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Sheriff Spangler seeks hearing date on Moore grievance

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
steelym@knoxfocus.com

Knox County Sheriff Tom Spangler has filed a motion requesting the Knox County Sheriff Office's Merit System Council set a date to hear the grievance filed by former KCSO employee Raymond Scott "Scoobie" Moore.

Moore was fired from the KCSO after seven years of working under the administration of Sheriff J.J. Jones as the Inmate Industries assistant supervisor under former supervisor Ivan Harmon. Both Moore and Harmon were fired over charges of unlawfully using funds from scrap metal and pallet recycling, using inmate labor for unauthorized jobs, and failure to report profits back to the department.

Like Moore, Harmon filed a complaint after his termination but withdrew his grievance complaint shortly after Sheriff Spangler was re-elected over former Sheriff J. J. Jones last month.

Both Harmon and Moore are former Knox County Commissioners hired by the former sheriff and removed from the

department by Sheriff Spangler after an investigation by the Sheriff's Office of Professional Standards found irregularities in the funds received for sold items and inmate labor. The inquiry was based on a complaint initiated by the Knox County Finance Department.

A separate inquiry was conducted by the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury.

Inmate Industries personnel collected about \$5,817 in cash from the sale of scrap metal and pallets and Moore is charged with failure to report or remit the funds to the Sheriff's finance department. He is also charged with failure to maintain any records and spending some of the cash to purchase snacks, lunches and have BBQs for employees and inmate workers.

Moore is charged with using Knox County tax exemption identification to purchase personal items, having inmates on his personal property, and knowing that inmates were taken to KCSO employees' private homes to do work. Moore is also charged with

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PHOTO BY KEN LAY.

Candidate for Farragut mayor Bill Johns, Knox County District Attorney General Charme Allen and Knox County Commissioner (At-Large Seat 10) Larsen Jay spoke at last week's Concord-Farragut Republican Club meeting ahead of the upcoming August 4 election.

Jay, Johns and Allen speak at Republican Club meeting

By Ken Lay

Four area politicians made a stump stop at the Concord-Farragut Republican Club's monthly meeting Thursday night.

Knox County Commissioner Larsen Jay (At-Large Seat 10) and Knox County District Attorney General Charme Allen, who are seeking re-election, and Bill Johns, who is seeking to unseat incumbent Ron Williams as mayor of the Town of Farragut, spoke to club members at Fruition Café ahead of the Aug. 4 election. Kim Frazier (who is seeking At-Large Seat

11 on county commission) also attended the meeting and was invited to address the crowd.

Jay, who faces opposition from Democrat Dylan Earley and is seeking a second term on the commission, promised to be accessible.

"I am a lifelong Republican but I really wasn't involved with clubs like this one," he said. "I wasn't a part of a grassroots movement. I'm a former film and TV producer."

Jay won his election the first time he ever sought office. He ran for a

county-wide seat.

"I have a wide table as my seat represents all of Knox County," Jay said. "The day-to-day work of a commissioner is never done."

"But I promise to be available. I promise to listen and I promise to answer my phone. It has been my honor to serve as your commissioner."

He noted that he has been in business in Knoxville and Knox County for nearly three decades. He's been on every side of town and noted that that makes him a great candidate to serve in his current

capacity.

"I've been here for 29 years and I've worked in all parts of town; north, south, east, west and even downtown," he said.

Jay hails from a military family. His father served in Vietnam and his grandfather served in World War II.

Johns spoke next and said he is seeking to become mayor of the Town of Farragut because it's "the greatest place in the world to live."

But he noted that Farragut faces challenges as the town continues to expand

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Inskip apartments face a second vote at council

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
steelym@knoxfocus.com

Stopping 120 apartments from being built on a neighborhood hillside was the goal of Inskip neighbors at the Knoxville City Council meeting Tuesday. The homeowners had met with developer John Huber the previous week but failed to reach an agreement on his request to zone the four-plus acres from RN-1 to RN-6.

Huber told the residents he is under a timeline to get approval so he can qualify for a tax break and build the two-story apartment buildings and offer affordable rent there. The residents,

including Inskip Neighborhood Association President Betty Jo Mahan, spoke Tuesday evening, mentioning the terrain, the homes that butt up against the site, the departure from the single-family residential, and the lack of service, shopping and area sidewalks.

The council voted, on the first of two readings, 6-3, to approve the zoning change, but not before various residents and Councilman Charles Thomas put up a strong objection. The matter had been approved unanimously by the planning commission.

Mahan reminded the council that Inskip has a Small Area

Development Plan that prohibits additional apartments and said children there would have to cross busy Bruhin Road to reach the park and pool across the street.

Huber has promised sidewalks in front of the development, as required, but there are no sidewalks planned for linking the site to the Dutch Valley Road intersection downhill where a convenience store and bus stop are located.

Resident Alex Dodd said granting the zoning change would set a precedent and disrupt the neighborhood.

Councilman Thomas, who

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Inskip Neighborhood Association President Betty Jo Mahan pleaded with the Knoxville City Council to not approve a 120-unit apartment complex in their neighborhood. The development passed 6-3 on the first reading and comes back to the council for a final vote. Photo by Mike Steely.

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Most mass killers are loners obsessed with computers

From a distance



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

On my first day as judge in 1982, Gary Tulloch, then the Chief Probation Counselor for East Tennessee, told me that 98% of the defendants in felony cases came from broken homes. He would have been much more accurate to have said they came from father-absent households. He was a little high, but the overwhelming majority did come from homes

where the fathers had left. In my almost 7 1/2 years as a judge, probably 98% of the defendants pled guilty and applied for probation. I went through over ten thousand cases, and every day I would read statements like "defendants father left to get pack of cigarettes and never returned," or "defendant's father left when defendant was two and never came back." I thought about all this in relation to the horrible killings of 19 children and two teachers at the elementary school in Uvalde, Texas. It seems that most of the mass killings that have been done over the last many years have been done by loners who have spent most of their lives staring at computers and

playing video games. We have addicted young people to the computers, "smart" phones, iPad, etc. Many young people cannot look people in the eye and have much more interaction with machines than with other live human beings. I wrote in one of my newsletters to my constituents several years ago that I wish the schools would go technology-free at least one day a week and force the kids to think. There is so much addiction to phones and computers that people's brains seem to be turning to mush. Some people can't even remember a phone number. Some are turning to games like Sudoku to help stave off early dementia.

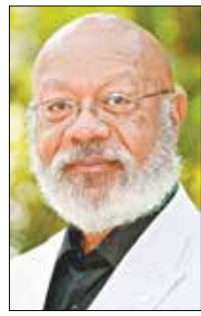
I don't know what public relations genius came up with the words "computer literate" but I have noticed that some who know how to use computers are dumb as dirt about everything else. Former Judge Bill Swann, one of the smartest men I know, sent me some interesting statistics after the killings in Texas. The report he sent said the U.S. is third in murders throughout the world. But if you don't count the murders in Chicago, Detroit, Washington, D.C., St. Louis, and New Orleans, the U.S. is then 189th in murders and all five cities have the toughest gun laws in the world. Whenever there is a mass killing in the U.S., the liberal media is quick to

point out that most other countries don't have the murder rate that we do. It may not be politically correct or even socially permissible to point out that the real problem is too many young Black and Brown men are growing up in father-absent households. A report in one recent but unfortunately typical year said 53.5% of U.S. murders were committed by Blacks and 20.8% by Hispanic or Latino people. And Black leaders who conduct demonstrations and press conferences the 22 or 23 times a year that a white policeman kills a Black person say nothing about the over 90% of Blacks killed by other Blacks. When families stayed together, and kids were

not addicted to computers, we did not have the mass shootings of recent years. The late Supreme Court Justice, Antonin Scalia, said he used to take his shotgun on the New York City subways to go hunting. There is not much crime and drug addiction from young men with hunting licenses. I don't even own a gun, but I believe we would have fewer murders if boys, of whatever race or ethnicity, were out in the woods hunting with their fathers instead of spending so much time alone in their bedrooms playing violent video games on their computers.

The Uvalde Shootings

I can't really explain why the Uvalde shootings have affected me more than other shootings including Buffalo. Maybe its because every year I deer hunt near Eagle Pass, TX (the epicenter of the illegal migrant



By Dr. Harold A. Black
blackh@knoxfocus.com
haroldblackphd.com

reminds me of "small time USA". Although predominately Hispanic-American, conversations were like what you would find almost anywhere on main street USA. One of the women at the deer processor

the shootings. They want "assault" rifles banned yet most would not be able to define what an assault rifle is. They simply think that if it looks somewhat like an AR-15, then it must be bad. They also want universal background checks even if most shooters have passed such checks and use rifles, shotguns and handguns rather than "assault-type" weapons.

The facts are that if - as commonly defined - a mass shooting involves the shooting of four people - then most are domestic disputes involving handguns. The media almost gleefully reported the Buffalo shooting as that of a white supremacist and one source erroneously reported the Uvalde shooting as such even though the shooter was Hispanic. Although President Biden loves to spring out the white supremacist label saying that "White supremacy is a poison. It's a poison ... running through our body politic." But most of us realize that "white supremacy is the Left's dog whistle for "conservatives." One oft-cited source notes that over the past 10 years "extremists" have committed a total of 244 killings. Of the 244 reported killings, 76 were in prison and only 86 were classified as "ideological". However, that source omits eight mass killings including four by black nationalists leaving one to doubt its veracity. Regardless, last year there were 791 murders in Chicago alone - none of which were committed by a white supremacist. But those mainly black on black killings are not deemed newsworthy by our politicians or by the media and are largely ignored.

One day survey shows increasing homeless

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
steelym@knoxfocus.com

A one-day survey of 1,178 homeless in Knoxville indicated that 373 had no shelter while 805 were in emergency shelters or transitional housing. The Point-In-Time survey is required each year by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

"It's always difficult," he said of doing an accurate count of homeless people. He added the total reflects not only Knoxville but Knox County as well and is based on the number of people seeking public assistance, housing or shelter. "It's our piece of the national problem," Dunthorn said.

said that she had moved back home after living for a while in the big city -San Antonio. She said that San Antonio was just too big for her and that she missed the closeness of community that was Uvalde. That closeness is what makes the Uvalde shootings especially painful. In a town of only 16,000, most likely every resident knew someone directly affected by the shootings. After the shootings, the politicians repeated their usual refrains and called for legislation that have nothing to do with

We also hear that the US is the only country where mass shootings occur. Of course, that is not even close to being true. We also hear that the US leads the world in mass shootings. Again, that depends on how mass shootings are defined. Given different definitions the US ranks from first to 62nd making most discussions about rankings meaningless. When talking about the recent mass shootings, the president bemoaned the power of the gun lobby as if the NRA suddenly disappeared, then mass shootings would vanish.

He also said the increase in homeless people recently counted is possibly due to the greater number of outreach workers conducting the survey. According to KnoxHMIS, more than 1,600 homeless were permanently housed in 2021 with about 15% of those becoming homeless again. The chief cause of homelessness is a lack of affordable housing, mental and other health issues, and eviction. The city has committed \$10.8 million in the upcoming year's budget for affordable housing and creating pathways to housing.

