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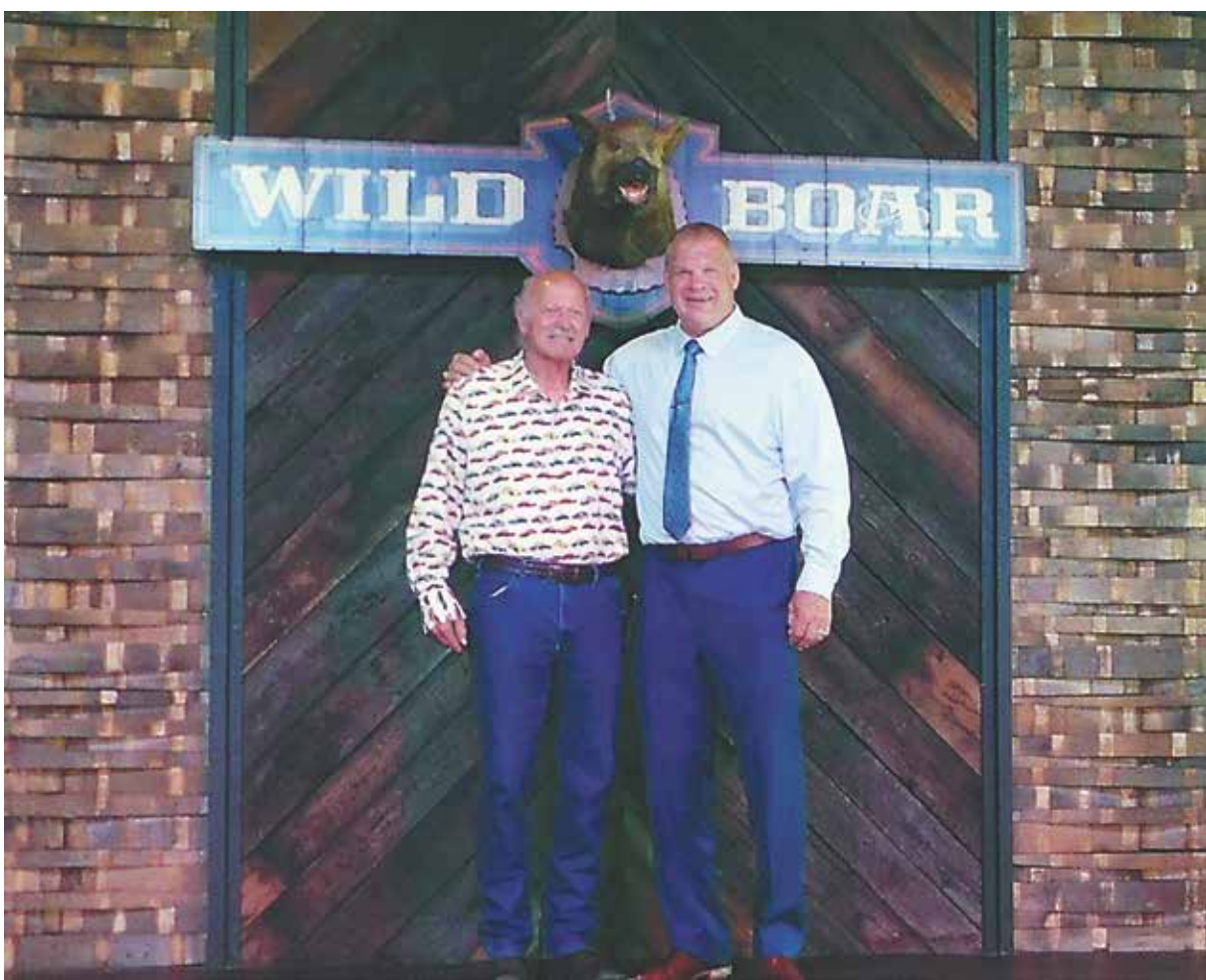


PHOTO BY KEN LAY.

Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs with Wild Boar Tavern owner Jim England at an eat-and-greet Thursday in Powell.

Moore withdraws his Merit Council grievance

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
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The Knox County Sheriff's Office recently asked its Merit System Council to set a date for a hearing for a grievance filed by former employee Scott Moore. That became unnecessary when, on Thursday, Moore withdrew his grievance via a letter from his attorney.

Attorney John P. Valliant Jr. notified Merit System Executive Director Paula Taylor that Moore "does not wish to proceed any further with the grievance." Valliant went on to say Moore "has determined that he cannot afford to pursue his claim through the entire process."

Moore was a former

Knox County Commissioner but was removed from that office in 2008 for charges of perjury. Then-Sheriff J.J. Jones created a special division, "Inmate Industries," and hired Moore and a fellow former commissioner, Ivan Harmon, as supervisors.

Both Harmon and Moore were fired by Sheriff Tom Spangler after an investigation found they had accepted unreported cash for selling pallets and scrap metal, failed to maintain records, purchased personal items, stored meat for the former sheriff, and used inmate and department employees to do work at KCSO employee homes.

Harmon dropped his grievance last month.

Glenn Jacobs hosts eat-and-greet at Powell's Wild Boar Tavern

By Ken Lay

As the 2022 general election nears, Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs took some time late last week to meet constituents in an informal setting.

Jacobs, who is seeking re-election in August, met with constituents and had lunch at Wild Boar Tavern in Powell.

There was no speech, no formal words. The eat-and-greet was a time for Jacobs to sit and chat with supporters.

"This is just a time for people to come and talk to me in an informal setting," said Jacobs, the professional wrestler and businessman turned mayor.

The environment couldn't have been more casual as Jacobs had lunch at the establishment owned by Jim England, a former football player on Tennessee's freshman football team.

The US Open golf tournament and ESPN were on the televisions and classic rock music played on the restaurant's sound system. Jacobs and his party had burgers, sandwiches and chicken wings alongside other patrons.

These meetings are nothing new to Jacobs.

"This is something that we try to do about once a week," he said. "We do it in different parts of the county."

"It's a big county and the places

in different parts of the county are different. Corryton is different than Farragut and then you have Downtown Knoxville. It's a big county. It's 536 square miles and there's a lot of territory."

Jacobs will be challenged by Democrat Diane Helsley in the upcoming election on Aug. 4.

Supporters mingled, visited with Jacobs and came and went during lunch time.

Knox County Sheriff Tom Spangler and Knox County Commissioner Busler each made an appearance early Thursday afternoon, along with several sheriff deputies and members of the Rural Metro rescue department.

Inskip rezoning postponed

By Mike Steely
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Although the developer has stressed that his application for a low-interest loan must be filed soon, the Knoxville City Council postponed the vote on a zone change for property along Bruhin Road for two weeks. The rezoning request will be studied for entry and exit by the city prior to a vote.

Councilman Charles Thomas made the motion to postpone following appeals from Inskip homeowners. Developer John Huber wants to build 120 apartment units on about four acres atop a hill along the busy Bruhin Road connector route and has pledged a sidewalk along

the property on Bruhin, across from the Inskip Pool and Park. There's increasing concern among the neighbors about additional traffic, school access, and how children in the apartments would access the pool across the road.

Thomas told The Focus he is concerned over the welfare of future apartment dwellers there and said the city needs to make improvements if the zoning change is approved, including a sidewalk linking the development with the Dutch Valley Drive intersection.

Prior to the postponement, members of the Inskip Neighborhood Association had contacted

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Game On Against Cancer celebrates its 10th anniversary

By Ken Lay

The weather was a bit toasty but spirits weren't dampened Friday night as Game On Against Cancer celebrated its 10th anniversary at The Wakefield Corporation Friday night.

The event, an annual fundraiser for the Thompson Cancer Survival Center, has raised more than

\$650,000 since its inception.

