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COVID-19 Weekly Focus

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2019 Knox County Total Population ¹ 470,313	Total Confirmed COVID-19 Cases ² 43,073	% COVID-19 Cases/ Total Population 9.2%	Total COVID-19 Deaths ² 633	% COVID-19 Deaths/ Total Population .13%
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SOURCES 1. U.S. Census Bureau 2. Knox County Health Department data from 4/30/2021.

Despite protests, commission passes three important items

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
steelym@knoxfocus.com

While continued protests at the Knox County Commission meeting last Monday got most of the news coverage, the commission passed three measures that will affect both the city and county.

Public forum at the end of the meeting saw several citizens condemn the commission, the sheriff, the district attorney and the 40 or so deputies that ringed the main assembly room of the City-County Building. No one was arrested during the meeting and those arrested the previous week during the commission's work session were permitted back in the meeting.

"I would like to publicly thank each one of our Deputies, Detectives and Corrections Officers who helped ensure tonight's County Commission meeting was a safe and peaceful meeting," Sheriff Tom Spangler released in an email Monday night following the meeting.

Sports Authority

The commissioners voted to approve the nominees to the Sports Authority. Consultant Mark Mamantov told the meeting that the Authority would be reporting all expenditures and actions for approval and would hire a contractor for the project. He confirmed that the eventual cost of the city-county owned complex could increase from \$90 million to about \$120 million.

He also reminded the commissioners that while the Sports Authority would issue bonds to

Continued on page 4

School board fails to approve agenda for Friday's called meeting

By Ken Lay

The Knox County Board of Education's called meeting Friday morning turned out to be much ado about nothing.

The meeting, which lasted just more than 30 minutes, didn't legally happen as the motion to approve the meeting's agenda failed at the City-County Building.

The agenda got four votes for approval and four members voted the agenda down. Board member Evetty Satterfield was not in attendance due to a prior

personal commitment.

Since the meeting's agenda failed to pass, the current face covering policy will remain in place.

Several board members objected to the meeting.

"There is nothing here that constitutes an emergency," said KCS Board Vice Chair Virginia Babb. "There are things going on in our schools that are emergencies, but this isn't one of them."

"We have a regularly scheduled meeting on Wednesday

and there's no reason why this couldn't come up then."

Board member Jennifer Owen objected to the meeting due to the timing, saying the mid-morning gathering couldn't be attended by students and teachers, those most affected by the mask mandate, which is set to sunset on Aug. 1.

Both Tennessee Governor Bill Lee and Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs have lifted state and local masks mandates and the Knox County Law

Department had the board call the special meeting, which was adjourned after failing to get majority approval for the agenda.

One board member, Kristi Kristy, said she would have voted to approve the agenda had Satterfield been present.

"The reason that I'm opposing this is because Ms. Satterfield is not here. If she were here, I would vote to approve it," Kristy said. "She was the one who decided to separate this policy from the dress code."



Turning the corner!

Senior Dominique Romain of Hardin Valley Academy (second from left) appears to have the lead in the 200-meter dash in a meet at HVA in late March. Romain has the top local girls' times in the 100 and 200 dashes as of April 29. She will be competing in the annual Knoxville Interscholastic League Championships Tuesday at HVA. The KIL meet, which includes all Division I and II high schools in Knox County, will start Monday with the field events. Please see a KIL meet preview story and all the top local times in high school track and field in Sports and Recreation, Section B. Photo by Luther Simmons.

An hour with the city mayor

By Mike Steely
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Knoxville Mayor Indya Kincannon invited various members of the media into her office Tuesday to answer questions about her proposed budget. The Knoxville Focus joined News-Sentinel's Tyler Whetstone and Scott Barker of Compass for a round and each person asked questions in rotation.

The mayor announced her proposed budget will have no tax increase but didn't rule out a future hike if needed. The proposed budget is \$384 million. A public hearing on the proposed budget is set for Friday, May 14 and a second and final reading is scheduled for city council on May 18.

proposed Safety Center at the former St. Mary's Hospital and why expected federal relief funds are not included in the budget.

"We don't know yet," she replied, explaining there's no guidelines yet as to how the promised federal money can be used. The city is expecting about \$44 million in the American Recovery Act.

About \$20 million in additional city funding was approved by the city council recently because of delays in demolition and construction of the new Safety Center because of COVID-19 affecting the cost of materials. The facility will eventually house the police and fire departments as well as an E-911 back up facility, an LMU Nursing School, a partnership with Knox County Schools for Fulton High School, City

Court, Pension Board, etc.

The partnership with Fulton High School will involve creating a Criminal Justice Career Path program.

The Focus also asked about the Washington Pike improvement project and learned the project will stretch to Murphy Road with new turn lanes, bike paths on either side and a bus stop.

Within the budget is \$400,000 to expand the police's co-response team which pairs behavioral health specialists with crisis-trained officers.

The Focus also asked about the city's plans to eventually have an all-electric bus system. The budget has \$1.3 million to support KAT's conversion of the fleet and \$150,000 for additional electric charging stations for the city and



Three local journalists including Mike Steely of The Focus interviewed Knoxville Mayor Indya Kincannon Tuesday as part of her media day to promote her proposed annual budget. The city council will take up the budget soon which includes the standard 2.5% employee pay increase. Photo courtesy of City of Knoxville.

public use.

Knoxville currently has five electric buses and 12 more coming this year with hopes to use some of the federal recovery funding for those. The conversion to electric power is expected to take 8 to 10 years

The mayor said the key components of the proposed budget include public safety, health and connected neighborhoods, a clean and resilient future, thriving businesses and

good jobs, and good governance. She also noted that city employees will receive a 2.5% raise and noted the

city, during the pandemic, had no layoffs or lapses in city services.

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'Microaggression nonsense'

From a distance



By John J. Duncan Jr.
duncanj@knoxfocus.com

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s most famous quote is one in which he said "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."

Yet today we have a president who publicly excluded

all white men and women from even being considered as running mates for vice president on his ticket.

He said he would consider only women of color and received not even the slightest criticism for doing so.

Dennis Prager, the brilliant Jewish talk show host, said in one of his recent fireside chats that saying America is racist is "the biggest lie in world history."

In a chat a few months earlier, he discussed what he called the "microaggression nonsense" and added that "there is so little racism in America today that they have to make things up as being racist when they are really not."

Thus, now we have seen

some performances of Cinderella canceled because it was "too white," Coca-Cola employees briefly asked to act "less white," and Peter Pan and some books by Dr. Suess labeled as racist.

Now, we have a former president, Barack Obama, saying he feels reparations are justified, and, apparently, the city council of Evanston, IL, agrees. As do some of the Knoxville City Council.

The City of Oakland, CA, has started a program to give monthly payments to black families but not white families.

And the recent COVID Relief bill approved extra farm loan repayment money for black and brown

farmers that is not available for white farmers.

In some states, blacks make up more than half of the Democratic primary vote. Joe Biden won the nomination for president mainly because of his strong support in the African-American community. Now he is trying to do everything he can to repay them for this support.

The Democrats are shouting (false) white supremacy at every opportunity to shore up their black vote, and they know that many white people will support them hoping to prove they are not racist.

However, if the Democrats go too far in this direction, it could backfire

and create racism where it doesn't now exist.

A black student at Albion College in Michigan recently was discovered writing anti-black, racist graffiti on college walls and property. Was he trying to create racism so he could get more special treatment?

Jessica Krug, a history professor at one of my old schools, George Washington, recently admitted she had held herself out as black to help her career.

Vosko Kohlmayer, who fled his home country, Czechoslovakia, is a columnist very worried about what is happening in this country.

He wrote: "There is no systemic or structural

racism in American society. Quite to the contrary, in America black people enjoy an array of rights and advantages that are unavailable to the rest of the American population and can only be described as Black Privilege."

Blacks are treated better and there are more social welfare programs for their benefit here than in other countries. In fact, no other country even comes close to the U.S. in this regard.

It seems that there are almost too many things being done today both by the government and most major corporations based entirely on skin color rather than the content of character.

PARC meeting reviews two cases

By Mike Steely
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While protesters marched against the shooting death of an armed Austin-East High School student last month the Police Advisory and Review Committee (PARC) met virtually. Executive Director LaKenya Middlebrook expressed sympathy for the student's family and explained that the review committee will eventually review the incident when the investigation is submitted to it.

Two members, Chairwoman Rosa Mar and Ann Barker, will be leaving the committee and two new members should be approved before the committee's July 22 meeting. Both members expressed their service was a learning experience and pledged to continue to follow the actions of the group.

The quarterly meeting heard from Tennessee Bureau of Investigation's Special Agent in Charge Derek Newport. While he could not talk about the Austin-East case, he did explain that state agency's procedures in such incidents. Newport said the TBI gets involved with local deadly force investigations but works independently of local law enforcement. When TBI's report is completed it is passed to the local attorney general without recommendations and that official makes decisions.

Newport, a 31-year law enforcement veteran, told the group that TBI has 16 agents in Upper East Tennessee and primarily receives requests from the district attorney to become involved. He said the TBI will not speak publically on active cases.

He said the agency gets involved in all officer shooting deaths and, if the attorney general approves, the findings can be shared with local law enforcement and PARC. He again expressed that TBI's intent in investigations is independent and "not influenced."

The PARC committee quizzed Knoxville Police Chief Eve Thomas about the case it is reviewing involving an officer's child in blackface posted on social media. Member Jered Croom asked about police policy in the incident. The officer was reprimanded for the Halloween photo of his family dressed as Forrest Gump characters.

Chief Thomas said the blackface issue is a good case for training and that the photo "caused a stir" in the police department.

Member Ann Barker asked about social media policy and Thomas said it is a policy violation to discredit the department. Member Leticia Flores said that some officers may not be aware of the history and

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What is a Pleading?

One term that you may have heard an attorney use is the term, "pleading." What in the world is a pleading? Is a pleading a good thing? Is it a bad thing? Is it public record? Is it some secret document?



By Jedidiah McKeehan
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If I take off my lawyer hat and think about the term, "pleading," what comes to mind is me as a kid on my hands and knees "pleading" for my parents not to make me eat peas or "pleading" with them not to punish me for jumping on my bed. Well, the legal definition is a little bit different.

