMSBC regular season and the James A. Ivey Jr. Memorial Middle School Basketball Tournament, went on a tear and scored 13 points over the final 18 minutes after being silent in the opening frame.

"Sharon is a great player and when we need a spark, she gives us a spark," Ballard said.

While Sharon Wilson, Lindsay Wilson, Kendall Anne Murphy and Lainey Cox supplied some offense in the second frame, West Valley's defense shut out the Lady Admirals (5-1) in the period and opened a 19-10 lead by halftime.

Farragut coach Devan McIntyre said she was pleased with her team's start but also noted that much of the adversity that the Lady Admirals faced was self-inflicted.

"I was excited when we came out hitting (shots)," McIntyre said. "But I knew that they would make a run, and when they made their run, it was when we were making our own mistakes."

"It was the little things.

It was missed box outs, unforced errors and turnovers."

Ballard noted that he was impressed with the Lady Admirals and complimented them for their effort.

"I thought Farragut played a good game under their new coach and she has them headed in right direction," Ballard said.

Over the past several seasons, the Lady Wolves and the Lady Admirals have been the two most consistent programs. West Valley and Farragut both made the East Tennessee Regional Tournament.

The Lady Wolves won the county tournament last season after Farragut won in 2017 and 2018.

But the Lady Admirals never quite recovered from their dismal second quarter last week.

Sharon Wilson led West Valley with 13 points. Lindsay Wilson had nine. Cox had six and Murphy finished with four.

Addison Pressley paced the Lady Admirals with 10 points. Annie Priest had seven.



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RURAL METRO

THE BEST OF THE KNOX METRO YOUTH FOOTBALL LEAGUE

EKAA has ‘good year,’ ties Falcons with three titles

By Steve Williams

The East Knoxville Athletic Association, in its sixth year of having football, made an impressive showing in the Knox Metro Youth Football League this season.

The Runners captured three championships to tie the Knoxville Falcons for most titles in the nine divisions.

West won two and Catholic one.

“It was a good year,” said Willie Anderson, EKAA commissioner. “Coaches did a good job. That’s what it’s about – good coaches.”

EKAA also had a good turnout of fans.

“We try to support the kids, because kids play harder when their parents are there to support them,” said Anderson.

As for runner-up finishes, the Falcons’ strong program had four, the Roadrunners two, Central one, Powell one and Center City Youth Sports Program (CCYSP) one.

“It was a real good year for all the City commissions,” added Anderson. “This was our first year in the 6U flag and the 7-year-old division.”

This is the sixth year EKAA has had football and about the 10th year overall of the organization, which also offers basketball and baseball.

East Knoxville now has two youth football programs – EKAA and the Baby Roadrunners – that both feed into Austin-East High School.

EKAA 8U CHAMPS: The Runners captured their title under Head Coach Charlie McCaleb. His assistant coaches were Marcus Webb, Maurice Davis, Con-seco Stewart and Dimtri Strickland.

“The strength of our team was definitely our defense,” said Webb. “We didn’t give up a single touchdown all year including the playoffs. In addition to that, we had great balance on offense. We ran and threw the ball well all season.”

FALCONS 9U ROLLS: Head Coach Chris Miller’s team has now had three undefeated seasons in a row. His Falcons also are three-time Pig Bowl champions, three-time East Tennessee champs and Holiday Bowl champs as well, said Miller.



NEW IN KMYFL: This year was the first season for flag football in the Catholic Youth Football Organization, reported Kevin Lane, who was the Director of the Flag Football portion (6U and 8U teams) of the organization. Catholic’s 8U Flag team

took top honors right off the bat in the KMYFL.

“This team was put together this past summer and very few of the kids knew each other,” said Lane. “The kids worked really hard along with the coaches. Each kid

contributed in their own way and worked really hard as a team.

“The coaches worked great with the kids and the environment was excellent and contributed to winning the 8U Flag championship.”

Zach Holmes was head



PHOTOS BY STEVE WILLIAMS

Clockwise from top: The Knoxville Falcons run the football against the Baby Roadrunners in the Knox Metro Youth Football League 7U championship game Nov. 5 at John Tarleton Park. Coach Ricky Jones’ Falcons prevailed 20-6.

A South-Doyle player weighs in before his playoff game. Players that are over the weight limit for their division have to wear an “X” on their helmet and are limited in what they can do on the field for safety reasons.

In the 7U age group, coaches have to do more than just teach blocking and tackling and good sportsmanship.