A City of Knoxville news release last week carried the information gathered from the February survey and described the results as "a snapshot" of area homeless people. The PIT count is just that, a required one-time, one-night count. Michael Dunthorn, one of the city's homeless program coordinators, told The Knoxville Focus that the cumulative number of homeless is estimated at 3,530 on the Knoxville Homeless Management Information System (KnoxHMIS) Dashboard. The total count is done quarterly and involves not only the truly homeless but also those in shelters or transitional housing.

five in July and three in August. The Moore grievance hearing has been postponed by the merit council several times over the past two years. Prince has also filed a Requests to Admit on behalf of Sheriff Tom Spangler asking that Raymond Scott Moore shall answer 25 Requests for Admission within 30 days.

Sheriff Spangler seeks hearing date on Moore grievance

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storing meat from Sheriff Jones's slaughtered pigs in department-owned coolers and helping transport the animals and disburse the meat under Jones' instructions. He's also charged with lying to investigators.

KCSO attorney Gary Prince is asking the merit council for optional dates to hear the case, suggesting three dates in June,

three dates in June,

three dates in June,



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Deadline for Classified ads is Thursday at noon.
Deadline for submissions is Thursday by noon.
Articles, announcements, photo attachments and cutlines may be submitted by e-mail to staff@knoxfocus.com.
Publisher Steve Hunley
Editor, Art Director Marianne Dedmon
editor@knoxfocus.com, design@knoxfocus.com

Managing Editor Lisa DeMarsico
managingeditor@knoxfocus.com
Mike Steely, Senior Writer steelym@knoxfocus.com
Sales sales@knoxfocus.com
Pam Poe phpoe2000@yahoo.com
Chase Clemmer clemmerc@knoxfocus.com
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Publisher's Position

Homelessness: New solutions are needed for an old problem



By Steve Hunley,
Publisher
publisher@knoxfocus.com

Knoxville has more subsidized housing than any other city of its size in the entire country. Yet the City of Knoxville continues to spend and talk about "affordable" housing when it means subsidized housing. City Councilwoman Amelia Parker recently declared there's a need to create a "safe space" for homeless people to live out-of-doors. Parker pointed out there were those among the "houseless" who would prefer to live outdoors and it is incumbent upon the city government to find an appropriate spot for them. It was Amelia Parker who dictated a story to an all-too-willing Knoxville News-Sentinel about her death-defying encounter with two

police officers who were at a homeless encampment in South Knoxville. Parker described how she was terrified, clutching her city council ID card like Wonder Woman's shield, as she claimed she feared being summarily killed by the white officers. Amelia has a talent for telling stories that all have several things in common; she is always the heroine in her own stories and she is always quite nearly paralyzed with terror. And best of all, her tales of terror end up in local news media.

The point being how does someone who has little to no use for the police department and police officers propose to create a "safe space" for those homeless folks who enjoy living outside in the elements? Safe for whom? The very idea of leaving the homeless to roam all over the city and occupy some space simply designated to be "safe" yet protected by no one seems nonsensical. Clearly, the time has long since passed when the issue of homelessness needs to be solved.

The City of Knoxville is primarily responsible for three services: garbage is

contracted out and they provide police and fire protection, yet the supposedly superbly well-managed city government has been spending more than it has been taking in for a while. The city raises taxes every 3 - 4 years to pay for the pensions of retired employees and pay for its burgeoning social welfare program. Kincannon and the majority of the city council raised taxes 21% just a month ago in the middle of the highest inflation in 40 years and in the face of a possible recession.

Looking to a city government to provide a "safe space" for those homeless people who prefer outdoor living seems like a mighty big task for a mayor who pulled the police officers out of schools within the city limits. In spite of the fact Knoxville has more "affordable" (subsidized) housing than any other city of its size in the country, the city continues to spend beyond its means for housing and other social programs. To use a favorite word of the Left, it is not a sustainable policy.

Nor will it solve the homelessness problem. Cameron Brooks, a realtor running

for the city council next year, has touted the idea of taking part of the tax dollars earmarked for the housing program to purchase and rehab homes to be sold to people who could not otherwise afford a home. Too many working and middle-class people are being squeezed out of the housing market presently. It is a really good idea as it not only restores homes inside the city but also gives working people the opportunity to enjoy home ownership and the money returned to the fund to repeat the process. The homeowners, unlike those living in subsidized housing, would be paying property taxes. The plan is sound, logical and helpful. One would think that the very thing our officeholders should be promoting, but the idea won't likely be popular with those on the Left. They prefer subsidizing folks who don't pay the property taxes they enjoy jacking up regularly. Yet it is not only a viable solution to a growing problem but a really good solution.

So, too, should city leaders work together with county leaders to consider building a mental health

facility to treat those homeless people who have no place to go and suffering from mental illness. How many of the homeless population are suffering from mental issues I don't know, but simply driving up and down Broadway, I have a suspicion it's a pretty large number.

The State of Tennessee has just outlawed living in public spaces outside. And while I don't doubt city leaders will try and ignore state law, it's not likely going to take the legislature long to figure out it should draft and pass a law to remove from office those county and municipal officeholders who refuse to obey state law.

It's long past time when the city ought to approach the county and both governments work together to build a mental health facility to house and treat those homeless people suffering from mental illness. That not only protects the people of our community, but also those suffering from mental illness. The county and city governments could also approach our legislative delegation to see if there is not some state assistance to build such a facility.

One would think those boosters of the taxpayers paying for stadiums for private business would all be on board to build a mental health facility to protect and serve an entire community.

If the city government were to round up the homeless folks on buses and bus them down to Lakeshore Park instead of some scruffy location in South or East Knoxville, how long do you suppose it would be before folks in West Knoxville were on the warpath? My guess is it wouldn't take long at all.

There have been more than a few people who have complained about the homeless congregating downtown. That certainly doesn't help business and whether the Left in Knoxville wishes to admit it or not, but businesses pay the bulk of the property and sales taxes that keep the government running. When folks stop coming into businesses, it's over. There is already a fetid smell of garbage and urine hovering over downtown and that's not good for business. Nor is it fair to any person. It's long past time to build what we all know should be built and operated.

Jay, Johns and Allen speak

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and as the economy continues to spiral downward. He also said that he attended a town planning meeting for more than seven hours and received no response from the town's leader.

"We need citizen respect and participation," Johns said. "The reason that I decided to run for this office was because of this club right here.

"I also went to a planning meeting and sat there for seven-and-a-half hours. (Farragut Press reporter) Tammy Cheek and I were the only ones who were there."

The meeting, he said, accomplished nothing. He also said no one acknowledged his presence at the meeting.

"It was a planning meeting and nothing was being planned. I proposed a plan and no one followed it."

Johns and Jay both brought up voter apathy.

"I was extremely dismayed that only one in 10 registered voters voted in the (primary) election," Jay said. "We are lazy and we are complacent and we need to engage."

Allen has worked in the District Attorney General's Office since 1989.

During her remarks, she acknowledged her staff for its hard work and distributed her 2021 Year in Review Report.

"My entire life, I knew that I wanted to be a prosecutor," said Allen, who is seeking another term in the office. "I've been with the office since 1989 and I've been the District Attorney General since 2014."

She also noted that she and her staff have been transparent to the extent the law allows. Allen has her own podcast, "Generally Speaking," and created a citizen's academy.

She faces opposition in August from Jackson Fenner, a Democrat.

"I have a Democratic opponent and I won't speak ill of him, but I will speak the truth," Allen said. "But (Fenner) has never prosecuted a case.

"He doesn't know how to prosecute and he doesn't know what prosecution means."

Allen made her appearance just hours after successfully filing an injunction to have The Ball Gentlemen's Club and Jolly's Bar shut down. The establishment was deemed a public nuisance.

Frazier, who faces Democrat Vivian Shipe, promised to "meet with constituents anywhere."

She noted that Knox County has several areas and people from those areas are seeking solutions to their challenges as they should. Frazier is seeking the seat of the term-limited Justin Biggs who is running for trustee.

Early voting takes place July 15-30.

Inskip apartments face a second vote at council

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represents the area, pointed to past failed efforts to rezone the property and called the effort "an abrupt change to a long-standing policy."

"It's going to be a traffic nightmare," Thomas said, adding, "Building in an existing neighborhood is asking for trouble."

Referring to the planning council's approval, Councilwoman Janet Testerman said, "We have to trust our specialists."

"Things have changed dramatically," Testerman said noting the city is committed to affordable housing.

Councilwoman Lauren Rider cited the Pond Gap apartments as having

similar opposition but working out well and Councilwoman Lynne Fugate said there is a change in the area, a housing crisis, and "not a lot of open spaces" available in the city.

Councilwoman Seema Singh asked Huber why he chose the site and he responded, "It's available and for sale." He also said it qualifies for an affordable housing loan.

Councilman Tommy Smith called the zoning change request "a quantum leap and a shock to the system" for the neighborhood.

Huber described the plans as "garden-style" apartments.

Thomas said passing the zoning request is

"throwing the baby out with the bath water" and said the council should not vote solely for the convenience of a developer.

Councilwoman Amelia Parker asked what threat apartments were to the neighborhood and challenged that a multi-family designation would harm the area.

Voting against the zoning change were Thomas, Smith and Andrew Roberto.

"This is the first reading, I still have hope we can work this out," Thomas said. Huber responded that he is still willing to meet with the neighbors and discuss the request before the second and final vote.



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Second Saturday Concert Series Lineups Announced

Knox County is again hosting its Second Saturday Concert Series this summer as the Parks & Recreation Department will oversee live music at The Cove at Concord Park and Clayton Park.

The free concerts are held from 6 to 8 p.m. June through August on the second Saturday of each month. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own blankets, lawn chairs, and food. However, no alcohol is allowed.

The dates and bands for summer 2022 are:

- June 11: Mystic Rhythm Tribe (Cove) and Paul Beasley Group (Clayton Park)
- July 9: Leftfoot Dave and the Magic Hats (Cove) and Jay Dee (Clayton Park)
- August 13: Rockinfellerz (Cove) and Crawdaddy Jones (Clayton Park)

"We are happy to once again host one of the biggest events of the summer," Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs

said. "Folks from here and across the region love these events, and it's a good chance to listen to music, have a picnic, and check out our parks, which are some of the nicest places in the area."

The Cove, located at 11808 S. Northshore Drive, is the county's most visited park. It features several summertime amenities, including a beach, playground, sand volleyball court, walking trail, and fishing areas. River Sports also rents canoes and kayaks. Clayton Park, located at 7347 Norris Freeway, includes a pavilion, grills, walking trail, and playground.

If any concert must be canceled because of the weather, the county will post a notification to the Parks and Rec Facebook page and the Park's Twitter page.

The county will release more information about each band during the week or so prior to each Second Saturday event.

When one of my criminal clients is entering a plea agreement regarding what they are charged with, they often receive probation. That means they serve none of their sentence in jail but instead serve their sentence on probation. This usually requires that they report monthly to a probation officer to ensure they are staying out of trouble, that they are maintaining housing, and pursuing employment.

For example, on a driving under the influence (DUI) charge, my client may be sentenced to serve the mandatory minimum sentence of 48 hours in jail. A DUI charge is a Class A misdemeanor that carries a maximum sentence of 11 months and 29 days in jail (1 day less than a year). That means that after my client does their 48 hours in jail, they will spend the next 11 months and 27 days on probation.



