



Dr. Jon Rysewyk named next KCS superintendent

By Ken Lay

Knox County Schools has a new superintendent. He's a familiar face in the district's central office.

The Knox County Board of Education has selected Dr. Jon Rysewyk as the school system's next superintendent.

The board voted, 6-2, to confirm Rysewyk as the replacement for Bob Thomas, who will retire in June after more than five years as KCS superintendent.

Board members Susan Horn, Kristi Kristy, Mike McMillan, Virginia Babb, Betsy Henderson and Patti Bounds voted for Rysewyk, who has been with KCS for more than two decades as an intern, teacher, school administrator and district administrator. He currently serves as an assistant superintendent and is KCS's chief academic officer.

Daniel Watson and Evetty Satterfield, the chair of the search committee, voted for Dr. Linda Cash, the other finalist, who is director of schools in Bradley County.

Board member Jennifer Owen voted for neither candidate and said that the position should be reopened to new candidates.

She attempted to alter her vote (in favor of Rysewyk) after he'd already been confirmed.

She recanted after McMillan objected, saying, "You had the



PHOTO BY KEN LAY.

New Knox County Schools Superintendent Dr. Jon Rysewyk with KCS board member Mike McMillan Tuesday night at the Andrew Johnson Building. Rysewyk was selected by a 6-2 vote and will begin his tenure as superintendent on July 1.

same chance that we all did to vote for Dr. Rysewyk, and you didn't."

Rysewyk, who will be offered a contract in March and will officially take over as superintendent on July 1, said he was honored and humbled to have the opportunity to be KCS's next superintendent.

"It's a blessing to have the

opportunity to serve the people of Knox County, and particularly for me, the students in Knox County," said Rysewyk, who served as an intern at Bearden High School in 1999, "I'm humbled.

"This is my community. This is where my wife and I have raised our two daughters. This is where I want to be. This is where my

career has been."

The search for Thomas' replacement began during the fall semester when he announced that he would retire in June, after being superintendent since 2017.

The position had 18 applicants and was narrowed down to Rysewyk and Cash recently.

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Magnolia Avenue renewal plan passes city council

By Mike Steely

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In order to lure businesses to locate near and around the proposed multi-use stadium the city and county passed a Magnolia Avenue Warehouse District Redevelopment and Urban Renewal Plan Tuesday. The two bodies met at about the same time with the county approving the project only minutes before the city council took similar action.

The idea is to offer tax breaks to new businesses there and the city is putting \$15 million into expanding the warehouse district. The 8-1 vote on city council came after Councilwoman Amelia Parker questioned the plan as the city would spend money to aid the developer of the stadium by creating public spaces there.

Chief Economic Development Officer Stephanie Welch

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School board can hire outside counsel in new resolution

By Mike Steely

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If the Knox County Board of Education votes to do so, it may hire an outside attorney with some conditions.

During the February 15 county commission work session, three school board members, Kristi Kristy, Betsy Henderson and Susan Horn, requested authorization for new legal counsel in order to appeal a federal mask mandate in the schools. Last Tuesday's regular commission meeting saw an updated resolution that required a full board of education vote for "independent expert legal advice and representation."

Commission decided unanimously to allow the board of education, voting as a full body, to hire and pay an attorney that the law department recommends.

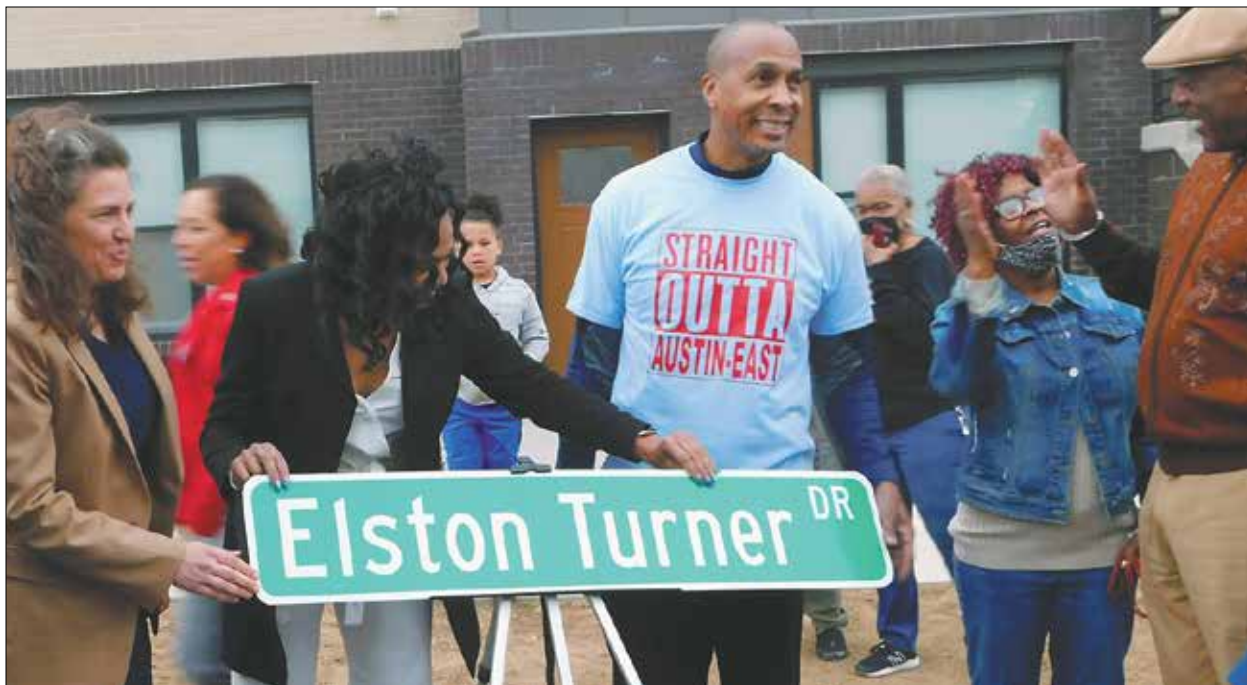
Sixteen of seventeen citizens speaking at the commission meeting's public forum favored the hiring. One speaker ended her remarks by saying that Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is a Nazi and then shouted "Go Truckers." The remarks also included "neglect from the docket," "Don't Comply," and "We're teaching each child as if they were sick." Only Bob Fischer, a Democrat candidate for Knox County Mayor, spoke in favor of

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A happy, high-five moment!

Elston Turner grins and Rev. Sanford Miller (far right) shares a high-five as a new street sign is positioned by Mayor Indya Kincannon (left) and Louise Turner, Elston's wife, last week in the new Austin Homes area of East Knoxville. Rev. Miller did the "leg work" for making the street sign a reality for his longtime friend and former Austin-East High teammate.

Photo by Steve Williams.



Turner touched by turnout for street dedication

By Steve Williams

Basketball great Elston Turner was touched by the turnout for a street named in his honor by the City of Knoxville last week. Even a quiver could be detected in his opening comments.

"Every time I come home I feel the love," he would later say on his special day.

The 6-foot-5 Turner with his bass voice proved to be an outstanding speaker and soon had those in the crowd laughing often.

Many from Austin-East High's Class of 1977 came to say "thank you" to Turner, not just for leading the Roadrunners to Knoxville's first state championship in the TSSAA classification era, but also for giving back to his school and community over the years.

Turner went on to star at Ole Miss in the SEC and played a total of eight seasons in the NBA with the Dallas Mavericks, Denver Nuggets and Chicago Bulls. He's in his 24th season as an NBA assistant coach and this

year with the Minnesota Timberwolves.

Elston said the event was "very, very special" to him. "Without the event, just to see everybody gather in February outside on my behalf - that's special to me right there.

"But the street naming is just unexpected and I'm blessed just to be able to see it, because it's usually an honor that's given with someone that's passed away."

Elston Turner Drive is now the name of

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Biden, Putin Good for Each Other

From a distance



By John J. Duncan Jr.
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Unfortunately for the American people, Joe Biden and Vladimir Putin have been very good for each other.

When President Biden came into the White House, one of his first actions was to shut down a major oil pipeline. That and other regulatory actions he and his administration have taken have driven up the prices of oil and gas. This

has made Putin, already one of the richest men in the world, even richer.

Putin, in turn, has given President Biden the opportunity to appear strong and decisive and has, at least temporarily, gotten problems like inflation, crime, and our southern border off the front pages.

Our leaders would never admit it, but there is nothing like a war to make people in Washington feel powerful and important. Especially dangerous at a time like this are chickenhawks who have never served in the military. They all want to become modern-day Winston Churchills and be regarded as world statesmen and show how tough and strong they are.

The most anti-war president we have had in the last 150 or so years was Dwight Eisenhower, a man who spent most of his career in the military. Everyone knows about his warning at the end of his presidency about the military-industrial complex. But probably the most anti-war speech ever given by an American president was when Eisenhower spoke to the American Association of Newspaper Editors in Washington on April 18, 1953.

This was really Eisenhower's first major speech as President. He said, "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not

clothed."

He talked of all the good things that could be done with the money spent on bombers, fighter planes, and destroyers and added that "the world in arms...is humanity hanging from a cross of iron."

He also once said to his Chief of Staff, "God help the nation when it has a president who doesn't know as much about the military as I do."

Most Americans feel great sympathy for the people of Ukraine. We have sent them many billions over the last few years. The total GDP of Ukraine is only \$155 billion. I went there a few years ago, and the country even then was going through a depression much worse than our Great Depression. Conditions

there are not much better now.

Russia has a total GDP about seven percent of ours. It cannot afford to do much for or get much from Ukraine.

William Taylor, a former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine said on CNN on Feb. 24th that Russia went into Afghanistan strong, stayed several years, and came out weak, leading to the breakup of the Soviet Union. He predicted that much the same thing could happen now with Russia's takeover of Ukraine. It could turn out to be like the dog catching the bus. What now? Strong now, weak later.

Unfortunately, with a debt of over \$30 trillion, the U.S. cannot afford to be the policemen of the world.

In a well-respected book called "The Inevitability of Tragedy," Barry Gewen wrote, "In foreign policy, choices usually come down to the bad and the less bad."

China is a much greater threat to the U.S. than Russia is. And the leaders of China have been wise enough to not get into any military war for almost 70 years. China is slowly taking over the U.S. through finance, technology, medicine, and buying up much of our land.

The Biden Administration is showing great concern for the sovereignty of Ukraine and the freedom of its people. They need to show more concern about the sovereignty of the U.S. and the freedom of our people.

Magnolia Avenue renewal plan passes city council

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defended the plan saying that making tax breaks available to future businesses there is the first step toward the renovation of the area. She said the plan would offer tax incentives to businesses not related to the development.

Parker argued that there is no development agreement yet with the developer and the city should not proceed without such an understanding. Welch said the city will have a development agreement after passing the Magnolia Redevelopment Plan. She said a tax incentive will help other businesses in borrowing private investment.

Councilwoman Lynne Fugate said that increasing the landmass in the district will increase local taxes once it is developed. Welch said the



Stephanie Welch, City of Knoxville Chief Economic and Community Development Officer, responded to questions about the Magnolia Warehouse District expansion and tax breaks there during Tuesday's city council meeting.

project is a "toolbox" that will lead to a development agreement.

Councilwoman Gwen McKenzie asked if existing businesses within the new warehouse district boundary may take advantage of the tax incentives and Welch replied in the affirmative that existing businesses can use incentives for

improvements or new projects there.

IN OTHER BUSINESS
Mayor Indya Kincannon told the meeting that 39 people have applied for the position of police chief. She said that applicants came from 23 states with eight from Tennessee including some from within the department. She also promoted her

proposed \$15 per hour minimum wage and a 16 % pay raise for city employees. She said the increases came from a comparison study and said the information will be released today along with a workshop being planned on the pay boost.

Lakeshore Park was approved for beer sales at small events there as long as the vendors have a state alcohol license. Small "slivers" of public right of ways along streets leading to the future multi-use stadium were closed with a promise that two-way traffic would continue. This affects parts of Florida Street and East Jackson Avenue.

The city council also voted to give SEED \$25,000 to develop and implement violence interruption street outreach programs. Parker voted for the funding but said community groups "compete for crumbs" for city funding.

The council also voted to ask local state legislators to declare gun violence a public health issue. Councilwoman McKenzie urged citizens to reach out personally to their state representatives to support the idea.

Four different mowing companies were allotted additional city funding with the idea of using the contractors to pick up roadside trash during the winter months.

The contract with CDM Smith Inc. got a boost in funding taking the agreement just over \$1 million for finalizing improvements at 275 Business Park.

Ellen Lee and George Anna Yarbrow were reappointed to the Knox County Board of Equalization.

Thoughts on Ukraine

Warning: On this topic, I am woefully ignorant.

Vladimir Putin has invaded Ukraine. What should be the US response? But first, I wonder if Putin would be doing this if Trump were still president?

America is in disarray with a weak, incoherent president. In the year since the election, the economy suffers from inflation, supply chain issues, a self-inflicted energy crisis, humiliation in Afghanistan, distrust of our institutions and misinformation resulting in confusion over COVID. Why shouldn't Putin (and China, Iran and North Korea) feel emboldened?

Again, what should be the US response? At its core this is a European problem. Britain is sending weapons to Ukraine. France is saying that it should negotiate with Putin without the US - likely because it is still fuming over the submarine deal with Australia. Germany has stopped certification of the gas pipeline from Russia. This after Germany would not allow Estonia to supply Ukraine with German-made weapons. It didn't even allow Britain to fly to Ukraine over German airspace. This is a warning shot to America regarding energy. Germany has made itself dependent upon Russian energy. The Germans are shutting down their nuclear plants and phasing out the use of fossil fuels. As a result, despite subsidizing energy costs with over 20 billion euros a year, Germans pay the most for energy than any country in Europe. Russia is the primary source for German imports of oil and natural gas. Although Germany is coal-rich, it is cheaper for it to import its coal from China.