A pleading is defined as: a formal document in which a party to a legal proceeding sets forth or responds to allegations, claims, denials or defenses.

In laymen's terms, that means that if there is a case with the court going on, pleadings is a general term for the documents filed with the court.

The pleading that starts a case is the complaint. Whether you have a personal injury case, a divorce, or a contract dispute, a complaint is the first pleading filed in a case. The complaint is usually responded

to by the defendant with an answer. The answer is also a pleading.

If an attorney gets involved in a case after someone has had a previous attorney, they may say something to the client like, "can you get me a copy of all of the pleadings?" While that may sound bizarre, that means, get me a copy of all of the documents filed with the court.

In a criminal case, if the defendant agrees on what should happen with his criminal charge, he will enter a, "plea." It usually goes something like this:

Judge: Mr. Smith, you have been charged with theft, how do you plea?

Mr. Smith: I plead guilty, Your Honor.

Mr. Smith's attorney: Your Honor, as part of his plea agreement, the district attorney's office has agreed that he shall serve his sentence on probation and shall pay restitution and court costs.

Judge: I accept your plea of guilty and approve your plea agreement.

So in the above situation, the defendant has just entered a plea with the

court as part of his plea agreement. That plea agreement will be memorialized in a pleading signed by the judge and entered with the court.

Some cases have lots and lots of pleadings and some barely have any. Civil cases typically have more pleadings in them than criminal cases.

Those pleadings are kept at the courthouse. Once cases are over, and time has passed (usually years, if not decades), then the pleadings in a file may be moved to storage, but my understanding is that the pleadings in every case ever are kept in some form indefinitely.

Pleadings in a case are public record, even a divorce case. If you want to go down to the courthouse and look through court files, you absolutely may do so. Typically, the only exception to this is cases where the file is sealed and those cases involving minor children.

While pleading may be an unusual term, there is nothing bad or scary about it. It is simply the catch-all term for the documents filed in a legal proceeding.

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

CORRECTION

In last week's story "Council tackles Merchant Drive zoning, Sports Authority and Penny Pawn site," Councilman Charles Thomas was paraphrased as saying "workability" when the word should have been "walkability."

We apologize for the error.



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Articles, announcements, photo attachments and cutlines may be submitted by e-mail to staff@knoxfocus.com.

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Publisher's Positions



By Steve Hunley, Publisher
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More Protest Follies

Readers will recall the antics of Constance Every and her merry band of protesters who tried to disrupt a recent meeting of the Knox County Commission and were promptly arrested by the Knox County Sheriff's Office. The protestors quickly discovered that Sheriff Tom Spangler is not Chief of Police Eve Thomas. Among those arrested was Reverend Calvin Taylor Skinner, who ran for mayor in the last election against Indya Kincannon, Eddie Mannis and Marshall Stair. The protestors were back at the county commission last week after Reverend Johnnie Skinner and county commission chair Larsen Jay exchanged letters. The Reverend Skinner demanded to know if "residents of Knox County, especially, can be banned from the City - County Building after being arrested for exercising their first amendment rights?" Jay deserves credit for a reply that was highly professional, yet quite direct and honest. Reverend Skinner doubtless doesn't realize the City-County Building is actually owned by the Public Building Authority and yes, they can ban folks from the premises. And no, Reverend, the First Amendment doesn't protect just one group of folks who are trying to disrupt a meeting and denying the people having the meeting their right to free speech. It's not exactly a one-way highway, Reverend.

Jay told Reverend Skinner, "In my opinion, your son, and his group of protestors, came to the County Commission meeting with the focus goal of provoking a physical confrontation with law enforcement, to get arrested, and to generate media stories in an effort to further their own image and narratives."

I think Larsen Jay was spot on in his analysis of why Constance Every and Calvin Taylor Skinner were present. Commissioner Jay wasn't finished.

"Not a single member of the protest group signed up to speak at our public forum or contacted me to ask for time at the Commission meeting - - - both of which they would be permitted to do."

Jay pointed out everybody else was able to discuss the topic in a reasonable manner whether they agreed with one another or not. As Larsen Jay politely termed it, "This group chose not to engage in any of those productive exchanges of ideas."

Keep in mind, following one of the shootings in East Knoxville, Indya Kincannon could barely be heard over Every screaming into a bullhorn as the mayor tried to address a press conference at a city park.

The Knoxville News-Sentinel tried to stress the protests were "peaceful" but then again, the mainstream media has made the same claim with buildings burning in the background. The KCSO was out in force during the last commission meeting, which drew the attention of the Sentinel for some reason. Skinner the younger has been before the commission previously and has even delivered a lecture/devotional before that body.

Any citizen has the right to sign up for public forum and speak his/her mind. Neither Constance Every, Calvin Taylor Skinner nor the other protestors had any intention of participating in any orderly process. I agree with Larsen Jay; they were there to shout, bully and disrupt and get arrested.

"Peaceful" or otherwise, Constance Every and her posse have no right to impede the people's business or scream obscenities or use a bullhorn in a meeting room. If anything ever has been equitable, it was the rules apply to everyone equally.

The protestors went out into the county to protest at what they thought was the home of District Attorney General Charme Allen. They didn't like the fact once again the Knox County Sheriff's Office was vigilant and yet they didn't have the right house.

Racist Math

Did you ever think you'd hear math is racist? I sure didn't. Evidently the Virginia State Board of Education would "move toward eliminating accelerated math classes before 11th grade." It's part of something called the Virginia Mathematics Pathways Initiative (VMPI). The State Department of Education is attempting to change the framework and pacing of subjects. Naturally, it's described by bureaucrats as "an attempt to remedy inequities among various demographics, including race and status."

In other words, Virginia is seeking to kill off advanced math classes for those students who excel in the subject in the name of social justice. Those higher-achieving students would be penalized and classes would be the same for all students until reaching the 11th grade. Only in the junior and senior year would students have the opportunity to take advanced classes. The state has utilized language stating a goal to "improve quality in mathematics learning opportunities." It also calls for empowering "students to be active participants in a quantitative world" as well as "identify K - 12 mathematics pathways that support future success." Typical bureaucratic gobbledygook that can mean anything or, more likely, nothing at all.

Then we get down to the nitty gritty. One committee member said, "Let me be totally clear, we are talking about Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2 - - - those three courses we've all known and loved - - - and removing them from our high school mathematics program, replacing them with essentials concepts for grades eight, nine and ten." Well, that's "essential concepts" to a bureaucrat who probably hasn't taught a class nor stepped foot in a classroom in twenty years.

Some parents are becoming increasingly alarmed the standard for all students might be lowered in the name of equity. Those kinds of changes are diametrically opposed to the efforts of those students who are high achievers in STEM-related curriculum. Locally, that would mean there'd be no STEM schools, no

IB program at Bearden and so on. In the name of equity, every student would be taking the same classes across the board. What the left calls "equity" doesn't take into account individuality or creativity, much less actual ability. If a student played a piano like Liberace, he/she would have to sit in the same music class with a kid who couldn't hit a note on a triangle. A child who could write expressively and beautifully will supposedly learn in the same class with one who couldn't spell "cat" if it was printed on the chalkboard. We should all be able to act as well as the greatest thespian on the screen, be as funny as the funniest comic, sing an aria like the greatest opera singer in the world, and play any sport like the greatest athletes; if we all can't play equally, nobody can play.

The notion of "equity" in subjects raises some interesting and alarming questions. If all things really are equal across the board, what happens to special education? Do special ed students still have special courses in an "equitable" educational program? Are they still mainstreamed with other children and yet retain their aides, etc.? Think of the tens of millions, hundreds of millions of dollars taxpayers have poured into the school system here and elsewhere to RAISE standards, not lower them in the name of equity.

Like everybody else, I've

watched over the years as local school systems have moved closer and closer to embracing the lowest common denominator in most every respect. Members of the state legislature are becoming, finally, increasingly alarmed at the abysmal preparation rates of many of our school systems. Preparations rates are those students prepared to go on and further their educations at colleges and universities or ready to go out and join the workforce. Graduation rates, usually widely touted by school systems, are pretty well meaningless as compared to a higher standard like preparation rates. Legislators have started discussing that as many as one-third of students in Tennessee likely should have been failed in at least one grade along the way, but instead have been pushed through the system as if they were being squeezed out of a tube like toothpaste. And before you jump to conclusions, it doesn't have as much to do with inadequate funding as you might think. In fact, it has nothing to do with inadequate funding. For instance, the Knox County school system spends over half a BILLION dollars annually. The high school with the lowest preparation rate - - - 3% last time I checked - - - is Austin - East, which also has the highest per-student expenditure in Knox County. Farragut High School has the highest preparation rate in the

county and that is only 42%. Clearly, too many students are being graduated from our local schools without learning what they need to know to go on and further their educations. It is an inescapable conclusion part of the problem is lowering standards, instead of raising them. Schools and bureaucrats can crow about graduation rates, instead of what really matters: what youngsters have actually learned.

These figures are far lower than in private schools. Dumbing down curriculum in the name of equity is one of the stupidest ideas I've ever heard in my life. It borders on insanity. Nothing could be more harmful to our children or our country's future. The best-educated countries in the world are doing no such thing; indeed, they are doing quite the opposite. Big Tech already imports talent from across the globe precisely because those students aren't deficient in math like American students. Yet, at least in Virginia - - - but it will begin creeping towards us, the woke will see to that - - - they are preparing to make things worse, all in the name of equity and social justice.

Talent isn't bestowed on any human being by schools, the government or bureaucrats. It is given to an individual by God Almighty and nothing can or will ever change that fact.

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Avoiding viruses

Are you tired of hearing how terrible 2020 was with the appearance of COVID-19? I might agree with folks if we hadn't already had 3.2 million cases and 573,000 deaths—so far. For those who have suffered through the disease or who have lost loved ones and friends, nothing can ever erase the tragedies of the past months.