Cheer coaches provide extra support as Hardin Valley cheerleaders perform at halftime during a semifinal playoff game.

coach of the 8U flag team and the assistant coach was Sherman Childers.

COX RETIRES: Larry Cox, longtime commissioner of the Knoxville Falcons’ highly successful program, retired from his post Aug. 9 “to see my grandkids more.”

Cox had been with the program for 33 years. Robert Stokes took over as the new commissioner.

OVER 20 MEMBERS:

Making up the KMYFL are 21 commissions. They are the Baby Roadrunners, Carter, Catholic, Center City Youth Sports Program (CCYSP), Christian Academy of Knoxville (CAK), East Knoxville Athletic Association (EKAA), Farragut/CBFO, First Baptist Academy (FBA), Gibbs, Halls, Hardin Valley, Karns, Knoxville Falcons, Knoxville Seahawks, New Breed, Oak Ridge, Powell, Seymour, South-Doyle and West.

Bobcats will represent Knoxville again in state finals

Cont. from page 1

It’s what we worked all year for. We’ve dreamt to come back every since we won the last one.”

In some ratings, West was a 3-point favorite over Coach Bryson Rosser’s Bobcats coming in. The 12-1 Rebels’ only loss had been a one-point overtime defeat at the hands of Powell in the regular season and they avenged that with a 17-point victory over the Panthers in their quarterfinal rematch in the Jungle.

The Bobcat also had avenged one of their losses with a 20-16 win at South-Doyle in the quarterfinals, coming back from a 10-0 deficit.

The semifinal meeting between the two seemed to get more physical as the game went on.

Biggest plays in a scoreless first quarter were a

sack and fumble recovery by West’s Andrew Gilbert and a blindside sack by Central’s Kalib Fortner. Both hits stopped offensive threats – Central at the West 27-yard line and West at the Central 32.

Jason Merritts scored on an 8-yard run up the gut to account for the game’s only touchdown with 8:47 showing on the second quarter clock. Liam Fortner’s 27-yard catch from Dakota Fawver on the preceding play set up the score. Jared Swislosky kicked the PAT.

West responded with a march – all on the ground – to the Central 23. Isaiah Mattress ignited the drive with an 11-yard gain. Freshman Jai Hundley broke a tackle and went 19 yards to the 23.

But Bost dropped Mattress for a 2-yard loss on the next play and Baker Dance’s

second down play action pass fell incomplete. Kalib Fortner and Bost held Mattress to a 1-yard gain on third down. Hudson Schmid’s 41-yard field goal attempt was short and wide right.

The Rebels threatened again before halftime. After getting good field position at the Central 46, Mattress broke a tackle at the line of scrimmage and picked up 12 yards. Omarian Wright added a 15-yard gain on a reverse to the 17.

But Central again stopped the Rebels in the red zone. Hundley was stopped for no gain on first down. Dance’s second down pass fell incomplete in the end zone. Kalib Fortner chased down Mattress from behind on third down just a yard past the line. This time, after Central called back-to-back timeouts to ice the kicker, Tyson Siebe missed a 33-yard field

goal attempt with 46 seconds to go in the half.

Two big offensive plays – a 36-yard catch and a 12-yard run by Braden Gaston – put Central in the red zone late in the third quarter, but an errant snap resulted in a 23-yard field goal attempt being no good.

The first play of the final quarter saw Kalib Fortner continue his outstanding play by intercepting a pass and returning it 18 yards to the West 24. That led to Swislosky’s 37-yard field goal that gave Central a two-score lead with 10:23 remaining.

Mark Adams’ 11-yard sack blew up West’s next possession.

Adams also had a 7-yard sack on the Rebels’ next series, but Dance overcame it with a 26-yard completion to Drew Francis and a 27-yard screen pass to

Mattress for a first down at the Central 33.

Dance kept the drive alive with a 20-yard pass to Wright on a do-or-die fourth-and-10. But Dance’s next four passes fell incomplete. Central took over with only 2:48 to go and ran out the clock.

“My hat’s off to Central,” said West Head Coach Lamar Brown. “I wish them the best of luck. Coach Rosser and his staff do a great job and they have a great football team.”

“We couldn’t get any kind of rhythm at all offensively. We had some drives inside the 20, missed two field goals and just couldn’t put anything together back to back to get it in the end zone. We always found ourselves in a hole it seemed like.

“I’m real proud of these seniors and this football team. They are a great group

of young men. They gave this football program everything they had this year and got us back to where we should be and laid a great foundation for the future.”