By Jeddiah McKeehan
jed@attorney-knoxville.com

However, when the judge announces what that agreement is in front of my client, there can be a mild freak-out moment when they hear how the judge states it. The judge will say, "I sentence you to 11 months and 29 days in jail (client freaks out), all time suspended to supervised probation except for 48 hours (client breathes a sigh of relief)."

Why do the judges state the sentence that way? Because if the client violates their probation, their probation can be revoked and they can be ordered to serve the remainder of their sentence in jail. This happens all the time and often for the most avoidable reasons in the world. Probation, when done properly, is a great tool. It allows someone who has made a mistake to avoid serving jail time, get them on the right path, and ensure that they maintain

good behavior for a period of time. It is the hope that the person can be "remediated," learn their lesson from their run-in with the law and move on to become a productive member of society.

Often, someone will enter a plea of guilty to a charge and get probation, and then they will not even bother going to their first probation meeting. That will instantly trigger a probation violation and the defendant will be re-arrested and can be made to serve the rest of their sentence in jail instead of on probation.

Probation allows people to avoid serving their sentence in jail, but if they cannot comply with the terms of their probation,

then they may not remain on probation. Oh by the way, just the "privilege" of being on probation is \$40.00 to \$50.00 a month in probation fees, which may not sound like a lot, but when you are poor, it's hard to come up with that money. I have seen people violated for not making their monthly probation fee payments.

To come full circle, when your sentence is suspended, that means that your sentence is one that will be served on probation instead of in jail.

Jeddiah McKeehan is an attorney practicing in Knoxville and surrounding counties. Visit attorney-knoxville.com for more information about this and other legal issues.

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Travelers

How shall I know, unless I go to Cairo or Cathay,

Whether or not this blessed spot is blessed in every way?

Now it may be, the flower for me is beneath my nose;

How shall I tell, unless I smell The Carthaginian rose?

— Edna St. Vincent Millay

Well...I have. Years ago, while traveling with family, our ship was detoured from Sicily because of storms.

We landed in Tunisia and were disappointed, but decided to make lemonade out of lemons. I was able to use my pigeon French to negotiate with a taxi driver, a day trip to Sidi Bou Said, the town now occupying the land of ancient Carthage, where Hannibal once stood. Magical! So, you see, I have "smelled" a Carthaginian Rose.

In my tribute to my brother Steve last week, I noted that, just like me, he loved to travel, and fondly remembered our sojourn to Carthage. Apparently, our parents instilled in us a wanderlust. In the final years of his disabling illness, Steve's desire to travel abated, but he continued his travels in his mind. And although I am still traveling on this side of the "bar," my wanderlust has also abated.

I have exhausted many traveling companions walking to see another cathedral, gaze upon a distant vista or see the original painting in a museum. Steve's horizons shrank and, instead, he focused on family and the simpler pleasures of good company. Life teaches you if you are open to such lessons of wisdom.

Since my wanderlust has

waned, Becky and I have discovered another travel option. Instead of booking plane and hotel reservations and then suffering the rigors of travel, we are sending our Knoxville daughter and kids to Portland to visit with the other daughter and her kids! We will miss being with the gang, but putting the two families together for a nice summer vacation is, for us, more important, and yes, less painful!

As a doctor I have traveled with numerous families through life, suffering and death. And though I realize it was Steve's time to go, his death has moved me more than I expected it would. I guess this is obvious because I'm still writing about my brother. Perhaps the church bells in John Donne's poem (last week's essay) are still "tolling" in my soul.

Steve's mind remained clear, remembering the travels and joys of a lifetime. His was a life well lived, but cut short. His final gift to his big brother was a study of courage, emphasizing the most important aspects of life.

As I've said many times, I write about what is on my heart and mind. This is not an excuse because to write something worthy of my readers requires me to be interested in a topic. I used to write about medical

issues more than I do now. Perhaps this was because I was practicing medicine then. About a year ago I realized that the fire in my belly for medicine was gone, and I knew that I would eventually become obsolete and perhaps dangerous. I have seen old doctors hang on too long. So, I decided that it was "best to step down before others told me to sit down."

Perhaps the signs that you are a "seasoned citizen" are reflections on your life and work. I had a long and meaningful career in medicine. But I have learned there is a huge difference between being responsible for a patient's care and merely answering questions or explaining "medical-ese."

But my travels are not over. I am now in my second career. Although for me writing is an avocation rather than a vocation, I have concluded I am more impactful as a writer than I was as a doctor. The old saw goes, "The pen is mightier than the sword." Perhaps the same goes for the stethoscope.

I will continue to write about medical conditions, but there is plenty of fodder for the pen diagnosing the maladies of our country and culture. Last week I wrote about guns and violence. The week before

the topic was abortion. And previous essays have discussed gender dysphoria, sexualization of children in school, critical race theory, indoctrination rather than education, The Great Reset, American Marxism and even delusional thinking promoted by progressive socialist Democrats. If you ever get bored, you can go to knoxfocus.com and look in the archives for previous essays. And if you'd like to hold a book in your hand, you can get a collection of my essays at Amazon entitled, "Well... What Did the Doctor Say?" My wife is on the cover, but in costume!

Readers are my fellow travelers. I know because I hear from some of you, and your comments are appreciated. My brother Steve was no wilting flower, nor am I. I will use reason and endeavor to "speak the truth in love," but I will not shrink from my duty in this culture war in which we find ourselves.

Therefore, you can expect to read essays regarding politics, history, philosophy and, of course, apologetics for country, conservatism and Christianity.

I'll conclude with a story from a fellow traveler, and reader. My friend was having trouble reconciling why God allows bad things to happen. (This is

the "theodicy" question of divine justice for those who would like to do more research.) The classical explanations are the following: there is no God; there is a cosmic battle against good and evil; we are all sinners and get what we deserve; adversity builds character; or justice occurs in the next life. Karma is another non-classical explanation for why bad things happen to seemingly good people.

I explained to my friend that I am no expert, but the simplest way of encapsulating this for me is Acts 17:28. In his debate with the stoic and epicurean philosophers in Athens, Paul quotes the pre-Socratic philosopher Epimenides who said, in Him "we live and move and have our being."

Unfortunately, because of free will, God allows forces in creation antithetical to God's goodness and desire. Fortunately, we are all His travelers in this journey we call life. Our job is to trust, obey and be faithful. History records a long list of Ahabs and Jezebels. They never last. It will be OK as we stand firm and courageously witness for the Way.

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

Dogwood Arts begins 2022-2023 sculpture exhibition installation

Dogwood Arts began installing the 2022-2023 Art In Public Places Sculpture Exhibition last weekend. The exhibition includes thirty-one new sculptures selected by renowned glass artist, Tommie Rush. The program has grown tremendously in the past year (from 19 sculptures to 31) with the addition of three new placement sites--including Emory Place in North Knoxville, the Student Union at the University of Tennessee, and the Maker Exchange at World's Fair Park. Installations began Saturday at



JAREDWORSHAMPHOTOGRAPHY

"Ruthless" by Flaminio Antonio will find a new home in Krutch Park.

the ORNL Federal Credit Union branches at Northshore and Oak Ridge. The majority of the sculptures in Krutch Park and Emory Place were replaced Sunday and Zoo Knoxville, the

UT Gardens, and the McGhee Tyson Airport will have new sculptures on Tuesday, June 7. The exhibition includes sculptors from 16 different states across the country: Georgia, Illinois,

Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Texas and **Continue on page 4**

Defense from Ticks

By Steve Roark
Volunteer, Cumberland Gap
Historical Park
Used with permission

Ticks season is officially here, though to be honest I was pulling them off me in January. With ticks come the concern of getting some serious illnesses they can carry. So be on guard to protect yourself and your family.

Lyme disease is the most common illness spread by ticks and is most usually transmitted by the deer tick while in its tiny nymph stage. Rocky Mountain spotted fever is carried by the American dog tick and is potentially deadly. Two lesser-known tick-borne illnesses are ehrlichiosis and babesiosis, which have flu-like symptoms and can make susceptible people very ill. The best protection against these

Continue on page 2

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Patriotism over price gouging

Times are rough for Americans. As soon as we stick our heads out after two-plus years of Covid, other things knock us sideways. Right now, inflation is choking our economy and causing a great

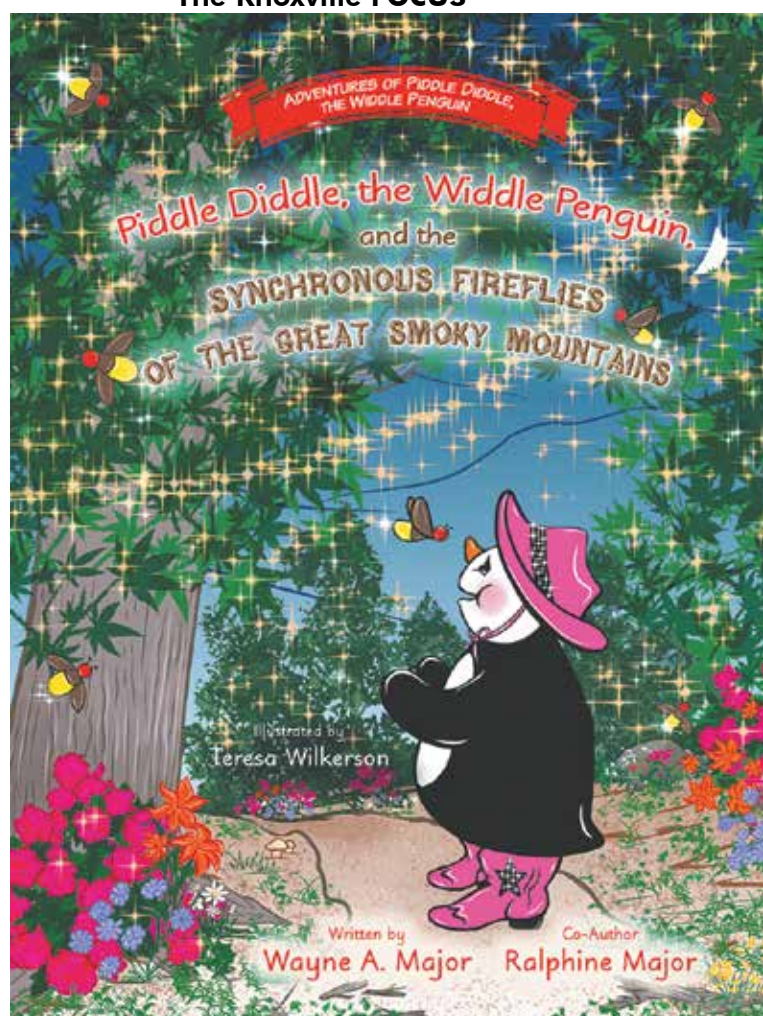


By Joe Rector
joerector@comcast.net

pain we feel over prices at the pump is not reflected in the earnings of the oil companies. Check out how many extra billions those companies have pocketed or passed along to their shareholders.