With that said, not all has been bad. I watched a documentary the other night about the effects the disease has had on the earth. They have been more positive. For one thing, the lockdowns around the world have impacted the air. According to the show, the amount of carbon emissions in 2020 decreased by 7 percent from 2019. Los Angeles skies were clear, an amazing change for the area. In

India, for the first time in most people's lives, the Himalayan Mountains were visible from their windows. We'll see if this year's measurements point to a consistent drop.

On the beaches, turtles laid their eggs without interference of humans. More babies survived than at any other recent time. Penguins in South Africa have been chased from the beaches by swarms of humans. They needed to leave their vulnerable young inland while walking to the ocean to hunt for food all day. Then the penguins come home to feed small ones who eat 1/3 of their weight each day. With humans locked down, the waddling creatures moved back to the beaches and their lives were much easier with their youngsters closer to them.

In cities and communities, wildlife appeared along streets and in yards. A group of deer walked back to old feeding grounds that had been gobbled up by development. Impalas ate from trees. In one place, cheetahs staked their claims

Continued on page 6



By Joe Rector
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Picture of Dwight and Gloria Kessel, Chapman Drug Company Christmas Party at Holston Hills Country Club, 1983, from the Kessel Family Archives.

Kessel: Awards, Recognitions, and Good Times!

Part 11 in Dwight Kessel series

By Ralphine Major
ralphine3@yahoo.com

With Dwight Kessel's years in public service, many well-deserved awards and recognitions have come his way. Some of the awards include Distinguished Service Award for Fifty Years of Leadership and Commitment to Kiwanis Ideals, Kiwanis Club of West Knoxville, 2003; Great Smoky Mountain Council, Boy Scouts of America, Silver Beaver Award, 1983; and Silver Lamp Award, Dwight & Gloria Kessel (Nursing Scholarship), Trinity Health Foundation of East Tennessee, 2019. Many awards are engineering-related from The University of Tennessee (UT): UT College of Engineering Outstanding Industrial Engineering Alumnus for 1992-93; Dwight and Gloria Kessel Auditorium, UT Science and Engineering Research Facility, 1997; Nathan W. Dougherty Award, UT School of Engineering, 2014; and Howard P. Emerson Award, UT Department of Industrial & Systems Engineering, 2018. Other recognitions include UT County Technical Assistance Service Evening Benefit Honoring Gloria and Dwight Kessel for establishing a Special Project Consultants Endowment, 1996; Volunteer of the Year Award, UT Chancellor's Associates, 1998; and UT Alumni Service Award, UT Alumni Association, 2013.

The West Virginia native has enjoyed some unique experiences like the time the air refueling group at the airport took him to South Carolina to do in-flight refueling of jets. He also got to ride in the new Humvee at the army base in Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia. The Navy flew him and some other guests to the Naval Base at Pensacola, Florida to spend the weekend on the

Lexington Air Craft Carrier to observe flight maneuvers. He was a member of the Tennessee delegation to the christening of the USS Tennessee submarine and was treated to a ride on the USS City of Corpus Christi submarine out Long Island Sound to the ocean and back. In 1985, Dwight and Gloria attended a world conference of wholesale pharmaceutical companies in England; and the trip extended on to France, Germany, and Austria. During his political career, he met four United States Presidents: Richard Nixon, Jimmy Carter, George H. W. Bush, and Ronald Reagan.

Among his fun projects was reading and visiting with second graders in some of the elementary schools. In 1993, celebrities Don Knotts and Barbara Eden performed at the Tennessee Theater, and the Kessels arranged to take them along with some others to Club LeConte for a late supper and conversation. When he was not working, traveling, or entertaining, Kessel found time to exercise at the YMCA by playing racquetball.

Words of Faith: "For I know that the Lord is great, And our Lord is above all gods." Psalm 135:5 (NKJV)

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Commission passes three important items

Cont. from page 1

cover the complex the city and county would be responsible for any shortfalls in payments.

The Sports Authority members, already approved by the city, include Richard Bass, Joan Cronan, Nikita Thompson, Tim Hill, Jeff Hagood, Alvin Nance and Rosalyn Tillman.

AJ Building Agreement

In a split vote the commission gave the Industrial Development Board authority to finalize negotiations with BNA Associates LLC to accept or waive payments in lieu of taxes for the purchase of the historic Andrew Johnson Hotel.

The Gay Street landmark, currently home of the Knox County School Administration Offices, has been before the county for a decision for several years. BNA had changed its original proposal, dropping hotel rooms in favor of apartments, and asking

for a tax break. The building will sell for \$6 million with a promise of a multi-million dollar restoration for retail and apartments.

County Finance Director Chris Caldwell told the commission the sale should be finalized in September with the board of education scheduled to move out before the next school year.

The 7-2-2 vote saw Commissioners Schoonmaker and Dailey voting "No" and Kyle Ward and Charles Busler passing.

Merit Council

The commission had two upcoming vacancies on the Knox County Sheriff Office's Merit System Council and four people applied for the positions. Commissioner Kyle Ward wondered if one of the nominees, Patti Bounds, could legally serve on the merit group while serving as an elected board of education member.

While Bounds was nominated by Commissioner Charles Busler she received his vote only.

Commissioner Dasha Lundy nominated incumbent Merit Council Chairperson Gina Oster and Commissioner John Schoonmaker suggested John Marshall. Commission Chairman Larsen Jay nominated Christopher Manning. In the main vote Oster received the six votes needed from Commissioners Courtney Durrett, Randy Smith, Terry Hill, Justin Biggs, Ward and Lundy.

Marshall got four votes from Commissioners Richie Beeler, Carson Dailey, Schoonmaker and Jay.

The alternate slot on the council went to Marshall.

The Merit System Council has been butting heads with the KCSO over which group has powers and duties in hiring employees. Three grievances are before the council, one on the transfer of an employee and two deputies are appealing their firings. The law director has told the council it has no powers to rule on those matters but the council is moving ahead with hearings.



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Carroll Reece

Tennessee's 'Mr. Republican' Pt 8

Pages from the Past



By Ray Hill
rayhill865@gmail.com

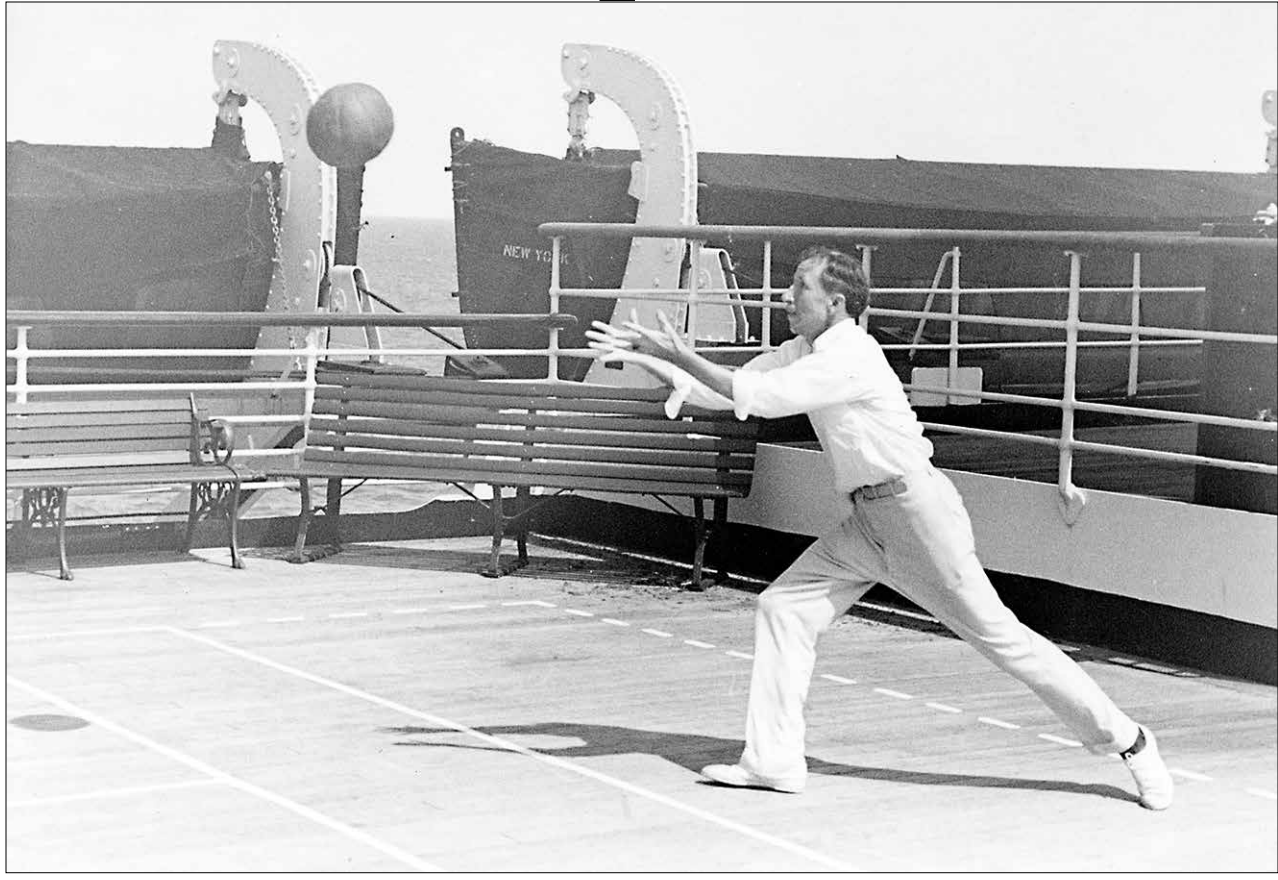
Carroll Reece, congressman from Tennessee's First Congressional District, had served for a decade. Yet, in the 1930 general election, Reece found himself surprisingly hard pressed by the challenge of Oscar Byrd Lovette, the former District Attorney for four Tennessee counties that surround Lovette's home of Greene County. Tennessee's First Congressional District was profoundly Republican and the congressman was almost always decided inside the GOP primary, yet O. B. Lovette was running against Reece as an Independent in the general election. Lovette was hammering Reece for the congressman's failure to support public power versus private power at Muscle Shoals, which was the fore-

election assuring readers O. B. Lovette had a chance to beat Carroll Reece. Noting Lovette had the combined support of Republicans as well as Democrats, the News reminded readers Lovette was waging his campaign on the issues of building the Cove Creek Dam and government operation of Muscle Shoals. It was Carroll Reece, the News asserted, "whose vote in Congress snatched the vision of Cove Creek Dam away from the people of East Tennessee." "A victory for the latter [Lovette], we believe, would have a salutary effect in causing Southern congressmen to consider the rights of the people above those of private interests," the editorial concluded.