Thus, Germany is also shutting down all its coal-fired plants. "Renewable" energy constitutes around 50% of energy in Germany. These actions, overwhelmingly endorsed by the German government and its people, belie the old notion that Germans are efficient smart people. What should be done? Here is my admittedly naïve view. First, we should terminate all economic trade with Russia, impound all financial accounts and terminate Russian access to our markets including financial markets. Second, we should support NATO but make clear that no US ground troops will be deployed. Third, we should supply German and European energy needs via shipments and pipelines. Of course, this means that we will have to reverse the idiotic policies that are putting us on the same energy-dependent path that Germany is on. We must open up oil and gas leases, pipeline construction and the use of clean coal and nuclear power. Fourth and most importantly, we should embargo all Russian exports of gas and oil. That way, the Russians would not be able to finance their aggression. However, I do not expect our weak administration to do any of these things. I doubt if it has the spine to confront Putin. I doubt it has the spine to flex its muscles in Europe and I know it does not have the spine to confront the Greenie Weenies on the Left by lifting the restrictions on the production of American energy.



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Publisher’s Positions



By Steve Hunley, Publisher
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Congratulations, Jon Rysewyk

The Knox County School system has a new superintendent. Dr. Jon Rysewyk has been the assistant superintendent since 2017. Six out of nine members of the Knox County Board of Education voted for Rysewyk.

Jon Rysewyk is a highly capable administrator and knows what he’s doing. Rysewyk comes to office without obligation to the teachers’ union, nor was he the choice of any special interest. For too long the board of education has been mired in the mess of the culture wars. It has been Knox County’s misfortune, and that of the students and parents of

our community, some of the board members act as if they are serving on the PTA Council rather than the school board.

Rysewyk is the first candidate for superintendent of Knox County schools to utter the word “taxpayers” in his interview since Earl Hoffmeister was elected by the people years ago.

Jon Rysewyk’s selection as superintendent affords Knox County the opportunity to change directions and concentrate upon the actual business of educating students. Congratulations to Dr. Rysewyk and the people of Knox County!

City Tax Increase?

For quite some time, this newspaper has been telling readers the City of Knoxville would raise taxes and lo and behold, that seems to be well on its way. The “rainy day” fund of the city has been depleted because Mayor Indya Kincannon and the city council has spent it. The Knoxville Police Department is 42 officers short of a full force, which equates to longer response times and less protection for law-abiding citizens. Kincannon is proposing a program, which

incidentally mirrors a program in the county government, that would reward employees for longevity. It cost taxpayers \$40,000 merely to train a single firefighter, for instance. What goes unmentioned is the progressive refusal (and advocacy to defund police departments) to support the police departments across the country which has demoralized and dehumanized departments everywhere. The truth is young people are much less likely to choose law enforcement as a career than at any point in time in our country’s history. Normal attrition is the enemy to municipalities and counties in America now.

The city, which all the incumbents running for reelection last year shamelessly bragged the city government’s finances were surpassingly well managed, has been spending more than it has been taking in for a while now. Just how spending more money than one is taking in is good financial practice has never been explained, but the consequences are rapidly approaching.

So the “well-managed” City of Knoxville proposes

to escalate the property tax bills at a time when a gallon of gas costs 40% more than it did a year ago, as inflation takes an average \$276 monthly bite out of the finances of working people’s budgets. You get what you vote for.

Puff the Magic Bylaws

I received an email from Elaine Davis a week or so ago following a Publisher’s Position questioning why she had not resigned her office as vice chair of the Knox County Republican Party. Davis says she is abiding by the local party bylaws and points out those same bylaws only required party chair to resign no later than ten days after the qualifying petition deadline should the county party chair run for office. Yet, Davis says, the bylaws are silent as to other elected offices inside the party apparatus having to do the same. Davis said she can retain her office by taking “a leave of absence” while challenging a Republican incumbent for the Tennessee House of Representatives. Davis says she “reached out” to members of the local party executive

committee because she values and respects their opinion. So basically, she consulted with fellow executive committee members Randy Pace and Daniel Herrera, etc. All of whom, coincidentally, are political opponents of state Representative Eddie Mannis whom Davis is challenging in the upcoming August Republican Primary.

Davis says taking a leave of absence is her best option because she has “almost completely organized” the GOP gathering for the May primary night, and continues to work on the next Lincoln Day Dinner. When Knox County Republicans last met in convention and elected Daniel Herrera chair (and Davis as vice chair), I was under the impression the local party had NO bylaws and was operating under state Republican Party bylaws, so of course my question is: where did these bylaws come from? The party bylaws are rather clear about state and local party officials remaining neutral in primary contests and somebody would have to be pretty naïve to think the current leadership would remain absolutely neutral. In fact, I would

guess Davis is counting on precisely that.

There has not been another convention of Knox County Republicans since Herrera and Davis were elected, so exactly who wrote and approved these bylaws, which have rather magically (and conveniently) appeared just in the nick of time? It seems to me bylaws should be approved and ratified by the state Republican Party.

A lot of questions remain about these new Knox County GOP bylaws. When did the local leadership intend to inform party members bylaws had been submitted to the state? Has the state executive committee actually approved the bylaws? When did the local party leadership intend to email or post on the Knox County GOP website those same bylaws it adopted without mentioning to anyone? I am currently in the process of reviewing and comparing these new local bylaws to the state bylaws. I am sure I will have more questions in the near future.

Governor Lee’s Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement

By Steve Hunley, Publisher
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Governor Bill Lee has unveiled details about his administration’s “Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement” act. It is a new formula for funding education in Tennessee. It has been 30 years since Tennessee has tried to recalibrate the funding formula for schools.

Governor Lee made the announcement in an event that was live-streamed and described TISA simply, saying the bill is “a piece of legislation and a funding formula that Tennesseans can understand, that parents can understand, that teachers and districts can understand.” Governor Lee said the current funding formula, the Basic Education Program (BEP) is “cumbersome and outdated.”

“Funding for the BEP doesn’t deserve a billion dollars to be put in it, but our students do deserve a billion dollar increase in public education funding,” Lee said. “They do deserve funding that ensures that our third-graders can read, and they do deserve funding that makes sure that they have a

pathway that prepares them for life beyond the classroom. And they deserve funding that fits every student’s individual needs and circumstances. And this formula is designed to do just that.”

Lee clearly stated the biggest change being proposed in funding education in the Volunteer State. “We are funding education based on the individual needs of the students that access that public education. We are making sure that parents understand that their child is receiving the funding for their public education based on their child’s unique needs, whether that’s concentrated poverty, a disability, a rural school. Individual needs will have individual funding decisions around it. And that’s what’s most important about this student-centered funding,” Governor Lee said.

Among the change proposed in TISA are:

- 1.) The student-based funding begins with a base funding amount for every student attending Tennessee’s public schools.
- 2.) Additional funding may possibly be allocated based upon individual student needs.

3.) The outcome incentives proposed in TISA are awarded based upon student achievement to help empower schools to assist all students to reach their full potential.

Governor Bill Lee’s approach provides a much-needed focus upon students. Currently, only 3% of funding (and we spend \$750 million of taxpayer dollars in Knox County alone) is spent on student characteristics. Centering funding around students is not only logical and simple, but also long overdue. The numbers are also impressive:

- \$6.6 billion for base funding for every public school student.
- \$1.8 billion in additional funding for students to be appropriated on the basis of the special needs of individual students.
- \$376 million in for programs that are specific, such as tutoring.
- \$100 million in “outcomes funding” which would be awarded based upon achievement to allow schools to assist students to reach his or her full

- potential.
- Another important feature of the TISA legislation is that the bill has reporting and district accountability requirements, which include an annual TISA report. That report must be made annually to the Tennessee General Assembly by the Department of Education, as well as each individual district-level accountability reports. The local reports would be submitted by local Boards of Education to the Tennessee Department of Education so that goals for students achievement can be established in each school year, explain how each goal can be met within the existing local budget, and state plainly how the local budget and school expenditures for prior years enabled districts to advance and promote student outcomes.
- Accountability measures are red flags to teachers’ unions and the educational-industrial complex and it will be interesting to see their respective reactions to the TISA legislation, which focuses

on updating the current outmoded funding formula used in Tennessee. TISA also significantly improves spending upon education in Tennessee, yet it appears to largely bypass spending it upon bureaucracy and administration. That alone will bother some in the educational-industrial complex. In Knox County, former superintendent Jim McIntyre’s Leadership Academy is precisely the reason every school in the county has so many assistant and vice principals, as he needed to justify running people through his academy and having a place for them to land. Expanding the administration was due less to the needs of students and parents than to feed McIntyre’s leadership academy.

The simplicity of the TISA program, as well as its transparency, in addition to the desperately needed focus upon students is a God-send by Governor Lee and his administration. It is difficult to imagine the TISA bill will encounter rough sledding in the very red Tennessee General Assembly.

Letter to the Publisher

Farragut has approximately 24,000 residents. The great majority of those residents do not know that from March of 2020 until May of 2021 there were no public meetings in the town of Farragut where citizens could speak directly to the Mayor and Aldermen as is protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and the Tennessee Open Meetings Act. The citizens were allowed to watch on cable television or YouTube and only allowed to email comments or questions to the Mayor and Aldermen and Planning Commission. Myself and others requested virtual meeting invitations and were denied by Mayor Ron Williams. I have the email read receipts to prove it. This was under the guise of protecting the public from the Covid virus. I can find no other city, town, or county government

that closed meetings in this way. The city of Knoxville did not and Knox County Government did not.

The First Amendment was ratified in 1791. Nowhere in the First Amendment does it say a citizen mails a letter to redress the government. Email would not be available for another 200 years. The right to redress the government has always been face to face. Always.

The Tennessee Open Meetings Act requires that citizens be allowed to Speak to the Issue. The key word is speak. Email is one direction. Speech is two way, speech is debate. Sending an email is not debate.

Mayor Williams also claimed that these email comments and questions were answered by the town of Farragut. Nothing could be further from the truth. Myself and many other citizens never heard anything

from the Mayor and Aldermen or the Planning Commission from our emails.

The reason for this authoritarian violation of our rights was to push through 285 apartments on the Biddle Farm across from the Farragut high school and middle school. In 2015 residents of Farragut stopped a proposed apartment complex on Smith Road next to Fox Den subdivision. Mayor Williams wanted to make sure that did not happen again. In the time Mayor Williams has served as Mayor he has pushed through two huge apartment projects in Farragut. Williams claims this is one of his most important accomplishments.

On June 19th 2021 on Nextdoor social media Mayor Williams wrote to me, “Mr. Mitchell, I am not going to argue Gov. Lee’s Executive Order, you are more than welcome to do that

with him and I will be glad to provide his email if you like. Our decision to follow the EO (Executive Order) was based on the number of folks who had underlying health concerns such as Agent Orange, COPD, etc. that could be exposed to COVID in open meetings. Your OPINION is that your civil rights were violated, again you may want to take that up with the one who issued the EO.”

Governor Bill Lee did not state in any Executive Order that local governments could or should exclude citizens who requested virtual meeting invitations. Yet that is what Mayor Ron Williams did on his own authority. There was no vote by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. This was done by Mayor Williams unilaterally. It is a violation of our civil right to redress our government in person. The person responsible is

Farragut Mayor Ron Williams.

Anyone who has ever taken a class in civics would know that Governor Lee cannot supersede the United States Constitution.

In December of 2021 Mayor Williams allowed open town meetings at the height of the Covid infection. There was no concern for “folks who had underlying health concerns such as Agent Orange, COPD”. The apartments on the Biddle Farm across from the Farragut high school and middle school were under construction. The entire violation of our most basic constitutional rights was to make sure we could not voice our opposition to the Biddle Farm apartments.

The great irony of this is the people of Farragut wrote 244 emails against the apartments at the Biddle Farm. Only 14

people wrote in favor of the apartments. There was a change.org poll where over 1,600 people signed they were against the apartments. This was the greatest protest in the history of Farragut. It took over four hours to read these emails in the Board of Mayor and Aldermen meeting where the final vote for the Biddle Farm apartments took place. The Mayor and Aldermen voted 5-0 to approve the apartments and had a celebration on film congratulating themselves on a job well done. Never forget this.

The town of Farragut will elect a new Mayor, north side Alderman, and south side Aldermen this August. Please remember these people who callously violated your rights.

Mike Mitchell
Farragut



PHOTO BY LETTIE STEELY.

Feeding the animals at Little Ponderosa Zoo is a treat. Large or small, the animals are friendly and love to greet you at the fence. The family-owned zoo and rescue center near Clinton has a large selection of animals, many rescued and housed there.

A DAY AWAY

Little Ponderosa Zoo worth a family visit

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
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My wife and I had talked about visiting the Little Ponderosa Zoo and Rescue for some time and recently we took a Sunday afternoon and drove to Clinton with little knowledge of what to expect at the family-operated zoo there.

Little Ponderosa Zoo is north of Clinton, just a couple miles off Highway 25W along Granite Road. You probably will want to follow the signs to get to the rural attraction. Founded by the late James Cox, the Little Ponderosa has continued under the family's care in spite of the pandemic and a devastating fire there in 2017.

It's a friendly place and admission is only \$15 or, in our case, \$10 for senior citizens. It's the type of place you will certainly want to take your children or grandchildren to and the day we were there many families were roaming the paved paths and admiring the many animals.

Little Ponderosa Zoo has a lot of animal variety including many that were rescued and brought to the site. We saw birds of all types, a big brown bull, lots of goats and sheep and even a tiger and a giraffe. You can feed many of the animals and they eat right out of your hands. Special animal food is available for a small price and comes

in different-sized plastic buckets.

The animals seem as glad to see you as you are to see them. Small kids are thrilled to pet the sheep, goats, and smaller animals as well as to feed them. There's even a pony ride available for the younger folks.

Deer roam the park and my wife and I were tickled to feed and pet the various animals, large and small, see the newborn baby animals, and discover which animals we could feed and which we could not. Whether your favorite is feathered or furred, Little Ponderosa Zoo and Rescue can be a great family outing and it is less than an hour away from Knoxville.