Don't get me wrong: companies should be able to make profits. Yet, when the country and the world work to defend another country from war and takeover, those oil companies might have considered reducing prices at the pumps instead of letting them rise by as much as 75%. How is that doing their parts in trying to help? The same thing goes for groceries. The cost of products might have risen due to shortages. We understand that, but when everything in the store skyrockets, something else is going on. Drinks used to be five six-packs for \$11.00. Now, they can be as much as \$6 or \$7 for one sixpack. A week's groceries have doubled for families. Many people have cut things from their diets simply because they can't afford them at all. Although I never was a Nixon fan, I appreciated his concern for the people of the country or his own political future when he froze prices. At some point, our entire government must stop being beholden to corporate interests. Members of the House and Senate are in place to support and defend us, not big businesses that fill politicians' pockets. Yes, we in America are suffering through some economic problems that come from soaring prices. Companies whose greed is more important than their support of democracy or obligation to be "their brothers' keepers" show that we have bigger problems than inflation with which to deal. This country has lost its way, and I'm afraid we might not discover it again. The choice is a simple one: Patriotism or Price Gouging.

Deal of worry for people here and abroad. While I'm not so sure that this is the fault of any one person or any political party, I am sure that decisions in board rooms carry tons of blame for the situation. The first Covid relief package was necessary to help millions of unemployed folks get by. They welcomed the money so that they could pay rent or bills that kept them in their homes. It was a lifeline for so many. The second round of money is a bit more suspect. Instead of indiscriminately passing out cash, the second outreach should have been for those most in need. Too many people saw the second check as a windfall that could help them buy things unrelated to getting by in a tough time. Spending the money heated up our economy and reversed the worst unemployment figures in decades. Some people were better off than they were when they were working, so they decided to sit at home or quit the jobs they had in hopes of finding a better one, maybe even one for which they had no qualifications. The inability to move goods from ships to seaports to stores also helped create a rapid rise in prices. Covid kept workers at home, and the goods stacked up on docks or remained hostages of ships carrying them. Shortages of all sorts of items led to hoarding. Perhaps this epidemic that we faced will be best known for the fact that it led to a hoarding of toilet paper. Several factors led to the shortage of gas. Refusing to buy oil from a country led by a war criminal has caused us to make sacrifices. However, the



Front cover of book, courtesy of Jan-Carol Publishing, Inc.

Words of Faith: "But Jesus called them unto him, and said, suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." Luke 18:16 (KJV).

Get crafty at the Library

Feeling crafty? Knox County Public Library invites creatives and creative wannabes of all ages to try out their maker skills in a lowkey setting. From egg carton ocean animals to paper art earrings, there's an outlet for every innovative spirit. All programs are free, and supplies are provided. Here are just some of the programs offered this summer:

Flower Power Bookmark | June 4 | 10:30 a.m.
Karns Branch Library

Create custom bookmarks with dried flowers and ornamentation. Participants are welcome to bring personal artifacts (e.g. small photo, meaningful quote, stickers, etc.) to add to the creation. Ideal for preteens and teens.

Make Your Own Canvas Banner | June 4 | 12:00 p.m.
Fountain City Branch Library

Decorate a canvas banner to hang on a door or in the garden. Ages 5-10.

Chalk Walk | June 6 | 11:00 a.m. | Karns Branch Library
Children and families are invited to join a sidewalk chalk art fest. Popsicles will be served.

Crafts for the Uncrafty: The Art of Book Folding | June 7 6:30 p.m. | Cedar Bluff Branch Library

Learn the art of book folding to create a free-standing work of art. This easy craft combines a love of books with paper crafting. All ages welcome.

Paper Art: Earrings | June 9 | 5:30 p.m.
Burlington Branch Library

Life-long crafter Susan Bernard will demonstrate how to make paper earrings. Ages 14 & up.

The Ocean: Black Glue Art | June 13 | 6:00 p.m.
Sequoyah Branch Library

Use black glue and paint to make stunning ocean art that looks like stained glass.

A full list of events is available at www.knoxcountylibrary.org or pick up a summer calendar at any library location.

Defense from Ticks

Continued from page 1

diseases is to prevent tick bites and recognize symptoms early so that proper treatment can be given.

Consumer Reports recommended these steps to take:

Protect your yard

Keep the most used areas of your yard as clear and dry as possible (ticks hate that). Rake leaves from around shrubs, walls and fences. Clear overgrown brush, and keep the lawn mown. If you live next to woodland, create a wood-chip or gravel barrier at least three feet wide to separate the grass from the woods. A single application of a pyrethroid pesticide around the edge of the barrier in mid-May, and again in the fall, can reduce tick numbers.

Protect your body

Ticks usually don't come to you... you go to them. Avoid brushy areas if possible during prime tick season. Wear long pants, preferably light-colored ones so you can see any ticks that climb onto them. Tuck your pants into your socks. Several deet-based insect repellents work against ticks as well as mosquitoes. You can also spray your clothing (not your skin) with an insecticide containing 0.5 percent permethrin. After a day outdoors, check your body for ticks, especially your groin, ears, neck and head. Be sure and check children closely. If you find a tick, grasp it firmly with tweezers as close to the skin as possible and slowly pull it off. Should a piece of the tick remain under the skin, it will

be unable to infect you with Lyme disease. Use a topical antiseptic to prevent skin infection.

Recognize symptoms

Lyme disease can start off with a bulls-eye rash, but not always. Other symptoms include a flu-like illness, sudden arthritis in large joints, sudden nerve pain in the hip area, facial palsy or abnormal heart rhythm. If you have any of these symptoms during tick season, go to the doctor. Treatment is usually with antibiotics. Rocky Mountain spotted fever typically starts with a fever, nausea, vomiting and severe headache, followed by a pink, spotted rash on the wrists, forearms and ankles. Prompt treatment with antibiotics is essential to avoid serious complications or even death.



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The 1948 Election in Tennessee V

Pages from the Past



By Ray Hill
rayhill865@gmail.com

Much as it will surprise many readers, there was a time - - - a very long time indeed - - - when Tennessee was almost entirely a one-party state. Elections were decided inside the Democratic primaries. The highest office any Republican could really aspire to with any expectation of reaching it was the U. S. House of Representatives, as the First and Second Congressional Districts in East Tennessee remained reliably in the hands of the GOP. In Middle Tennessee Republicans were as rare as unicorns and in West Tennessee only slightly less so. There were rare occasions when a Republican had come along and managed to win a two-year term as governor, usually when the Democratic Party had torn itself asunder in some brutal fight. That had happened in 1910 when the Democratic Party in Tennessee had split into two factions; the "Independent" Democrats allied themselves with the Republicans and Ben W. Hooper was elected governor twice, winning statewide elections in 1910 and 1912. The alliance referred to as the "Fusion" movement also elected both United States senators in the Tennessee General Assembly where Independent Democrats and Republicans combined to beat the regular Democratic nominees. Yet both Luke Lea and John Knight Shields were Independent Democrats, not Republicans.

By 1914 Democrats had managed to cobble together both wings of their party to nominate and narrowly elect Tom C. Rye over Governor Ben W. Hooper, who was seeking a third two-year term. 1916 brought about the first popular election in Tennessee for the United States Senate. Democrats held their primary a year in advance of the general election, largely to rid themselves of the incumbent, Luke Lea. Lea had been the youngest member of the United States Senate when he was elected in 1911. Handsome, charismatic, and a publishing magnate who owned the Nashville Tennessean, Lea also had a poor attendance record and could not help himself when it came to meddling in virtually every aspect of Tennessee politics. Luke Lea was far more interested in what was going on, at least politically, in Tennessee than tending to his duties in Washington, D. C.. One unwritten rule of politics is any candidate or incumbent who continuously meddles in other people's races or political affairs usually finds himself in a tough primary or general election race. More often than not, the meddler will have plenty of free

time to continue meddling, albeit out of office. Luke Lea had made a plethora of political enemies who aligned together to defeat him inside the Democratic primary and the early primary election had allegedly been the brainchild of Congressman Cordell Hull, who loathed the senator. Hull had once dismissed Lea as the "Ananias of Tennessee politics." For those less familiar with the Bible, Ananias was struck dead for having lied to God. For the time, it was a mighty potent insult. Lea was challenged by former governor Malcolm Rice Patterson, who had literally ignited the spark that had burned down the house of Democracy in Tennessee when he had pardoned his friend Colonel Duncan B. Cooper who had taken part in the murder of Edward Ward Carmack, who had been Patterson's primary opponent in a very bitter campaign in 1908. Patterson had also been an unabashed "wet" and drank that way as well. Rumors swirled throughout Tennessee about Governor Patterson having been found drunk in a whorehouse. By 1915, Patterson was now making a living as a speaker for temperance, or prohibition, on the evils of alcohol. There were tens of thousands of people in Tennessee who doubted the genuineness of Patterson's recent conversion.

Both Patterson and Lea were highly polarizing figures with numerous enemies. The third entry in the 1915 Democratic primary for the United States Senate was Congressman Kenneth D. McKellar of Memphis. McKellar ran as the "harmony" candidate, the one candidate all Democrats could support against the strongest candidates the Republicans could possibly field: former governor Ben W. Hooper. The 1915 Democratic primary was the only popular election for the U. S. Senate which had a run-off provision. McKellar won the first primary, followed closely by former governor Patterson. Luke Lea ran third after McKellar had carried both East and West Tennessee in the first primary. Lea did not even carry his own native Middle Tennessee in the first primary; Malcolm Patterson had won Middle Tennessee. Patterson's candidacy collapsed in the run-off primary a month after the first election, although the former governor campaigned hard. Congressman McKellar carried all three grand divisions in the primary. While Ben Hooper might very well have beaten either Luke Lea or Malcolm Patterson, McKellar easily won the 1916 general election with slightly more than 55% of the vote.

Republicans usually



Republican gubernatorial candidate Roy Acuff in 1948.

put up a sacrificial candidate for the United States Senate, but no member of the GOP had ever won election to the Senate from the Volunteer State. Republicans nominated Knoxville Mayor James A. Fowler, a distinguished lawyer and former special assistant to the U. S. Attorney General, as the senatorial nominee in 1928, but he lost badly to McKellar. The first real effort by Republicans in Tennessee to win a seat in the United States Senate since 1916 was in 1948 when former congressman Carroll Reece was the nominee. A shaman would have certainly forecast all the signs pointed to a Republican victory, nationally and perhaps in Tennessee as well. Harry Truman looked like a sure loser to New York governor Thomas E. Dewey in the general election. In Tennessee, Democrats had just finished one of their more bitter primary campaigns in the state's history. The Crump machine had taken a walloping following Ed Crump's biggest political mistake of having dumped Senator Tom Stewart for the Democratic senatorial nomination. Crump probably thought without his blessing Stewart would merely meekly withdraw and retire, but the senator issued an emotional and fiery blast at the Memphis Boss and ran anyway. Crump's candidate, an obscure Circuit Court judge from Cookeville, ran a poor third. What Crump's mistake accomplished was the nomination of Chattanooga Congressman Estes Kefauver who won the Democratic primary with a plurality. The two candidates supported by the McKellar - Crump axis had lost the Democratic primaries.

The Republicans had also nominated what appeared to be two very strong candidates to head their ticket; Carroll Reece had been in Congress twenty-six out of the last twenty-eight years, voluntarily retiring to become chairman of the Republican National Committee in

1946. Reece had presided over the greatest victory seen by Republicans since the age of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal had begun, winning back both houses of Congress. Governor Dewey had nudged Reece out of the Tennessean's perch at the National Committee in favor of his own appointee and the former congressman, thinking the circumstances boded well for Republicans, had come home to Tennessee to run for the United States Senate. Tennessee Republicans had also nominated a strong candidate for governor, albeit an unusual one. Roy Acuff was widely known as a performer on the radio (the biggest medium in private homes at the time), in motion pictures and at the Grand Ol' Opry. No candidate could have possibly had the name recognition Roy Acuff brought to the statewide ticket.