The event was the brainchild of Games and Things owners Scott and Lisa Mellon and the first seven years of the charitable event, which gives people the opportunity to play games such as pool, blackjack, cornhole, air hockey, darts and other games against former Vols

and other area athletes as well as local television and radio personalities.

The proceeds raised by the event provide various help for those fighting cancer.

It was Lisa Mellon, who is afflicted with Lupus, who began the event as she was seeking treatment for a blood disorder triggered by the disease.

"I was in the rooms in the infusion chairs alongside the cancer patients," Lisa said. "I was in the infusion center and I had different drugs going through my veins than they did, but I was so impressed with them and proud of them that I wanted to do something."

Lisa and Scott were

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Who voted for Biden?

From a distance



By John J. Duncan Jr.
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Not many are bragging about voting for Biden now. I doubt you could find more than just a tiny percentage of the American people who would say they were proud they voted for Joe Biden for president. In fact, one poll taken shortly after the election found that 17% said they would not have voted for him if they had known about the scandals surrounding Hunter Biden. Most Biden voters seem

almost embarrassed to admit they voted for him and try to rationalize their vote by saying it was not really for Biden, it was just against Trump.

Biden would not have won if the national media had not protected him and covered up his weaknesses and scandals.

Just think how the national media would have reacted if a Republican candidate had hidden in his basement during the campaign as Joe Biden did, with very limited public appearances.

And, just think what the national media would have done if one of Trump's sons had done all the scandalous things Hunter Biden has.

There is clearly one standard for Democrat candidates and another unfair,

even hateful one for Republicans.

I got a degree from UT in journalism in 1969. Back in those days, there was a clear delineation between news pages and editorial pages.

In good, honest old-fashioned journalism, reporters would never have been allowed to write in front-page news stories that a president's claims that an election was stolen were "obviously false."

One survey several years ago found that 93% of the national media had voted for the Democrat candidate for president.

And this was before Trump who was clearly the most-hated candidate ever by members of the national media. Reporters are seemingly not even allowed to write about the

election without repeating the mantra that Trump's claims are false.

Democrats have repeated this charge that Trump's claims are false so often, it is almost as if deep down inside they know there is some truth to his charge that the election was stolen.

They were also obsessively eager to repeat that 58 courts have ruled against Trump on his election charges. The problem with that is that not one court has allowed the case to be heard in full, on its merits, in front of a jury.

Every judge comes into office through some type of political process, whether by appointment or election. Yet almost every judge, especially appointed ones, has to admit that politics had anything to do with

their being on the bench.

Not one of the judges who heard part of the Trump election claims had the guts to allow the case to go to trial. They knew they would be crucified by the national media if they did not dismiss Trump's claims.

And almost all judges, even though most are very nice people, are very sensitive to publicity and cannot stand any criticism.

Protection by the national media was the biggest factor in the Biden victory. But the second biggest was covid.

Jane Fonda said covid was a "gift to the Left," and the Democrats leaped on it for all it was worth.

Trump had the economy booming. Gas was less than half of what it is now. There was almost

no inflation. Our southern border was secure. Illegals and drugs were not flowing in.

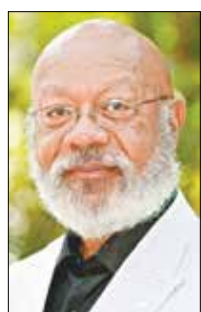
If Trump had remained as president, we would not have left 85 billion in new military equipment behind, and Putin would never have come into Ukraine.

Covid was blown way out of proportion so Democrats could shut down the economy for political purposes. Unfortunately, hundreds of thousands of small businesses went under because of false and greatly exaggerated claims about covid.

Now, the far Left is in control, and everyone is hurting except for the elitists in control of the federal government and their friends in extremely big business.

Joe Biden's Energy Crisis

When Joe Biden said in the final presidential debate that he was going to "end fossil fuels" I thought he would lose the energy producing states. I was wrong. Pennsylvania and New Mexico voted for him despite their



By Dr. Harold A. Black
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pickup- which for some reason reminds me of an Edsel.

Biden has no intention of "fixing" the crisis he created. It's not Putin. It's not greedy oil. It's not the tooth fairy. It's Joe Biden. He will release gas from the strategic

reserves, make overtures to Venezuela and Saudi Arabia in order to pretend that he is doing something. He is only pretending to address the problem that he created. He is not about to undo any of his previous actions. That he is play acting is obvious when last month he canceled oil and gas leases in the face of rising gas prices. Biden and the Democrats view climate change as an "existential threat" and is pompous enough to think that they can avert it. Democrats are more than three times as likely as Republicans to view climate change as an imminent threat to

humanity's existence.

I was asked by a dear friend why are gas prices so high and going even higher. Economics tells us that under these conditions, more producers come into the market and increase supply, bringing prices down. Why isn't this happening? It is because the government is not allowing the market to operate efficiently. First, virtually all government agencies have a climate change agenda and are contributing to keeping gas prices high. That makes additional investments in fossil fuels tentative at best. Investors do not like uncertainty and even though the Democrats are likely to be voted out, it is highly unlikely that they will stay out. Like the Terminator, they will be back and those monies if invested in fossil fuels will be not able to generate acceptable returns. Second, even if the producers were willing to invest in energy production, they would find it difficult to acquire financing.

The financial regulators are discouraging energy investments and loans. Moreover, the United States and 20 other countries have pledged not to fund international fossil fuel projects. Third, the private sector plays an outsized role in keeping prices high. Forty of the world's largest banks have formed the "Sustainable Markets Initiative" and its Net Zero Banking Alliance pledged to align lending and investments with net zero emissions by 2030. No wonder Big Oil is sending earnings to shareholders as increased dividends rather than investing in drilling and exploration. Moreover, the three largest fund managers, Blackrock, State Street and Vanguard who control over \$20 trillion in assets

are placing "woke" policies above return. Blackrock and State Street are members of the Climate Action 100 which pushes fossil fuel companies to show how they will meet carbon emissions goals. Blackrock's CEO wants to achieve 75% zero carbon investments by 2030. The fund manager's investments are pushing ESG (environmental, societal, and governance) investing. Blackrock is also insisting that firms that have diverse boards and engage in something called the Gender Initiative. Mind you that none of this has anything to do with firm profitability. Indeed, Elon Musk and Blackrock's former sustainable investing chief have said that ESG investing is a scam. ESG products

command higher fees that add to the profitability of the investment firms but not the returns to their managed portfolios. Several of the large pension funds have pushed back. Texas which has \$2 billion of its pensions at Blackrock has threatened to drop the company if it persists in its "woke" agenda. Other Republican run states have joined Texas to compel Blackrock to support and invest in the fossil fuel industry. However, Texas and other pension funds may be best served by moving their monies to a fund manager who seeks to maximize returns. Regardless, get used to high oil and gas prices because on this issue the Greenie Weenies have won.

What is Discovery?

One part of virtually every case is what lawyers call "discovery." What do lawyers mean when they use this term? That is a fairly large and vague term. It could mean anything.



By Jedidiah McKeenan
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Discovery is the part of a case where you discover what evidence and witnesses the other side has that they will be using against you at trial. Wait a minute, we get to discover what they will use against us before trial? Yes!

Very old attorneys will talk about a time when discovery was not a part of cases. You would just show up at trial with your witnesses and the other side would have their witnesses and you would be hearing what the other side has to say for the first time at the trial.

Now we have discovery which is designed to help parties ascertain the strengths and weaknesses

of their case before trial. What they discover may motivate them to settle. My old boss used to describe it by saying, "Imagine we are playing poker, and I get to look at the cards in your hand, you get to look at the cards in my hand, and then we both know how to play our cards."

Okay, I have described the purpose of discovery but what is it? Discovery is made up of written questions, they are called interrogatories and request for production of documents.