STATISTICS: Junior outside linebacker Kalib Fortner’s defensive stat sheet was full, with nine individual tackles, two assists, two fumble recoveries, one interception, one sack, one TFL and one pass break-up.

Senior strong safety Makhi Anderson added eight solo stops, two assists and one TFL.

Other defensive leaders for Central included Adams, Eunike Valentine, Bost and Malik Robinson.

TV COVERAGE: Central’s Class 5A state championship game will be televised locally on MyVLT, as well as all the BlueCross Bowl state title games.



Knoxville Falcons - 9U Champions



Catholic - 8U Flag Champions



West Rebels - 12U Champions



West Rebels - 14U Champions



Knoxville Falcons Maroon - 6U Flag Champions

Knox Metro Youth Football League CHAMPIONSHIP SCORES



6U FLAG
Falcons Maroon 14,
Roadrunners 6

7U TACKLE
Falcons 20,
Roadrunners 6

8U FLAG
Catholic 13, Powell 7

8U TACKLE
EKAA 13, Falcons 0

9U TACKLE
Falcons 13, Central 0

10U TACKLE
EKAA 13, Falcons 6

11U TACKLE
EKAA 8, Falcons 6 (3 OTs)

12U TACKLE
West 16, CCYSP 13

14 U TACKLE
West 14, Falcons 8

Dickey comes through in the clutch as 11U Runners win in three OTs

By Steve Williams

Nalijsha Dickey not only stopped the Knoxville Falcons' extra-point attempt on the opening possession of the third overtime, he made the winning kick to give the East Knoxville Athletic Association's 11U Runners an 8-6 victory and the championship.

It may have been the most exciting of the nine Knox Metro Youth Football League title games this season at John Tarleton Park.

Five of the finales were played on "Championship Tuesday" Nov. 5, including the triple overtime battle between the Runners and Falcons.

Of his two big plays, Nalijsha (pronounced Nuh-lie-juh) liked his kick the best, particularly after it was over.

When Dickey heard his coach had decided to kick for the win instead of running or passing the ball, he had negative thoughts.

"I was scared," he admitted. "I didn't think I was going to make it. I thought I was going to blow it."

He said he was "really nervous" as he lined up for the game-winning attempt.

As soon as Dickey saw his kick go through the uprights, he took off his helmet and ran straight to the sidelines, where a celebration erupted.

"I was really happy," said the Bearden Middle School sixth grader.

EKAA had lost to the Falcons in the finals each of the past three seasons. The two teams battled to a scoreless tie in the regular



EKAA Runners - 11U Champions

season this year.

"It was our first league loss in four years," said Falcons Head Coach Antonio Hamilton.

In the third overtime, the Falcons' Keshawn Mills scored a touchdown on an 8-yard run on second down for a 6-0 lead. On the point-after-try, Dickey stopped Jamir Ladd.

EKAA benefitted from an offside penalty on first down, which moved the ball to the 5-yard line. The Runners' Tory Beaufort then carried the ball. There was a collision at the goal line and Beaufort fell forward for the tying touchdown. Dickey tacked on the winning kick.

(In the KMYFL, a team receives two points for an extra-point kick and one point for a successful run or pass).

"My kids just didn't quit," said EKAA Head Coach Kaylin Chesney. "That was our message the whole week: Don't quit."

Chesney also felt the

weather worked in his team's favor.

"On Saturday morning, we had a practice and I think it was 35 degrees when we took the field. It got a little cold on us last night. But it was all sunshine today. I think the high was around 60 something. And I knew our kids would respond better with a little warmer weather."

Coach Chesney said Dickey had been working on his place-kicking all season.

"We trusted him to step up in that moment and that's probably going to be one of the biggest plays for his young football career."

"He just started playing defensive end about two weeks ago. We moved him over there and he's been phenomenal at that position. We had been telling our kids that we had to set the edge so they don't get around the outside and that's exactly what he did. He made a great open field tackle."

Ladd gained five yards

to ignite a drive early in the game before EKAA's Kaylin Chesney II brought him down with a rule book form tackle one yard short of a first down. Despite a holding penalty, the Falcons continued their march. On the final play of the first quarter, they overloaded their formation to the right and Ladd ran to the left on a misdirection play, gaining 10 yards for a first down at the 30.

As the second quarter started, Ladd ran 20 yards to set up a first and goal at the 10. The EKAA defense, however, stiffened. The Runners' Joe Hairston Jr. broke up a third down pass and a fourth down pass attempt also fell incomplete.