The Reece - Acuff ticket campaigned energetically across the state and drew enormous crowds in the thousands everywhere they went. Reece would do most of the speechmaking while Roy Acuff and his Smoky Mountain Boys did the entertaining. The size of the crowds was a source of constant irritation and worry to Tennessee Democrats and the newspaper supporters of the ticket. Kefauver and his running mate, former governor Gordon Browning, who was making a political comeback, took no chances and campaigned hard in the general election.

As September began to wane, speculation centered once more again on Ed Crump and his domain of Memphis. The Boss had said nothing about supporting either the national or state ticket and many Tennessee Republicans, including Carroll Reece, thought there was a good chance Crump might bolt the Democratic ticket. Reporters began asking Crump what he intended to do in the fall and the Memphis Boss refused to answer. Fred Hixson, political reporter for the Chattanooga Daily

Times, picked up the telephone and called Crump in Memphis. Hixson wrote the Memphis Boss was "noncommittal on questions pertaining to Democratic nominees" while "his voice was pleasant as he spoke about some of the Republicans nominees." Fred Hixson wrote there "was ample evidence in the tone of the voice and in his response to questions that he is still smarting under the lash - ing dealt his organization in the Democratic primary by Estes Kefauver and Gordon Browning." Hixson noted Crump pointedly refused to give any "assurance of any character" Kefauver and Browning could "depend upon his support in November." When asked directly if he would back the Democratic state ticket in the general election, the Memphis Boss merely murmured, "We are keeping our mind pleasantly blank."

Hixson observed the persistent rumors, which he carefully noted had yet to be confirmed in any way, "the Crump forces will join the Republicans in the state elections and possibly the national election, too." Fred Hixson wrote, with great understatement, "Such a blow in West Tennessee could be serious to Democratic aspirations." "What makes these reports more impressive is the fact that Crump himself will not deny them," Hixson reported.

"We are just not worrying about politics, about finances - - - about anything" Crump chortled to Hixson. "I was worried for awhile about the Leaning Tower of Pisa. You know, it has shifted several inches since I was there (1933). But the other day I read in a newspaper that engineers said it was good for 400 more years and I am

not worried about it any more."

The Memphis Boss told Fred Hixson no Republican had carried Shelby County since William McKinley in 1900, yet Crump added Herbert Hoover "all but carried it" in the 1928 general election. Crump pointed out he had supported the Democratic presidential nominee, Alfred E. Smith, against Hoover that year. When asked if he would support the Truman - Barkley ticket, the Memphis Boss replied, "We just have no comment to make." When Hixson asked the same question a different way and asked if Crump would vote for Truman, the Memphis Boss snapped, "Are you using a gimlet or an augur?" Crump punctuated his comment with "a few hearty guffaws."

Hixson reminded Crump Drew Pearson had reported on the August 8th edition of his weekly radio broadcast the columnist's prediction the Memphis Boss would support Carroll Reece to beat Kefauver in the general election. Crump dismissed Pearson's prediction by pointing out the news columnist had no "veracity." Crump speculated the Shelby County political organization would "probably" go along with the regular Democratic nominees, although he pointed out the recent Reece - Acuff rally in Memphis was the largest crowd ever to attend a political event in the Bluff City. Crump said he was not in attendance "but several who did come by here and told me about it." Crump told Hixson, "You are the fifth man to call me over the state today" but the Memphis Boss said nothing about the content of the conversations. The only real information Hixson gleaned was Crump was waiting to see if the backers of Estes Kefauver, who had received a surprisingly large vote in Shelby County, intended to challenge the Shelby County machine's candidates for the state legislature. That alone was a subtle warning to the Boss's opponents inside his own domain.

Asked if either Gordon Browning or Estes Kefauver had paid a call on him, Ed Crump replied, Kefauver "came down here and called Cliff Davis (the congressman from Shelby County) and he was out of town." Crump mentioned he had heard Kefauver had "a big write-up in Colliers Magazine all about his victory." Hixson wondered who had written the article and Crump shot back, "Kefauver did, so I heard."

Beaten in the recent primary election, E. H. Crump was clearly savoring his position as the general election approached.

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Don't Panic

Have you ever reached the point where you could not handle one more thing? Your teenager is giving you trouble. Your expenses are greater than your income. Your spouse says something or does something that annoys you and puts you over the edge. The prophet Elijah could relate. He has had enough. The wicked king and queen of Israel wanted him dead and they were hunting him down. We are told Elijah "came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, LORD," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors" (I Kings 19:4).

Elijah's negative thoughts are controlling him. He is saying his ancestors are lucky because they are already dead. This can happen to us: Life is not going to get any better than this. My life is so difficult. No one ever understands me.

Why do we think this way? It is because we get fixated on our problems and we lose focus of the presence of God. This causes us to panic. But God had never abandoned Elijah. He was right there sustaining him along the way. But Elijah couldn't see it. He forgot God and felt He was distant from him.

We need to remember Paul's words to the Philippians as he wrote from prison: "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer

and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:4-7). Right in the middle of Paul telling them how they can have peace and rejoice he says, "The Lord is near." When you know the Lord is near, you can have peace instead of panic.

Elijah needed to be reminded that the Lord was near him. God reminds him. The Lord said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by." Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper (I Kings 19:7-12).

Notice how God came in the whisper. Why would God whisper to Elijah? He whispers because He is so close. He doesn't have to shout. God wants us to draw close to Him. When someone whispers to you, what do you do? You lean in so you can hear better. I think we often might miss the whisper of God. We are expecting a loud shout. Maybe God wants you to slow down and listen for His still, quiet voice. Elijah did not need to die. He just needed God. God was and is enough.

Right now, you might be feeling overwhelmed and burdened. You might feel anxious and worried. You might feel distant from God. The problems you are dealing with are tempting you to panic. Please don't ignore the presence of God. God is much bigger than your problems.



Sweetwater Valley Farm, between Loudon and Sweetwater in Philadelphia, Tn., has a Visitor Center and conducts tours. Visitors can see the cheese being made and buy a wide variety of their cheese products.

Taking the Food Loop

A Day Away



By Mike Steely

There are lots of things to see and do within a short drive from Knoxville with historic sites, museums, parks, lakes and mountain scenery aplenty. There are also lots of places to eat and some very special places that not only have tasty fare but are also interesting and even historic.

Leaving Knoxville you can easily drive down Kingston Pike or take I-75 to Loudon and drop in at the Tic Toc restaurant on the corner downtown. After that you can follow Lee Highway southwest and spend time at **Sweetwater Valley Farm**, where they make their variety of cheeses in view of visitors, and now they even have a cafe featuring different cheese sandwiches.

You can take a tour and see how their cows are milked using the latest technology where eight robots milk 500 cows. Only 20 people are allowed on each tour which generally lasts one hour.

The farm was part of a Revolutionary War land grant to General William Ballard Lenoir, for whom

Lenoir City is named. It became a dairy farm in 1917 and John and Celia Harrison purchased an interest in the dairy farm in 1987 and modernized the farm, opening the business to public visits. Don't forget to ask if they have freshly-made cheese curd—that's something special if you've never tried it.

Sweetwater Valley Farm has a nice website, sweetwatervalley.com, where tours can be booked online. It's located in Philadelphia along Highway 11, Lee Highway, between Loudon and Sweetwater.

Mayfield Dairy Farms is located just off Highway 11 along Highway 305 in Athens. The Mayfield Dairy Visitor Center offers 90-minute tours and the center also has lots of Mayfield dairy products in

its old-fashioned ice cream parlor. It's a favorite destination of school children and tour groups.

Founded by the Mayfield family in 1910, the dairy is now owned by the Dairy Farmers of America cooperative. You can find Mayfield's online at www.mayfielddairy.com.

If you have room for some sweet tasty treats on your drive you can hop on I-75 and drive south from Athens to the Ooltewah exit, take Highway 317 east to the junction of Highway 321, and visit the **Little Debbie Bakery Store**. If it's something sweet you prefer then Little Debbie products, produced locally there by McKee Foods, would be a great family stop.

It's one of four outlets around the nation featuring a variety of McKee Food products. The firm has 6,400 employees and the Ooltewah-Collegedale site has fresh treats and is interesting to visit. You can find them also on the web at www.mckeefoods.com.

From there you can loop

back up I-75 to Cleveland, Tn., and take 74 east to Highway 411.

Benton's Smoky Mountain Country Hams will be on the south side of the highway just before you reach Vonore. The ham and bacon produced there are known nationwide and a favorite of restaurants and gourmet cooks.

Founded in 1947 by Albert H. Hicks, a dairy farmer who began curing and selling country hams, the operation under Allan Benton and his employees honed the dry curing of hams and bacon to an art. Hickory smoking is done in a small stove smokehouse for its distinct flavor.

Benton's Country Hams has a good website, bentonscountryhams2.com, and can also be contacted at (423) 442-5003.

Visiting all these delicious places in one day is a bit much so you may want to take in a couple on a day's outing and save the others for another family adventure.

Dogwood Arts begins 2022-2023 sculpture exhibition installation

Cont. from page 1

Wisconsin. Artists included in the exhibition: Luke Achterberg, Matt Amante, Mary Angers, Nicole Beck, Steve Buduo, Brigit Ciskowski, Jim Collins, Matthew Duffy, Travis Emmen, Brian Ferriby, Art Garcia, Mike Hansel, Richard Herzog, Suguru Hiraide, Hanna Jubran, Rollin Karg, Ray Katz, Andrew Light, Harry

McDaniel, Nathan Pierce, Richard Pitts, John Ross, Antoinette Schultze, Kevin Vanek, Susan Woodford, Chris Wubbena and Joni Younkins-Herzog.

The sculptures will be on display throughout the greater Knoxville area through June 2023: in Downtown Knoxville (Krutch Park, Emory Place, Maker Exchange, UT Gardens, UTK Student

Union), East Knoxville (Zoo Knoxville, The Muse), West Knoxville (ORNL Federal Credit Union-Northshore Branch), Oak Ridge (American Museum of Science & Energy, Jackson Square, ORNL Federal Credit Union-Oak Ridge Branch), and Maryville/Alcoa (McGhee Tyson Airport). The full exhibition includes 39 sculptures (31 new, eight on permanent display).