You mail whatever questions you want to be answered to the other party and they must truthfully answer those questions and send the answers back to the person asking the questions within 30 days. Do people lie in their answers? Sure, all of the time. But people are at least SUPPOSED to answer

truthfully. Depositions are where you ask questions of the other party under oath before trial. These are the scenes on tv where you see a lawyer in a conference room grilling the other party with hours and hours of questions. The law allows lawyers to ask about anything that might be even remotely relevant to the case, so almost nothing is off-limits for being questioned.

Both the written questions and the depositions allow you to prepare for the trial because you will know what the other party will say because you have already asked them what they will say. And if their story changes at trial you can bring up how what they said previously was different and question them on whether they are telling the truth now or they were telling the truth during their deposition.

Visit attorney-knoxville.com for more information about this other legal issues.



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Publisher's Positions



By Steve Hunley,
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have been steadily rising, especially under Mayor Indya Kincannon. Homicides increased by 61% in 2020 over what they had been the year before; 2021 increased 16% above the new record.

The wave of emotion amongst council members in spending the money was in contrast to the stone-cold dead silence when Kincannon abruptly withdrew police officers from the schools.

The goal is a worthy one, but a combination of government funding and cooperation between the city and a private organization begs some questions, the first being would city taxpayers be held liable should any of Turn Up Knox's employees fall victim to violence while trying to intervene? Admittedly, it is a distasteful question, but still one that a good steward of the taxpayer's money should ask. Considering the nationwide difficulty of recruiting police officers and sheriff's deputies since the Left's campaign to defund police, it is probably wise to inform the prospective employees of Turn Up Knox they will be engaging in a potentially dangerous service to the community.

Councilwoman Amelia Parker inferred Denzel Grant, the head of Turn Up Knox, was unqualified. "This city will find Black

people who aren't necessarily qualified for the job, because they're loyal to the city leadership," Parker sniffed.

The "street cred" Grant referred to in his remarks likely won't be enough to end violence. Newly appointed Chief of Police Paul Noel is right when he says there needs to be cooperation on every level.

Funding the Police

It seems too few of our public officials realize the need to do all we can to assist both the Knox County Sheriff's Office and the Knoxville Police Department with recruiting. There have been recent private conversations about adding armed guards at local schools. Yet members of the board of education seem not to be aware that both the sheriff and the KPD are having a really hard time recruiting candidates to serve as officers.

Two members of the Knox County Commission, Kyle Ward and Justin Biggs, offered a boost that would have helped sheriff's deputies considerably. That same spirit was incorporated into Mayor Glenn Jacobs' budget, which included a 12% raise for deputies. That sure will help with recruiting efforts by Sheriff Tom Spangler.

Helsley Lacks Institutional Knowledge

Speaking of Mayor Jacobs, his opponent in the general election, Democrat Debbie Helsley, let loose her weekly press release, which toots that the county mayor is paid too much and if elected, she will cut her own salary by \$50,000. First of all, that's about like Hillary Clinton saying if she's selected as the next Miss America, she will sell her crown to bring about world peace. Secondly, apparently Helsley, or more likely whoever is doing her messaging, is not aware that the county mayor, under the Knox County Charter, is to be the highest-paid government official. The county commission sets the mayor's salary and it cannot be changed during that term of office. Helsley, if she was elected, could give away \$50,000 of her salary, but as it is set by the charter, as approved by a referendum of the voters, and is set by the county commission, she cannot cut it.

It kinda helps to know these things.

Deceptive Democrats

Speaking of knowing things, one wonders what part of the Twilight Zone Joe Biden lives in. His speech of last week

shrieking that he's tired of the "lies" about reckless spending and insisted "We're changing lives!" Yes, Joe, you have certainly done that, just not for the better. Indeed, you made the lives of working people and the middle class substantially more difficult. The average household in the United States is spending \$450 more per month due to the raging inflation and ever-escalating cost of gas. That's \$5400 a year.

The fact that the president has the unmitigated gall to blame the rising cost of gas on Putin's war is astonishing. There's the rub. Joe Biden revoked the ability for the oil companies to build new refineries when we are currently at capacity. Trump had removed those regulations, which Biden restored before his wrinkled fanny hit the seat in the Oval office. It was also Joe Biden who revoked leases in Alaska and the Gulf of Mexico. Nor is it really about profits, that's yet another lie told by the Left. For the record, the biggest gas companies posted profits twice as much under the Obama - Biden administration as they are posting now.

In his defense, Biden probably believes what he's saying. All he does is try to read his teleprompter and likely believes what his speechwriters have written for him.

Leaving our border open has also complicated things

and places an increasing strain upon our power grids and infrastructure. All courtesy of Joe Biden and the Democrat Congress.

Even local Democrats want to talk about imaginary cutting of salaries, "bold" climate change policies and anything and everything that has absolutely little or nothing to do with local government.

The schools and the sheriff's office consume literally 3/4 of Knox County's entire budget. Every other entity - - - roads, the health department, parks, libraries, etc. - - - come out of the remaining quarter. Mayor Glenn Jacobs has managed to give county employees one of the bigger raises they've had and a whopping 12% raise to sheriff's deputies all without increasing local taxes by a penny. Compare that to Indya Kincannon and her city council's having implemented a huge increase in the property tax, while already plotting to increase the sales tax as well during the highest inflation our country has seen in 42 years.

The city provides basically three services; garbage is contracted out to a private company. Outside of that, the city provides fire and police protection, yet Kincannon and her council manage to spend money like a drunken sailor on shore leave and concoct new social welfare programs to waste taxpayers' money.

Game On Against Cancer celebrates its 10th anniversary

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presented with the Founders' Award as the event celebrated its milestone anniversary.

Game On Against Cancer is a party. It featured food trucks from the area and a silent auction.

Former Volunteers' quarterback Sterling Henton was the event's master of ceremonies. Hinton, affectionately known as "Sterl the Pearl," is a disc jockey. He provided tunes and commentary for the event as only he could.

And he wouldn't have been anywhere else on this night.

"I've been coming here for at least six years and now I'm the DJ," Henton said. "I'm willing to do anything I can to

help Game On and the Thompson Cancer Center with this event."

Celebrities who appeared include Knoxville mix martial artist Scott "Hot Sauce" Holtzman, Hinton, former Vols football players Dewey "Swamp Rat" Warren, Larry Seivers, Knox County Juvenile Court Judge Tim Irwin, John Cook, Anthony Hancock, Jerry Holloway, Daniel Hood, Bill Young and others.

Joel Silverberg, Tyler Ivens and Jimmy Hyams from WNML were on hand along with WIVK Landon Doane, and Olympian Missy Kane.

Television celebrities included WVLT's Rick Russo, Heather Haley, Ted Hall, Casey Wheelless, Amanda Hara, Harry

Sullivan and Jewelry Television's Mandy Bradshaw Steinbacher.

Holtzman, who played darts on this night, said that he enjoyed the event.

"This is a great cause and it's informal and you get to hang out and play games," he said. "At other fundraisers, you just sit around and eat food."

Irwin, who said he'd been at every Game On Against Cancer event, said that he keeps coming back because the event is for a good cause.

"I think I've been to every one of these things," Irwin said. "What keeps me coming back is the cause.

"Every one of us knows someone who's had cancer and some of us might get it. I don't think I've missed one of these things. This is

a good cause."

Russo, the sports director at WVLT, is a cancer survivor.

"Last year, they raised \$72,000 and they do good things," he said. "I'm a cancer survivor and I've seen them provide a lot for cancer patients."

Event Co-chair Danielle Hemsley has seen the event grow over the last decade.

"The first seven times we had this, we had it at Games and Things, then it got so big that we had to move it," she said. "This year, I think we sold 450 tickets and we have five food trucks."

Hemsley, like Russo, is a cancer survivor.

Anthony Wilson attended Friday night for the second time.



PHOTO BY KEN LAY.