After a false start backed up EKAA to its 8-yard line, the Runners put some good offensive plays together. Beaufort ran 20 yards to the 28 and Chesney II completed passes to Hairston Jr. for 10 yards, to Beaufort for eight yards and to Rejuan

Womble for 11 yards and a first down at the Falcons' 35. But the first half clock was winding down.

After Beaufort was tackled by Marcus Brown for no gain, only 16.6 seconds were left. Beaufort broke loose for a 33-yard run before being tackled by Ladd two yards short of the goal line as time ran out.

The second half started with the Falcons' Mills having a 60-yard touchdown run nullified by a holding penalty. Another holding penalty erased a 10-yard run by Ladd. Facing first-and-17 from its 33, Mills gained 13 yards around right end. The Falcons picked up a first down at the 50, but the Runners' Nicholas Steen made a tackle for a six yard loss on the final play of the third quarter and the Falcons ended up punting.

EKAA threatened early in fourth quarter as Beaufort had a 19-yard gain around right end to the Falcons' 28. The Falcons' defense,

however, stiffened and EKAA turned the ball over on downs.

Only 2:25 remained and the Falcons were battling the clock as well as the EKAA defense. Back-to-back runs of 11 and 10 yards by Mills produced a first down at the 49. With 22.9 seconds to go, Ladd ran for 15 yards to the EKAA 34. A halfback pass was intercepted by Hairston Jr. inside the 20 as time expired.

In the first overtime, the Falcons lost a fumble on second down. EKAA almost scored. On a pitch right, Beaufort decided against throwing a halfback pass and kept the ball, carrying it to the 1-yard line. But the Falcons kept the Runners out of the end zone and swarmed Beaufort on fourth down.

In the second overtime, EKAA's Chesney II was intercepted by Mills at the goal line. Mills then ran out of the Wildcat formation on first down, fumbled and lost the ball to end the Falcons' possession.

"We've definitely closed that gap," said Chesney after his Runners finally ended their losing streak in the finals. "They're a great team. I can't take anything away from them."

Chesney said he tells his team every season that the championship goes through the Falcons.

"That's just a testament of what they're doing with their program," he said. "Those are some great guys and they put in the work with their kids."



EKAA Runners - 8U Champions



EKAA Runners - 10U Champions

SIGNING DAY, III

Versatile Carter guard signs with Bryan College

By Steve Williams

Starting off the interview with Jordan Heifner, who had just signed a basketball scholarship with Bryan College, the reporter couldn't resist.

Were you named after Michael Jordan?

"No, I wish," laughed Jordan.

Well, you never know unless you ask, right?

Jordan agreed.

Heifner may lack Michael's height, but not his enthusiasm.

The 5-7 guard seems excited about her senior year as a Carter High Lady Hornet and her future.

"Team goals are to get past regions, because every year our team has struggled to get past it," said Heifner. "We all just want to get to state and further than we did last year."

"And I think further in life, I just want to exceed on my goals that God has given

me to do, and just let me do the talent that He gave me."

Heifner also had college offers from William Peace University in Raleigh, N.C., Brenau University in Gainesville, Ga., and Milligan College, but she wanted to stay close to home.

Bryan is a Christian liberal arts college in Dayton, 80 miles from Knoxville.

"I eventually just prayed about it and the other schools were kind of far from where I wanted. I just prayed about it and I knew that God wanted me to go to Bryan."

"The environment is so good (at Bryan)."

Heifner has primarily been a point guard in high school, but Carter Coach Bo Lewis said she also will see action as a shooting guard her senior season.

Playing either of the guard positions may also

be the plan Bryan College has for her.

"I personally feel my best strength is seeing other people and getting other people the ball, seeing other people up the floor and getting them open shots more than myself," she said.

As for academics and a college major, "I'm thinking about physical therapy, but I'm not for sure," said Jordan, who has a 3.7 GPA.

Assistant Coach Bryon Lawhon represented Bryan College at the signing. The Lady Lions are a NAIA school and members of the Appalachian Athletic Conference. He said Bryan finished No. 12 in the nation last season.

"We're extremely excited to have Jordan," said Lawhon. "She's a big-time defensive player and a big-time shooter. What she brings to the table is exactly how we play, so we



PHOTO BY STEVE WILLIAMS

The Carter High girls basketball team attended Jordan Heifner's signing with Bryan College on Nov. 14 in the school library. Seated at Jordan's right is Head Coach Bo Lewis and on her left is Lance Gammon, the team chaplain. The framed pictured up front is Jordan with her papaw Jack Nichols, who passed away on April 10. "Jordan looked up to him," said her mom, Marsha Heifner. "She said he just had an influence on pushing her to be the best she could be in all aspects of life."

expect her to come in as a freshman and contribute.