The Bristol Herald Courier carried a column attributed to "Old Timer" which opined on a variety of topics, not the least of which was politics and political campaigns. "Old Timer" published a column before the November general election stating the congressional race was "so lopsided that it is ridiculous." "Old Timer" ridiculed Oscar Fair, the regular Democratic nominee, writing, "The Hon. Oscar Fair, Democrat, when last heard from was soaring from peak to peak, from crag to crag, and so far, with the wrongs and insults of the people vexing his perturbed soul, has not as yet returned to earth and announced whether he will endure present evils or fly to ills he knows not of." Nor did "Old Timer" spare William Isaac Giles, another Independent candidate. "The erratic Giles, William Isaac, will try and negotiate the race, but the infirmities of years and the love of conversation will cause him to tarry by the wayside." "Old Timer" then came to his main target, O. B. Lovette. "General Lovette, Republican, an Independent candidate, is on the stump, making addresses. Whether the mantle discarded by Price, who opposed Reece in the primary, fell on his shoulders remains to be seen, but so far he has not complained. The forces of Carroll Reece, regular Republican nominee, are confident, and indeed they have a right to feel confident over the result. It is probable that William Isaac Giles, the eccentric, will run Gen. Lovette a dead heat." As entertaining as "Old Timer's" column was, he was dead wrong.

Reece had built an impressive political network and organization throughout his congressional district, which rallied around the congressman and party nominee for the general election. One supporter, J. R. Gardner, went so far as to buy newspaper advertisements denouncing O. B. Lovette. "That a Republican of the standing and ability of General O. B. Lovette would allow himself to be drawn into the race is regrettable," Gardner's ad stated. "He enters the contest without credentials of any sort and in defiance of party regularity. He has been honored by the Republican organization in the past, yet he joins a movement to demoralize and destroy the Republican Party in the First Congressional District." J. R. Gardner characterized O. B. Lovette's campaign for Congress as less a fight against Carroll Reece than the Republican Party.

As the general election campaign came to a close, Carroll Reece spoke in Johnson City, while O. B. Lovette ended a motorcade tour in his own home city of Greeneville. The next morning, November 5, 1930, the Nashville Tennessean announced, "Carroll Reece Defeated for



COURTESY OF THE ARCHIVES OF APPALACHIA, EAST TN STATE UNIV. CARROLL REECE COLLECTION

An athletic Carroll Reece on board a ship during the 1930s.

Congress Seat." The Tennessean pointed out it had been 52 years since a Republican nominee for Congress had lost inside the First Congressional District. Lovette polled 20,893 votes to 18,239 for Reece. Of the 12 counties comprising the First Congressional District, Congressman Reece carried only four: Carter, Hancock, Johnson, and Unicoi. O. B. Lovette won everything else. Carroll Reece lost by 2654 votes.

Reece may well have also been hampered in his reelection campaign by the constant bad publicity given the case of his brother, Joseph, one of two Reece siblings who professed their preference for the Democratic Party. Joseph Reece had been appointed Commissioner of Insurance under Governor Henry Horton and was embroiled in a messy financial scandal, which eventually enmeshed yet another Reece brother. Certainly, the publicity surrounding Joseph did Carroll Reece no good.

Congressman Reece acknowledged his defeat on Thursday, November 6, 1930. Reece offered his congratulations to O. B. Lovette. Carroll Reece's statement was considerably more than a cursory acknowledgment of defeat and a proffered token snip-pet of congratulations. It was a mixture of polite, albeit a bit on the icy side, acknowledgment and an illustration of what the congressman saw as the differences between himself and his political opponents. Nor was it the statement of one who was done with politics. Quite the contrary.

"A man who cannot accept defeat graciously is not entitled to victory," Reece said in his statement. "It happens, however, during my six successful victories in the primary elections that no defeated opponent has extended congratulations or a word of acknowledgment, including the one who has apparently emerged victorious as an independent candidate after having been defeated in the Republican primary four years ago."

Congressman Reece said he was glad he had "been sustained by my own party in our primary" and believed "my apparent defeat was brought about by a comparatively few

bolting republicans having joined hands with the democratic party, in its effort to embarrass the present administration." Reece also believed heavy snowfalls in the "upper end of the district kept thousands of loyal republicans away from the polls," many of whom likely believed the congressman was sure to be reelected. Carroll Reece, having analyzed the election returns, noted "the democrats who are the strongest in the urban districts voted rather solidly for the independent candidate." Reece stressed his own commitment to the Republican Party, saying he did not "feel that the time has come for the disorganization of the republican party by independent candidates." Carroll Reece said "differences" inside the Republican Party should be settled inside GOP primaries.

Reece reminded voters, "I am interested in the first district, I love its people and shall never forget my friends to whom I am most profoundly grateful for having stood by me so loyally." If anyone doubted Carroll Reece had his eye upon the future, the statement, "I hope to always be able to be with them and render them every service possible" should have served as a mighty big giveaway.

It could hardly surprise anyone that Carroll Reece would try and reclaim his seat in Congress in the 1932 election. There was very good reason to believe Reece's defeat was but a temporary setback. The former congressman knew his successor would have only two years to ingratiate himself with the people of the First Congressional District, while Reece had performed countless services and favors for constituents for more than a decade. Reece also knew the administration of President Herbert Hoover would ignore Congressman O. B. Lovette in matters of Republican patronage. Carroll Reece proved that point and it was amply demonstrated the former congressman still wielded considerable influence inside the Hoover administration when the Knoxville Journal announced, "Reece Gets Job for Lowe as Agent in the Labor Department" in May of 1931.

had returned from a trip to Washington, D. C. to his home in Johnson City. Reece had gone to the Capitol and spent the day visiting "governmental departments and calling on old friends." One result of his trip to Washington was the appointment of L. Bert Lowe, a resident of Elizabethton, as an agent for the Department of Labor. Lowe was to be engaged in "unemployment work," earning a salary of \$3,000 annually. Bert Lowe was the nephew of John Lowe of Erwin, Tennessee, who was the head of the local chapter of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. Reece was quoted as saying, after his visit to Washington and discussions with "departmental officials," he believed "the federal buildings at Elizabethton, Rogersville and Soldiers Home, Johnson City, to be started at an early date." The Journal reminded readers the projects had been approved, along with the necessary appropriations, by the previous Congress. As a congressman, Carroll Reece, had pushed along appropriations of \$650,000 for the Soldier's Home in Johnson City, along with \$125,000 for the post office building in Elizabethton, and \$75,000 for the post office building in Rogersville. It was also a none-too-subtle reminder Congressman O. B. Lovette could not shower the First District with federal largesse as the Great Depression deepened and took hold in East Tennessee.

Both Carroll Reece and Congressman O. B. Lovette were suspected of aiding beleaguered Governor Henry Horton when Tennessee's Chief Executive was doing his best to outswim the shark of impeachment close on his heels. The Chattanooga Daily Times reported, "The alliance between the Horton-Lea-Caldwell political machine and J. Will Taylor republicans today showed its color in the impeachment vote in the house of representatives." A similar alliance with the Crump machine in Memphis negotiated by Luke Lea had dissolved when almost \$7 million of taxpayer money evaporated with the collapse of the financial house of cards engineered by Rogers Caldwell. Crump and the

Shelby County legislative delegation came after Governor Henry Horton with everything they had, which was considerable.

J. Will Taylor, the congressman from Tennessee's Second Congressional District, reputedly did not want to see the GOP expand much beyond East Tennessee, as he enjoyed the power he had in patronage matters. With Carroll Reece absent from Congress, that power only grew. The Chattanooga Daily Times thought both Reece and his successor in Congress had helped Governor Horton to escape impeachment when the first vote failed by a mere seven votes. There were sixteen Republicans in the Tennessee House of Representatives and only four voted for the articles of impeachment. The four Republicans who voted for the articles of impeachment were Arthur Atchley of Knox County, M. G. Goodwin of Loudon County, Tom Taylor of McMinn County, and H. C. Franks from Hardin County in West Tennessee. Atchley was almost certainly following the will of the people he represented as few counties in Tennessee were harder hit by the fall of the House of Caldwell than Knox.

The Chattanooga Daily News related Horton had been helped by Carroll Reece, Congressman O. B. Lovette and Congressman E. E. Eslick, a Democrat who represented a district comprised of counties from Middle and West Tennessee. E. H. Crump was also then serving as a congressman from Shelby and few surrounding counties.

Carroll Reece was surely pondering his next campaign.

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School board unanimously approves 2022 fiscal budget

By Ken Lay

By a unanimous vote, the Knox County Board of Education approved its tentative budget for the 2022 fiscal year.

The discussion took just over an hour at a called board meeting Wednesday night at the City/County Building.

At the meeting's conclusion, board chairperson Susan Horn said that it was one of the most pleasant processes that she's been a part of during her time on the board of education after members approved a \$542 million budget.

The budget, which is \$38 million more than the current budget, includes a four percent raise for all educators and classified

employees. The \$14 million allocated for staff raises could be more as the board is waiting to see how much money the district will receive in BPE funds.

"We don't know how much we're going to get in BPE funds," said KCS Assistant Superintendent and Chief Financial Officer Ron McPherson said. "We usually know what we'll get, but this year, it's been a little late from the state."

McPherson estimates that the district could get \$103 million in additional funds from the state. Board member Daniel Watson added a measure that would give staffers an additional four percent raise should the district receive the funds.

KCS Superintendent Bob Thomas also added funds in the budget to give raises for secretaries, teaching assistants and custodians if funds from the state are higher than expected.

"These are our lower-paying jobs where we continue to experience significant numbers of vacancies and turnover every year," Thomas said.