Knox County Juvenile Court Judge and former Vol Tim Irwin tries his hand at darts at Friday night's Game Against Cancer fundraiser in West Knoxville.

"It's the charity that's important," he said.

He didn't play games against celebrities but he did bid on items in the silent auction.

Chase Womble, a Vols fan, said he wanted to support the cause and play pool against some of the

Tennessee legends.

"This is a great time and a great cause," Womble said. "I'm looking forward to playing against some former Vols.

"I probably won't be all that happy if I lose. I wish it was a little cooler, but it's not as hot as it has been."

Inskip rezoning postponed

Cont. from page 1

Harold Cannon, Knoxville's Department of Engineering Director, asking that he take a look at the proposed apartment plans, the traffic and the access to Inskip Pool and Park by residents.

Thomas also said he may make a motion to down zone the project to RN-2 and a second motion to have the city link the proposed apartment complex sidewalk with Dutch Valley Drive.

McNabb Mental Health Care

The lease of 1515 St. Mary's Street was approved for an urgent care and mental health care facility was approved. Councilwoman Seema Singh mentioned that an expansion of Medicare in Tennessee

would have helped provide funds. Councilwoman Lauren Rider asked Jerry Vagnier, CEO of the McNabb Center how many people are served at McNabb.

Vagnier said the center sees about 40,000 people each year in the East Tennessee region and writes off about \$8 million of charity care. He said that if Medicaid Expansion were approved in the state it would help defray costs. He said the new facility, on the campus of the former St. Mary's Hospital, will provide physical and mental health care under the umbrella of the University of Tennessee and Team Health.

He said the facility would treat the people with mental health problems who would

normally be treated in hospital emergency rooms in a 24-hour environment with a full medical staff, with 16 beds available and other evaluation care available.

McKenzie urged citizens to lobby state legislators to support Medicaid Expansion. Council members Lauren Rider and Thomas lamented the closing of St. Mary's with Thomas saying that the McNabb urgent care center there will partially restore some of the services.

With council members Andrew Roberto and Lynne Fugate absent, the council voted 6-0 on the lease agreement. Parker asked about funding once the facility is renovated and Vagnier said Medicaid and TennCare will be billed to

cover the uninsured.

Violence Prevention

The council also approved an application to the federal government for \$1.5 million to support violence intervention and prevention and to allocate \$450,000 to SEED, Inc., for violence intervention street outreach on a request by the Office of Community Safety.

Several speakers on violence prevention spoke and LaKenya Middlebrook, Director of Community Safety, said the SEED funding goes to direct community outreach and engagement by local people who have a sense of community and trust. McKenzie said the funding for the SEED outreach is "a

step in the right direction."

"We have to stop the bleeding," she said in an emotional moment.

The discussion went on at some length with council members speaking. Parker was the sole "No" vote on the funding saying the city's effort is divisive and creates tension and does not address the issue.

Other Council Action

Mayor Indya Kincannon welcomed new Police Chief Paul Noel who took the position last week after a nationwide search to replace retiring Chief Eve Thomas. Noel is a 25-year veteran of the New Orleans Police Department and has already submitted a request for Knoxville to take part in the Active Bystandership

for Law Enforcement program which deals with officer response to encounters with citizens.

The council approved a rezoning request from Knoxville College to designate a part of the campus from Office to RN-2, Single-Family Residential, for housing for students and others. Councilwoman Gwen McKenzie said the change will bring life back to the campus.

June was declared as LGBTQ+ Month in a motion by Council members McKenzie and Amelia Parker. Parker thanked the various sponsors of the idea.

The council also approved a five-year agreement with Visit Knoxville to do marketing and event management for the city.

Some place names explained

Ever been to Friendsville, Greenback, Mascot, Walland or Wartburg? Ever wonder how those places got their names?

A Day Away



By Mike Steely

Friendsville was founded

by Quakers from North Carolina who visited the area to promote anti-slavery. Some stayed and founded the Friends Meeting House. The Blount County community became a haven for runaway slaves before and during the Civil War as part of the Underground Railroad escape route. The nearby community of Unita is a related place also part of the Underground Railroad.

Greenback is named for the U.S. currency, often called "Greenbacks" and was inspired by local resident Jonathan Tipton, a supporter of the former Greenback political party.. Founder Lorenzo Thompson wanted to use the

name "Thompson's Station" but could not as it was already taken. The Loudon County community grew when nearby Morganton residents relocated when their community was flooded with rising lake waters.

Mascot was originally settled by the John Erwin family near a ford of the Holston River. It was

the center of zinc production. The name apparently comes as an acronym of The Mining and Smelting Company of Tennessee. It is located just four miles from Strawberry Plains and about 2,400 people live in the Knox County community.

Walland is a fusion of "Walton" and "England." The A. J. Fisher house still stands on Old Walland Highway and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The community gets its name from the Walton and England Leather Company in Blount County and was settled about 1780.

Wartburg was originally founded

as a German settlement and the first six streets were named for European cities. The name comes from Germany's Wartburg Castle. It became the Morgan County Seat in 1871, moving the county government from Montgomery, a city that disappeared after the move. Only about 900 people live in the town. Frozen Head State park is located nearby.

Petros, also in Morgan County and the home of Brushy Mountain State Prison, gets its name from the Greek word "Peter" meaning "Rock." It was a center of coal mining, much by prison labor. There's only about 650 residents.

Corryton in Knox County was settled by John Sawyers, a Revolutionary War veteran who in 1785 built a small fort along Emory Road. In 1887, a developer named Corryton Woodbury purchased property surrounding the rail depot to grow the community into a small town. The lots failed to sell and the venture was unsuccessful with the community remaining predominately a northern suburb of Knoxville.



The historic Greenback Depot was built in 1914 along the Louisville and Nashville Railroad. It is located in the center of the community and a noted place in our region.

Seymour was founded as Newell's Station by Samuel Newell. The Sevier County community was where the first meeting place for the State of Franklin was held. It became known as Trundles Crossroads. When the railroad came through in 1909 the post office changed its name to Seymour in honor of the line's chief engineer, Charles Seymour.

Blaine is located just northeast

of Knoxville in Grainger County. Originally known as Blain's Crossroads the small town sat at the intersection of several roads and the beginning of Emory Road. It was founded about 1789 by Robert Blaine who opened a general store.

Do you have a question about a community or place name? Email me at steelym@knoxfocus.com and I'll look into it.

KCHD program manager honored with award from national organization

The Knox County Health Department is excited to announce that Cheryl Hill, Program Manager of KCHD's Healthy Weight division, has received the Outstanding Leadership Award from the Association of State Public Health Nutritionists through her work on the Healthy Food, Active Communities Council.

The organization recognizes individuals for their contributions to the field of public health nutrition within their respective communities. In her role as the council's past-chair, Cheryl has worked alongside registered dietitian nutritionists from across the country to strengthen policies, programs, services, and evidence-based practices that promote healthy foods

and active communities.

The organization had the following to say about Cheryl:

"Cheryl's network connections with other public health professionals have contributed to the many great presenters and topics shared during Council calls and webinars. She has innovative strategies, such as the redesign of our council calls to improve engagement and participation among members. In addition, she has taken on leadership roles for small workgroup projects within the council. Cheryl has been an outstanding leader for the Healthy Food, Active Communities Council."

Through her role at KCHD, Cheryl oversees a team of registered dietitian

nutritionists, and a physical activity health educator, who address chronic disease prevention and management, breastfeeding support, food security, and childhood nutrition. Through her leadership, her team has been the

recipient of the competitive Project Diabetes grant from the Tennessee Department of Health three cycles in a row, spanning nine years, allowing for continued funding to address these critical health focus areas.

Advisory Board of Health skips June meeting

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
steelym@knoxfocus.com

COVID-19's variances are on the rise again this year and the county's Advisory Board of Health had a quarterly meeting scheduled for last week to hear from members on the latest infections. The meeting started to get underway when it was found there were not enough members present to hold a session.