"We don't promise kids any playing time coming in, but our expectation of Jordan is that she will come in and compete."

This is Lewis' sixth season to coach Heifner, having coached her two

years in middle school, too. "J is one of those girls who has started since her freshman year."

Jordan has had to overcome injury.

"She missed the first 10 or 11 games last season, but she is closing in on 1,000 points in her career

here," said Lewis. "We're expecting huge things from her in her senior year."

"I'm just thankful to coach all of them and when you see some of their goals and dreams become reality, it's a special thing."

Six Lady Bulldogs sign to continue their athletic endeavors

By Ken Lay

Six Bearden High School student-athletes answered an early-morning wake-up call to officially finalize their respective college plans Tuesday.

Among those who signed National Letters of Intent during

the fall signing period were Emma Davis, Hannah Wilson, Jakhya Davis, Hailey Cartt, Taylor Cross and Mandi Chadwell.

Davis is a softball player for the Lady Bulldogs and she'll continue her education and playing career at South Carolina Union.

Wilson, Cartt and Cross all played soccer for the Lady Bulldogs, who have won three consecutive District 2-AAA Championships and haven't lost a league match since they joined in 2017.

All three players are all-state caliber standouts and all will

remain in Tennessee for college.

Wilson will play at Austin Peay. Cartt will continue her career at Maryville College and Cross will play at Carson-Newman.

Davis, a premiere post player for Bearden's girls basketball team, will head to Johnson City

where she will play for East Tennessee State University.

Like Cross, Chadwell will attend Carson-Newman, where she'll swim for the Lady Eagles.

She is one of the most decorated athletes in the history of Bearden's aquatics program.

Farragut ready to take next step?

By Alex Norman

The Farragut boys' basketball team had its struggles last season, finishing at 14-16. But with some experience and depth in the backcourt, the 2019-2020 season could be the one in which they become a team to be reckoned with in Knoxville.

"We've got quite a few people coming back," said Farragut head coach Jon Higgins. "We have two starters returning (guards Robby Geron and Dillon Atwell), plus guys that have been major contributors for us (including guard Isaiah Smith). We've got a bunch of new kids. Five guys that are now in the program that weren't with us last year (including guard Aaron Dozier), so it will be interesting to see how they adapt and fit in with what we want to do."

The Admirals will need to develop more in terms of their post players if they are to be successful this season. Winning significant games in late February and March is what the Admirals are hoping to achieve.

"I expect us to do well, but I expect us to do well every year... I have high expectations for the kids, and they have high expectations for themselves, so we are going to do all we can to make that happen. We've got some goals... first to be in top two of the District, but that should be everybody's goal. After that, it is to go as far as we can. We are trying to start at an attainable level, go from there and see where it takes us."

Higgins of course might be best remembered for his time as a guard at Tennessee from 1999-2003. That experience assists him in this, his third season in charge of the Admirals program.

"I learned from two great guys in (head coaches) Buzz Peterson and Jerry Green. Two very different ways to go about practices and interacting with young men. That helped me greatly. I learned a lot as far as plays and execution and things of that nature. So, I try to incorporate that into what we do, but mainly how to raise young men to be better men."

On that same topic, Higgins wants his players to learn some things from this experience that will pay off along after their paying days are done.

"We use basketball as a tool," said Higgins. "All team sports are a tool for things that as you get older that you will have to do in the real world. Coming to work every day, being prepared every day and being willing to give your all. Those are characteristics for every athlete that you can take with you as you get older in your real job. Whenever the ball stops bouncing, you need that discipline and that teamwork. We want to teach the young men here and to make them the type of men their families can depend on and be proud of."

Higgins added, "Basketball has given me a lot. I wouldn't be here if not for basketball, so I just want to repay that and help young men realize their dreams to play college basketball, or to just have successful seasons. And I want to help young men do that and become better men, and I think that's why almost all coaches get into this is for the kids, and I'm just another one of those. Playing has helped me get to this point and now it is time to give back."

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS NOTEBOOK

'Road Crew' helps GCA get through long and winning year

By Steve Williams

Grace Christian Academy's football team may not have traveled as many miles this season as Knoxville Catholic, but it made seven road trips – one more than the Irishmen.

An extra trip occurred in Week 6 when the Rams had to get up early Saturday morning and go back to Chattanooga to finish a game at Silverdale Academy that had been interrupted, delayed and eventually postponed by lightning the night before.