We found that taking I-75 to the Clinton exit and following it to Highway 25W was the easiest way to reach the little zoo, turning west on Granite Road and following the signs to 629 Granite Road.

You can find Little Ponderosa Zoo and Rescue online at littleponderosazoo.com or on Facebook or call them at 865-457-5536. The zoo is open Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. and on Sundays from noon until 5 p.m. While in Clinton you may want to visit the Appalachian Museum, the historic downtown, or the Green-McAdoo Cultural Center which has a museum dedicated to the Black community there and the integration struggle in the local schools.

Scenic Knoxville: Kill the Digital Billboard Bill

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
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Scenic Knoxville is campaigning to stop a bill before the Tennessee legislature that may open up local governments to permit digital billboards. In a statement last week the local organization is asking people to contact their state house and senate representatives to stop the bill.

"Both the city and the county prohibit digital

billboards, but we think this bill will override local ordinances. Basically, it looks like any existing static billboard could be 'upgraded' to digital technology," was the statement. Joyce Feld, president of Scenic Knoxville is handling the local effort to stop the bill.

"We have a chance to stop a fast-moving bill that will open the door to more digital billboards and seriously undermine local control community character

and appearance," the group's notice read.

Scenic Knoxville is asking residents to specifically contact state Senators Richard Briggs and Becky Duncan Massey. Massey appears to be one of the bill's sponsors and the organization said that Massey is "generally very responsive to our concerns."

Scenic Knoxville is affiliated with Scenic Tennessee and the state president, Marge Davis, is

spearheading the effort to kill the legislation.

"The industry insists the bill simply clarified existing regs and allows its members to keep up with changing times. It says it will have no impact on home-rule cities such as Knoxville or on TDOT regulated billboards along the interstate. Many observers, however, foresee a host of complications and unintended consequences," Davis said.

Rodney Woods, a Vol for Life

By Ralphine Major
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He wore No. 10 and was a Tennessee Volunteer point guard on the men's basketball team. From 1972 to 1975 Rodney Woods ran the point for Ray Mears. What was so unusual about Woods was the fact that he came from the Bluegrass State, one of Tennessee's greatest rivals. Tennessee stole the sharp-shooting point guard right out from under the Wildcats! I was amazed to learn that one of Tennessee's top three coaches came to 17 consecutive games to see the point guard play.

I paid close attention to the point guard out of Lone Jack High School because of our pastor at the time. He had recently served at a church in Middlesboro, Kentucky, before coming to Fairview in Corryton, Tennessee. The late Rev. Ralph A. Berry loved basketball. Though he was originally from North Carolina and lived several

years in Kentucky, he was a huge Tennessee fan and was thrilled when the Big Orange recruited Woods out of Kentucky. I was a University of Tennessee student during that time and often picked up tickets for the Berrys to go with us to games at Stokely Athletic Center. Woods and a teammate even visited our small, rural church one Sunday morning during his time at UT. Those were exciting times for the Big Orange, and Tennessee fans had lots to cheer about in those early days. Tennessee basketball had the colorful coaching style of the late Ray Mears, the late Stu Aberdeen, and the late A. W. Davis; they had Bernard King and Ernie Grunfield, the players from New York who made up the exciting "Ernie and Bernie" duo; and they had a talented point guard from Four Mile, Kentucky, named Woods.

Woods has been coaching 45 years. The beloved coach and his teams have won over 900 games! Rodney



Picture of two Tennessee greats: (L-R) former UT quarterback Bobby Scott and former UT point guard Rodney Woods, courtesy of Rodney Woods.

and his wife Cynthia are parents to two daughters and three sons, and they are grandparents to five grandsons! With a family like that, Woods could start his own team. Maybe one day those five grandsons will make their way onto a team in Big Orange Country the way a talented point guard from Kentucky did so many years ago.

Healthy but hurting

By Joe Rector
joirector@comcast.net

My goodness, the past week has been a busy one for our country. Covid appears to be easing its two-year grip on the planet, and with just a little luck and without some new variant appearing, we might just return to a new kind of normal life. Just imagine how much quicker this terrible disease could have been wiped out if everyone had been vaccinated and boosted when the medicine first became available. Not to worry though, no matter how hard some work to make life better for the country, things occur that set us reeling and wondering what we'll do.

Russia has decided to turn the world on its ear by surrounding Ukraine and setting the stage for an invasion. With that, NATO allies will give aid in the form of money and arms to help the country to defend itself. Attempts at diplomacy have failed, as

most of us expected. Putin used supposed good-faith efforts to find a solution to his advantage. That riled up both sides while the dictator further set his troops and military hardware in place.

The US and its allies simply can't let Putin bully his way through smaller, weaker countries in an effort to rebuild the U.S.S.R. He's played our government and strung them along for years, not just since 2021. If democratic countries can't stand firm, then authoritarians will take positions of power, and the great American experiment will be dead. I'm not ready for that to happen and hope other folks aren't either.

Inflation is eating us up right now. Looking up to see gas rising by a dime every couple of days brings out fears, not of disease but of being able to pay the bills. Groceries are also skyrocketing, and the money we budgeted for each week doesn't

cover the expenses. I never thought I'd see that a pound of hamburger cost \$5.00. Every product in every store is increasing in price, but store owners can't be blamed for increases in their prices. I've heard all the problems about boats stacking up as they wait to unload their cargo. I just don't believe that the gas supply is short. I do believe big oil companies are finding ways to stem the flow of oil or refining it. They've profited by \$175 billion since these gas prices began climbing. Other companies are surely raking in huge profits as well.

I never was a fan of Nixon. I do give him credit for opening a dialogue with China. I appreciate what he did when gas was in short supply. The problems across the economy were so bad that the man froze prices. That gave Americans a bit of relief.

I'm tired of relying on other countries for our energy supplies. The time is now for us

to develop new energy sources and to cut the cord connecting us to those places. We will turn our world into one that is no longer at the mercy of other countries, our economy will thrive as new energy is developed, and our climate will have at least a chance to heal as we switch from nasty oil to clean, efficient electricity or some other new product.

I worry about the future. Most of us in the Baby Boomer generation will be all right. Our lives will have ended before the world become an uninhabitable orb. I hope that when I am gone that I'll have something to leave my children, but if we don't figure out these problems, they will have lives worse than ours. It will take both political parties working together to solve the problems. Let's hope they discover that they are elected to help the citizens of this country.

School board can hire outside counsel in new resolution

Cont. from page 1

in-school masking and was booed by the mask opponents.

Other speakers lambasted Knox County Law Director David Buuck, who was represented in the meeting by Deputy Law Director Mike Moyers.

A school board ethics complaint was filed against Kristy, Henderson and

Horn soon after the work session for acting outside a prior vote by the school board to support the law director's actions.

Commissioner Charles Busler supported the hiring but asked, "I'm for you all but why beat a brick wall without a hammer?" He said an additional attorney and the law department, which has already

been appealing the federal mandate, probably won't be successful unless CDC and health department guidelines change.

"We've had to work with what we had," Moyers told the meeting, adding, "The judge wants to see a change in circumstances." "Just give them the power to make a decision if this is what the people want," Commissioner Kyle

Ward said.

The separation of powers was noted by Commissioner Courtney Durrett who suggested, "The law department may be in conflict of interest."

"This may turn out to be an exercise in futility but I intend to support it," said Commissioner Larsen Jay.

Vice Chairman Justin Biggs asked how many students have been pulled out of public schools over the mask issue and answered himself that 3,000 students have left the schools. Russ Oaks, the school system's Chief Operating Officer, disputed that number and said the loss in attendance was about 1,000 to 1,500 students.

Moyer said a resolution of the appeal to end the mask mandate is up to the judge adding, "It's not going to be over with soon."

Chairman Richie Beeler, who sponsored the altered resolution, said nothing will happen if the school board

votes to not hire an outside attorney. The law department would continue to appeal the case with or without an outside attorney assisting in the matter.

The approved resolution, in part, reads:

"That the Knox County Commission hereby authorizes the Knox County Law Director to hire an attorney to advise and assist the Law Director in all matters regarding the litigation regarding the mask mandates imposed upon the Knox County School System by the Federal District Court of the Eastern District of Tennessee and to render legal advice to them with regard to any and all mask mandates that are issued affecting the Knox County School System.

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this attorney shall have experience in cases involving the Americans with Disabilities Act and/or the individuals

with Disabilities Education Act.

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Knox County Board of Education shall have the opportunity to approve or not approve of the Knox County Law Director's selected counsel by a majority vote in an open meeting. If the Knox County Board of Education does not approve the Law Director's chosen counsel, he shall provide alternatives until the Board of Education votes to approve.

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, this Resolution shall only take effect upon approval of a majority of the Knox County Board of Education voted on in open meeting.

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, any expenses related to hiring said outside counsel shall be paid from funds appropriated to the Board of Education in the Fiscal Year 2022 Budget adopted by the Commission."

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Tennessee Goes Republican... Again!

The 1956 Presidential Election in Tennessee II

Pages from the Past



By Ray Hill
rayhill865@gmail.com

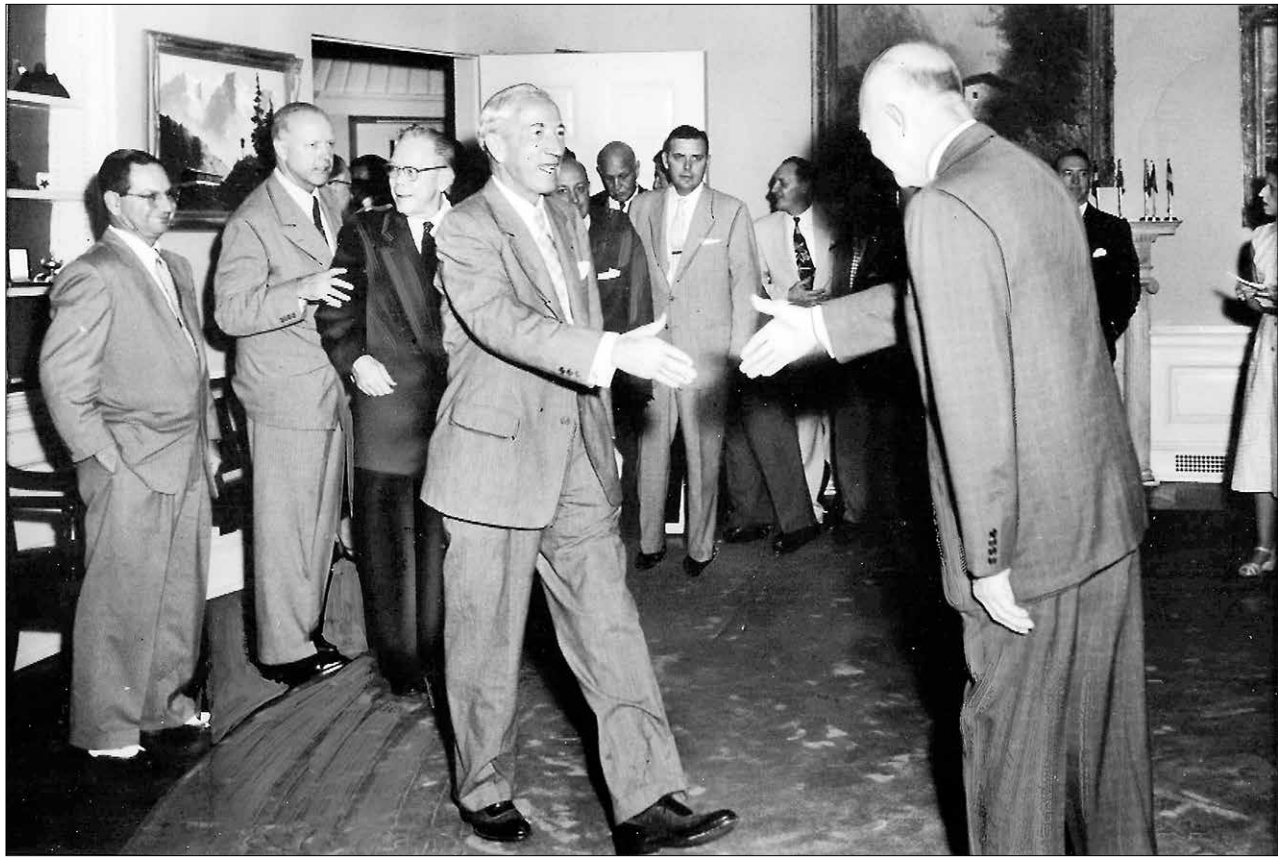
Democrats all across the South had gathered in Knoxville, Tennessee, to plan the strategy for the fall campaign at the end of August in 1956. At least ten states had been represented, including much of the Democratic Party's leadership. An editorial appearing in the Chattanooga Daily Times lauded the Democratic gathering and the resulting unity. Even then Democrats hated Republicans referring to the "Democrat Party" rather than the "Democratic Party." The Chattanooga Daily Times actually printed another editorial on the subject of "To 'IC' Or Not To 'IC'." The editorial noted Carroll Reece had tormented Democrats by repeatedly and purposely using "Democrat Party" while he was chairman of the Republican National Committee in 1946. The Daily Times sullenly huffed Reece was "the longtime embodiment of Tennessee failure in the Republican party."

Yet things were changing in the Volunteer State. The 1952 presidential race in Tennessee saw the movement of white middle-class voters in the suburbs to vote for at least some Republican candidates. Since the turn of the century, Republicans had won only three presidential contests in Tennessee and an equal number of gubernatorial contests. Tennessee had never popularly elected a Republican to the United States Senate. There had been two serious tries by Republicans to win a Senate seat; the first was the 1916 race when former governor Ben W. Hooper contested with then-Congressman Kenneth D. McKellar to become the first person ever popularly elected to the United States Senate. The second truly serious effort made by a Republican to win a seat in the U.S. Senate had been Carroll Reece's race in 1948; the former congressman had run with country music entertainer Roy Acuff as his running mate for governor. Republicans had thought there was a good chance GOP presidential nominee Thomas E. Dewey might carry the Volunteer State, especially as E.H. Crump and his Shelby County machine had bolted the party, refusing to support Harry Truman. President Truman won just under 50% of the ballots cast, with Tom Dewey winning only approximately 37% and States' Rights candidate Strom Thurmond winning around 14%. Still, Republican division in the state showed itself with the election returns for the Reece-Acuff ticket. Some 202,914 Tennesseans cast their votes for Dewey while Carroll Reece tallied 166,947 votes. Estes Kefauver won more votes

in running for the United States Senate than were cast for Harry Truman; Kefauver had 326,142 votes while Harry Truman got 270,402 ballots.