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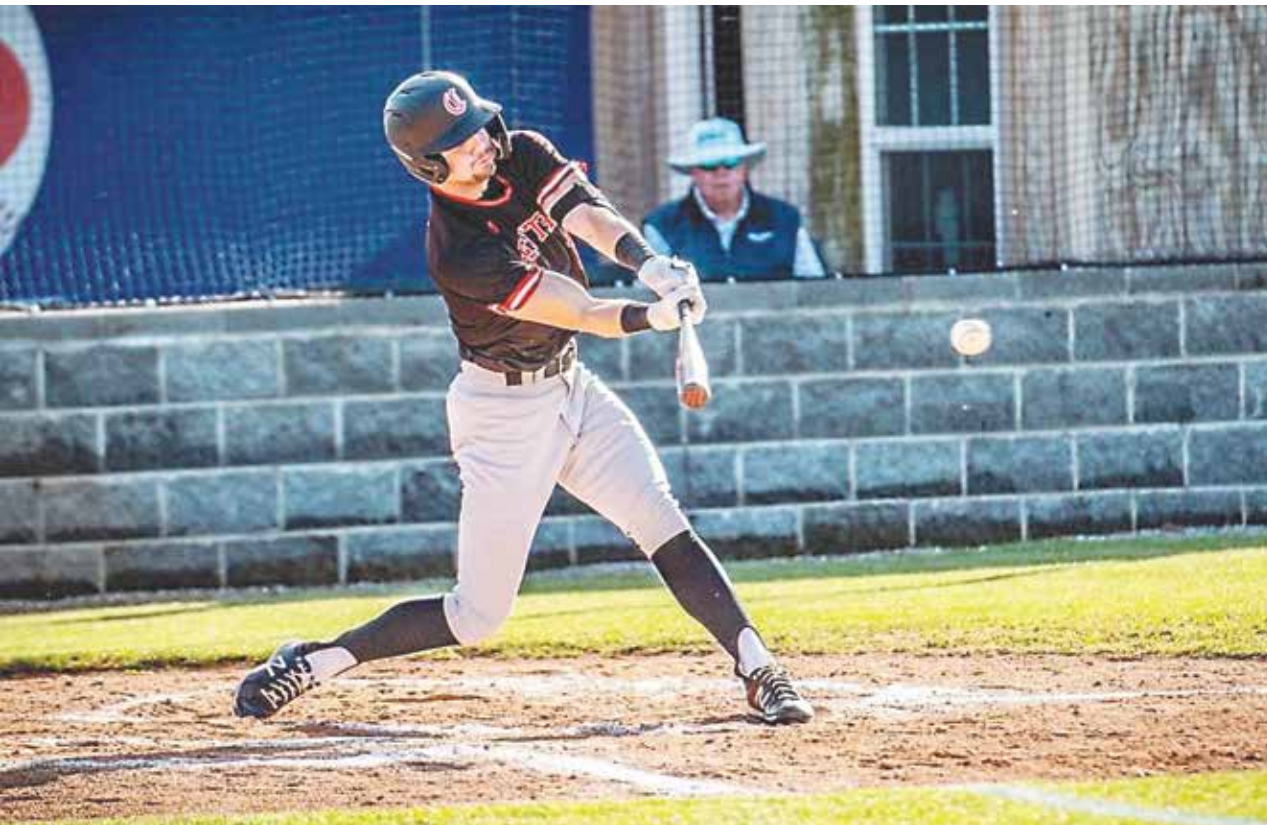
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2021-22 HIGH SCHOOL LEADERS

Student-Athlete of Year award tops off Bolton's prep career



Ryan Bolton connects with a pitch during his senior season this spring. The two-sport standout also excelled in the classroom and was voted Mr. Central High School by his peers.

Brown is Central's female honoree

By Steve Williams

Ryan Bolton played on state championship football teams his first two years at Central High and as a junior helped the Bobcats' baseball team place second in the district and advance to the region tournament for the first time in 15 years.

When the Bobcats' final at-bat occurred in an elimination loss to West in May, Ryan still had another award to come – that being his selection as the CHS male Student-Athlete

After the signing, Ryan said his goal was to win the district baseball championship in his senior season.

When the Bobcats' final at-bat occurred in an elimination loss to West in May, Ryan still had another award to come – that being his selection as the CHS male Student-Athlete

of the Year.

Bolton had impressive numbers in football and baseball as well as in academics his senior year. He also was team captain in both sports, which spoke highly of his leadership qualities.

In football, the two-time All-Region QB passed for 2,025 yards and 25 touchdowns. Also a two-time All-State punter, he got off a school record 68-yarder versus rival Fulton.

In baseball, the two-time All-District outfielder had a .365 batting average, 10 extra base hits and 10 stolen bases.

In the classroom, Bolton compiled a 4.25 GPA.

Ryan was very popular at Central too and his peers voted him Mr. Central High School and the 2022 prom king.

Despite all the time Bolton put into academics and athletics through his

Continue on page 2

Focus begins recognition of Student-Athletes of the Year

The Knoxville Focus proudly begins its recognition of the leading student-athletes in our local high schools for 2021-22 in this week's issue.

Each of the 25 schools in our coverage area was asked to submit its Student-Athletes of the Year, with athletic directors starting the process. Teachers, coaches and administrators contributed to the selections.

This marks the 11th annual year The Focus has published stories and pictures of our best student-athletes. Just think, this past school year's seniors were second graders when we began this feature.

It will take us about four weeks to recognize all of our honorees and we hope you will join us in learning about their accomplishments and applauding each one!



Nathan Graves (left) and Emery Fisher were selected Berean Christian School's Student-Athletes of the Year for 2021-22. Nathan has graduated, but Emery has one year remaining at BCS.

Graves was dependable and Fisher determined at BCS

By Steve Williams

Dependable may best describe Nathan Graves, who was a four-year basketball player for Berean Christian School.

"Nathan was one of the most coachable and consistent players I've ever coached," said Shannon Jenkins. "If there was a team activity scheduled, I could count on Nathan to be there, be on time and give his absolute best every time."

"He has incredible character and is exactly the kind of Christian and athlete you want on your team. He makes everyone around him better."

Graves also graduated with highest honors and was a member of the National Honor Society, maintaining a GPA of 4.3.

He had what it took to be the BCS male Student-Athlete of the Year.

"We are so proud of Nathan and know he will succeed in whatever he does next," said Berean Christian School Athletics' Hannah Warwick.

Emery Fisher is Berean's female honoree. She was a junior this past school year and played golf and basketball for the Lady Eagles.

In golf, Emery placed

Continue on page 2

Poteet and Trumm are Powell honorees

By Steve Williams

Hard work has been the foundation of Logan Poteet's success in baseball.

The Powell High senior catcher helped lead the Panthers to the TSSAA Class 4A state tournament this spring and he's also been a standout in the classroom.

That combination has earned him the honor of being named the PHS male Student-Athlete of the Year.

"Logan is one of the hardest workers in our program," said Josh Warner,

Powell's baseball coach, in May. "He has gone above and beyond in the weight room, on the field and in all of the individual skill development. This has transformed him into an SEC signee as he is committed to Vanderbilt University."

The 6-2, 205-pounder was selected this season's District 3-4A Most Valuable Player and he was a candidate for the Tennessee Baseball Coaches Association's Mr. Baseball award, noted Warren.

"He has excelled not

Continue on page 2



PHOTO BY STEVE WILLIAMS.

Powell catcher Logan Poteet poses for a picture after the Panthers defeated Bearden 1-0 in a Region 2-4A elimination game. He is the PHS male Student-Athlete of the Year.

Bring us on vacation with you.

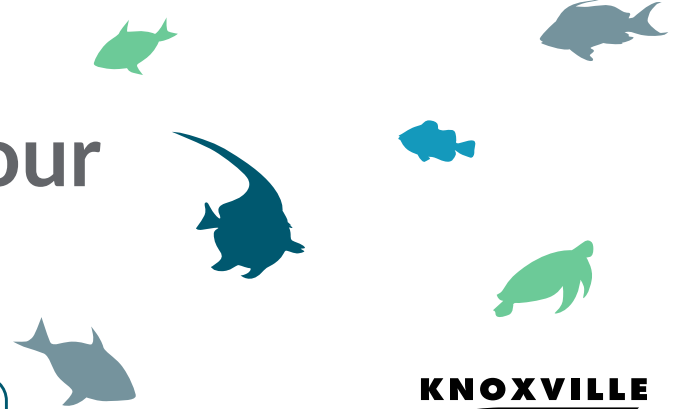
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2021-22 HIGH SCHOOL LEADERS

Houser was a student leader at Seymour

By Steve Williams

Emma Houser, Seymour High's female Student-Athlete of the Year, was not only an outstanding soccer player, but a great leader as president of her senior class and the Student

Government Association. In addition to that, Houser stood out in academics, achieving a 4.0 grade point average and scoring a 30 on the ACT.

She played soccer throughout high school and earned All-District 3

and All-Region 2 Class AA honors plus was voted the district's Player of the Year. Connor Witucki, Seymour's male honoree, was a standout in tennis and the District 2-AA runner-up this season, after winning the district championship in 2021.

In the classroom, Connor excelled with a 4.0 GPA and made 33 on the ACT.

Patterson first recipient of Conley Athletic Award

Emma Patterson was the recipient of the new Brad Conley Athletic Award at Gibbs High School this year.

Patterson was a four-year volleyball player who also played basketball her senior year. She is also a top student in this year's graduating class, said Jeff Thomas, Gibbs Assistant Principal and Athletic Director.

Karns AD praises Mundt and Jarreau

Seniors Madelyn Mundt and Caleb Jarreau are Karns High School's Student-Athletes of the Year.

Athletic Director Chad Turner took time to comment on each of them before the end of the school year.

"Madelyn Mundt has

dedicated herself to excelling in all walks of life. She is a cheerleader at Karns and an active member of DECA and the National Honors Society. She has danced with the Angela Floyd Dancing Company and played basketball her freshman year. She is also in the Top 10 Decile. Madelyn's positive outlook, motivation and commitment to academic excellence are key factors in her success.

"Caleb Jarreau is an outstanding student who always gives his best effort in both the classroom and athletics. His strong work ethic makes him one of our top students. Caleb hosts and produces the school podcast "Dispatches from

the Dam." He is also the Managing Editor of the school newspaper and president of the National Honors Society. Caleb cares about his teammates on the baseball team and pushes them to be better than they thought they could be."



Emma Houser and Connor Witucki are Seymour High's Student-Athletes of the Year.



Karns High School's Caleb Jarreau.

Student-Athlete of Year award tops off Bolton's prep career

Cont. from page 1

prep career, he still accumulated over 100 hours of community service spent with youngsters.

Bolton plans to major in Business Administration at C-N.

"Ryan is a mature, hard working kid that is very focused on being the best that he can be," said Central baseball coach Brandon Roberts. "I was impressed with his consistency. I expect him to go to Carson-Newman and fit in to the culture that Coach (Tom) Griffin has established and to have a successful career as a student-athlete."

Adryanna Brown, Central's female honoree, also was an exceptional student-athlete.

Girls soccer coach Bill Mize said: "Adryanna was the best center back I have coached at Central."