Another area where the district continues to see significant turnover is with its security officers. That is problematic because the district training academy is only conducted once a year between May and July.

Security officers often leave at midyear or announce their intentions to leave at the end of a

school year.

The tentative budget includes an additional 21 days of pay for both security and resource officers, meaning their paid calendar days would increase from 200 to 221.

This would provide incentive for officers to remain with the district according to KCS Chief Operating Officer Russ Oaks.

"The strategic plan includes a goal to reduce our attrition rate to five percent during the 2023-24 school year," he said. "We conduct 10 weeks of training. We usually do it between May and July."

"When we lose people during the school year, they're gone, and that's a hole we have in our staff

until we're able to run another academy. And most people wait until the end of the school year to tell us that they're not coming back."

The budget also includes additional funds for special education and the district has also committed to improving mental health as students continue to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.

The budget has \$3.1 million earmarked for mental health and the district will also look to add 55 professionals to improve special education.

The budget must go to Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs by May 1 and ultimately approved by the Knox County Commission.

City Council to meet in-person Tuesday

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
steelym@knoxfocus.com

The Knoxville City Council meets Tuesday in regular session, live instead of virtually, and will begin looking at portions of Mayor Indya Kincannon's \$384 million budget for the next fiscal year.

Eric Vreeland, deputy director of communications, told The Focus the meeting will, indeed, be in the main assembly room. It starts at 6 p.m. that evening.

Given Mayor Kincannon's continuation of the mask mandate on city property those attending should mask up and observe social distancing. Her order extends inside all city-owned property and the Public Building Authority has designated the city-county owned building as a masking area.

The council is being asked, on the first of two readings, to fix the annual appropriations to several city departments and agencies and fund the next fiscal year. The council will also discuss continuing the property tax rate of \$2.46 for the new fiscal year beginning July 1.

A 2.5% pay increase for

general city employees is also on the agenda as well as the creation of the Knoxville Affordable Housing Fund.

The proposed budget will be followed with legislative budget hearings on Thursday and Friday, May 13-14, and a public hearing on Friday, May 14.

The council will revisit a zoning request for the former Penny Pawn site at 4821 North Broadway in Fountain City. Councilman Charles Thomas, who represents the area, had previously noted that the well-known business building there was probably demolished and postponed any decisions until today's meeting. The rezoning, for an oil-change company, passed the planning commission in a 7-6 vote and appears to be headed for approval at the council meeting.

The zoning request by Hilton Capital Group for two adjoining lots along Merchant Drive in Norwood is back before council. Two weeks ago efforts of local homeowners were successful in getting the vacant, long hilly property changed from the requested RN-5 to a more restrictive RN-3.

Homeowners there still

have some hesitation on the development of the property which also falls under the city's hillside protection act. The change has three items on the agenda including changing the Northwest Sector plan. One other piece of land, at 5291 Oakhill Drive is within the rezoning request.

Other zoning requests on the city's agenda include removing the commercial designation at Zero Nickle Road, and moving the zoning from heavy industrial to light industrial at 2100 Chipman Street.

Mayor Kincannon is asking for the reappointment of Maribel Koella to the Airport Authority and nominating Amy Midis to Knoxville-Knox County Planning. Councilman Janet Testerman is asking that Julie Eisenhower be named to the Golf Course Committee.

The mayor is also asking for authority to buy property for easements for the Lancaster Drive Sidewalk Project, acquire property for easements from CSX Railroad along Amherst Road, contract with Rogers Group Inc. for funds for the resurfacing Phase II Project, and contract with Southern Contractors Inc. for the Boyds Bridge repair project.

Avoiding viruses

Cont. from page 4

In fact, the number of cubs who survived increased with humans staying away. Elephants invaded villages in Asia to eat humans' garden plants. To stop the onslaught, villagers decided to plant acres of rice on which the large animals could feast. The plan worked and helped both man and beast live.

I watched these animals roam city streets and communities and thought of how terribly we have treated them. Even

in Knoxville, developers devour parcels of land, strip the natural habitats of wildlife, and cram 5 houses per acre. Those animals have no place to go other than into communities to search for food. Where are animals supposed to live and find food? No wonder so many animals lay dead on roadsides after the sun comes up.

That documentary showed me just how destructive we humans are. Our desire for gasoline and plastic and land have

led to the pollution of our world. Earth chokes and wheezes as it tries to keep its lungs free of crud. If we don't do something soon, wildlife and the planet itself might lose their battles and their lives. We have a choice: clean our planet up or be known throughout the universe as the virus that destroyed a planet. Think how similar we are to the very virus that plagues us. However, we also are the answer to survival, if only we can live a bit more like we have for the past year.

PARC reviews two cases

Cont. from page 2

culture of blackface.

Rosa Mar asked Chief Thomas about a "baseline for termination" and Thomas replied there are three classes, A, B, and C. Thomas said, "We do a lot of informal and formal training" concerning cultural diversity. She added, "We're always learning."

Middlebrook suggested that PARC and the police department look at doing more intense training and engage the community

in small groups. Croom suggested foot patrols in diverse neighborhoods.

Another case PARC discussed involved a complaint of a "violation of safety." The late 2020 incident involved a car that was stopped for violation of registration. The officer and a trainee called for backup after the driver demanded the officer put on a mask while talking with him and reported being treated roughly.

Chief Thomas said masks are not required by

officers traveling together, a policy she discussed with the city mayor. Thomas also said that city officers are not required to get the COVID-19 vaccine but added that she and 70% of the officers have.

After Mar asked why the officer refused to give his name to the car driver Chief Thomas said that giving the name is policy and she will look into it.

"It's common courtesy to give your name," Thomas said.

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PHOTO BY LUTHER SIMMONS

Christian Langlois of Bearden (third from left) competes in the 100-meter dash at this season's William Blount Invitational. Langlois has the top local times in the 100 and 200 events through April 29 and will be competing at the KIL Championships at Hardin Valley Tuesday.

Langlois to go for sprint double in KIL meet

By Steve Williams

Christian Langlois runs the shortest races when it comes to outdoor track, but the Bearden High senior standout has long-range goals when it comes to his sport.

Langlois will be competing in the annual Knoxville Interscholastic League Championships in the 100 and 200-meter dashes Tuesday at Hardin Valley Academy.

"It's a pretty competitive meet," said Langlois, during a break in a practice session last week at BHS. "There hasn't been a 100 and 200-meter winner in the same meet for the same team in quite a bit, so that's really what I'm shooting to go for."

"I definitely want to PR (set personal records) and come home with the wins." Langlois took third place in the KIL meet 100 dash as a sophomore in 2019, posting a time of 11.25 seconds behind champion Elijah Young of South-Doyle (10.79), who was a senior, and CAK's Kanye Harris (11.04), who was then a freshman.

Langlois didn't get to compete in the KIL his junior year as there was



PHOTO BY LUTHER SIMMONS

Bearden senior Justin Orlor goes over a hurdle at the William Blount Invitational. Orlor, who will be competing in the KIL meet Tuesday at Hardin Valley Academy, had the top local time of 41.41 seconds in the 300-meter hurdles event as of April 29.

not a meet due to the pandemic. But he will come into this season's meet with the top local times in the 100 (10.8) and 200 (21.8). Those times rank high in the state as well.

"Those times are nice, but I know that's not where my potential stops," said Langlois. "I know I can do way better than that. I just really have to learn to push myself and keep training harder to get those times down because I know I can get them down."

Christian said he's been running his whole life, except for when he was injured.

"I battled a couple of

injuries. A fractured hip put me out for two years (his eighth and ninth grade seasons), so that was kind of tough. And I didn't have a junior year (due to the pandemic) so I'm really making up lost experience for my senior year.

"I'm 100 percent now."

Langlois is a tall sprinter at 6-foot-2 and doesn't play in any other sports.

"I do want to make track a career," he said. "With the right amount of training in college, I know I will get faster. It's just what I will do with speed. I definitely want to go pro in track."

Like many, his long-range dreams are winning

national championships and competing in the Olympics.

"That's definitely what's in mind," he said, "but right now I'm just focusing on the present and what I have to do now to get my times lower to get into college to be able to have the opportunity."

"Yes, it's a step by step process."

The KIL meet will start today (May 3) at 5 with the field events. Track event finals get underway Tuesday at 5.

Please see 2021 TOP LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL TRACK AND FIELD TIMES, MARKS on B4.

Korey Mobbs named Catholic football coach

By Ken Lay

Knoxville Catholic High School introduced its new football coach last week, ending a three-week search to replace Steve Matthews.

And the Irish lured a successful coach from Georgia to East Tennessee to take over the reins for the Catholic program.

Korey Mobbs was named the Irish's coach at a press conference Wednesday afternoon at the Catholic High School gymnasium.

Mobbs comes to Catholic from Lanier High School in Sugar Hill, Georgia, a suburb of Atlanta.

At Lanier, Mobbs has been the head coach since 2014. He said it was tough to leave Georgia and his current job to come to Knoxville because of relationships that he established there, but also noted that Catholic and Knoxville are the right places for his family and him.

"When you come to a program as a football coach, you can tell how they've been coached and what kind of homes they come from by their body language," said Mobbs, who compiled a record of 58-22 as a head coach and won a pair of region championships. "I saw their eyes as I paced nervously around the locker room and that validated that we made the right decision for our family."

"We're happy to be here. We're happy to be in Knoxville. It's a great day to be Irish."

Mobbs won a Georgia

State Championship as a player in 1997 and said it was tough to leave Lanier due to the relationships that he'd established through the game of football but said "I look forward to establishing those same relationships here with the faculty, staff and administration at Knoxville Catholic."

He didn't rule out retaining some of Matthews' former assistants.

"We have good coaches, many of whom are here in the building," Mobbs said. "We'll continue to evaluate that. I look forward to meeting them and I look forward to working with our young men."

"I'm just a guy who's been blessed to coach a lot of young men and work with some great parents and great people."

Mobbs emphasized what he called the three Cs: character, class and commitment.