Guy Lincoln Smith was chairman of the Tennessee Republican Party as well as the editor of the Knoxville Journal, which was the voice of East Tennessee Republicanism. Much of the failure to support the GOP ticket came from the Second Congressional District and Smith was deeply unhappy when the election returns showed Reece and Acuff had lost Knox County to their Democratic opponents by about 5,000 votes or more. Yet Thomas E. Dewey carried Knox County over Harry Truman by 5,000 votes. Smith pushed Carroll Reece to reclaim his seat in Congress while at the same time the Journal backed the candidacy of Howard Baker (father of the future senator) against Second District Congressman John Jennings Jr. Both Dayton E. Phillips, who had taken Reece's seat in the House, and Jennings lost in the Republican primary.

Tennessee had narrowly favored Dwight D. Eisenhower in the 1952 election and some Democrats theorized that the failure of Estes Kefauver's campaign for the nomination of his party had caused some not to vote for Adlai Stevenson that year. Democrats confidently expected to return Tennessee to the Democratic column in the 1956 election as Kefauver had shown his own strength when Adlai Stevenson had thrown open the vice presidential nomination at the Democratic National Convention. The delegates had chosen the vice presidential nominee and Kefauver had overcome all challengers, including two from his home state: Frank Clement and Albert Gore. In the end, it was a race between Estes Kefauver, whom Lyndon Johnson (who also lost the vice presidential nod) had called "the greatest campaigner of them all", and a young United States senator from Massachusetts, John F. Kennedy. A poor public speaker, Estes Kefauver had probably shaken more hands during his political career than any other candidate. Kefauver demonstrated a remarkable ability to connect with voters while campaigning from hand to hand. With Kefauver on the Democratic ticket, the Volunteer State should return to the party of Andrew Jackson. Republicans had carried Tennessee in 1920 and 1928, but those elections had been political aberrations, Democrats argued. There had been no political realignment of voters and voting patterns. Gains made by Republicans had been quickly reversed.



UNITED PRESS TELEPHOTO FROM THE AUTHOR'S PERSONAL COLLECTION.

Tennessee Congressman Carroll Reece steps up to shake hands with President Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1954.

The 1956 election saw Tennessee become yet again a battleground state between the Republican and Democratic parties. Both political parties felt they had a good chance of carrying the Volunteer State. Guy L. Smith certainly believed President Eisenhower could carry Tennessee in the general election. Once again, the editor was the campaign manager for the Eisenhower-Nixon ticket in Tennessee. In mid-September, Congressman Carroll Reece, Tennessee's Republican National Committeeman since 1939 and a former chair of the Republican National Committee, boarded a train to attend a conference with the president at Eisenhower's home in Gettysburg. Eisenhower was hosting prominent Republican leaders to map out the fall campaign.

Reece stepped over the border of his congressional district to campaign for William C. Wampler, a young Republican who had won a seat in Congress in 1952. Young Wampler was the son-in-law of Congressman Howard Baker (and brother-in-law to future Senator Howard Baker, Jr.) who was seeking a comeback in the 1956 election. Congressman Reece then traveled to Nashville to greet Vice President Richard Nixon who came to campaign in Tennessee. As James Stahlman, publisher of the Nashville Banner, was introducing Richard Nixon in the capital city, his newspaper was running stories about the collection of campaign funds from state employees. The campaign funds were being collected by Everett LaFon, Director of the State Safety Department's drivers' license bureau who denied any pressure had been applied to employees. Joe C. Carr, Tennessee's longtime Secretary of State, said employees were "given the opportunity to contribute, as is customary in election years."

The organization of Carroll Reece was an important factor in turning out the vote in the heavily Republican First Congressional District. Indeed, the Reece organization was the Republican organization in the First District. Robert Clark of Blountville had been campaign manager for Congressman Carroll Reece in the 1950, 1952 and 1954 elections

in Sullivan County; Clark became one of the managers for the Eisenhower-Nixon ticket in 1956.

Congressman Reece habitually moved through his district and in Jonesboro, he told a gathering of Republicans, "The Republican administration has restored fiscal integrity to the government with efficiency and economy in place of Democrat waste and extravagance."

As Election Day approached, Carroll Reece welcomed former Republican presidential standard-bearer Thomas E. Dewey to the First District. Natty in a double-breasted suit, the former New York governor had an overcoat casually draped over his arm as he arrived in Johnson City. The congressman and former governor were greeted and escorted by young Thomas Carr, who was named for Dewey.

In his speech Dewey taunted Estes Kefauver, saying the farm supposedly owned by the senator existed only in "somebody's fertile imagination like some of the issues the Democrats have been raising." "So far as I can find out," Dewey said, "the senator isn't even sharecropping anything." Pointing to the votes cast by the Tennessee delegation at the Democratic Nation Convention which had been hostile to Kefauver, Dewey chortled, "Certainly the Democrats know him because it took his state so long to give him a vote. Your Governor can tell you all you want to know." Dewey knew how to campaign even if he didn't do much of it in 1948; the former New York governor told his audience Adlai Stevenson was unworthy of "wearing the mantle" of Tennessee Democrats like Andrew Jackson and Cordell Hull.

Evidently, every seat in the East Tennessee State College auditorium was filled, bringing the audience to something like 5,000 people or more. Dewey and Carroll Reece had a history and were from different factions of the Republican Party, but both were old pols and political professionals. Both were highly cordial and the congressman was beaming. Tom Dewey's speech was nicely summarized by one reporter as a "praise-like-give-Adlai-hell" talk.

Carroll Reece remained on the campaign trail and

told a Republican rally at the Unaka School, "No man in the nation is better qualified to lead the defense of the United States, should the need arise, than President Eisenhower."

As Election Day approached, Republicans were hopeful while Democrats in Tennessee were confident with native son Estes Kefauver on the presidential ticket. That confidence was shattered as the election returns began to come in and be counted. Eisenhower remained popular in the Volunteer State. Adlai Stevenson won 29,768 votes in Knox County, but the Eisenhower-Nixon ticket polled 46,167 and about 65% of the ballots cast. Stevenson fared better in the Democratic stronghold of Davidson County (Nashville), in which the former Illinois governor won 56,822 votes as compared to 37,077 for Eisenhower. Yet it was astonishing to many Democrats that a Republican could pull almost 40% of the vote in Davidson County. More astonishing to Democrats was the fact Dwight D. Eisenhower carried the former domain of Edward Hull Crump, Shelby County. The Memphis Boss had died in 1954 but had managed to carry Shelby County for the Democratic ticket in 1952. With Crump gone, many conservative Democrats opted to vote for the Republican ticket. Eisenhower won Shelby County 65,690 to Stevenson's 62,051. Likewise, the Eisenhower-Nixon ticket carried Hamilton County (Chattanooga). The margins won by the Eisenhower-Nixon ticket in Republican East Tennessee were greater than those won by the Stevenson-Kefauver ticket in the rest of the state. The loss of Memphis and Shelby County helped to tip the balance; Eisenhower carried the Volunteer State by the narrow margin of 5,781 votes.

The Nashville Tennessean published the election returns by congressional district, which illustrated the lopsided margins given President Eisenhower by voters in East Tennessee. The Eisenhower-Nixon ticket won 87,645 votes in Carroll Reece's First District while Adlai Stevenson polled 36,587. Eisenhower tallied 91,852 votes in Tennessee's Second Congressional District with Stevenson well behind with

55,281 votes. Eisenhower also carried the Third Congressional District while Adlai Stevenson won the heavily Democratic Fourth District. Stevenson also carried the Sixth Congressional District, but Eisenhower's personal popularity was demonstrated by the fact the vote inside Tennessee's Seventh Congressional District in West Tennessee was almost a draw, the vote totals being separated by less than 2,000 votes. Stevenson carried the Eighth District while Eisenhower won the Ninth District.

There were no other statewide races on the ballot in Tennessee that year; voters had approved changes to the state Constitution giving the governor a four-year term, which Frank Clement had won in 1954. Neither of Tennessee's seats in the United States Senate was up for election, nor did the Republicans win any additional seats in the Congress in Tennessee that year. The two GOP congressmen, Carroll Reece and Howard Baker (father of the future U.S. senator) won overwhelmingly in their own districts.

The Republicans would fare even better in 1960 and seeds had been planted in fertile ground for the future. Bill Brock, a young businessman, would claim the Third Congressional District for the Republicans in 1962 and Howard Baker Jr. would win a seat in the United States Senate in 1966. Bill Jenkins would become the first Republican to serve as Speaker of the Tennessee House of Representatives in 1969 while Richard Nixon carried the Volunteer State in the 1968 election. Brock would win Albert Gore's seat in the Senate in 1970 while Winfield Dunn became the first Republican to occupy the governor's office in fifty years. By 1972, Republicans would win five of Tennessee's nine seats in the U.S. House of Representatives. The tide began turning with Dwight Eisenhower.

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Dr. Jon Rysewyk named next KCS superintendent

Cont. from page 1

Kristy, who serves as the board of education chair, said that the two finalists were top-notch candidates.

"Both were highly qualified, but the board did decide Dr. Rysewyk would be our next superintendent of Knox County Schools," Kristy said. "He is a team builder."

Satterfield said she voted for Cash because she was impressed by her student-centered focus.

"Dr. Cash rose to the top and that is why she received my vote," said Satterfield, who serves as the board's co-chair as well as chairing the search committee, which also consisted of Bounds and Henderson. "I believe that she has a very student-centered focus and I wish her the best in all of her journey."

"I don't know if there was anyone who had their minds made up because we didn't know any of the

candidates, so after the roll out of the candidates, Jon Rysewyk rose to the top."

Rysewyk promised to put students and teachers first and said that he also learned from Thomas over the past five years.

"The biggest thing about Bob Thomas is his heart," Rysewyk said. "He has a heart for kids and he's humble. He'll talk to me."

"He really taught me how to listen."



PHOTO BY KEN LAY.

Dr. Jon Rysewyk was selected as Knox County Schools next superintendent Tuesday night. Rysewyk will replace the retiring Bob Thomas on July 1.

Liability for Debts After a Divorce

A normal part of divorce cases is dividing up the husband and wife's assets and debts. While the law says the parties' marital assets are to be "equitably" divided, most judges interpret the word equitably to mean

"equal." Effectively, that means that the assets and debts accrued during the marriage are totaled up and divided straight down the middle.

It is easier to say this than to carry it out. It can mean selling a house, it can mean dividing up vehicles with loans against them, it can mean deciding who is going to pay credit card debts.

One issue we have to instruct people about is when both the husband and wife are both in debt for a vehicle. When we have that situation, the preference is for both the husband and wife to refinance the vehicles to take the other person's name off of that debt. However, some people are not in a financial position to do such. When that occurs, the best we can do is put something in the divorce documents like, "wife shall be responsible for all of the debts related to the vehicle and shall insure husband has no liability for those debts."

When this occurs, we have to tell our clients about Tennessee law section 36-4-134 which is titled, "Notice that the decree



By Jedidiah McKeehan
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does not necessarily affect the ability of a creditor to proceed against a party or a party's property." That means that even though the divorce documents may say a wife is responsible for a debt, the creditor can come after whoever they

want if she fails to make a payment.

So in our scenario, if a wife does not pay a bill, and the creditor comes after the husband, what is the husband to do? The only recourse they have is to go to the divorce court and request that the court force the wife to pay the debt, pay the husband his attorney's fees incurred in enforcing the divorce agreement, and potentially order some other remedy (like making wife sell the car).

What's the lesson here? If you are going through a divorce, do everything you can do to get your name off debts the other person is responsible for paying. If you do not, they may pay their debts, but if they do not, it becomes a huge headache.

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

Merit Board to hear Dooley complaint

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
steelym@knoxfocus.com

The Knox County Sheriff Office's Merit System Council plans to meet Tuesday, March 1 at 9 a.m. to begin hearing the complaint from Martha Dooley. The hearing follows a recent Chancery Court decision that the council can hear the grievance case. A second day of hearings on Dooley matter is planned for Wednesday, March 2 at 9 a.m. Both hearing dates are scheduled for the main assembly room of the City-County Building.

Dooley had been communications director for former Sheriff J. J. Jones after being the planning director for former Sheriff Tim Hutchison. Prior to that she worked for WATE-TV. Currently she is listed as deputy communications director for KCSO. She contends that the use of a department car and a gas card was part of her original hiring agreement. Dooley is appealing the loss of the car and card following her transfer within the department. Sheriff Tom Spangler contends that Dooley's position did not justify the use of a car or gas card and she suffered no

loss in salary. The hearing comes before the May 3 Republican Primary which pits former Sheriff Jones against Sheriff Spangler.

A grievance hearing for former KCSO employee Scott Moore will be heard at a later date, Paula Taylor, director of the merit system, told The Focus Tuesday. She also said the board will hear motions filed to dismiss the complaint and for the three merit members to recuse from voting. Those motions also will include and apply to Scott Moore and Ivan Harmon cases.

Hardin Valley residents honored for saving children

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
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"There was a house fire in Hardin Valley and it appears to have started upstairs in the bonus room. Mike Law, a neighbor saw smoke, called 911," Knox County Commissioner Terry Hill told The Focus prior to a recent commission meeting where neighborhood responders were honored.