So the planned meeting was adjourned until their next session in September.

Knox County to Offer FREE Property Fraud Alert Program

Knox County Register of Deeds Nick McBride wants to make sure property owners don't become scam victims.

That's why he's offering folks the chance to enroll in Knox County's Property Fraud Alert Program – a free service that uses up-to-date technology to let owners know if there is a potential threat to their property and act before it becomes too late.

"Your home may be the most significant investment

you ever make, and you deserve the peace of mind knowing that your property is protected from fraud," McBride said. "Property Fraud Alert will give you that assurance."

McBride also pointed out: "A lot of folks will see the same service offered on TV but there's a big difference – we do not charge a fee for it! This is a service we offer for FREE to our citizens."

The Knox County Register of Deeds Office records and maintains all deeds

and other property documents. Once enrolled in the Property Fraud Alert Program, those who sign up will immediately receive alerts via email when a document has been recorded that affects that person's name, business name, or real estate.

"In essence, it's an identity theft protection tool for your real property," McBride added. "Our notification system is a tool to empower property owners to conveniently stay alert and act

quickly if potential fraud is detected."

McBride said it only takes a moment to subscribe, and it could save residents hours of time and legal fees while providing peace of mind. He also added that his office will not inundate subscribers with emails.

"You will simply be notified within 24 hours if anybody tries to record anything in your name," he said.

To sign up for the program, visit knoxcounty.org/register/

School Security Officers to get new body cameras

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
steelym@knoxfocus.com

Resolutions authorizing Knox County School Board spending and receipts are routinely approved by the Knox County Commission and some are noteworthy. Two such school board items involving clothing and new cameras for School Security Officers will be on the agenda when the commission meets next Monday at 5 p.m.

A contract with Central Technologies Inc. for the provision of body-worn cameras for the security officers will be approved next week. Carly Harrington, Knox County Schools Communication Director, told The Focus that the \$205,293 agreement for the new school year is an upgrade from current body cameras worn by officers.

Another resolution is an

agreement for a prepaid expense card agreement with Commerce Bank for school security officers to purchase the required uniforms for the year. Harrington said it's a new program and helps the officers keep current with their uniforms. The agreement may be renewed for an additional four years at an annual cost of \$ 2,670 per officer.

School Security Officers are sworn deputies of the Knox County Sheriff's Department. The unit supplies rapid response and school protection and maintains regular and specialized training throughout the calendar year. With over 100 men and women serving, it is one of the largest dedicated school security forces in Tennessee.

The unit operates in nine districts within Knox County.

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The Doctor is in

a weekly column by
Dr. Jim Ferguson

Dog Days of Summer

If there are two different perspectives, neither with incontrovertible proof, a rational man is free to choose the perspective which works best for him.

backyard grass swarmed by a half-dozen puppies. I remember puppy breath, and, yes, I remember stepping in their piles. But I especially recall my first dog more than sixty years ago. He was white except for a few spots of yellow which coalesced over his broad face. I named him Tang after the drink developed for astronauts.

William James

Faith makes life better now, and there is the hope of then.

The Bible holds that we are created in God's image and imbued with reason and free will (Genesis 1:27, Isaiah 1:18, Genesis 2:16-17). The Earth and mankind may be unequaled in the Cosmos, but I don't think so. As a writer of science fiction, my novels "Epiphany" and "Mantis" explore other possibilities, imagining other thoughtful beings. But these first two novels of my Stellar Trilogy are unique and compelling because they also advance spiritual concepts of revelation and redemption.

James Ferguson

We lost Bo today. He was a loyal and good friend to my Portland son-in-law, Matt, and his companion for a decade and a half. It was his time, but it still hurts. Dogs don't live as long as humans. Perhaps a dog's love causes their life to metaphorically burn more quickly and brighter, "like a candle in the wind," as Elton John sang of Norma Jean (Marilyn Monroe).

It is thought that dogs evolved from wolves to become "man's best friend." If you want to experience guileless love, adopt a dog. I grew up around dogs because my dad raised bird-dogs for hunting. I remember rolling in the

perspective of Enzo, a golden retriever, offered in the beautiful and bittersweet book "The Art of Racing in the Rain" by Garth Stein.

I also offer the perspectives of the Bible, though I am not a Biblical literalist. I consider the Bible more a source of wisdom than a compendium of facts. The stories are timeless and I believe are meant to challenge us to think, rather than to indoctrinate.

Spiritual existentialist Soren Kierkegaard wrote about "a leap of faith." My journey was different and built upon logic. I agree with Aristotle that something cannot come from nothing. And it is more logical to see and praise an Intelligent Designer rather than to embrace some notion that a cosmic or quantum flux produced everything that is.

Some have said that the notion of infinity and heaven is part of man's design. Perhaps this notion is proof of their existence. Years ago, I came to the conclusion that two options are possible when I die: I will either blink into oblivion or awaken in Paradise.

I thought I was quite clever until I read Plato's "Apology." His mentor Socrates was on trial for his life, accused of not respecting Athens' deity and corrupting the minds of Athens' youth. In his defense recorded by Plato, Socrates said they could kill him, but he would become a martyr and either cease to exist or he would

awaken in paradise and meet his hero, Homer, the writer of the Iliad. I learned that "Few things have never been considered before." (The same vision is depicted in the Star Wars battle between Darth Vader and Obi-Wan Kenobi, who, at death, joined the pantheon of the Force).

You may be familiar with the movie "The Gladiator," which opens in the time of the Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius battling foreign invasion in an area near current day Vienna. There is considerable historical accuracy in the movie, but also a glimpse of the stoic's vision of Heaven. First described by Homer, The Elysian Fields or Elysium was a "beautiful meadow in the Underworld where the favored of Zeus enjoy perfect happiness." At the end of the movie the slain gladiator is reunited with his martyred wife and son in Paradise, and they are seen walking hand in hand through a bucolic meadow with his beloved dog. It is a beautiful Roman vision of Heaven; one where "All dogs go to Heaven."

I cannot prove there is an afterlife, nor can anyone disprove it. There are those who say their intellectual honesty forces them to say there is no God or an afterlife. They are free to say No! to God, but understand it is only an opinion, perhaps born of hubris.

There are a lot of things humans did not understand 100, 500, 1000 and



Lulu, our Day Dog.

2000 years ago. And there will be further discoveries and new awareness in the future. Paul wrote, "For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror...[we] know in part; then [we] shall know fully" (1 Corinthians 13:12). I know what I know now, and I am held accountable for that level of understanding and my choices.

There is so much beauty and wonder in the world. It's too bad that, unlike our "best friends," man often sees what he doesn't have (or shouldn't have) rather than thanking God for another day of life, enough to eat, a hot shower, a soft bed and enough time to reflect on purpose, responsibility and destiny. I'll bet we could all make a gratitude list which would dwarf our challenges, aches and pains, even academic arrogance (Ecclesiastes 12:12)

and the destruction engineered by "fools placed in high places" (Ecclesiastes 10:6).

I love my dog and love the grace she extends to me. Actually, she is my Knoxville son-in-law's dog, but since they are working and in school, Lulu hangs with us. She is our "Day Dog," and she seems fine with that because Becky and I are retired and home all day. And she has a "farm pool" to enjoy during the dog days of summer (so named because Sirius the dog star is in ascendancy). Perhaps we all have the best of both worlds. I know I am thankful for the arrangement, and Lulu acknowledges with a thump of her tail and a smile that all dog lovers can see.

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

What is an ISO Rating?



PHOTO BY MIKE STEELY

Rural Metro Fire Chief Jerry Harnish chairs a recent Fire and Technical Rescue Committee meeting dealing with ISO ratings for the county's fire departments.

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
steelym@knoxfocus.com

The Knox County Fire and Technical Rescue Committee is looking at ISO Ratings and how they affect individual fire protection and homeowner's insurance.