"We'll wear the green and gold with pride," he said. "We're going to do things with character. We're going to do things with class and we're going to do things with commitment and it's an honor to pair those three Cs with Knoxville Catholic."

"People talk about winning games but I want to establish championship habits, and if we do that, the other things will take care of themselves."

Mobbs replaces Matthews, who resigned after eight years last month after he was arrested for DUI and drug possession charges.



Knoxville Catholic High School introduced Korey Mobbs at a press conference Wednesday at the school's gymnasium. Mobbs come to Catholic from Lanier High School in Georgia, where he won two region championships. Photo by Pam Rhoades.

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!

"To the world, you are a mother, but to your family, you are the world."

- Unknown



Powell 'survives' in 2-1 win over rival Gibbs

By Steve Williams

Alaina Watson, playing first base for Powell, was involved in two smacks in the softball game at Gibbs last week.

She much preferred the contact she made in the second one.

After surviving a nasty collision with third baseman Reagan Radocesky as the two went after a pop up midway between the pitching circle and home plate in the fifth inning, Watson smacked a double over third base to lead off the Panthers in the top of the seventh in a 1-1 game.

Radocesky's sacrifice bunt moved Watson to third and Macy Belyea's double to centerfield brought her home with the go-ahead run in a 2-1 Powell victory.

"Nobody got hurt thankfully," said Watson of the collision after the game. "We just need to work on communication. We were both going for the ball. The effort was there. We just need to talk a little bit more about that type of play."

"I could see her out of the corner of my eye a little bit, but I couldn't tell how close she was," added Alaina. "But I could tell she was nearby with my peripheral vision."

Winning pitcher Delayna Bryant



PHOTO BY JAMES SPEARS.

Powell shortstop Cayden Baker, a Texas A&M signee, prepares to throw in the Lady Panthers' 2-1 win over Gibbs in Corryton last week.

had a close-up view of her teammates' crash.

"I'm just glad they are okay. When they were both calling 'ball' at the same time, I backed up trying to avoid any collision. It didn't work very well, but I tried."

Watson, batting in the No. 4 spot in the order, said she was just looking for a base hit in the seventh and was expecting a pitch over the inner part of the plate.

"I wasn't trying to hit it over the fence. I just wanted to get on base."

She made contact on the first pitch and said it was made "definitely with the sweet spot of the bat."

Gibbs took a 1-0 lead in the first inning. Freshman Dakota Large singled, stole second and scored on an error.

Powell tied the score in the third. Bryant doubled to right field

and Kendall Radocesky's sacrifice bunt moved her to third.

Gibbs second baseman Emma Keck made a good catch of a hard hit liner for the second out, but a pickoff attempt at third by catcher Madison Watts got away and Bryant scored to tie the game.

Watson, a senior, said it was a really big win.

"We've been rivals since 2017 when we faced each other at the state. None of us were there at that time, but we know the rivalry has been passed on. We have to fight and play our hardest and so it's still a big win. It's awesome. I'm glad we won."

After Gibbs defeated Powell in the Class AAA state finals in 2017, Gibbs was reclassified Class AA.

"Thankfully, we went back to state in 2018 and ended up winning the state title," said Watson, who was a freshman on that team.

Gibbs Coach Carol Mitchell said her team just didn't get hits or advance runners when they needed to in the game.

"We have to be able to beat teams like this for it to be a good year, and we're not beating teams like this," said Mitchell. "Lost to

Farragut (3-2) and lost to Powell. If we can't beat teams like that, then the end result is not going to be what we want it to be. Close doesn't work."

Mitchell said her post-game message to her team was: "We have to walk out with the expectation that we're going to win the game and we haven't done that the last two games I don't think. We haven't shown that we're walking out there expecting to win the game. We should expect to win every game period."

"And some of that is not having a last year to feed off of (due to the pandemic). We're feeding off of two years ago ... We've got to get back into where we understand the expectation is to win the ball game first and foremost."

Mitchell said having several freshmen in the starting lineup didn't matter.

"I don't care what grade they are in. You walk out on the field; you better expect to win the ball game. Period."

"Maybe we can turn one of these our way in the next few days."

Gibbs was scheduled to play at Powell Friday.

Bobcats rout Anderson County to claim second in District 3-AAA

By Ken Lay

A run-rule victory over Anderson County Tuesday helped Central High School's baseball team clinch second place in the District 3-AAA standings. As the No. 2 seed, the Bobcats will be a host team in the upcoming district tournament.

Central had to come from behind to notch a 17-7 victory over the Mavericks Tuesday night at Bob Bales Field at Tommy Schumpert Park.

"This was a big win for us," said Bobcats' coach Dustin Plumlee. "We came out and we were able to come out and jump on them and they fought back and came back."

"But our kids battled back and we hit the ball hard."

Central (17-8 overall, 10-3 in the district) fell behind 6-2 as the Mavericks (9-16, 5-9) scored six runs in the top of the second inning with the help of two errors by the Bobcats and a grand slam home run by center fielder Luke Lowery.

But the Bobcats, who will co-host the District 3-AAA Tournament, which begins Friday, along with top-seeded Powell, didn't



PHOTO BY KEN LAY.

Central High School outfielder Ryan Bolton digs in at the plate in the Bobcats' 17-7 victory over Anderson County Tuesday. Bolton had four hits to help Central claim second place in the District 3-AAA standings.

go away.

Central opened a 2-0 lead in the bottom of the first thanks to a lead-off double by Andrew Hill, who would score the game's first run when he came home on an RBI single by Ryan Bolton.

Bolton, who went 4-for-4 scored when first baseman Owen Holbert came up with another double making the score 2-0.

After ACHS's offensive outburst, the Bobcats began to chip away as they tallied four times in the third as Jay Faulkner came up with a two-run double and Austin Ellis and Bolton had RBI singles in the frame to help

Central, which won the series opener between the two schools 8-6 on Monday, April 26 in Clinton, pull even.

Bolton's RBI double helped Central reclaim the lead as it plated Logan Rodewald to make the score 7-6.

After the Mavericks evened things again in the fifth, the Bobcats scored five in the bottom of the frame and ended things with five more in the sixth, Bolton's two-run single sent the Mavericks home early.

Hill also had a two-run single in the sixth for Central which finished the contest with 17 hits.



Seymour High's Adam Quincy hurls Eagles to a 7-3 win over Sevier County to wrap up a 12-0 record in District 2-AAA. Photo by Steve Williams.

Seymour's perfect district run ends with a blast

By Steve Williams

The batter's eye at Seymour High School's baseball field includes several 30-foot tall pine trees behind the center-field wall.

One night last week Elijah Galyon, the Eagles' 5-11, 215-pound slugger, hit a towering shot over those trees and into the darkness.

As the ball traveled out of sight, "oohs" and "ahhhs" could be heard from the fans.

It was a Paul Bunyan type home run for sure.

Not familiar with the dimensions of the Seymour field, the reporter in the press box asked the scoreboard operator how far he estimated Galyon's home run ball traveled.

To "Boyd's Creek," answered a grinning Keith Payne.

The majestic three-run homer erased the momentum rival Sevier County had mustered in the top half of the sixth inning when the Smoky Bears pulled to within 4-3.

"The home run by Galyon was the back-breaker," said Sevier County Coach Casey Taylor after the game.

Elijah enjoyed it. "This one felt great," he said. "Of course, it was against a rival, so that always makes it a little bit sweeter."

Kyle Koeneman, in his sixth year as the SHS head coach, said: "Since I've been here, it's probably one of the longest ones I've seen hit."

"He's strong. He's solid."

Senior southpaw Adam Quincy blanked the Smoky Bears in the seventh inning for the 7-3 win, which capped Seymour's perfect 12-0 run through the District 2-AAA regular season.

The Eagles (28-2 overall) are scheduled to play Chattanooga Baylor today (May 3) at Tennessee Wesleyan University at 4 o'clock before their district tournament opener at home Friday.

The seniors on this year's talented team were freshmen when Seymour stunned perennial state power Farragut on the road in the 2018 sectional round and advanced to the state semifinals before being eliminated.

"So they know how to win," said Koeneman.

"Our arms have been our strength this year (13 wins were shutouts) and we hit the ball well. Our one through six can all hit

it hard and get on base and the bottom of our lineup can produce too."

In addition to Quincy (7-0, 1.23 ERA), Seymour is led by lefty Derek McCarley (8-0, 0.44 ERA) and Galyon, a third baseman who leads the team in hitting with a .526 batting average, eight homers, 37 RBI and 35 runs.

McCarley is second in hitting (.397) and Quincy is batting .358 with five homers. They both can play first base when not pitching.

Galyon also gets work on the mound as the team's closer. He's 2-0 and has four saves with a 0.38 ERA.

All three have already signed college scholarship papers - Quincy with Western Carolina and McCarley and Galyon each with ETSU.

Others contributing significantly include AJ Berry, a junior third baseman, outfielder and pitcher with a 5-1 record. He's hitting .384 and leads the team with 16 stolen bases.

Seth Shaw, a senior shortstop and third baseman, is hitting .381.

Luke Farragut, who made a great diving catch in right centerfield for the third out of the third inning in the win over Sevier County, has a .329 batting average.

Seniors Judson Geringer (.304) and Cooper Douglass (.298) split time catching.

Senior SS-3B Tres Parton is hitting .254 and junior second baseman Blake Payne .333.

Seymour won 19 straight before losing its first game 7-3 to Maryville in a tournament April 9. The Eagles won seven more in a row before falling to Gibbs 2-1 in a non-district game on Senior Night April 23.

McCarley struck out 14 as Seymour clinched the district title with a 4-1 road win at Sevier County on April 26.

McCarley also hit a two-run homer to spark Seymour to a 3-0 lead in the opening inning of its April 27 win over the Smoky Bears.

After that game, Galyon was asked how the Eagles remained motivated, considering the title had been clinched the night before at Sevierville.

"Even if it doesn't mean anything (in the standings), you're going to have to fight to beat us ... This is business to us," he said.

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This bumper sticker, purchased outside Legion Field in the mid afternoon of Oct. 19, 1985, is a real "keeper" for the serious-minded Tennessee fan. Picture courtesy Mattingly collection.