"He went over and saw two of the kids at the window unable to get down and outside because of smoke. Law took ladder over—was rescuing them about the time fire trucks

arrived," she said, adding. "The house appears to be a total loss."

The house, at 1506 Sergeant Lane, was the home of John and Melissa Cox and their two daughters, Makenlee and Evie. The two girls were home alone when the fire broke out.

"Before the Karns Fire Department arrived Mr. Laws attempted to rescue the children through the front door but was overcome with heat. He then retrieved a ladder from his garage, positioned the ladder at the second-floor window and successfully assisted the two children safely to the ground

and away from the burning home," Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs read from the resolution earlier this month in a tribute to Law and other neighborhood heroes.

In the brief honors ceremony Hill also recognized 14-year-old Makenlee for her bravery and efforts to get out of the burning house. The teen remembered what to do from fire safety classes and she called 911 and followed the instructions of the operator. Hill said the girl put the life and safety of her 7-year-old sister, Evie, first.

Jacobs not only honored Law, who was not at the

ceremony, but also noted neighbors Caleb Alexander, Mike Carr and Nick Kolinisky for their efforts during the fire.

Turner touched by turnout for street dedication

Cont. from page 1

the street that connects South Bell Street to Harriet Tubman Street in the new Austin Homes area.

"I just hope maybe some young people riding up and down the street see it and then realize how important it is to start giving back to the community," added Turner.

That's something Elston has been doing with his summer youth basketball camp for close to 40 years. And it was brought to the attention of City Council's Gwen McKenzie by Sanford Miller, a best friend of Turner's growing up and a teammate of his in 1977.

"I especially want to thank Rev. Sanford Miller, who came to me and said, 'Hey, we need to do this.' And he actually put forth all the effort to do the leg work," said McKenzie.

Turner said he gives "a nickel or two here or there," but his investment in the community is mostly his time. There have only been three or four years when he was unable to come back.

"I come back and make myself available for the kids and for friends and family," he said. "That's one thing that I'm kind of proud of."

He's also worked some camps with back spasms or a hernia. "I just wasn't going to say no. So I was out there, giving my time. That's important to me."

Turner partnered with Emerald Youth Foundation and the Pro Help Summer Basketball Camp staff in 2016 and expressed his appreciation for their assistance.

Later in his talk, Turner said: "I'm blessed to have all you guys as well as others in my life – good friends and family around me. I wouldn't be standing here without you. So I would like to reflect the spotlight a little bit and say thank you."

"First of all, giving the honor to God," he said. "He took a little boy, born in Lonsdale, raised in the east side, took me all around this country, all around the world and brought me right

back here to witness a day like this ... I get a chance to witness it, so it's very special."

He then thanked his parents for teaching him the value of hard work, his wife Louise for sticking by his side, and all those in his family, some who flew in from southern California.

He also thanked all of his old coaches that laid the foundation for him to learn how to compete and the friends and classmates he had all the way from Mountain View to Green School to Vine Junior to Austin-East.

Elston acknowledged his high school teammates – Miller, George Underwood, Namon Hall and James Bowden – who attended what turned into a celebration ceremony.

And yes, even that famous A-E chant – Who Dat? – that became popular at the state tourney at MTSU in 1977, was heard often.

"I just appreciate you giving me some unforgettable memories," said Turner.

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Knox County Coach of the Year

Higgins just glad to be part of team’s success

By Steve Williams

Farragut High’s Jon Higgins has been voted The Knoxville Focus / Coaches’ All-Knox County Coach of the Year in boys basketball for 2021-22.

When Higgins heard the news, he appreciated the award coming from his fellow peers. But perhaps what even topped that feeling was the gratitude he showed for his players.

“It’s a great honor,” said Higgins Friday. “But to be voted on by your fellow coaches to receive that honor, as any coach knows, you wouldn’t be here without the kids. Our kids have worked extremely hard to have success this year. I’m just glad I’m able to be a part of it.”

Higgins was a runaway winner for the award, which is based on regular season play. Four other coaches – Tyler Cate of Carter, Mike Hutchens of Knoxville Catholic, Ricky Norris of Webb School and Mike Wilkins of Concord Christian School – were recognized in the voting.

One coach who voted for Higgins said: “I believe they have exceeded expectations.”

Higgins and the Admirals notched some big victories this season and probably none was bigger than the 62-57 overtime win over archrival Bearden on Dec. 3 in the Dawg House. It was the school’s first win over the Bulldogs since 2016 and Higgins’ first since his arrival at Farragut in 2017.

The two teams split in the regular season and were District 4-4A co-champions.

Last week, Higgins guided Farragut to a 73-62 win over Bearden in the district tournament’s championship game at Heritage – the Admirals’ first district tournament title since 2001.

Farragut went into the Region 2-4A



PHOTO BY LUTHER SIMMONS

Jon Higgins, the Knox County Coach of the Year, watches from the sideline as Farragut defeats Bearden 62-57 in overtime on the road in early December -- the Admirals’ first win over their arch-rivals since 2016.

tournament Saturday with a 23-7 record.

Higgins was hired at Farragut in April of 2017. Prior to that, the former University of Tennessee basketball stand-out was head coach at Central for five seasons. He was an assistant under veteran coach Jody Wright at Fulton for three seasons before taking his first head job at CHS.

As for his current team, Higgins said: “I’ve been fortunate to coach a lot of these kids since they were freshmen and to see their improvement and growth each year has been wonderful.

“Anytime you get a very experienced team like I have. as long as they continue to work hard, you’re going to have success, if you’re doing the right things ... Right now we are experiencing that and they are doing a great job of teaching, holding the other kids accountable for things that they do. So hopefully, we can have sustained success over the next few years as well.”

Higgins currently has six seniors, including five who have played for at least three years.

Continued on page 2

THE KNOXVILLE FOCUS / COACHES' ALL-KNOX COUNTY TEAM BOYS BASKETBALL

FIRST TEAM

Name, School, Position, Height, Class

Dillon Atwell, Farragut PG 6-2 Sr.
Will Biven, West SG 6-4 Sr.
Elijah Bredwood, Bearden G 6-1 Sr.
Blue Cain, Catholic SG 6-4 Jr.
Luke Carter, CAK G 6-0 Jr.
BJ Edwards, Catholic PG 6-3 Sr.
JJ Faulkner, Karns G 5-10 Jr.
Walker Kyle, Bearden P 6-5 Sr.
Tyler Lee, Fulton F 6-4 So.
Dalton McNew, Carter SG 6-2 Jr.

SECOND TEAM

Darian Bailey, Bearden W 6-6 Sr.
Ayden Greene, Powell G 6-3 Jr.
Bennett Lane, Halls F 6-4 Jr.
Nick Liakonis, HVA SG 6-3 Sr.
Gabriel Pastrana, West PG 6-0 Sr.
Jose Rodriguez, CCS PG 6-2 Sr.
Denaj Kimber, Fulton PG 6-1 So.
Taj Kimber, Fulton W 6-3 So.
Ryan Neal, Farragut G 6-2 Sr.
Presley Patterson, Catholic SG 6-0 Sr.

HONORABLE MENTION

Bearden: Hayden Moseley. **CAK:** Evan Coffman, Denzel Jackson, Matt Murray. **Catholic:** Yesan Warren, Deondra Lindsey. **Farragut:** Dallas Carbaugh. **Fulton:** Marcellus Jackson, Desmir Hatchett. **GCA:** Josiah Brown. **Gibbs:** Zack Turner, Braden Graves, Bryson Palmer. **Halls:** Caleb Shaffer, Luke Simpson. **Hardin Valley:** Hudson Stokes, Jaelyn Pannell. **Karns:** Jaylen Roberts. **Powell:** Eli Walls, Bryce Jardret, Austin Heard.

‘Special’ Lady Devils rout Carter to advance to Region 2-3A Semifinals

By Ken Lay

Halls High School girls basketball coach Savannah Harrison has been proud of her team all season.

And she’ll get to coach the Lady Devils, the District 4-3A Champions for at least one more game. That game will be tonight (Feb. 28); in the Region 2-4A Semifinals at Halls High School.

Tipoff for the game between Halls and the Cougars is slated for 7:30 p.m. Anderson County will

tangles with Seymour at 6 p.m. at Halls in the other semifinal.

The Lady Devils (13-15) advanced to the semifinals with a 56-30 victory over Carter Friday night and Harrison was pleased, as she has been all season.

“We have a lot of things to work on, but I’ve said it all year, we have a special team,” Harrison said. “This is a good group of kids. They work hard and I don’t have to worry about anything with them.

“When we’re on, we can

play with anybody. They’re just a special group.”

The Lady Devils battled some offensive woes against the Lady Hornets (4-20) as they missed numerous layups and were just 4-for-11 from the free throw line.

“Our free throws are definitely something that we need to work on, and the layups. We missed a lot of layups and if we would’ve made our layups, halftime would have definitely looked different.”

Still, Halls led 24-6 at

halftime as they shut out Carter during the second quarter. The Lady Devils outscored the Lady Hornets 13-0 in the frame.

“I was really pleased with us in the second quarter,” Harrison said. “We held them off (the scoreboard), but I didn’t know that they didn’t score in the second quarter until we came in at halftime.”

Carter took an early 4-2 lead when Ava McSwain scored off an offensive rebound midway through the opening stanza.

But the Lady Devils closed the quarter with a 9-2 run, and thanks to their defense, they didn’t look back.

Carter finally scored again when Emma Collins buried a long-range jumper from beyond the 3-point arc to make the score 25-9 with 6 minutes, 52 seconds remaining in the frame.

Offensively, once the Lady Devils kicked things into gear, they boasted a balanced attack.

Sophie Tharpe led the way with 19 points. Emma

Tharpe added nine and Olivia Culp finished with six as she buried a pair of 3-pointers after halftime. Kiera Everett had five. Megan Bilter, Raegan Corvette and Bailey Roberts scored four points apiece and Blayke Holbert found her way into the scorebook with a 3-pointer in the final frame.

Halls finished the game with nine successful shots from beyond the arc.

Lilly Lampkin led the Lady Hornets with nine points.

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PHOTOS BY STEVE WILLIAMS

Seymour High's Lady Eagles had reason to smile after winning the District 3-3A basketball tournament championship and Coach Greg Hernandez said they would take one game at a time as they enter region play.

Seymour girls (26-5) dominate District 3-3A

By Steve Williams

Seymour's girls basketball team capped its District 3-3A dominance early last week, enjoyed the moment and then looked ahead to the Region 2-3A tournament.

The Lady Eagles overcame a five-point deficit late in the third period and pulled away for a 47-39 win over Northview Academy (18-12) in the district title game Feb. 21 at Seymour. It was their third win over the Lady Cougars this season. "Honestly, we weren't worried because of the pep talk Coach gave us before the game," said senior Emma Watson. "He told us there were going to be ups and downs in the game, but you just had to keep fighting and push through it and that the tougher team would win."

When the battle was hot and heavy midway through the final period, Seymour Coach Greg Hernandez called timeout immediately after Caiden Russell hit a short jumper to give the Lady Eagles the lead with 3:57 to go. He wanted to give his team another pep talk. "I told them we got to ride the wave and hold on," recalled Hernandez, who is in his fourth season at

SHS. "And I told them the team that can hold on and stick together the longest throughout the craziness will come out on the other side victorious. And that's what we did."

Seymour ended up outscoring Northview 16-5 in the final eight minutes.

With the victory, Seymour upped its record to 26-5. The Lady Eagles, who were a perfect 6-0 in the district during the regular season, tied for the No. 6 ranking in the state in The Associated Press' final poll.

Bailey McCoy, the tourney MVP, scored 12 points and Kaylyn Jarvis added 11 in Seymour's balanced attack. Watson and Russell chipped in nine each.

Northview's Savannah Bates took game-high scoring honors with 14 points. Reagan Brown contributed 11.

The Lady Cougars led 13-11 after one period and 24-22 at halftime. Bates' 3-point shot from the left wing gave Northview its 39-34 lead before Seymour's Brielle Turner was fouled at the third period buzzer and sank both FTs for her only two points of the game. Those two points were big going into the break.

After Seymour retook



Greg Hernandez, head coach of Seymour High's state ranked girls basketball team, tells his players "We got to ride the wave and hold on" during a fourth quarter timeout in its District 3-3A title game against Northview Academy on Feb. 21. The Lady Eagles held on and won 47-39.

the lead and extended it to 38-34, a technical foul was called on Northview's Sarah Charkosky and Russell made both free throws with 2:09 to go.

Watson hit both ends of a double bonus to keep the Lady Eagles ahead by six at 1:02.

McCoy made five of six charity tosses the rest of the way to keep Seymour safely ahead.

"Defensively, we were

able to get enough stops," summed up Hernandez. "We were able to limit their best player (Brown), made it really hard on her. And then just making enough shots, I really didn't care if we won by one or 20. The last three minutes to only give up three points was huge. The girls competed on the defensive end and just got it done."

Northview Academy Coach Brooke Shelley said:

"We won the first three quarters, but we just didn't finish tonight. We can't keep saying we're young and inexperienced. At this point, we are experienced because they've played all year. We've just got to be able to finish the game."

The Lady Cougars committed 10 turnovers in the second half, including six in the final period. Seymour only had five turnovers after intermission.

Seymour defeated Scott 48-29 Friday in the region quarterfinals and will play Anderson County tonight (Feb. 28) at Halls High with tip-off at 6.

ALL TOURNEY: Seymour: Watson, Jarvis, Russell and McCoy (MVP). Northview: Brown, Bates and Josie Horner. Gibbs: Maddi Whaley and Brenna Taylor. Carter: Marah Yeo.

Higgins just glad to be part of team's success

Cont. from page 1

Edwards edges Atwell for Player of the Year

Knoxville Catholic point

guard BJ Edwards has been voted The Knoxville Focus / Coaches' 2021-22 Knox County Player of the Year for the second straight season.

Edwards edged Farragut

point guard Dillon Atwell by one vote. Elijah Bredwood of Bearden, JJ Faulkner of Karns and Tyler Lee of Fulton tied for third in the voting.