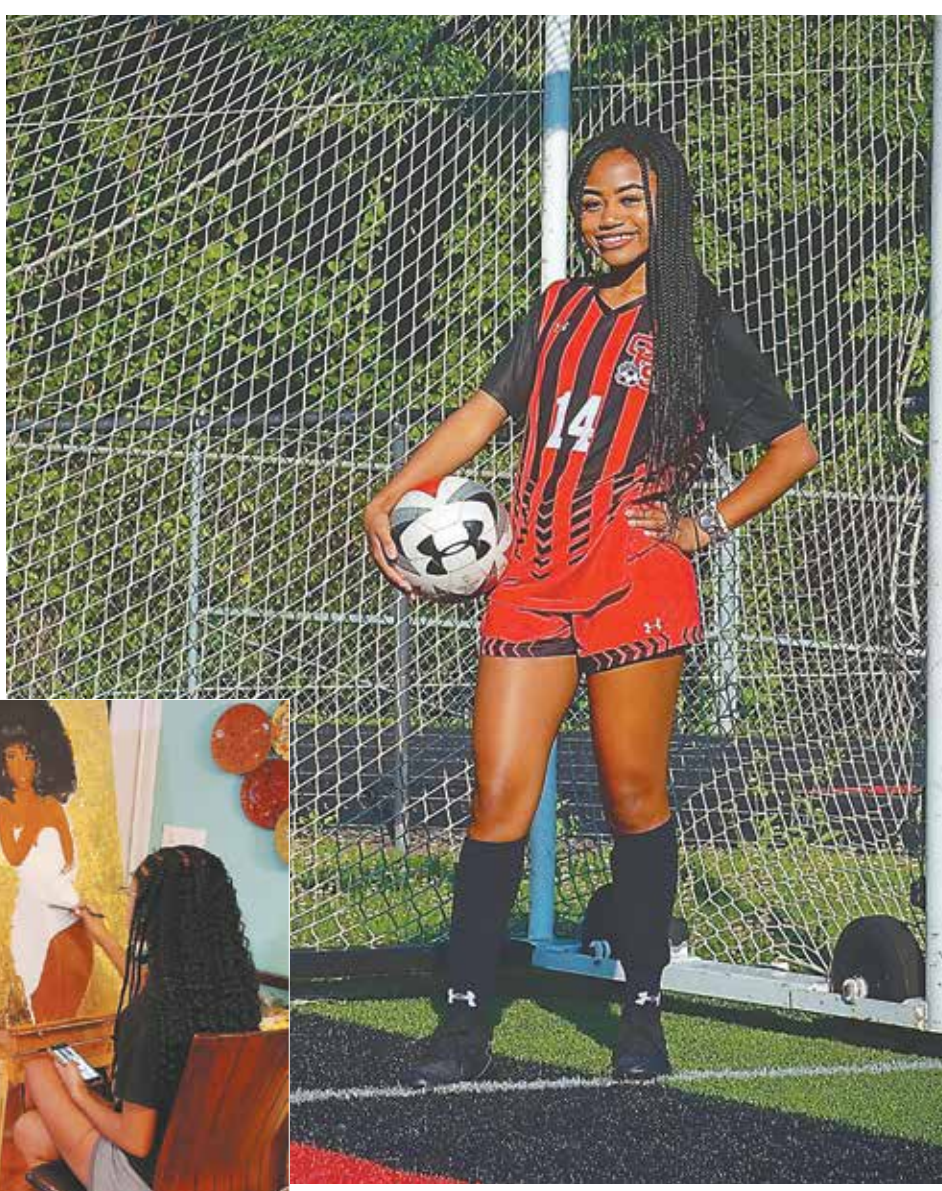
Brown's position was the last line of defense in front of the goalkeeper. Adryanna was small

in stature, but quick and smart as a defender and attacked the ball with reckless abandon.

She was all-district every year, three-time all-region, two-time District Defender of the Year and also a Region Defender of the Year.

"Away from soccer, she is a wonderful artist," added Coach Mize.

Brown also earned the



Adryanna Brown, Central's female Student-Athlete of the Year, poses for a senior banner picture. She was a defensive standout at the center back position on the soccer team. Inset: Adryanna Brown works on a painting this year for Central High art teacher Cheryl Burchett's class.

senior captain's award in soccer and the National Society of High School Art Award recognition in Atlanta.

"I had the pleasure of teaching Adryanna in Advanced Placement Art," said Cheryl Burchett. "This

is a college level course that asks students to put a lot of thought into their art and to create a body of work that speaks to an issue that they want to explore.

"Adryanna is a talented and introspective

student. I enjoyed watching her wrestle with ideas and art processes in my class. She is a student who works hard and puts a lot of thought into her school work."

Adryanna compiled a weighted GPA of 3.77. She plans to attend Middle Tennessee State University and major in Business Entrepreneurship and Innovation with a minor in Studio Art.



Powell's Reagan Trumm warms up for a basketball game. She earned a college scholarship to Western Carolina and was chosen the PHS female Student-Athlete of the Year.

Poteet and Trumm are Powell honorees

Cont. from page 1

only in baseball but in academics (3.6 GPA) and has been a great citizen in our school," said the Panthers' coach. "He defines what it is to be a student-athlete at Powell High School."

Reagan Trumm, who put her name in the TSSAA basketball record book during her prep career, is Powell High's female honoree.

During her senior season, Trumm averaged 25 points per game to move past the 2,000-point mark in her career. She also averaged five rebounds, two assists and two steals.

The awards the 5-9 guard received in the 2021-22 season included being named to The Knoxville Focus / Coaches' All-Knox County first team.

"Reagan is a very talented kid that has been a pleasure to coach," said Powell Coach John Fisher. "The time she has put into the game is a testament to her dedication and work ethic. She will be missed."

Reagan signed with Western Carolina University and will rejoin her sister Bailey on the basketball court there.

Both are in the TSSAA record book and still rank No. 1. Reagan earned that distinction for free throw percentage during her junior season when she made 94.5 percent of her attempts from the foul line.

Bailey's claim to fame is for most 3-point field goals made in a career. She hit 416 in her four seasons (2016-20).

Graves was dependable and Fisher determined

Cont. from page 1

finished fourth in the district tournament as an individual, third in the region and 13th in the state. She was also a member of Berean Christian's district runner-up team and fourth

place region team.

In basketball, Fisher was recognized as first team all-district and made the all-tournament team.

Emery also received the following awards this year – the ACSI Distinguished Christian High School Student Award for Athletics and the TSSAA Student-Athlete Award of Merit – while maintaining a GPA of 3.5 and being involved in the Pep Club and National Honor Society.

"Emery is a determined, focused athlete who is fun to watch!" said Liz Palmer, an assistant coach for the BCS girls basketball team. "She is a team player on the basketball court and individually focused on the golf course."

"Emery knows what it takes to get it done and is willing to put in the hard work to make it happen. She is a joy to coach. She is one of the most successful athletic young ladies to ever attend Berean!"

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'You'll make a mistake if you don't take him'

Over the years, it hasn't mattered how players ended up at Tennessee to play football. It didn't matter who they were or what their "credentials" were. Once players arrived in Knoxville, they still had to prove themselves.

For those who did, there were great rewards. Col. Tom Elam of Union City, the long-time trustee and athletics board member, loved telling this story about local product Stockton Adkins. (For the record, it's Doug "Atkins" from Humboldt and Stockton "Adkins" from Union City.)

In June 1988, Doug Dickey "suggested" that I travel to Union City to assemble a VOLUNTEERS Magazine story about Elam titled "King of the Hill."

There are three ways to get to Union City from Knoxville, none of which are easy, one even going through western Kentucky via I-24. It's an all-day trip, regardless of the route.

But the eventual destination—after a wide-ranging Friday interview and subsequent story—was well worth the journey.

During his undergraduate days at Tennessee, Elam had been involved in a number of campus activities, capping his career as

the editor of the 1930-31 Volunteer yearbook.

"I was the associate editor of the annual in 1929-30," Elam remembered. "The group that put the annual together wanted to dedicate it to Maj. Neyland. I said that would be putting too much emphasis on athletics, and I sold them on that idea."

But that was not the end of the story.

"Guess who the annual was dedicated to in 1931, the year I was editor? I was determined that my annual was going to be dedicated to him."

From those humble beginnings, he became close enough to Gen. Neyland that he could offer advice, mostly unsolicited, about recruiting and other important matters.

There weren't many people connected with the Vol program who could get away with that, but Elam always believed in the scriptural injunction, "You have not because you ask not."

In the early- to mid-1950s, Elam had an epiphany that Adkins could have a significant impact on the Vol football program. He queried Neyland about the possibility of putting Stockton on scholarship and received a quick and terse response.

"Neyland looked me in the eye with that cold, piercing stare, and these are the words he said: 'You country son-of-a-gun, what the

heck do you think you know about recruiting a football player?'"

Neyland's question brought a quick rejoinder. "I told him I did not categorize myself as a football scout or recruiter. I said, 'I know this boy, and he can play football for you. You'll make a mistake if you don't take him.'"

Then came the clincher, as Elam offered a "money back guarantee."

"If you do take him, and he doesn't pan out, I'll pick up the tab on his scholarship. I don't think that was illegal in those days." Adkins did come to Tennessee and lettered three years. He was a starter at blocking back in 1956 and 1957, playing at 5-10, 178. Fulfilling Elam's promise to Neyland, Adkins won the Jacobs Trophy, emblematic of the SEC's best blocker, in his junior and senior seasons.

"It was nice of him to do that," said Stockton. "It surprised me when I heard about it. It didn't suit me too well at first, because I didn't want anybody to give me anything. I appreciate him helping give me the opportunity. I wouldn't take anything for that experience. He was as good to me as anybody in my lifetime."

These are two of a number of vintage Tom Elam stories.

He often recalled the Nov. 23, 1963, late Saturday afternoon he first met Dickey, about a week before Bob Woodruff named



Union City's Stockton Adkins is pictured with teammates in a 1950s-style photograph of prominent University of Tennessee football players. Photo courtesy of University of Tennessee Sports Information Office.

Dickey the university's new head football coach.

The two men steadfastly disagreed on the location of the meeting. Elam was firmly convinced he and his wife, Kathleen, had driven to Memphis to meet Dickey, while Dickey is equally convinced that he flew from Fayetteville, Ark., to the airport near Union City to do so. Such are the vagaries of history.

The result was Elam being impressed with Dickey. "He made an impression on me, and I was sold. Once I have a firm impression, I stay with it."

These stories and many more came out of an interview on a Friday in June 1988 at his law firm in downtown Union City. Elam held court for nearly four hours, including lunch at the local Rotary club. It was a trip through 60 years of the history of the University of Tennessee and its athletic program. Memories are made of such moments.

Col. Elam came as close as anybody could to being a "one-question" interview. You just asked the right questions and kept that tape rolling.

Chris Quinn tapped to take reins for Catholic girls soccer program

By Ken Lay
Chris Quinn's schedule just got a little busier. But he says he's living his dream.

"I feel like I'm at the pinnacle," said Quinn, who has named head coach of the Catholic High School girls soccer team. "This has always been my dream and now I'm getting to live my dream." Quinn is no stranger to high school soccer in Knoxville or East Tennessee. For the last six years, he has been the boys soccer coach at Central High. He will remain there and coach the Bobcats in the spring. He previously served as the assistant boys coach at West High School.

Quinn, a personal trainer by trade, has also previously served as Central's head cross country coach and as the kicking coach for the Bobcats football team.

While it's not uncommon for coaches to guide both boys and girls teams, since the girls season is in the fall and the boys play in the spring, Ryan Radcliffe coaches both teams at Bearden and Jessica Stephens guides both team's at Hardin Valley Academy. Quinn, however, becomes just

the second local coach in recent memory to coach programs at two different schools. Former Fulton boys coach Larry Johnston once coached the Powell girls and the Karns boys concurrently.

Quinn, who also works in Pepe Fernandez's camp coaching staff at Maryville College, said he's extremely grateful to Central High School principal, Dr. Andrew Brown and athletics director J. D. Lambert as well as Catholic athletics director Jason Surlas for allowing him to take advantage of this rather unique opportunity.