In a recent meeting the committee turned to Dwight Van de Vate, the county's chief operating officer, for a report. ISO stands for Insurance Services Office, which is an independent, for-profit organization. The ISO scores fire departments on a scale from 1 to 10, with 10 being the lowest, on how

they are doing against its organization's standards to determine property insurance costs.

Locally, the Rural Metro Fire Department has a Class 3 rating compared to Knoxville's City Fire Department's Class 2 rating in 2018. Rural Metro's score was better by two points than its previous rating. More than 40% of the homes in Rural Metro's district subscribe to the fire company service. Typically ISO ratings are done every five years.

According to Jeff Bagwell, spokesman for Rural Metro Fire Department, the Karns Fire Department was rated

Class 4 and the Seymour Volunteer Fire Department has a current rating of Class 7.

The ISO ratings have a direct bearing on a homeowner's fire insurance rates and the company's evaluation determines a community's Public Protection Classification. The ratings depend on a fire system's emergency communications system, fire department staffing, training, equipment and local deployment, the water supply system and fire prevention efforts. A Class 1 rating represents superior fire protection. A rating of 10 means a fire

department does not meet ISO's minimum criteria.

Van de Vate's report, delivered by telephone, centered on ISO ratings and he reported he spoke with several agencies and called the conversations "productive." But he also reported that ISO is a private business and no one has the power to intervene with the ratings.

"I would like to know what other states are doing," he said.

Rural Metro Fire Chief Jerry Harnish called the ISO ratings "complicated" and Van de Vate called the system "difficult."

— **Continue on page 2**

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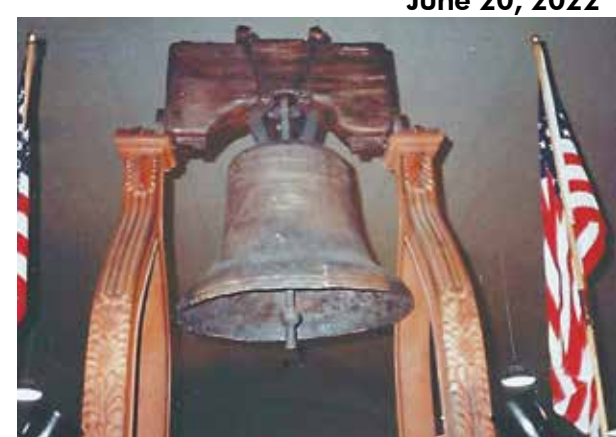
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Enjoying Our Freedom

Flags, fireworks, and parades. Cookouts, concerts, and celebrations. These words are often reminders of America's all-important summer holiday--the Fourth of July. In 2022, many holiday plans may depend on the financial impact of America's economy. With escalating gasoline prices, some families may opt to stay closer to home for celebrating the holiday. Higher food prices may cause some Americans to choose

different menu items, particularly for larger gatherings. The most significant takeaway from the Fourth of July is not really those things mentioned above, although festive celebrations

are fun and have become part of our culture. It is most important that we recognize and remember the independence of our country, all the freedoms that we enjoy every day, and those who have fought and those who continue to serve to keep us a



Picture of a display taken some years ago of beautiful American symbols of freedom by Ralphine Major.



By Ralphine Major
ralphine3@yahoo.com

free country. The United States Constitution, The Declaration of Independence, and the Bill of Rights are also important words often thought about with the Fourth of July, as well as the Statue of Liberty and the Liberty Bell. How blessed we are in America! May we always be free. Have a safe,

meaningful, and Happy Fourth of July! God bless America!

Words of Faith: "He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun." Psalm 37:6 (NIV).

Testerman campaigns in June

It has been a busy month for Councilwoman Janet Testerman as she campaigns for the District 18 seat on the state House of Representatives. Above, Testerman (center) is pictured with (left to right) Battalion Chief Doug Gwaltney, Firefighter Jessica Worth, Senior Firefighter Andrew Link and Master Firefighter Larry McAfee following a dinner at the Knoxville Fire Department Station 11 where she learned she received the endorsement of the Tennessee Professional Firefighters Association. Below, Testerman visits with veterans at Free Veterans Breakfast hosted by The United Veterans Council of East Tennessee at Hillcrest United Methodist Church in South Knox.



Neighbors are special

How many of your neighbors do you know? How many meals have you shared? Have you been there for them when tragedy struck? Getting to know neighbors these days isn't such an easy thing.



By Joe Rector
joerector@comcast.net

Our house was built in 1978. At that time, it only had a couple of bedrooms and bathrooms. Over the years, we've added rooms as our family grew. Now we are retired and still living in the same place, something that's unusual in today's world.

One reason we are still here in Ball Camp is that our two-street neighborhood is about as good as we will find. Many of the houses on our street have the same folks in them that were here when we moved in. I've become friends with them all. No, we aren't bosom buddies, but we talk with each other frequently and wave as we pass in our cars. Over those years, we have watched each other's children grow and move on to new lives and

adventures. To hear that some of them are in their 40s shocks me because it doesn't seem so long ago that they were all toddlers. I used to walk Snoop every day through our neighborhood and met and got to know most folks who live in our little community. We'd share stories about what had happened on our own property or warn that thieves were making the rounds in places near us. Just sharing a few minutes with others always made my day a little better. What endears us to each other is the fact that all of us are willing to help others in times of need. We will help with cutting a fallen

tree or mowing a yard when a family is out of town. If an ambulance or fire truck drives through, we're out the door and checking on the problem, not because we are nosy but because we care for each other. That kind of attitude and closeness continued to this place where we live. More recently, many of those original neighbors have passed on. For the most part, the men of the household died, and their passing left women needing help sometimes. I especially miss Mr. and Mrs. Nelson. Their boys used to play football in our yard. When we moved in, Mr. Nelson was always there

to help me with so many things. I especially remember when he taught me one winter the best way to burn a brush pile. He worked magic with a blower and some kerosene. New neighbors have moved into several of the houses. I've made an effort to meet them and make them feel welcome. I also told them not to hesitate to ask for help when they needed it. The sounds of children once again can be heard. They ride bikes and play games outside, and just hearing their laughter leaves me longing for my own children when they were that age. I hope that these families settle in and

make the houses their permanent homes. They can count on us old folks to be ready to carry on a conversation or pitch in to help complete a difficult task. These days, new developments stack houses on top of each other; however, folks are so busy that they have little time to make a connection with those who live down the road and closer. I hope that homeowners will make it a priority of meeting people who live on their roads. The ties that they form and the relationships that develop are precious, and they make life brighter and more satisfying.

What is an ISO Rating?

Cont. from page 1

There were also questions about getting an ISO rating for the entire county. The committee also discussed response times and possibly adding all the cancelled calls back into the total calls reported. The commission's finance committee may also be revising its recommendations toward future budget allotments to the various fire departments. Currently the allocation of \$675,000 from the county government is split between fire departments in Karns, Seymour and the Knoxville County Rescue Squad. Rural Metro Fire is funded by subscribers and receives no county funds.