Making GCA's 2019 schedule even more unusual was the fact that six of its first seven games were away.

Those trips were aided by the "Road Crew" that would drive the Rams' football trailer, loaded with equipment and everything needed, to the destination site ahead of the team and back to the school prior to the team's return.

Making up that crew were five GCA dads – Gregg Bostick, Chad Campbell, Tony Campbell (no relation), John Lott and Allen Stansbury.

In addition to the players' gear, the trailer hauled sideline equipment and food for players to have at halftime and after the game.

Bostick, the Director of Football Operations, said the crew took pride "in having everything prepared prior to the team's arrival, so the players' only focus was playing and the coaches' only focus was the X's and O's."

It wasn't all work. The crew enjoyed a pre-game meal together on every trip. "I rounded the number of

miles we traveled to 1,055," said Bostick. "That included our mileage to eat before the games. We went to incredible local restaurants on the road."

GCA, which posted a 9-3 overall record, traveled to Stone Memorial High in Crossville, South-Doyle, York Institute in Jamestown, Silverdale Academy in Chattanooga (twice), Webb School and Chattanooga Christian.

Places the "crew" dined were the Gondola, Chop House, Simply Fresh, City Café Diner, the Gondolier and Champy's Chicken.

"We had a blast this season and were wondering what we were going to do that first Friday night after our season ended," said Bostick. "We were hoping to go to CPA in Nashville, but ran into a buzz saw in Lipscomb. That trip would have added another 390 miles to the season."

Chad, John and Allen have sons who were on the team. Gregg and Tony have sons who used to play football but are now focusing on other sports.

Bostick also announced he has retired as Director of Football Operations after seven seasons.

"It is very strange knowing I have picked up my last pylon and have made my last road trip with GCA," said Gregg.

"I honestly don't know what I will do on Friday nights. I know what I won't be doing ... getting home at midnight after home games and 1:30 a.m. after road trips!"

For the record, Catholic traveled over 2,100 miles this season, including one

trip to Kentucky, two trips to Nashville, two trips to Chattanooga and one trip to Memphis.

YOUNG IN RUNNING: South-Doyle's Elijah Young was among three candidates for the Tennessee Titans Mr. Football Award in Class 5A today (Dec. 2). The award, based on regular season play, will be presented at Nissan Stadium in Nashville. Academics and character were also taken into consideration.

In nine games, Young had 1,656 net yards rushing (9.0 average per attempt) and 33 touchdowns. He also had 11 catches for 154 yards and two TDs and one kickoff return for a touchdown.

A NIGHT FOR HENSON: Karns basketball coach Lee Henson will be honored Tuesday night at Karns for his 25 seasons at the school. The recognition will be held between the girls' and boys' games against Clinton.

CHEER AND DANCE: The TSSAA's 2019 Cheerleading & Dance Championships will be held Saturday (Dec. 7) at MTSU in Murfreesboro.

POWELL CLEARED: In a Nov. 18 letter from TSSAA to Powell High, regarding the alleged violation of the recruiting rule by the football program, TSSAA Executive Director Bernard Childress wrote: "After reviewing all of the information submitted by the Powell High administration and schools that filed each complaint, it is our conclusion that these incidents can only be treated as hearsay ... Based on the information we have currently, we cannot verify there has been a violation

... The case is being closed accordingly."

TENNOVATURNOUT: "It was a steady flow of people," replied Karns Coach Lee Henson when asked about this year's attendance for the second night of basketball jamboree action at Karns.

"We're fortunate to have a lot of space to have events like this. Also, we had some high profile teams that were here."

PREPS OF THE PAST (Thirty years ago, Dec. 1, 1989): The 1-2 punch of Ricky Norris (20 points) and Lee Henson (19) led Karns to an 85-81 basketball win at Bearden. The Bulldogs' Jay Furrow led all scorers with 23, including six shots from 3-point range.

In girls' action, Central standout Amy Heist added to a big week with 31 points in the Lady Bobcats' 68-45 win over Maryville. Three nights earlier, she tallied 41 to lead Central past Carter. Counting both games, Amy also had eight steals and seven assists.

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FOOTBALL

Week of Semifinal Round playoffs

Central - Dakota Fawver

West - Jai Hundley

University of Tennessee (Recipient following the Missouri game) - Jarrett Guarantano



600

Many writers have compared the seasons of the year with the seasons of life. As I approach three-score and ten years, I've done so as well. I fancy myself late in the Indian summer of my days, though frosty mornings and brown leaves, like my aches and pains, portend winter's chill.