"I'm glad that the administration and athletic administration at Central, Dr. Brown and J.D. and Jason Surlas and the administration for letting me live my dream of coaching boys and girls soccer, and not have to give something up," Quinn said.

"I always wanted to coach girls high school soccer in the fall and boys high school soccer in the spring."

But the coach said that he owes the biggest debt to his family, which includes his wife, Maggie, and two daughters, Max and Ellis.

Continued on page 4

Windy City Action

By Mark Nagi

As I get older, the more and more I realize how beneficial life experiences are for the soul.

We weren't meant to sit on the couch and watch other people do things while we collect dust as the Netflix queue gets a workout.

With that in mind, when the opportunity arises, I like to jump in the Camry or hop on a plane and make some memories.

Typically, my journeys involve sports in some way. Makes sense. I enjoy travel. I like sports. Not much chance of me checking out the Branson (Missouri) Christmas Show, but if there's a minor league hockey game as part of that package, I'm down.

Recently I made a trip to Chicago to watch the Cubs play in one of baseball's cathedrals, Wrigley Field.

We got to Chicago the day before the game so that gave us the chance to see some sights. We ate pizza at Giordano's (I chose the thin crust because Chicago style is horrific - don't @ me), had some drinks at a hip basement bar and saw a show at Second City. It was a great day and night.

But all the while, I kept looking at my weather app, fearing

that Mother Nature was going to ruin our plans to watch the Cubs.

This brought back some bad memories. Back in 1983 I was ten years old, and baseball was everything to me. My Dad and I took a bus down to Yankee Stadium. The pitching matchup was Tom Seaver (future Hall of Famer) against Ron Guidry (a former Cy Young winner). It was the NBC Game of the Week. I looked forward to it for months.

Then the heavens opened. I swear it was raining sideways. We sat in the stadium for hours before they finally called the game. All these years later it ranks up there among my worst childhood experiences (I was blessed to have a good childhood).

On Saturday morning we took an Uber to Wrigleyville and hit The Cubby Bear and Murphy's, two must visits for Cubs pregame activities. Good thing they have roofs because the heavens did open. Fortunately, this time the rain eventually stopped and after about 90 minutes, the umpires said "Play Ball!"

This was my fourth time at Wrigley Field, and it never disappoints. They've made a lot of upgrades over the years. Digital scoreboards and big screens

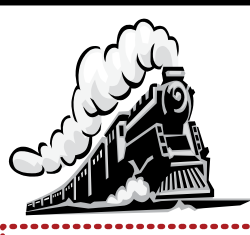
are present, but you still have the old school manual scoreboard in center field. It's also neat to be in the same place Babe Ruth called his shot decades ago. That history is what baseball has over every other major American sport.

The Cubs were hosting Arizona. Neither team is setting the world on fire these days but the stadium itself is always the draw. Former Vol Yan Gomes was catching for Chicago, so it was good to see some orange. Gomes and the Cubs jumped out to a 4-0 lead, with two homers hit while I was getting a hot dog. The Diamondbacks rallied, sent the game to extras, and Arizona won 7-6.

On the final day we took a river cruise to get an up-close look at Chicago's beautiful architecture. I spent half the time watching Tottenham secure fourth place in the Premier League, which earns them a spot in the Champions League. If you are a soccer fan you know what I'm talking about.

If you don't, just know that's good.

All in all, it was a wonderful trip. I can't wait for the next time I get to walk into a major league stadium, or an arena, or any other field of play.



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Managing the rain delays at Spring Fling XXIX

By Steve Williams

On the Saturday morning of Farragut's championship game against Clarksville May 28, senior Lauren Brakovec revealed how the Lady Admirals had dealt with a few days of stormy weather at Spring Fling XXIX.

"For me, it's all about staying loose and keeping the energy at a high level," she said. "We had most of our team in an empty dugout to try and stay dry during the heavy rain, but we also had some loud music to keep us pumped up."

"We had a few juggling competitions and dance battles, but later I found myself playing wide receiver and catching footballs from one of my friends in the stands. We just try to keep a positive attitude to get us in the right mindset before we have to go out and play."

There were no weather issues later that day and the sun was out for most of Farragut's Class 4A title game. In fact, minutes before game time, Brakovec was applying eye black to many of her teammates' faces to keep the glare out of their eyes.

With a good crowd of Farragut fans on hand at McKnight Park in Murfreesboro, the Lady Admirals took care of business on Starplex Field No. 4 and capped their season with a 4-0 win for a second straight state championship.

RECORD NUMBERS: The 2022 Farragut team finished with the most wins (43), most runs (380) and most hits (451) in school history.

Individually, Brakovec ended up with the most home runs in a season (12), which was one more than she belted a year ago. Rising senior shortstop Ava Guzowski is tied for third on the list with 10.

Brakovec also leads FHS in career homers (28).

Pitching star Avery Flatford finished No. 2 in two career categories - strikeouts (670) and no-hitters (six).

BRIGHT FUTURE: Gibbs' softball team placed second this year for the fourth time in school history. Its other runner-up finishes were in 2014, 2008 and 2003.

The Lady Eagles have 10 state titles, the last one coming in 2017.

With six sophomores and

freshmen this season, the future looks promising.

"Let me start off by saying I love this team," said Coach Carol Mitchell, who saw her players battle through the losers' bracket to make it to the Class 3A finals against Lexington before falling 2-1.

"They're fighters, they're winners. They battled in tough games all season and just when people had pretty much marked them off, they come through and they took that first game today into extra innings (before winning over Hardin County 7-6).

"We've done that all year in some of the close games we've had. They don't get rattled. (Pitcher) Lacey (Keck) was phenomenal today. She's a freshman. We had no idea she could go the distance today. We had Abby (Buckner) ready to go but she kept throwing good pitches in there and our defense held strong.

"It is hard to come out of the losers' bracket, but I really don't think it fazed the girls. We were confident in our ability to go out and score runs and win games. Like I said, I love this team."

DOUBLE DUTY: McKenzie Morton, Gibbs junior, was



in two Spring Fling events this year. She competed in the Division I pentathlon and placed fourth among the 13 competitors, totaling 2,290 points in the five events. Her most points came in the long jump, 800 run and high jump.

After that, McKenzie played on the Lady Eagles' softball team and used her athleticism to score Gibbs' lone run in the loss to Lexington.

SILVER GALORE: Ariya Rice, Austin-East senior, didn't win in the Division I Class AA state track and field meet, but came close four times, placing second in the 100, 200 and 400 dashes and third in the long jump.

STILL STREAKING: Thanks to Farragut, Knox County now has a 21-year streak of having one of its teams reach the TSSAA state finals in baseball.

Only the coronavirus pandemic was able to interrupt that streak when it forced the TSSAA to cancel its spring sports championships in 2020.

Gibbs got it going again at the Spring Fling last year and defeated Pigeon Forge in the Class AA finals.

The streak started in 2001.

BOYS SOCCER: Christian Academy of Knoxville didn't make it to Spring Fling this year, but the Warriors still lead the state in consecutive championships with five (2003-07).



Top Left: This picture was taken at noon Wednesday (May 25) at the MTSU track and field venue during a rain delay for the pole vault and high jump events at Spring Fling XXIX. The people with umbrellas and others were athletes, TSSAA officials and spectators waiting for the "all clear" signal. However, not long after this picture was taken, thunder and lightning occurred and they cleared the track altogether. Photo by Barry Houchin.

From top: Farragut's Lauren Brakovec applies "eye black" to Avery Flatford prior to the Lady Admirals' state title game on May 28 at the Spring Fling. Photo by Steve Williams.

Riley Cassity won the Class 2A State girls singles championship in Murfreesboro recently.

Brennon Seigler (17) greets Eli Evans during the recent Class 4A State Tournament in Murfreesboro. The Admirals won a state title for the 11th time in school history. Photo by Jack Tate.

Amani Martin (far left) checks her cell phone possibly for a congratulatory call after the South-Doyle 4x100 relay team notched the school's first-ever state title in girls track at this year's Spring Fling. Amani's teammates are (from left) Abby Sharpe, Ka'Shauna Dyer and Lariah Cozart.



Central High School volleyball player is joined by teammates after signing her National Letter of Intent to play for Elizabeth City State University in North Carolina. Photo submitted.

Central volleyball star signs with Elizabeth City State

By Ken Lay

One of the area's top high school volleyball players recently finalized her college plans.

Recent Central High School graduate Clarke Blakemore has signed to continue her academic pursuits and athletic career at Elizabeth City State University, an NCAA Division II Historically Black College or University.

She finalized her college plans just prior to Central's Class of 2022 graduation earlier this month.

Blakemore exits Fountain City as one of the most decorated players in Lady Bobcats' volleyball history.

As a junior in 2020, Blakemore led Central to the Region 2-2A

Tournament, the Lady Bobcats' first regional appearance since 1982.

He has been an elite performer at both the district and regional level.

In 2021, she was an all-District 3-3A standout and the league's Defensive Player of the Year.

During her career at Central, she was a full-rotation player.

"Clarke can attack across the net as an outside hitter, a middle (blocker) and a setter. She is a full-rotation player," Lady Bobcats' coach Susan Davidson said. "As a captain and a team leader, Clarke was a leader that led by example on the court and coached the younger players."

Blakemore was also a

stellar performer in the classroom as she was an early graduate and had a weighted GPA of 3.75 with college credit.

She will major in pharmaceutical science and she aspires to become a pharmacist.

She will be approximately eight hours from home.

"I wanted to go to school somewhere outside of Tennessee," Blakemore said. "I also wanted to an HBCU. I wanted a smaller school, and this one is somewhere in the middle."

"It's not too big and it's not too small. It's just the right size. The coach and the team made me feel welcome."

Chris Quinn tapped to take reins for Catholic girls soccer program

Cont. from page 3

"I couldn't do this without the support of my wife, Maggie Quinn," Chris said. "It's your wife who tucks the kids in at night. She's the one who picks up the kids at school because after school, you're already on the soccer field."

"My family is always at the games at Central. They have Chick-fil-A picnics on the track. Maggie has our kids dressed to the 9's, and they're there to support Daddy. My wife is always there and she's always been very supportive. She always told me that I could coach in the fall and in the spring if I ever got the right opportunity."

At Central, Quinn has guided the Bobcats to

back-to-back 10-plus win seasons in 2021-22. That's the first time Central has had consecutive seasons of double-digit victories since the early 1990's.

The Lady Irish boast a tradition-rich program that has fallen on hard times and Quinn knows he must reverse fortunes of a team filled with young talented athletes.

"Everybody knows who Catholic is," he said. "I don't have to put them on the map. I will coach like I do at Central. We will all grow together."

"We will win games but I want to prepare these young women for life. And more than anything, I want the girls to know that they will have an advocate."

Quinn, by his own admission, has plenty to be thankful for, and he expressed gratitude to Fernandez, Radcliffe and Catholic boys coach Gordon Heins.

"I love Pepe Fernandez because when he meets you, he's always nice to you," Quinn said. "He gave me an opportunity to coach on his camp staff. Ryan Radcliffe, he's nine years my junior, but he's taught me a lot of things."

"Gordon Heins is my best friend and when he got a hold of me, he changed me. Without him, I wouldn't have gotten the opportunities that I have. I'm not saying that he got me these jobs, but he's the reason that I've had the success that I have."