Focusing on the Presence of God

Take a couple of moments and think about what has been consuming your thoughts and leading you to worry. It may be your health or the health of a loved one. It may be a child who is struggling with school or life. It may be the loneliness you have been dealing with. It might be a situation at work that is stressful. Whatever it may be, pray. Prayer is awkward for many people. Some people were never taught how to pray. They might get caught up in how to address God and what



By Mark Brackney,
Minister of the
Arlington Church
of Christ

language to use. Prayer is not about getting titles right, it is about talking to God in your words, and presenting your requests to Him. Few things make me happier than to hear my children say, "Dad, I need to talk to you." I delight in talking to them because I am their daddy. All seven of my kids talk to me a bit differently. Stephen is more prone to call, while Caleb will text. Joshua does not have as many words as Noah, but each is important. Luke probably talks to me more than the others due to him being the youngest, and I am around him more. Rebecca talks more to her mom than me, but that is not surprising as they both tend to use more words than me. Jonathan

is more deliberate in his words. While each shares differently, it is communication all the same and such a blessing. Just like my kids, each of us is different, so the way you pray will be a bit different from someone else. Pray in a way that is comfortable for you. There is no perfect way. Just do it. Peter reminds us that God invites us to come to Him with our concerns: "Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you" (1 Peter 5:6-7). Peter says God will lift you up. I can't help but think about the day Peter stepped out in faith and was walking on the water with Jesus. He was doing

fine until he took his eyes off Jesus and got distracted by the wind and waves. This is a reminder of how the presence of problems in our lives can cause us to ignore or forget the presence of Jesus. Peter began to sink. Peter then reached out to Jesus and Jesus grabbed his hand and lifted him up. Prayer changes things. Prayer actually changes you. Research reveals that prayer changes your brain. It was just a few decades ago that neurologists believed the brain did not change after adolescence. But our brains are changing all the time. Neurologists call this process neuroplasticity. Our brains are being sculpted just like our muscles with time in the gym. Our brains

are rewiring themselves all the time by creating neural pathways. Every time you think a thought, it is easier to think it the next time. If you are thinking godly thoughts, this is a good thing. Prayer has the ability to change your brain and move you in positive ways. Prayer renews your mind. Paul wrote, "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Romans 12:2). We don't want to conform. We want to be transformed and renewed. Paul says to pray and present your requests to God. By doing so, "...the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7).

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The 1948 Election in Tennessee VI

Pages from the Past



By Ray Hill
rayhill865@gmail.com

With E. H. Crump saying little or nothing about whether or not he would support the state or national Democratic tickets in Shelby County, the general election campaign in Tennessee continued to be hard-fought. John G. Townsend was a former United States Senator from Delaware who headed the National Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee. Townsend was quoted the first week of October as saying Crump had made a "deal" to support Carroll Reece for the United States Senate. When contacted by members of the press, Crump snapped, "I have made no deal with anyone on anything, from president on down." According to the Nashville Tennessean's Washington Bureau, Senator Townsend was quoted as having said, "I haven't made the deal myself, but I understand that one has been made." Until recently, the Shelby County political organization and its master had been licking the wounds it had received from its thrashing in the August Democratic primary. Ed Crump had said or done little with reference to politics since both candidates he had supported for the U. S. Senate and the governorship had been soundly defeated. "I don't believe I could write the word 'politics' right now if I had a pencil in my hand," the Memphis Boss had told one inquiring reporter.

Evidently, the Memphis Boss picked up his pencil and managed to scratch out the word "politics" after all later that night. Crump announced the Shelby County machine would back the presidential candidacy of South Carolina Governor Strom Thurmond in the general election. Tennessee's senior United States Senator and Crump's political partner Kenneth D. McKellar issued a statement of his own, saying he would support the Truman-Barkley ticket. Senator McKellar said his friendship with Crump remained unchanged. "It is just a case of honest difference of opinion between us. My friendship for him and my admiration of him remain the same as always," McKellar said.

The caravan of the Reece-Acuff ticket toured the Third Congressional District, drawing large crowds in Benton and Etowah. Congressman John Jennings joined the program when Carroll Reece and Roy Acuff held a rally in Loudon. Acuff was telling the thousands who attended the Republican rallies he would name the first bipartisan cabinet in Tennessee's history, having as many Democrats as Republicans in his official family. Reece continued to pound Estes Kefauver for the congressman's supposed leftwing tendencies.

Even inside Carroll Reece's First Congressional District, there were a few signs not all was well. The Johnson City Press Chronicle published an editorial stating the newspaper had always been against "Crumpism" which was why it had endorsed the candidacies of Estes Kefauver and Gordon Browning while at the same time endorsing the presidential bid of Thomas E. Dewey and the congressional candidacy of Dayton Phillips locally. "The cleanup of Tennessee, begun in the August primary, should be completed in the final November election," the Press Chronicle editorial intoned.

While Carroll Reece continued to hammer Estes Kefauver's liberal politics, the Chattanooga congressman and his allies castigated the GOP senatorial nominee as an isolationist. Apparently, the charge irritated Reece who snapped at rallies in Maryville and Wartburg, "It ill becomes anyone who has never seen the flash of a gun to criticize any veteran who has served his country." A statement made by the former congressman was frequently cited by his political opponents to classify Reece as an isolationist. What Carroll Reece had said was, "To really know war you have to be in one. I hope no American boy will ever again have to go through what I did."

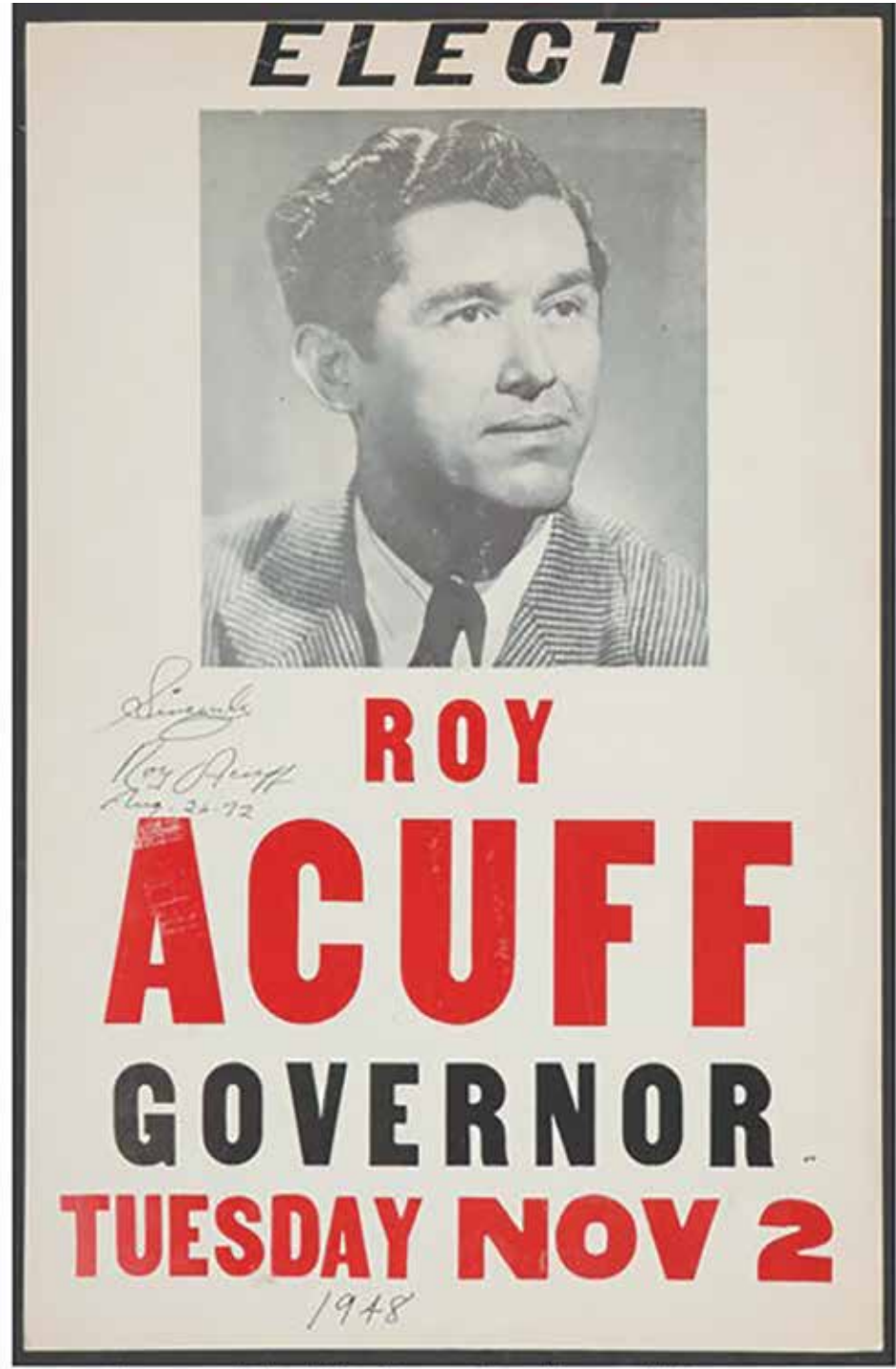
Reece then described the three things he believed the United States should do to avoid war: "First keep America so strong that no nation will attack her.