A look at historic scores

There are times the game-by-game scores in the Tennessee Football Media Guide, pp. 280-296 in the 1919 version, are just a mind-numbing array of numbers, stretching from that first game in 1891, Sewanee 24, Tennessee 0, through the more recent years. No one has had the patience to count how many different scores there have been, but there are certain scores that do stand out.

35-34... 37-34... 15-13... 23-16... 16-14... 45-3... 20-14 (twice) 35-7... 10-6... 24-13 ... 35-28.

35-34 On Nov. 9, 1991, Tennessee defeated Notre Dame at South Bend, but it was no ordinary game. The Vols trailed 31-7, 31-14 at the half, but rallied to win. Freshman placekicker John Becksvoort dreamed of winning the game with a field goal, but an extra point proved to be plenty.

37-34 On Dec. 4, 1965,

Tennessee and UCLA squared off in the "Rosebonnet Bowl" game at the new stadium in Memphis. It was an unprecedented offensive display, with quarterback Dewey Warren scoring the game-winner at the left end of one of the longest 1-yard runs ever.

15-13 On Oct. 20, 1928, on Denny Field in Tuscaloosa, Tennessee defeated Alabama in a game highlighted by Gene McEver's 98-yard TD return of the opening kickoff. This was the game that brought the Vol program and Maj. Neyland into the bright sunlight of big-time college football.

23-16 Tennessee knocked off Florida State on Jan. 4, 1999, in the inaugural BCS Championship Game. Tee Martin had a 79-yard touchdown pass to Peerless Price. Dwayne Goodrich had an interception return for a touchdown and won Defensive MVP honors despite being injured and missing the second half. The game finished off a 13-0 season, best mark since an 11-0 worksheet in 1938.

16-14 On Oct. 19, 1985, in Birmingham, Dale Jones had a point-blank interception off Mike Shula, saving the game and highlighting a season in which the Vols won the SEC title and a berth in the Sugar Bowl. The Vols lost starting quarterback Tony Robinson to a knee injury but found a more-than-capable replacement in Daryl Dickey.

45-3 On Homecoming night, Oct. 13, 1990, the halftime score was 7-3, Tennessee over Florida. The Vols erupted in the second half to outscore the Gators 38-0. Dale Carter's 93-yard kickoff return launched the onslaught. The point total included a TD pass from tight end Von Reeves to wideout Carl Pickens.

20-14 Take your pick of the triumph over Texas in the Cotton Bowl on Jan. 1, 1951, or a similar triumph over Ohio State in the Florida Citrus Bowl on Jan. 1, 1996. Andy Kozar and Cowboy Hill led the way in the fourth quarter in Dallas, as Kozar scored twice, while Hill had an interception and fumble recovery. In Orlando, Jay

Graham had a long TD run, Joey Kent caught a TD pass, and Bill Duff had a key fourth-down stop on Eddie George in the shadow of the Vol goal.

35-7 On Jan. 1, 1986, the underdog Vols, supposedly fodder for a Miami team that had national championship aspirations, took inspiration from a heavily partisan Sugar Bowl crowd and dismantled the Hurricanes. Jeff Powell's 60-yard scoring run in the third quarter stands as one of the most memorable jaunts in Tennessee football history.

10-6 The Vols defeated Miami on Nov. 8, 2003, at the Orange Bowl. It was a shocking upset, especially for those Vol fans who had mentally chalked this one up as a loss. Derrick Tinsley scored the game's only touchdown and recovered a fumbled punt late in the contest to seal the deal.

24-13 The trip home up I-59 to Big Orange country was fun. Third-string quarterback Bubba Wyche led the first triumph over the Tide since 1960. Albert Dorsey had three interceptions

off Snake Stabler in the fourth quarter to fend off an Alabama comeback. Sophomore defensive back Mike Jones made the next week's cover of Sports Illustrated.

35-28 On Oct. 16, 1982, the Vols defeated Alabama, 35-28, breaking a losing streak that dated to 1971. Alan Cockrell threw the ball all over the field, and Mike Terry had the game-clinching interception in the final seconds. The game marked Bear Bryant's final appearance at Neyland Stadium.

31-11 Penn State was 10-0 coming to Knoxville for the 1971 home season finale on Dec. 4 and the celebration of "Majors Family Day." Bobby Majors had two long kickoff returns and a 44-yard punt return for a score. Conrad Graham had a 76-yard TD run off a fumbled pitchout by State quarterback John Hufnagel.

If you look closely, there are some great stories behind the scores.

HS Football Spring Practice Underway

By Mark Nagi

There are times that the days drag, and others that they fly by. Either way, our local high school football teams can't wait for the opening games of the 2021 season get here.

The good news (or bad news for those impatient folks) is that the kickoff to the 2021 campaign is less than four months away.

I've had the chance to check in with a bunch of area schools over the past couple of weeks and figured this would be an opportune time to relay what I've learned to you, the loyal reader!

First up, let's head to the mean streets of Farragut where the Admirals are hoping to win a Region title, and advance further in the Class 6A playoffs. In 2020 they were eliminated in the first round by Bradley Central.

The Ads return eight starters overall, the most important of which is quarterback Dawson Moore, an all-Region performer in 2020.

"Dawson did a great job growing up last year with all this COVID," said Farragut head coach Eddie Courtney. "He matured a lot and that is what we wanted him to do. He can be a dual threat and got more accurate as a passer. We always know that he can run the football so, that is a big plus there. He's always been a great leader in the off season and I'm looking forward to see what he does this spring."

There is a lot of potential in terms of the skill positions.

"That's wide open right now we lost some good ones last year," said Courtney. "We have got some young kids that got some playing

time last year so that's why you have spring practice to see what you have. We should be getting some guys back from track and baseball soon. It should be pretty exciting around here."

Farragut's 6A rivals, the Hardin Valley Hawks, had their struggles in 2020, finishing 2-8. But head coach Mike Potter likes what he is seeing from his team these days.

"These guys are motivated, and they are working hard," said Potter. "We have had some good work in the weight room, and they are getting stronger. They are eager to get the pads on in the next couple of days and getting after it... coming out every day, working and giving maximum effort, and being committed to the cause and trying to do our best to improve upon what we did last year."

A few miles away the rebuild continues

for the Karns Beavers in Class 5A.

"We are excited for spring practice," said Karns head coach Brad Taylor. "It looks like we are getting back to more normal of a football season coming up, so we are excited about that too."

The Beavers return twelve starters, including rising junior running back De'Sean Bishop, who is getting looks from lots of college programs. And he'll have some help going forward.

"We had a good off season through winter workouts," said Taylor. "We return a good bit of offensive linemen. We have some guys in the skill positions that have some experience. Our biggest concern is where

we are on defensive line and linebacker because we lost some experience there. But we return a lot of good football players."

And finally, the South-Doyle Cherokees are getting used to life in Class 4A after a 2020 season in which they were Class 5A semifinalists.

"We feel like we played in a great league," said South-Doyle head coach Clark Duncan. "5A football is huge but so is 4A. We've moved into it with Fulton, Anderson County, Greeneville, Elizabethton... so there is great football to be played. It is going to be challenging but exciting because it is new people. We have a really strong out of conference schedule which will help us come postseason."

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Tyler Overdorf
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Kristen Sampson
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David Sanger
Owen Feld
Jaylon Green
Luke Lentz
Devin Mixon

WEST (Girls)
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Alexis Porter
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WEST (Boys)
Cade Acker
Ethan Shields
Braden Lathem
Hunter Hudson
Baker Dance

2021 TOP LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL TRACK AND FIELD TIMES, MARKS

(Through April 29)

BOYS

Sprint Events

100: Christian Langlois (Bearden sr.) 10.8
200: Christian Langlois (Bearden sr.) 21.8
400: Connor Evans (Farragut sr.) 49.81

Distance Events

800: Tyler Ebbert (Farragut jr.) 1:57.89
1600: Andrew Schultz (HVA sr.) 4:23.04
3200: Kaden Keller (HVA jr.) 9:37.52

Hurdles Events

110H: Michael Spurgeon (HVA sr.) 15:25
300: Justin Orler (Bearden sr.) 41.41

Relay Events

4x100: Bearden 43.52
4x200: Hardin Valley 1:31.9
4x400: Hardin Valley 3:26.6
4x800: Hardin Valley 8:02.6

Field Events

HJ: Mason Collins (Farragut jr.) 6-2
LJ: Ben Smith (HVA jr.) 22-9 ½
TJ: Mason Collins (Farragut jr.) 43-4¾
PV: Jonathan Shved (Farragut sr.) 13-6
Discus: Ian Salyer (HVA sr.) 145-0
Shot Put: Ian Salyer (HVA sr.) 50-5

Tindall, Carter wrestler, places second in NHSCA event



By Steve Williams

Jailynn Tindall has added to her growing list of wrestling awards.

The Carter High junior, who captured a TSSAA state championship in girls' wrestling this past winter, finished in second place in the 144-pound weight class of the National High School Coaches Association meet the weekend of Aug. 23-25 at Virginia Beach, Va.

Tindall pinned Kamryn Ellis of Georgia in the Round of 16 and scored an 8-0 major decision win over Mia Buckner of Georgia in the quarterfinals.

In the semifinals, Jailynn added another pin against Kilee Callaghan of Washington before losing an 8-6 decision to Lorelei Smith of West Virginia in the national championship match.

Carter High's Jailynn Tindall is close to pinning an opponent en route to taking second place in the 144-pound weight class of the National High School Coaches Association's national tournament recently in Virginia Beach, Va.

Local basketballers named to TSWA all-state teams

By Ken Lay

The Tennessee Sports Writers Association honored 10 area high school basketball players when it released its all-state basketball teams recently.

The organization honored five local boys players and five local girl basketball players. All played in Division II and eight of the 10 honorees were underclassmen.

In Division II-A, Concord Christian School's Jose Rodriguez and Webb School of Knoxville's Lukas Walls were named to the boys team.

Rodriguez, a junior for the Lions, was the Division II-A East Region District 1 Most Valuable Player while Walls, a sophomore for the Spartans, led Webb to the regular-season district championship and the postseason tournament title.