Edwards, a UT signee, is

currently a finalist for the TSSAA's Mr. Basketball award in Division II-AA, an award he won last season as a junior.

Averaging 20.8 points per game, 7.7 rebounds, 5.2 assists and 3.2 steals, Edwards is a nationally rated 4-star point guard.

As of February 14, BJ had scored 2,154 career points, collected 774 rebounds and dished out 545 assists with three regular season games and the postseason remaining.

Atwell, a 6-2 senior who was named the District 4-4A MVP this season, averages 17.3 points per game, 5 rebounds, 6 assists and 3 steals. He's shooting 48 percent from the field and 38 percent from 3-point range.

Two Bulldogs and Irishmen on first team

Bearden and Knoxville Catholic each have two players on The Knoxville Focus / Coaches' 2021-22 All-Knox County boys basketball team.

The 10-player first team



PHOTO BY KELLY KEARSE

Knox County Player of the Year BJ Edwards of Knoxville Catholic takes off down court in a game against Bearden this season.

also includes one player each from CAK, Carter, Farragut, Fulton, Karns and West.

Head coaches at each of the 20 Division I and Division II high schools in Knox County that play basketball were contacted by The

Focus to nominate players from their team for All-Knox County consideration based on regular season play.

Ten players earned second-team recognition and several more received honorable mention.

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SEC hoops on television

Does anybody remember the basketball games produced by TVS, the early SEC syndicated television package, a highlight of Saturday afternoons in January and February in the 1960s and 1970s, sometimes into March?

If you wanted to see SEC hoops on television in those days, this was your only chance.

It might have been the “Dark Ages” of televised sports, but none of us knew that at the time. John Ferguson and Ed Thilenius were the early talents. Joe Dean, of “String Music” fame, came on a few years later to add commentary.

It seemed primitive by today’s standards, but it was all we had. It was black and white, without replays and all the other bells and whistles we see today. There were modest graphics, player identifications and a continuously updated score at the bottom of the screen.

“Cutting into” another game was an idea whose time had not yet come.

It was a two-camera operation, one up in the rafters and one on the floor. Being on television in those days was a big deal, way before ESPN came along.

By agreement, maybe even by fiat, there had to be a broadcast from every SEC venue. That was a problem,

especially from a marketing perspective.

Kentucky and Vanderbilt, maybe even Kentucky and Tennessee, might have been in the Top 10 and playing on Saturday for all the marbles late in the season, but if there hadn’t yet been a telecast from Ole Miss or LSU, watch out.

Here came a game from the Tad Smith Coliseum in Oxford or the Parker Agricultural Center in Baton Rouge. The announcers did the best they could to make it exciting, but sometimes to no avail.

In addition to the two sites mentioned above, there were such great venues as the Armory-Fieldhouse and Stokely Center in Knoxville, Memorial Coliseum in Lexington, Memorial Gym in Nashville, the old Quonset Hut in Auburn, Woodruff Hall at Georgia, “Alligator Alley” in Gainesville, Foster Auditorium in Tuscaloosa, and McCarthy Gym in Starkville.

There were any number of great moments emanating from each.

The venues were intimate, with the crowd right on the floor. The visitors had a tough time not only getting on and off the floor, but had an even tougher time once the game started. There was definitely a home floor advantage in those days.

There were no 9 p.m. tipoffs, nor were there games on Sundays at noon, nor at any other times. Sundays were left to the pros. The colleges honored the

Sabbath religiously.

When the Vols were on television once or twice per year, home or away, fans often turned down the volume on their television and listened to John Ward (and, in earlier years, joined by the incomparable Lowell Blanchard) describe the action. Former Vols A.W. Davis and Doug Ashworth also provided expert analysis as the action heated up. That was comforting.

In those days, there was also the taped replay, with long-ago announcers Charlie Bailey and David Shirk on WTVK Channel 26, later Ward on Channel 2.

Ray Mears was one of those who listened to Ward’s play-by-play somewhere around midnight on Saturday night and once observed how much he learned from Ward’s commentary.

Ward was a towering presence on the airwaves when the Vols were playing hoops. Whether live or on tape, Ward made the games “must-hear.” Ward could “follow the ball” with the best of them, keeping track of the players and officials on the court, the coaches on the sidelines, and whatever else might be happening elsewhere in the arena. It was a vintage time.

Occasionally, fans without tickets wouldn’t listen to the live broadcast and steel themselves to wait until the replay came on at 11:30 p.m. That was really an act of desperation.

Many did so. One



The action was always hot and heavy when SEC rivals squared off, but was even more so when network television cameras showed up for the contests on Saturday.

unfortunate soul who lived next door to a fan of an opposing school was waiting patiently for the replay to air when his phone rang.

The message was clear. “You won’t like the way the game turned out,” the caller said. “Sorry about that.”

Disheartened, he went to bed, assuming his team had lost.

He woke up the next morning to find his team had won.

Decisively. Now there are games on all day on any number of channels, some contests

good, others not so hot. But, by golly, you can see them at all times, day or night, on any of several networks.

In those days, you always wished you could see more games.

Now that you can, it doesn’t seem as much fun.

Powell’s Greene receives good news



By Steve Williams

Ayden Greene, Powell High junior football and basketball standout who suffered a knee injury in the Panthers’ last basketball game of the season, received good news when his MRI came back.

Greene’s injury turned out to be a dislocated knee cap and he should be OK in a few weeks. There was no ligament damage, reported Powell Coach Gary Barnes.

MAROON MOTIVATION: Fulton basketball coach Jody Wright was sitting on career win No. 796 going into Saturday’s Region 3-3A quarterfinal game.

If Wright’s Falcons take the region title, which would mean three more victories, that would give him a chance to log No. 800 in the Sectional game. That’s the same scenario Jody had en route to No. 700.

FINAL AP POLLS: With the TSSAA state basketball tournaments getting ready to begin this week, here’s a look at the state’s No. 1 teams and top local teams in the final regular season rankings, including their records at that time:

Division II Class AA girls: 1-Ensworth (21-4),

2-Knoxville Catholic (19-8).

Division II Class A girls: 1-Northpoint (26-2).

Division I Class 4A girls: 1-Blackman (21-0), 3-Bearden (26-3), 7-Farragut (22-6).

Division I Class 3A girls: 1-Page (26-1), 6-Seymour (24-5).

Division I Class 2A girls: 1-Loretto (24-1).

Division I Class 1A girls: 1-McKenzie (22-2).

Division II Class AA boys: 1-Brentwood Academy (25-0), 3-Knoxville Catholic (23-3), 6-Knoxville Webb.

Division II Class A boys: 1-First Assembly Christian (23-2).

Division I Class 4A boys: 1-Beech (29-0), 6-Bearden 23-5.

Division I Class 3A boys: 1-Jackson South Side (18-2), 4-Fulton (22-5).

Division I Class 2A boys: 1-East Nashville (20-3).

Division I Class 1A boys: Middleton (20-2).

3,000 POINT CLUB: Trey Morrow, a senior at Scott High who has played against Fulton and other local teams throughout his prep career, went over 3,000 points during regulation play in the Highlanders’ overtime loss to Halls in the District 4-3A tournament.

HOOPS OPENINGS: The Karns’ and West girls’ head coaching positions are open.

Kiley Heyward was an interim coach at Karns



The 500th win in Tim Smith’s coaching career came in the 2021-22 season -- his first at Grace Christian Academy. The Focus recognized the achievement in the Feb. 21 issue of the Sports Notebook, but inadvertently left out Tim’s last name. So, we wanted to make up for that error this week and include a picture of Tim and the Lady Rams, who played a part in Coach Smith’s milestone victory.

this past season and may reapply.

“We will keep it open for several more weeks,” said Karns Athletic Director Chad Turner.

Coach Caitlin Hollifield has resigned at West and will be pursuing other professional interests, said West AD Tom Poisal. “We just listed the position (last) week.”

Three Hall of Fame inductees have ET ties

Three of members of this year’s TSSAA Hall of Fame class have ties to East Tennessee. Jackie Parton is an administrator from Sevierville; Bob Chambers, a coach from Elizabethton; and Junior Moree, an official from Sweetwater.

Parton was Superintendent of the Sevier County School System for over 33 years and served at Gatlinburg-Pittman High

School as a coach and administrator for eight years. The gymnasium at G-P and the baseball field at Pigeon Forge High are named in his honor.

Chambers began his career as an assistant basketball coach at Elizabethton High under fellow TSSAA Hall of Famer John Treadway. He coached at Lynn View High, Sullivan East and Tennessee High, where his teams made three sub-state appearances and one trip to the state tournament.

Moree began his work as a TSSAA official for football and baseball in 1979. He worked two state football championships and four state baseball title games. Moree became supervisor of the Tri-County Football Officials Association in 2001 and still serves in that role today.

Tennessee Baseball is back! Thank goodness.

By Mark Nagi

Do you remember? I’m sure you remember.

In 2021, the Tennessee Volunteers baseball team went on a spectacular run that ended in Omaha. It was the Vols first trip to the College World Series in 16 years.

That was a team that had so much personality. Far too often we saw Tennessee take a back seat to their SEC rivals, but the baseball Vols took swagger to the extreme, challenging the conference elites. It mattered not that they weren’t on the same level as the Vandy’s of the baseball world. Tennessee was ready to jump into the fray at every opportunity.

Drew Gilbert’s game winning grand slam home run to beat Wright State in the NCAA Regionals is now on the short list in terms of the most memorable plays in Tennessee athletics history. That’s in the conversation with Peyton Manning’s touchdown pass to Joey Kent in the 1995 Alabama game, Tee Martin’s touchdown to Peerless Price in the 1998 BCS title game, Chris Lofton’s shot over Kevin Durant in the 2006 win over Texas and touchdown passes from Josh Dobbs to Jauan Jennings in the 2016 Florida and Georgia games.

I’ve absolutely left out a few. There’s only so much room in this newspaper.

Head coach Tony Vitello has transformed one of the worst baseball programs in the conference to an SEC and national title contender, despite subpar facilities and recruiting limitations.

Back on February 18, Tennessee kicked off the 2022 season and the fans showed up at Lindsey Nelson Stadium in droves. The Vols outscored

Georgia State 33-3 in the series sweep but the real story was the turnstiles. Tennessee broke its previous attendance record for a three-game series with 13,566 tickets sold.

“We had our home crowd behind us, and it was the best weather of the weekend,” said Vitello after the series finale. “Those folks that came out on Friday... we expect to have good crowds out here as does our whole athletic department... but that wasn’t baseball weather on Friday night, that was (Green Bay) Packer weather and yet we packed the stands here and that was pretty cool.”

It’s a pretty good time for Tennessee athletics. The Women’s Swimming and Diving Team recently won its second SEC title in the past three years. The Men’s Tennis team finished second in the ITA Indoor Championships.

Tennessee’s men’s and women’s basketball teams are both ranked in the top twenty nationally and could make some news during March Madness. The football team will start spring practice soon, looking to keep the momentum from a surprising 2021 season going.

But it might be the baseball team that dominates much of the local sports landscape over the next few months.

There are lots of opportunities to catch the Vols in action, including weekday games which shouldn’t be as crowded. With stadium upgrades on the horizon, and Vitello’s much deserved raise and contract extension secured last summer, this program should be worthy of your attention this year, and in the years to come.

We missed you, Tennessee baseball.

Lentz leads balanced attack as Spartans advance in Division II-AA playoffs

By Ken Lay

Luke Lentz played the final game of his career at Webb School of Knoxville's Lee Athletic Center last week. He did not, however, want it to serve as his high school Swan Song.

And it wasn't.

Lentz, a senior guard for the Spartans and his team made sure that they would make a trip to the Division II-AA state quarterfinals as they toppled Nashville's Christ Presbyterian Academy, 75-50, Wednesday night.

"We played hard and we didn't want to go home," said Lentz, who scored 21 points and knocked down six 3-pointers to help Webb eliminate the Lions and advance to state semifinals Saturday to face top-seeded Brentwood Academy (28-0). Results for that game were not available at press time. "We won this game and now, we have to come back and have good practices."

"We won this game but we want to keep winning. We had a good week of practice and we came out with a lot of energy tonight."

With the victory, Webb improved to 22-5, but the Spartans had to win on the road at Chattanooga-McCallie without the injured Lukas Walls, to even make it to the state playoffs on Feb. 11.

"We're going to go down to Nashville and play Brentwood Academy as hard as we can," Webb coach Ricky Norris said. "We could be at home."

"With us not having a region tournament, we had to win a game at McCallie, without Lukas, to even get here."

Walls, who was injured in the Spartans' first region game against Cedar Bluff Area rival Knoxville Catholic on Friday, Jan. 14, was back against the Lions on Wednesday and scored nine points despite being saddled with a bit of early foul trouble.

Webb had a balanced attack as Jaylon Green scored 13 points and Markeis Barrett also added nine points for the Spartans, who were a combined 13-for-14 from the free throw line and buried 11 shots from beyond the 3-point arc.

But Norris said his squad's defense was key to its success against the Lions (18-14).

"We shared (the basketball, on offense) and that was good, but defensively, we made a really good team look like they weren't very good and that's not a knock on them," Norris said. "We did a good job finding and locking down on their shooters."

Jake Dykstra led CPA with 15 points in its season finale.

Area girls soccer players honored by TSWA

By Ken Lay

The honors just keep rolling in for the Bearden High School girls soccer team.

The Lady Bulldogs had their first undefeated season in history in 2021 and won the Class AAA State Championship. They recently had three of their players named to the Tennessee Sports Writers Association's All-State Team.

Bearden was represented on the association's Class AAA All-State Team by forward Brinley Murphy, midfielder Becca Roth and defender Alayna Corbitt.

Murphy, a junior and University of South Carolina commitment, scored 30 goals in the fall.

She was the District 4-AAA Most Valuable Player and the Region 2-AAA MVP. She was also the Knoxville Focus Player of the Year for the second consecutive season.