I have also compared my life to an extensive airplane journey. After making my way to the airport with foundational principles and a good education, I boarded the plane with my wife and we took off into life. We cruised into the future, touching-down often with kids and career, for good times and tough ones, but always traveling toward the final destination. Though I am in the fall of my life, winter and the final destination are fortunately not yet on my horizon.

In March 2008 my first essay appeared in The Knoxville Focus. In the

ensuing twelve years, I have written 600 essays and over 600,000 words, comparable to more than 6 novels. I never imagined this direction in my journey. I'm a husband, a doctor, a father and a Christian, but I never imagined I would become a writer. Isn't it funny how life opens doors of opportunity and possibility?

I couldn't think of a special topic for a numerically notable column. My Focus oeuvre includes observations of medicine, science, history, politics, religion, travel, literature, art, music, plays, philosophy and cinema. As Forrest Gump implied my column is "like a box of chocolates." You never know what you'll get. My defense is lots of things interest me, and every week I need to come up with a 1000 word essay.

I'm not paid to write, so by one definition I'm not a professional. I'll trust my reader's judgement of

my prose more than the judgement of any self-styled "expert." Those self-important and self-righteous experts of the State Department, who testified in Schiff's kangaroo court claiming they made foreign policy instead of the President, are classic examples of such elitist attitudes.

I have become a skeptic in the fall of my life, especially of opinion polls done to shape thought rather than measure it. Remember all the polls and "experts" that affirmed Hillary Clinton would win the November 2016 election? In fact, part of America's current problem is false and manipulatory polls which were wrong then and continue to manipulate people now. The soft coup d'état of the Russian hoax has now moved to the Ukraine. Democrats still call Trump a traitor and a Putin puppet. Talking heads say Trump's a fool and not smart like the "expert," unelected, deep-state bureaucrats of Washington.

About fifteen years ago a friend challenged me asking, "How many branches of government are specified in the Constitution?" Having taken a lot of tests in graduating from college and medical school, I can spot a trick question. I answered, "three: executive, legislative and

judicial branches." However, I knew his question was more rhetorical than real. He replied that there are actually four branches of government, three defined by the Constitution and the fourth branch comprised of ensconced, non-elected and usually faceless bureaucrats. He was right, and the curtain was pulled back and we saw the faces of the swamp bureaucrats during Schiff's inquisition.

Giving someone or something a name helps define them. Early in the Genesis account (2:19-20), Adam is tasked to name all the created animals. In antiquity and in many primitive cultures a person's name was a reflection of their personality or character. Like the signet ring of a king which imprints his seal, our good name is a reflection to the world. The word character derives from the ancient Greek word kharackter, a reflection of a person's soul.

I'm not an "expert," but I have common sense, and I was afforded a good education. I've been a teacher for more than forty years. The word doctor derives from the Latin verb docere which means to teach. Doctors teach each other, patients, staff and students. Unfortunately, I've observed education becoming more indoctrination rather than teaching students how to

think critically and logically.

Hamlet said, "Something is rotten in Denmark," and few would argue that something is wrong in America. The Democrats say that our problem is Trump. Actually, Trump is the reaction of We the People to what has become wrong in America. If our children had not been miseducated and we were not subject to 24/7 indoctrination by the media (96% Trump negative), would a rational person consider the transcript of a phone call be grounds for Presidential impeachment? Would a rational person actually consider the insane proposals of Democrat Presidential candidates?

Hatred is a destructive thing. We watched it destroy the families of the Christian-Newsom murders. We see the generational hatred of Palestinians and the enmity of Muslims and Jews. We smirk at the fictitious Hatfield and McCoy feud, but the malevolent character of hatred is disturbingly reflected in the eyes of Adam Schiff.

My father-in-law taught me that no man is as good or as bad as he is portrayed. I suspect that is true. However, I aver that "Sometimes the best explanation of the otherwise inexplicable is evil." I pray for Schiff's co-opted soul.

Perhaps you have heard

of the Five Pillars of Islam. In my opinion there are "five pillars of Methodism." When I became a Methodist in 1975, we promised to support the Church with our prayers, presence, gifts and service. In recent years Methodists added the promise to witness for Christ.

I have written that the two fundamental questions of humankind are where did we come from and what is our purpose? After considerable study and reflection I see the Creator as the origin of everything (you can research panentheism if you want more). And I know my purpose. I am to write, teach, serve, pray, study, witness and praise the Lord all my days.

Since I've been blessed with clean scans and more life, a voice in The Focus and the love of a beautiful wife and family, you can expect more on the topics listed in the second paragraph of this essay.