In Division II-AA, Catholic High School had three players named to the team in junior guard B.J. Edwards, sophomore guard Blue Cain and junior forward Handje Tamba named to the squad.

The Irish, the 2020 Division II-AA State Champions, reached the state tournament again in 2021, falling in the semifinals.

Edwards was named Mr. Basketball this season and is a three-time finalist for the award.

All three Catholic players have multiple NCAA Division I scholarship offers and all are being recruited by Tennessee.

Three area girls made the Division II-A all-state team including First Baptist Academy's Catherine Hendershott, Webb's Madelyn Ladd and Berean Christian School's Gracie Palmer make the team.

Hendershott just completed her senior season for FBA in Powell. Ladd is a sophomore for the Lady Spartans and Palmer is a junior for BCS.

In Division II-AA, Catholic made its first-ever trip to the state championship game after winning the region title.

The Irish were represented on the squad by senior Jeila Greenlee and freshman Sydney Mains.



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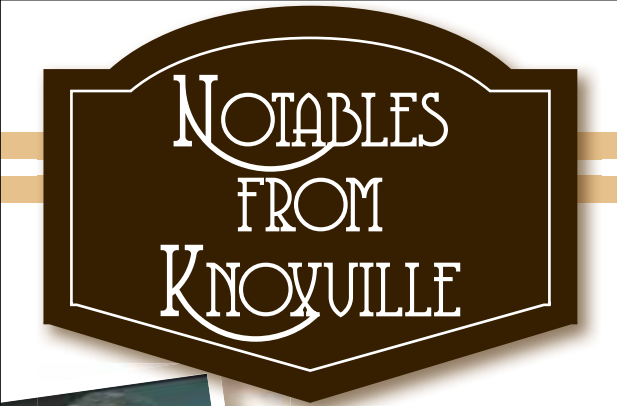
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LOWELL CUNNINGHAM

Did you know that "Men in Black" is based on a comic book created by a Knoxville native?

Lowell Cunningham grew up in Tennessee and graduated from UT in 1985. His comic book series, "The Men in Black," inspired the sci-fi franchise.

Since childhood he has been interested in the possibility of life in space. As the film that was based on his comic-book presumes, maybe there has already been contact and an elite, super-secret organization shields us from the existence of alien visitors even as it blows to bits those who might do us harm.

"Men in Black" became a Hollywood blockbuster and so did the follow up movies.

Cunningham lives in West Knoxville.

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The Doctor is in

a weekly column by
Dr. Jim Ferguson

The Flow of Life

I hate to write; I love having written.
Dorothy Parker

As a writer I have to disagree with Ms. Parker, the famous poet, satirist, critic and writer. But then she was perhaps best known for her wisecracks. My corollary to Parker's quip is, "I enjoy writing; I love having written."

Sometimes the most difficult aspect of writing is the beginning. But the focus of this week's essay is the ending... of the Tennessee River.

I have always been interested in rivers. Civilization arose along rivers. The most notable are the Nile in Egypt, the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in the Middle East (Mesopotamia translates as the land between the two rivers) and the Indus River of the Far East. Rivers supply necessary water for people, animals and crops, and provide a source of food (fish

and a means of transportation.

I learned first-hand about river transportation of heavy loads when Becky and I once took a trip on man-made canals in England. Nineteenth century roadways were poor, so canals were often dug near rivers to move loads by boat. Locks were constructed on the canals to control water levels and we learned to work the locks as we steered our refurbished sixty-foot canal barge through the English countryside. Quite an adventure!

Last week I mentioned the three previous essays I had written about our Tennessee River. It is a truism that we often take for granted things in our neighborhood or sometimes our backyard. As we cruised English canals the locals would often ask us what we were doing as we motored by their gardens alongside the canals.

I've been in most areas of Tennessee, but realized I knew little about our river where it traverses the northwest corner of Tennessee before joining the Ohio River just across the state line in Paducah, Kentucky. So, this week The Doctor Is In the third grand division of our state.

I had heard of the Land Between the Lakes, but did not know the area was formed by the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers in northwest Tennessee and southwest Kentucky. Actually, Barkley Dam impounds the Cumberland River as Lake Barkley, and the Kentucky Dam does the same for the Tennessee River to form the Land Between the Lakes. Interestingly, the impounded Tennessee River is called Kentucky Lake. I guess the builders of the dam get to name the waterway they create. (There is also a navigable canal between the two lakes, but I couldn't find its name.) Below Barkley Dam the Cumberland River finally joins the Ohio River. Ten miles further downstream, the Tennessee River flows into the Ohio River. And about forty miles later, the Ohio joins the mighty Mississippi at Cairo, Illinois - not Cairo, Egypt!

The now conjoined rivers afford barge transportation of grain and other products

throughout Tennessee, Kentucky, Alabama, Ohio and the Midwest. Additionally, flood control is aided, recreational areas are created and electric power is generated. Recall, the TVA was established in 1933 to control flooding and provide electrical power in the Tennessee Valley.

The lovely Ms. Becky taught me that life flows through relationships. This obviously applies to people, but also our relationship with God. We are seeing what happens to a society that emphasizes government instead of God.

We crossed the rivers and proceeded inland to Sikeston, Missouri, where Becky reconnected with a college buddy. Not being the sharpest knife in the drawer, I knew that if I wanted to go to medical school, I had to choose the college library over a fraternity. I don't regret this decision, but I am a bit envious of the relationships Becky developed in college. The two college buddies resumed their relationship like they were never separated by time and distance. I just listened from the backseat as we toured Cape Girardeau on the Mississippi River and hometown of Rush Limbaugh. I learned that towns on the Mississippi have permanent ten-foot wall dikes

often adorned with colorful murals of history and notoriety.

I had always heard of Reelfoot Lake, a fisherman's haven, but I had never been to our next stop. (I no longer fish except at the Kroger meat department.)

My Dad was a fisherman and growing up we fished in the Smoky Mountains. I even tied my own dry flies for trout fishing. However, it finally dawned on me, while wading the "big water" of Montana's Madison River, that I was done as a fisherman. Trying to cast a dry fly into spitting snow and a twenty-five miles per hour wind was the last straw.

Reelfoot Lake was formed by the earthquakes of 1811 along the New Madrid fault. The shift of tectonic plates with subduction caused the Mississippi River to flow backwards for three days and fill the floodplain creating what one writer described as an "afterthought of creation." The lake has an average depth of five feet and is a natural fish hatchery with fifty species of fish. Two hundred and twenty species of birds can be found in this birdwatcher's paradise, replete with iconic cypress trees encircling the lake and creating a vision of wonder.

Most now understand that we live on huge plates

of the Earth's crust which "float" on the molten mantle beneath. In 1912 Alfred Wegener more fully developed the 16th century concept of continental drift, but was ridiculed by the "experts" of his day. I challenge you to look at the west coast of Africa and see how it "fits" into the Caribbean Basin.

As these plates of the Earth's crust bump and push against each other tension builds up along fault lines and may finally be released as an earthquake. And if one plate rises above another, mountains are pushed up or pushed under. A tsunami may result when a continental plate is tilted, just like a wave is produced in a pan of water when the pan is tilted.

Have you noticed I've said little about politics, medicine, philosophy or even religion? But then I've said nothing about art or music, some of my other areas of interest. Sometimes the beauty and wonder of the natural world is more than enough.

Forrest Gump, a true philosopher, once said, "Life is like a box of chocolates." And you never know what you'll get when The Doctor Is In.

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

Mountain sights and sounds at Old Fort

If you're headed east on Interstate 40 beyond Asheville, North Carolina there's one little town right off the interstate you should take the time to stop and visit.

A Day Away



By Mike Steely

adventurers. In the 1800s the railroad finally reached that little settlement and a resort spa and hotel was built on the mountainside by Sanborn Worthen, who also bought

the old Davidson plantation. He created a railroad depot and set about luring wealthy families to his resort.

A fountain was created below the hotel in the meadow and water was piped from the mountain all the way to the fountain. The fountain became known as "Andrew's Geyser" because it ran continually and spouted a stream of water high

into the air. Today a trip north from the town by car eventually brings you to the fountain. There's parking and picnic tables there and you can walk out to the "geyser" or look behind the fountain to where the former hotel sat high on the mountain beside the train tracks.

Back downtown you can't help but see the Arrowhead Monument, a large granite rock built to remember the peace between the Cherokee and Catawba Tribes. Built in 1930 the arrowhead is the focus of the little downtown, which has the shops and tourist venues you'd expect. Davidson Fort, the Revolutionary Fort, is a reconstruction of the original.

Old Fort is immediately beside Interstate 40 and

if you head south you'll eventually come to Bat Cave, Chimney Rock Park and Lake Lure. Parts of the movie "Dirty Dancing" were filmed in that area.

Heading east from Old Fort is Marion, NC., the McDowell County Seat. The downtown is on the National Register of Historic Places and has the home of founder James McDowell, built in 1787. Just east of Old Fort is the Pisgah National Forest and its beautiful Catawba Falls. Parts of old Highway 70 have been opened by the state and McDowell County as a bicycle and foot trail there in the forest. Point Lookout Trail is a paved trail climbing 1000 feet in the Swannanoa Gap in a four-mile trip.

Old Fort has an annual Pioneer Day hosted by the

Mountain Gateway Museum in April and the town is also known for their Octoberfest each year. Trout fishing is permitted, with a special \$5 license, downtown along a section of Mill Creek bordering the museum at 102 Water Street.

During the season Old Fort also has weekly music concerts. A free bluegrass concert is held each Friday at the Rockett Building. The Welsford Parker Artz House and the downtown are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

You can get more information on Old Fort, NC online at www.oldfort.org or by calling (828) 668-4244. The little town could be a destination if you're headed that way and certainly is worth a brief stop if you're just passing by on your way



The huge arrowhead in Old Fort is a popular photo spot. The little town also features a museum, reconstructed pioneer fort, shops and is located just off Interstate 40 east of Asheville.

to somewhere else.

Sometime brief stops every couple of hours can not only break up a road trip but also can be entertaining and educational. Be safe and take a rest stop occasionally.

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