Roth, a junior, was the district's Co-Offensive Player of the Year and earned all-region honors en route to helping the Lady Bulldogs win the state title in Chattanooga in November.

Corbitt, a senior, anchored a back line that surrendered the fewest goals and set a school record for shutouts in 2021. She was an all-district selection and all-region standout.

Farragut senior goalkeeper Caroline Ekern was

also named to the Class AAA All-State squad. She posted 13 clean sheets in 2021 and was the District 4-AAA Defender of the Year.

In Class AA: Gibbs High junior forward Carolina Pitman was named to the squad after she scored 33 goals and dished out five assists and led the Lady Eagles to the Class AA State Tournament for the first time in school history.

In Division II: Grace Christian Academy senior was named All-State standout as a midfielder in Division II-A and Webb School of Knoxville's McClain Cameron was also an all-state midfielder in Division II-AA.



PHOTO BY KATRINA WIENS

After the CAK girls' big win over Nashville Christian Friday night, Lady Warriors Head Coach Abby Williams organizes a "White Out" group photo for a victory to remember!

Defensive effort propels CAK girls into Final Four

By Steve Williams

It was a game that Christian Academy of Knoxville's girls basketball team refused to lose.

On a night the Lady Warriors couldn't match their opponents from 3-point land, they used their size, toughness and determination to pull out a 58-55 win over Nashville Christian in a Division II-A state quarterfinal battle Friday at CAK.

Lady Warriors Coach Abby Williams said the key to the win was "defense and grit. They just didn't quit. It had to happen on the defensive end."

"We had to get stops. We were down eight, down seven. We were in a hole trading baskets. Our defense was what won the game ultimately for us."

In addition to the effort on the floor, a "White Out" crowd of CAK students and fans helped fuel the comeback victory.

CAK (26-7) will advance to the BlueCross State Championships at Tennessee Tech and play Trinity Christian (25-4) in Friday's semifinals at 12 (CST). Trinity eliminated Providence Christian 59-53.

Friday's other Division II-A semifinal game will pit Webb School of Bell Buckle against Middle Tennessee Christian School at 1:30.

The state title game is set for Saturday at 4 (CST). Keira Leffew, a 5-foot-11 shooting forward as well as a shot blocker on a team full of juniors and one sophomore, led CAK with 25 points.

Nashville Christian Coach Dustin Patton felt Leffew was the difference in the game.

"She's an incredible player," he said. "I think they are a really well coached team. They do a lot of great things, play hard



PHOTO BY KATRINA WIENS

CAK's Reese Campbell goes up for a shot against Nashville Christian's Avan Pomeroy in the Division II-A state quarterfinal game. It was an uphill battle most of the night, but the Lady Warriors finished strong for a 58-55 win.

and compete, but No. 11 is a different player. She played an unbelievable game. Big-time player in a big-time game."

Shooting guard Madi Jones added 13 points and Izzy Proffitt, the lone 10th grader, chipped in nine, including an old fashion 3-point play that put the Lady Warriors ahead for good with a little over two minutes remaining.

Whitley Miller, a 5-4 senior who bombed in a 3-point shot three feet behind the arc to open the game and then added her second of five treys from even farther away, was the Eagles' offensive star with 21 points.

Riley O'Conner contributed 13 for the visitors

and Kame Bishop added three 3-pointers. Overall, the Eagles connected on 8 of 16 from 3-point land, while CAK could make only 4 of 16.

The Lady Warriors, however, made up for that disparity by sinking 22 of 29 free throws to Nashville Christian's 9 of 12.

In the opening quarter, CAK was missing its 3-point shots and couldn't finish many of its other attempts and fell behind 15-10.

The Lady Warriors moved ahead 16-15 at the start of the second period, but when it looked like Nashville Christian was wearing down, the Eagles answered with a 10-point run and led 25-16.

CAK responded with six

straight points, getting two free throws from Reese Campbell, a strong rebound bucket by Chatham Ibach and two foul shots by Ibach.

A spin move in the lane by O'Conner gave the Eagles a five-point halftime advantage.

Nashville Christian continued to drain its 3s and maintained a seven-point advantage for most of the third quarter. Finally, Emma Carroll hit a 3-pointer for CAK and Leffew connected with another from the right corner.

The Lady Warriors also scored the last four points of the third period and CAK built on it as Jones nailed a 3-pointer at the start of the final period to tie the score.

Jones added another 3-pointer later in a rare five-point play, which saw the Eagles commit a foul during her shot and Carroll made both ends of a 1 and 1 to put the Lady Warriors ahead 49-45.

Nashville Christian took its final lead at 50-49. But Proffitt got the lead back as she battled underneath for a rebound and scored her old fashion 3-pointer. She was inadvertently smacked in the face on the play, but that didn't stop her.

The Eagles' Grayson Bonds missed the front end of a crucial 1 and 1 and also missed a layup after Carroll's free throw gave CAK a three-point lead (53-50) with 54 seconds to go. Two clutch free throws by Leffew made it 55-50.

Jones also connected on 3 of 4 FTs in the final 20 seconds to give the Lady Warriors a six-point lead (58-52) with only 6.8 seconds remaining.

Miller made her last 3-pointer, but this one didn't really matter. It only set off a CAK celebration.

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The Doctor is in

a weekly column by
Dr. Jim Ferguson

In what do you trust?

Giving money and power to government is like giving whiskey and car keys to teenage boys.
J. O'Rourke

As many of you already know, Tennesseans are getting new automobile license plates. I am envious of my wife because she is already sporting her handsome new plates and I can't get mine until the end of the year. Bummer. But this is a first world problem. Children - and those who never grew up - often whine, "It's not fair!" Actually, life is not always fair. Grow up!

An interesting aspect of our new license plates is that you get to choose whether you would like In God We Trust on your plate or not. My wife, Becky, chose to drive with God's ensign and so will I. And that's where this essay

began.

In 1776 the United States chose E Pluribus Unum as our motto. The Latin translation is "out of many, one." In 1956 our official motto was changed to "In God We Trust." Perhaps it's just as well that the motto was changed because we are no longer one people. But do Americans still trust in God?

While affiliations with religious groups have declined, the Pew Research Center in 2021 found that 58% of Americans say they believe in God as described in the Bible, and an additional 32% say there is some higher power or spiritual force in the universe. Actually, I am encouraged by these findings. We live in an increasingly secular society, so I believe spirituality is to be encouraged. Some years ago my minister preached a sermon

where he described people who were "functional atheists" because they did not make God a part of their daily lives. However, I'm not like Jesus who could look into the heart and soul of a person. It does seem that some live closer to God than others, but my observations are fallible.

I knew of the political satirist and journalist P. J. O'Rourke, but I did not know him. Others, whose opinions I respect, spoke highly of his work, so I ordered his last book because he recently died. Ferguson's axiom is, "You know a writer when you read his work." Those who follow my column know a great deal about me, but I assure you that there is more than in this column. Read my latest novel Mantis and you will see! I decided to use a quote from Mr. O'Rourke because he and I share an irreverent view of politicians and government. And I will soon "know" more of him when I read his book.

As I pin this essay, it's hard to think about anything other than the latest war in Europe. I had planned another topic, but as I listened to iPOTUS last Thursday, I thought, how can anyone think our country or the world is better off with this PINO rather than President Trump? Russia

and China were held in check by Trump. And then Covid hit, and along with the Democrat and media attacks on Trump, our country was distracted, divided and weakened.

The results are obvious. Like Ukrainians, our country is being invaded across the nonexistent southern border. With Trump we were energy independent and exporting natural gas, but Biden canceled the Keystone pipeline, stopped oil exploration and imposed new regulations on fracking. As a result we are again begging Saudi Arabia to increase oil production and gas/energy prices are skyrocketing. Trump had stymied the Nord Stream pipeline designed to pump natural gas from Russia to Germany and make billions of dollars for Putin. Biden reversed Trump's policy and approved the pipeline until he reversed himself with the Ukraine invasion. If Germany were buying gas from us they would not be hostage to Russia. Additionally, our poor monetary policies have ushered in rampant inflation making all of us poorer. If Trump were President we would have left Afghanistan with honor, we would still have the strategic Bagram airbase one hour from China and we would not have left our equipment to arm the

Taliban.

Obama warned us about Biden, "Don't underestimate Joe's ability to [foul] things up." But media and Democrat lies fostered an irrational hatred of President Trump and brought us a doddering, ineffectual POTUS. Those who voted for Biden are reaping their reward and the world is paying the price.

It is unfortunate that many disregard the lessons of history or trust the media. Consider the horrible starvation of Ukraine engineered by Stalin in 1932 where millions died. As representative of the "legacy media," The New York Times repeatedly lied about those events in Ukraine and other notable instances. I suggest you consider the 5 minute video of history at PragerU.com, Can You Trust the NY Times?

Trump was unpredictable, not a feckless politician like Biden. Trump allegedly threatened Putin, saying if he moved on Ukraine he would attack Moscow. He also challenged China's communist dictator Xi Jinping, threatening an attack on Beijing if China moved on Taiwan. Trump demanded that NATO pay their military commitments or he would not defend them if they were attacked. Tough

talk, perhaps hyperbole or a bluff. But we had peace then and we don't now. The Washington ruling class and elites were troubled by Trump's bravado and destroyed him. Americans are suffering from collateral damage.

We now face the Russian bear ruled by an ex-KGB colonel who is considered brash and unpredictable. As a student of history I find Biden eerily similar to Neville Chamberlain of the 1930s. And in last Thursday's presidential address, Biden stated that "no one expected the sanctions would prevent an attack." Then what's the point? During the Syrian conflict, I remember Obama threatening Bashar Assad not to cross the "red line" of chemical weapon use. And then Obama/Biden did nothing when Assad killed 1400 with sarin gas.

I'm just a retired doctor and I have no idea where this is going. Again, reading from history it is said that plans for war and battle are made, but as soon as the fighting starts all plans are useless.

Putin is unpredictable, but was checked by the equally "unpredictable" Pres. Trump. Do you still prefer our PINO?

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

Living a Life of Faithfulness

"The fruit of the Spirit is...faithfulness" (Gal. 5:22). This word is found thirty-six



By Mark Brackney, Minister of the Arlington Church of Christ

Faith is lived out; it moves from a noun to a verb. It is like what James says: "What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them?" (James 2:14). If you claim to have faith but no actions accompany that faith, then that faith is useless.

When I think of living out a faithful life, the word integrity comes to mind. I believe our world today is longing for people to live out honesty, faithfulness, and integrity in their lives, and when you do so, people notice. To me, the opposite of faithfulness is dishonesty. Dishonesty is found all over the place. It is nothing for someone to lie,

or stretch the truth. Corporate earnings are exaggerated because the company wants to please the board of directors and shareholders. Some car mechanics might replace parts that aren't bad to make extra money. Applicants for job interviews might stretch the truth because they need the job. Students will cheat on their homework and tests so they can pass the class. God is not fooled. He knows everything we do and think.

Like all the other fruit of the Spirit, our model and example is God. Our God is faithful. That is one of His attributes. In Exodus 3:14, at the burning bush, Moses asks God for his name. God replied, "I AM WHO I AM." What does God mean by this? God was saying that He is the God of the eternal present. He is the faithful God and what He says is true. I like this idea that God does not look to be faithful in the future because He is always faithful in the present now - and that will carry on into the eternal future.

We are privileged to have a faithful God we worship. God's faithfulness and integrity will flow throughout lives as partner with the Holy Spirit. Being faithful means to have a determination to stand by your word

and complete your commitment. It is being committed to doing the right thing. Faithfulness and integrity are needed because people are watching us. People are wondering if your behavior matches your beliefs. Faithful people avoid gossip and slander. They treat others well and with respect. They are willing to say they are wrong and take responsibility for their actions.

A sermon series I have wanted to do is on the "one another" passages of the Bible. There are more than forty-one of them. These verses remind us that the disciple of Christ is not to have a lone-ranger mentality. We are in relationship with not only God, but with our brothers and sisters in Christ as well. The Hebrew writer wrote: "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another" (Hebrews 10:24-25). It is important to have someone in your life that can spur you on to love and good works. To spur means to "arouse, provoke, or irritate."

Faithfulness to God at times needs to be spurred on. Don't give up! Stay faithful!

Sharon Baptist celebrating 150 years

Sharon Baptist Church, located at 7916 Pedigo Road, is celebrating its 150th Anniversary. Sharon was organized on March 25, 1871, with forty-three charter members. The members came from Beaver Dam Baptist Church, Third Creek Baptist Church, and Adair's Creek Baptist Church (now Smithwood). The congregation met in the Oakdale School building for the first ten years before a church building was erected on Pedigo Road.

The anniversary celebration has been delayed one year because of Covid. For the first three months of this year, Sharon Baptist has been hosting ministers who were ordained there. Rev. Chris Francis and Rev. Noah Case have returned to deliver sermons. Dr. Terry Kirby, former ministerial intern, delivered a greeting via video. Dr. Ray Jones Jr. is scheduled for March 6. On March 14, Dr. Phil Young, Director

Continued on page 6

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 PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE(S)
 LOIS V WILK; EXECUTRIX
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G KEVIN HARDIN ATTORNEY AT LAW
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NOTICE TO CREDITORS

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ESTATE OF LUZANA WOOTEN

PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE(S)
 BRENDA WOOTEN; ADMINISTRATRIX
 4325 JOE LEWIS ROAD
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ESTATE OF MARIE H WORRELL

PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE(S)
 JOHN CECIL; EXECUTOR
 4805 ROWAN ROAD
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MARK E TILLERY ATTORNEY AT LAW
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This the 18 day of FEBRUARY, 2022.

ESTATE OF BUDDY RAY WRIGHT

PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE(S)
 RUBY JEAN WRIGHT; EXECUTRIX
 3513 S FOUNTAINCREST DRIVE
 KNOXVILLE, TN. 37918

KAITLYN A SELL ATTORNEY AT LAW
 P.O. BOX 2047
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 date of death.

This the 15 day of FEBRUARY, 2022.