So, keep reading. Keep thinking and praying. Feel free to share my essays with friends who might be conflicted and confused. And some might benefit from a stocking stuffer with my book of essays (Well, What Did the Doctor Say?) at Amazon or Barnes & Noble!

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

Cumberland Gap Iron Furnace often overlooked

Almost everyone in our nation knows of the Cumberland Gap pass, made famous by Daniel Boone, and many in our region visit the national park there. Cumberland Gap is also the name of a small Tennessee town that is surrounded on all sides by the park there.

You can drive down into the little town during the season and visit the Old Mill store there or marvel at the old houses.

From the Mayberry-like town, many choose to walk one of the two paths leading to the Three State Marker where you can literally stand

A Day Away



By Mike Steely

in Tennessee, Kentucky and Virginia all at the same time.

One path, as you start into town from Highway 58, leads the walker up and past Cudjo Caverns, where U. S. Park Rangers give tours of the historic old

cave.

Many others choose to drive through the broad Highway 25E Tunnel and visit the Cumberland Gap National Historical Park office, with its small museum, and then drive atop Cumberland Mountain to the Pinnacle. There you can look off across the Tennessee Valley and see the Smoky Mountains far away. Or you

can stroll along the Union Army's Fort Lyon and note the many Civil War signatures in the rocks there.

But the most overlooked or seldom visited site in Cumberland Gap is back downtown at the end of downtown road near the old railroad tunnel. The Iron Furnace is just a brief hike up the ridge there and has a history that reflects not only the early history of the town but also the Civil War.

Today only a small portion of the once huge iron furnace still stands. Built in 1819 the vast complex was powered by steam generated from the stream that flows from what is known as Cudjo Caverns. Huge limestone blocks were used to construct the furnace and it was lined with handmade bricks. A waterwheel

Continue on page 4



The Cumberland Gap Iron Furnace is the oldest standing structure in that historic little town. Built in 1819 iron was produced there and shipped down river to Chattanooga. Union forces destroyed the adjoining buildings in 1863, leaving only the furnace standing. Photo by Mike Steely.



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Join Mabry-Hazen House for their annual Christmas open house

Celebrate the holiday season with Mabry-Hazen House during their annual Christmas tours on Saturday, December 7, 2019 from 5-8 p.m. and Sunday, December 8, 2019 from 2-5 p.m.

Mabry-Hazen House will be decorated in the spirit of the holiday, historically-inspired refreshments will be served, and there will be a few surprises as well. On Saturday evening, carolers will perform traditional favorites and Santa Claus will attend and

be available for pictures. The historic house will open for visitors to casually walk through and enjoy a festive mix of modern and historic decorations. Mabry-Hazen House's holiday exhibit titled "Holiday Greetings: A

Century of Christmas Cards" will return for a second year! Nearly 100 years of holiday cards addressed to the Hazen family will be on display for visitors to learn about this sentimental holiday tradition.

Tickets are not required to attend, but donations are deeply appreciated. The event is free for members and children under 13; a suggested \$5 donation is encouraged for all others. A \$5 donation enters

individuals into drawing for a door prize for a limited-edition porcelain replica of Mabry-Hazen House. A perfect addition to any Christmas village! (Winners will be notified the following day)

Cumberland Gap Iron Furnace

Cont. from page 1
powered the blower and the furnace included a large hammer that beat the iron from rocks mined nearby.

Originally known as New-lee's Iron Furnace, the facility sold its finished iron to local blacksmiths and also shipped the material down the Powell River to Chattanooga. In 1863 the Union Army raided the town and destroyed most of the buildings and supplies at the furnace, leaving only the furnace standing.

Today a well-marked path leads up to and inside the furnace, giving visitors an idea of what a huge facility the complex must have been.

There's a full day of things to do in and around Cumberland Gap. Just to the east is a reconstruction of Virginia's Martin Station Fort. In Middlesboro

there's a museum and a "Coal House" built entirely of coal mined in the area. Middlesboro is a wonder by itself. The city sits in the middle of an ancient meteor crater.

Four Civil War fort sites are found on the mountain within the national park. Park rangers give lectures and offer guided tours of Cudjo Caverns.

And, of course, you can walk the ground where Daniel Boone and many others walked.

If you'd like more information on the area and the national park you can find information on the internet or call the park at (606) 248-2817.

You can also get area information from the Cumberland Gap Regional Tourism Association, located in nearby Tazewell, Tn. by calling (423) 259-8406 or online.

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