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Mark Campen, Courtney Shea honored by Fountain City

By Mike Steely
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Honor Fountain City Day has been a Memorial Day highlight for many years. The members of Fountain City Town Hall have hosted the celebration of their community but this year the coronavirus pandemic has caused the cancellation.

Although the gathering won't be held, the Town Hall isn't abandoning the annual tradition of honoring those who have

contributed much to Fountain City. This year they chose two local residents deeply involved in preserving our environment.

The Fountain City Man and Woman of the Year 2020 are Mark Campen and Courtney Shea.

Campen, a former Knoxville City Council member, is a UT graduate with a degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Science and a minor in Forestry. He is the executive director of the Tennessee chapter of the Izaak Walton

League of America.

He and his wife, Emily, have two children and Emily owns The Flower Pot florist shop. Campen continues to address conservation issues and water quality.

Courtney Shea came to East Tennessee with the Office of Surface Mining in 1979 and loved the area so much she stayed. She and her husband raised four children in Beverly Place in Fountain City, most of them attending Central High School.

Shea became involved with



Mark Campen Courtney Shea

the CHS Foundation and her favorite project was the Wall of Fame where she helps write bios of those inducted members.

An environmental enthusiast she became an active member of the Tennessee Interfaith

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KSC becomes 1:1 district as proposal 8E passes

By Amy Box Felthoelter

Last week's Knox County School Board digital meeting was filled mostly with discussion of the funding and wording particulars of proposal 8E which will allow every student to receive a device from KCS.

After hearing from families and the community about keeping people safe during graduation, Superintendent Bob Thomas announced an alteration made to the initial graduation plan by allowing ceremonies to take place in June with a limited number of guests. Ceremonies will include social distancing and precautionary guidelines and will be scheduled from June 8 through June 19.

Board member Jennifer Owen showed concerns on the 1:1 initiative first by asking how many laptops needed to be purchased immediately. "Several have two years of support ... seems since we don't know a funding source yet ... would it be more responsible to look at a lower number until we are in a better financial situation?"

Thomas followed with confirming KCS will get the maximum use out of the devices already in use and that not purchasing all the devices at once would be a financial help. Gail Byard, chief technology officer for KCS, explained the plan contemplates buying a Chromebook for every student, but doesn't specify an exact purchase date.

Sheryl Martin, who has been working with the state, spoke of how to deploy the devices, and extend the life of the current devices by complying with ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act). The conversation revolved around every student receiving a device which follows ESSA, and staying in compliance with CARES Act funding guidelines at the same time. In question was would it be necessary for devices to be deployed at the same time? Or can the devices be deployed over several years?

Assistant Superintendent Ron McPherson explained if the lease purchase agreement is over several years, "right now what we are looking at is a 21-million-dollar investment over the next three years. If we can stagger the purchase — that means we save money as we roll into future years ... because we have extended the life of newer devices, — the savings comes in — that we are not in year five or six, we are not looking at buying another 60,000 devices because we have devices that are operational."

For instance, if only 40,000 devices are bought for students for the next school year, then the

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Audit Committee to hear of impact of shutdown

By Mike Steely
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When the Knox County Audit Committee meets this afternoon it will vote on the approval of hiring Pugh & Company PC for another year as the county's external auditor.

The company has served as the county's external auditor since 2012 and, under the old rules, would have exhausted the former eight years agreement. The new contract extends the agreement through the fiscal year of 2021.

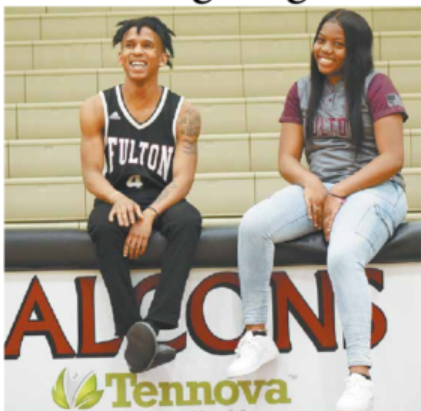
Ted Hotz of Pugh and Company will address the committee on the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on the county.

The audit committee will also hear from the finance department on COVID-19's effect on the budget and Knox County Schools will also address the pandemic as it affects the school system.

The internal auditor will report on the tax abatement program, the county hotline, current and completed projects, administrative items, and upcoming and current projects.

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Shining Bright!



Edward Lacey and Gaycia Davenport enjoy a moment together at the scorer's table as pictures were taken for Fulton High's yearbook. Edward and Gaycia were chosen the "Most Athletic" at FHS. Please see the stories and photos of Fulton's Student-Athletes of the Year and other local high schools' honorees in Sports and Recreation, Section C, of this week's Focus.

Kincannon kicks off Climate Change Council

By Mike Steely
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"Fifty percent by 2030 and 80 percent by 2050" is the goal for Mayor Indya Kincannon's Climate Council.

The new group met for the first time Tuesday via Zoom. The mayor said achieving those goals will take "steady and pro-active leadership." Among those invited to join the council were everyone from a local pastor to a former Knoxville City Council member and real estate executive.

Members include Pastor Chris Battle, Gabe Bolas, Chris Cimino, Brian Hann, Amy Hathaway, Alicia Hemmings, Stan Johnson, Nancy Habor, Courtney Piper, Dr. Stephen Smith, Rebecca Tolene and George Wallace.

Sustainability Director Brian Blackman and Chief Policy Officer Erin Gill join the

group as Kincannon's staff members. Blackman is coordinating and said achieving the goals is "a heavy list."

He introduced Luke Gephard of Milepost Consulting, who was hired as the facilitator of the project. He said the effort will include three groups on transportation, energy and buildings, and waste. Gephard said each climate council member will be receiving a survey seeking their concerns and input. The council will meet bi-monthly.

Gephard said Knoxville's environment is slightly improving but explained that most citizens are driving polluting cars which are 10 years or older. He also said that manufacturers aren't planning a real push on electric cars until 2024. The city did achieve its "20 by 2020" in cutting down on pollution.

Mayor Kincannon said she would keep the city council informed on the climate council's efforts, ask for their comments, and approach them for budget requests.

Kincannon said the climate council is at the core of the campaign promises she made when running for mayor.

The July meeting will deal with transportation. September the Council looks at energy and buildings and in November "waste" is the topic.

Working groups within the council will begin in August.

"Reducing Knoxville's carbon footprint is critical to combating climate change, improving our ability to bounce back after disaster, protecting our health and being smart with taxpayers' dollars," the mayor said in a statement from her office.

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