ESTATE OF JOHN EARL YODER

PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE(S)

KAREN FROST; ADMINISTRATRIX
 5610 LAWRENCE ROAD
 KNOXVILLE, TN. 37912

WILLIAM L CATHCART ATTORNEY AT LAW
 625 MARKET STREET, SUITE 404
 KNOXVILLE, TN. 37902

MISC. NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICE

THE KNOX COUNTY FIRE AND TECHNICAL
 RESCUE FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE SHALL
 MEET ON MONDAY, MARCH 7, 2022, AT 1:00
 PM IN THE E-911 MULTIPURPOSE ROOM, 605
 BERNARD AVENUE, KNOXVILLE, 37921. ALL
 AGENDA ITEMS ARE SUBJECT TO VOTE.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Funding Model Discussion
4. Adjournment

PUBLIC NOTICE

THE KNOX COUNTY FIRE AND TECHNICAL
 RESCUE COMMITTEE SHALL MEET ON
 WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9, 2022, AT 5:30 PM
 IN THE E-911 MULTIPURPOSE ROOM, 605
 BERNARD AVENUE, KNOXVILLE, 37921. ALL
 AGENDA ITEMS ARE SUBJECT TO VOTE.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Reading and approval of minutes
4. KGIS Presentation by Jimmy Brink
5. Finance Subcommittee Report
6. Service Area Mapping Update
7. New Business
8. Adjournment

PUBLIC NOTICE

THE KNOX COUNTY COMMISSION SHALL
 MEET FOR A PUBLIC HEARING ON MONDAY,
 MARCH 21, 2022, AT 4:30 P.M. IN THE MAIN
 ASSEMBLY ROOM OF THE CITY-COUNTY
 BUILDING, 400 MAIN STREET.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order.
2. Public Forum.
3. Discussion of Ordinance 0-22-2-101
of the Commission of Knox County,
Tennessee, amending the Knox County
Code, Appendix A - Zoning, to reflect

the name change of the Knoxville-Knox
 County Planning Commission by removing
 "Metropolitan" from the name throughout
 Appendix A. (Ord. No. 0-90-9-130, adopted
 9-10-90, as amended). A complete copy
 of the proposed amendment is available
 and may be obtained at the Knox County
 Commission Office, Suite 603, in the City-
 County Building.
 4. Adjournment.

LEGAL NOTICE 94

Knox County will receive bids for the following
 items & services:
 RFP 3147, AVL-GPS Services, due 3/29/22;
 Bid 3208, Produce for Schools, due 3/23/22;
 Bid 3217, Kitchen Equipment Preventative
 Maintenance and Repair, due 3/25/22;
 Bid 3218, Insurance Brokerage and Consulting
 Services, due 3/29/22;
 RFP 3219, Advertising Campaign Services,
 due 3/29/22;
 RFQ 3221, Architectural and Engineering
 Services, due 3/29/22

For additional information call 865-215-5777,
 stop by the Procurement Division, 1000 North
 Central St., Suite 100, Knoxville, TN 37917,
 or visit our website: www.knoxcounty.org/
 procurement. To bid on Knox County surplus
 items, go to www.govdeals.com.

NOTICE OF LIEN SALE

In compliance with TCA 66-14-102 thru 66-
 14-106 the following cars will be sold on March
 18, 2022 @ 2:00 PM @ Cedar Bluff Towing, Inc.
 623 Simmons Rd Knoxville, TN if total bill is not
 paid by date of sale.

2012 NISSAN ALTIMA 1N4AL2AP9C562379
 2000 VW PASSAT WVWMA2388YP159049
 '04 MITSUBISHI LANCER JA3AJ2644U069922
 2006 FORD 500 1FAFP27136G142932
 2009 BMW X5VEHICLE 5UXFE43559L269079
 2017 CHEVY MALIBU 1G1ZE5ST6HF212223
 2015 KIA OPTIMA 5XGGM4A73F6459763
 2004 CHEVY SILVERADO 16CEC14V34Z344853
 2006 TOYOTA COROLLA 2T1BR30EX6C682623
 1995 NISSAN QUEST 4N2DN11W85D852245
 2004 MINI COOPER WMWRC33484J35170
 1999 DODGE DURANGO 1B4HR282XXF637506
 2010 NISSAN ALTIMA 1N4AL2AP3AN430697
 2009 KIA RIO KNADE223396524496
 2006 GMC SIERRA 26TEK13261338523
 '97 CHEVY ASTRO VAN 1GNDM19W2VB147328
 2005 FORD MUSTANG 1ZVFT80N755250032
 2004 NISSAN XTERRA 5N1ED28Y34C688343
 1997 TOYOTA CAMRY 4T1B622K3VU151618
 2003 CHEVY TAHOE 1GNEK13Z0J3123769
 2007 SATURN VUE 5GZCZ53467S808638
 2004 TOYOTA SIENNA 5TDZA23C54S167799

NOTICE OF LIEN SALE

In compliance with TCA 66-14-102 thru
 66-14-106 the following cars will be sold on
 March 18, 2022 @ 2:00 PM @ Chestnut Street
 Transport & Recovery, Inc. 2430 Thorngrove
 Pike, Knoxville, TN if total bill is not paid by date
 of sale.

2001 CHEVY MALIBU 1G1ND5J816240787
 2010 CHEVY HHR 3GNBAADB6AS548108
 2004 NISSAN SENTRA 3N1C651D04L835579
 2004 HONDA CIVIC 2HGES16524H628167
 2006 CADILLAC CTS 16GDM57T860108767
 2007 TOYOTA CAMRY 4T1BE46K07U704725
 2005 SATURN VUE 56ZC253465S804196
 2002 HONDA ACCORD 1HGCG16542A076501
 2002 HONDA VT750 JH2RC44F72M010127
 2002 MERCURY G MARQUIS
 2MEFM75W52X608359
 2004 NISSAN MAXIMA 1N4BA41E24C907768
 2010 DODGE NITRO 104PU56K3AW125143
 2012 HONDA CR-Z JHMZF1D68CS002693
 2004 LEXUS ES 330 JTHBA30G345001140
 2006 HYUNDAI ELANTRA
 KMHDN46D96U368419

NOTICE OF LIEN SALE

THE OWNERSAND/OR LIEN HOLDERS
 OF THE FOLLOWING VEHICLES ARE HERBY
 NOTIFIED OF THEIR RIGHTS TO PAY ALL
 CHARGES AND RECLAIM SAID VEHICLES
 BEING HELD AT THE STORAGE LOT OF
 RICK'S AUTOMOTIVE CENTER. FAILURE TO
 RECLAIM THESE VEHICLES WILL BE DEEMED A
 WAIVER OF ALL RIGHTS, TITLE AND CONSENT
 TO DISPOSE OF SAID VEHICLE AT PUBLIC
 AUCTION ON MARCH 2, 9AM AT 5601 NORTH
 BROADWAY,
 KNOXVILLE

08 Honda 1GCDT19Z3R8201440
 05 Honda JHMCN36445C006169
 07 Honda 1HGFA15547L125143
 04 Chevrolet 1GNEK13Z94R200447
 95 Ford 1FALP45T5XF284004
 02 Mazda 4F4Z47E12TMO6254

NOTICE OF LIEN SALE

PUBLIC SALE TO BE HELD ON, February 9,
 2022 11:00 AM AT YOUR EXTRA STORAGE

A mysterious grave in Townsend provides inspiration for 'Our LITTLE Secret'

By Christy Martin

A mysterious grave marker on the farm of Stanford Johnson's paternal grandparents' home in Townsend, Tennessee, set him on a quest to find out what really happened to the person buried there. The grave marker from the time he can remember was always a mystery. His grandparents gave him a little information. A name and a possible reason for the death, as well as the reason for the young man's presence in Townsend, Tennessee in the 1920s was all he had to go on.

The result of his research and his imagination is a new book called "Our LITTLE Secret." It is based on the stories his grandmother told him and what Stanford Johnson filled in with an imaginative interpretation of the events surrounding the death of a Black man buried there. According to what his

grandmother and great-aunt told him; Albert Peoples is the name of the man interred on their property. Peoples, they said, was one of many imprisoned laborers used to improve and build a useable road from Townsend to Cades Cove. The road known as "Rich Mountain Tower Road" is a beautiful one-way lane that provides a shortcut from the Cades Cove Loop Road to Townsend. They also indicated that Peoples was killed when he cheated at a card game one night. Their farm provided a place for a decent burial.

Stanford Johnson researched state records for information about the building of Rich Mountain Tower Road but was unable to find any information. The death of Peoples and events around it were also unreported. According to many residents, there were not many Black folks in the Townsend area either

before or after the Civil War. Townsend was, according to Johnson, a place where prejudice was not uncommon, and acts of violence might have been committed against African Americans with little or no repercussions during the time when Albert Peoples was killed ... and even for many years after.

Finding few definitive facts to go on to write his book, Johnson relied on what he did remember. He based his characters on real people in his own family and a few he made up to make the story complete. His book reflects the dialogue of the Townsend Appalachian region and some of the folklore of his growing up years with the people and land that he loves and the prejudice that he hates. The gravesite on private family property still exists.

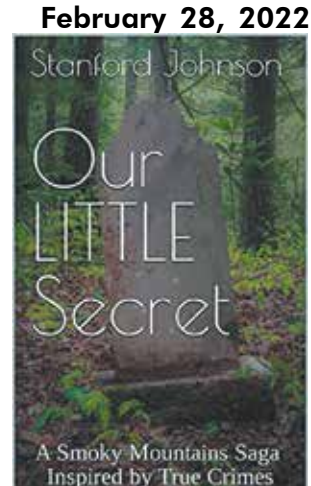
"Our LITTLE Secret" is a story rich in the history

and culture of the area. The characters are deep and interesting, the plot involves the reader in the crime that was committed, and the story is multi-layered encompassing trauma and its effects on generations. Those who have visited and enjoyed the beauty of the national park and the "Peaceful Side of the Smokies" gateway to it in Townsend will enjoy the story. Those who love a good mystery and one that very well could have happened will be mesmerized by reading "Our LITTLE Secret." It is an excellent book and an exciting debut novel.

This book is available on Amazon in both print and digital copies. It can be purchased in Townsend at The Abbey, Chocolate B'ar, the Townsend Ace Hardware, Smoky Mountain Outdoor Center, and The Pharmacy. It is also available in Maryville at Southland Books. Mr.

Johnson has donated several copies to the Blount County Public Library for checkout and he will make copies available for purchase to those who email him at our.little.secret.the.book@gmail.com.

Christy Martin is a retired educator of K-12 thru post-secondary and former coordinator of programs for youth in foster care. She is currently a freelance writer and book reviewer with



special interests in local history and books written by local writers.

Local authors guild meets Thursday

The Authors Guild of Tennessee will hold its monthly meeting on Thursday, March 3 at 11:00 a.m. at the Faith Lutheran Church in Farragut. Social time and book exchange begins at 10:30. Published authors are invited to attend.

AGT is now accepting applications for associate membership from authors who have written a book but are not yet published. Serious authors only. In the event of inclement weather, check the AGT Website for updates and information: authorsguildoftn.org.

Candidate withdraws from primary ballot

By Mike Steely

Senior Writer
steelym@knoxfocus.com

Thursday was the last day to withdraw from the upcoming May 3rd Knox County Primary Election. Several potential candidates chose not to turn in their petitions and one, according to Election Commission Coordinator Chris Davis, withdrew from a race.

"Anthony Cespedes (County Commission, District 3, Democratic Primary) has withdrawn," Davis told The Focus. That gives the Democratic nomination to Stuart Hohl. He will face either Gina Oster or Nicholas Ciparro, the Republicans in the race, in August.

Primary candidates who picked up a petition but did not return it were Marcus Lowery for county court clerk; Scott M. Whaley for board of education District 4; Heather Hensley for BOE District 6; Cameron Ward for BOE District 7; and Tracy A. Clough, a Republican for Knox County Mayor. Incumbent Mayor Glenn Jacobs will now face the winner of the Democratic Primary, either Bob Fischer, Tyler Givens or Debbie Helsley, in August. Greg Mills, an Independent candidate, did not return his petition for the mayoral race.

Added to the ballot is Dave "Caz" Cazale for Knox County Trustee, a Democrat who may face either Justin Biggs or Richard Jacobs in the general election.

Sharon Baptist

Cont. from page 1

of Missions for the Knox County Association of Baptists, will speak.

March 20 is the focus day of the anniversary celebration with a special worship service. Dr. James Robertson, Pastor Emeritus, will deliver the anniversary sermon. Former Music Director Luke Lindsay will lead the choir and congregational worship. Dr. Matthew McCurry, Dora Love and Amy Swabe will be guest instrumentalists. Former associate pastors, Rev. Perry Austin and Rev. Dennis Blazier, will lead prayers. The morning

celebration will include viewing of historical displays and a lunch.

In addition to the guest ministers, former staff, children and grandchildren of former staff have been enjoying sharing memories and greetings. Diana Nixon and her sister, Sally Simmone, daughters of Rev. Dan Dunkel, shared memories. Dr. David Tullock, son of former Music Director Robert Tullock, also spoke of his time at Sharon. Mitch Lister, son of former Music Director Bill Lister, shared his memories. David Rule, grandson of Rev. Stuart Rule, will

speak on March 6.

Several long-time members will be sharing anniversary remembrances. Allen Edmondson, Brenda Cate Edmondson, Rick Thompson and John Crawford have already spoken. Steve Hall will share on March 6. Other guests and speakers are to be scheduled.

The anniversary celebration will conclude on March 27 with Pastor Mark McCoig preaching.

The church has prepared a 150th edition of the church history and it will be available for sale.

Fountain City Auction

4109 Central Avenue Pike - Knoxville, TN 37912
TAL #687 / TFL #5223 PH. 865 - 604 - 3468

UPCOMING
March 4TH
AUCTION

**ONLINE
 BIDDING
 NOW OPEN!**





Visit www.fountaincityauction.com for more pictures & full details!