"Second, cut the would-be aggressors completely off from our war secrets, our war supplies, and the machine tools that build war machines. Without our help, Russia and her satellites can never catch up with us. And this left-wing policy of strengthening our potential enemies must be stopped.

"Third, elect an administration and a senator to support it, that would not have been a party to the Yalta, Tehran and Potsdam agreements which brought about the present world situation."

While campaigning in Oak Ridge, Carroll Reece told an audience, "When I was lying in the mud of France, I had ample time to contemplate the smallness of the world."

Congressman Estes Kefauver continued to stress those issues he believed to be important to voters in Tennessee, which included such traditional pocketbook issues as the cost of living and the role of the United States in keeping the peace of the world. Kefauver also stressed his support for legislation for various groups such as veterans, organized labor and farmers. The Chattanooga congressman also reminded Tennesseans of his support for the Tennessee



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com

Autographed poster from Roy Acuff's 1948 campaign for governor.

Valley Authority and Social Security. Kefauver was not a particularly good orator; in fact, those who knew him best frequently recalled the Chattanooga was a wretched speaker. Yet Kefauver proved to be a truly gifted practitioner of retail politics. By the time Estes Kefauver died, Lyndon Johnson paid him tribute as "The greatest campaigner of them all."

"People of the Volunteer state of Tennessee whose matchless fighting forces have always marched in the vanguard of American defense whenever our flag was threatened or our liberties were imperiled deserve a better representation in the senate of the United States than would be provided by a man who voted against every measure in the interest of national security and national defense up to the very hour when the Japanese bombs struck at Pearl Harbor and proclaimed our entrance into World War II," Kefauver cried.

By October 10, the state GOP headquarters estimated more than 150,000 Tennesseans had seen and heard the Reece - Acuff traveling road show during the first three weeks of the campaign; it was for the time, an astonishing rate of 50,000 people per week. When Roy Acuff had first decided to run for governor, he had pledged, "If the people of Tennessee see fit to give me this nomination I'll make a campaign the like of which has never been seen in Tennessee before." Yet throughout the campaign, Acuff kept his promise not to use negative campaigning, as he and Gordon Browning were personal friends.

"There'll be no mud-slinging. If I have to criticize my opponent, I'll withdraw," Acuff said. "Gordon Browning is my friend. I introduced him to more than 10,000 people during the fourth of July weekend,"

Acuff pointed out. "I told folks he was a good man. I haven't changed my mind." To the despair of some Republicans, Roy Acuff continued to campaign, telling voters at rallies to "vote the way you want to." Acuff wasn't even in Tennessee when he had won the GOP gubernatorial nomination, as he was in California making a movie.

The Nashville Tennessean continually pointed to Carroll Reece's record in Congress where the East Tennessee congressman had attacked Jim Crow laws and reminded readers Reece "thought it was a disgrace that a federal anti-lynching law was not enacted." The Tennessean accused Reece of having ignored his own past record to flirt with the Dixiecrats as "his schedule took him in hailing distance of Mr. E. H. Crump." The Tennessean editorial marveled it was one of "the high points of an already amazing campaign."

The Chattanooga Daily Times, which was fervently backing Estes Kefauver, published an editorial reminding its readers Reece had been determined to have been 39% disabled by the Veteran's Administration and as a retired officer from the First World War, the former congressman collected a pension of \$150 per month. "He had already collected \$36,000 on the pension," the editorial noted. "He married into a very wealthy family and he, himself, has made an outstanding success with some banking interests he owns in Tennessee," the editorial stated.

"Of course, any war veteran who is disabled is entitled to the pay," the Chattanooga Daily Times editorial piously opined, "and no criticism can be laid against him for accepting it no matter how wealthy he is in his own right." Evidently, the point of the entire recitation of the editorial was to

remind readers Reece had voted against "the emergency housing law to aid war veterans." Never mentioned was the fact one big reason for Carroll Reece's immense personal popularity inside his own First Congressional District was the fact throughout much of his service, veteran or their widows and orphans did not have pensions or disability benefits. At the time, the only pensions or disability benefits came from congressmen introducing special bills to provide them for specific individuals. Carroll Reece was said to have introduced more such bills during the decade of the 1920s than any other member of the House of Representatives. Indeed, throughout his twenty-six years in Congress, Carroll Reece remained enduringly popular with his fellow veterans and their families.

Reece did have editorial support in Tennessee, most notably from his friend Guy Smith, editor of the Knoxville Journal and chairman of the state Republican Executive Committee. Like most everybody else, Smith presumed Thomas E. Dewey would be the next President of the United States. In an editorial Guy Smith wrote, "With Dewey in the White House, Rep. Kefauver's only function in the Senate would be to vote 'no.' That is not the kind of representation this great state deserves." The Johnson City Press Chronicle reprinted a portion of an editorial published by the Chattanooga Daily Times which stated it thought "Dewey would shed no tears over the defeat of the reactionary Mr. Reece, who fought him at Philadelphia and who represents the very ills in the Republican party Mr. Dewey seeks to cure."

Tom Dewey throughout the 1948 campaign had thoroughly irritated a goodly number of Republicans in various states by remaining

silent as to his personal support for a number of incumbent GOP senators who were deemed perhaps too conservative. Dewey never appeared in West Virginia nor endorsed the candidacy of Senator Chapman Revercomb, who was being pilloried by much of the press in the country for the immigration reform legislation he had passed, which some asserted was too restrictive and prejudiced. Nor did Dewey have much to say about Senator Wayland "Curly" Brooks of Illinois, who had the enthusiastic backing of devoted isolationist Colonel Robert McCormick, publisher of the Chicago Tribune. Opponents of Carroll Reece in Tennessee delighted in noting the former congressman, long affiliated with the more conservative wing of the national Republican Party, had never been officially endorsed by his own party's presidential nominee. It was all the more harmful due to the fact most everybody believed Thomas E. Dewey was the next President of the United States.

The Chattanooga Daily Times also tried to compare the decade of service in the House of Representatives served by Estes Kefauver to the twenty-six years in Congress served by Carroll Reece. The newspaper pointed out Reece had introduced 94 bills as compared to 151 sponsored by Kefauver. The Chattanooga Daily Times blithely wrote it had discounted "the 1,217 private relief bills introduced by Reece or the 46 introduced by Kefauver" while noting five of the bills sponsored by Carroll Reece had become law while nine of Congressman Kefauver's had become law.

Virtually all of the "private relief bills" sponsored by Congressman Carroll Reece had been for the benefit of veterans or their widows and children.

The press in Tennessee was divided along partisan lines, as well as of conservative versus liberal. To those supporting Carroll Reece, Congressman Estes Kefauver was a radical liberal who did not represent the thinking or values of the Volunteer State; to those supporting Kefauver, Reece was a heartless Republican who supported the predatory special interests over those of the people of Tennessee.

Unlike the heated race for the U. S. Senate, GOP gubernatorial nominee Roy Acuff stuck to his pledge not to be critical of his friend Gordon Browning. Nor did Browning denounce Roy Acuff. It may well be the most gentlemanly governor's race in our state's history.

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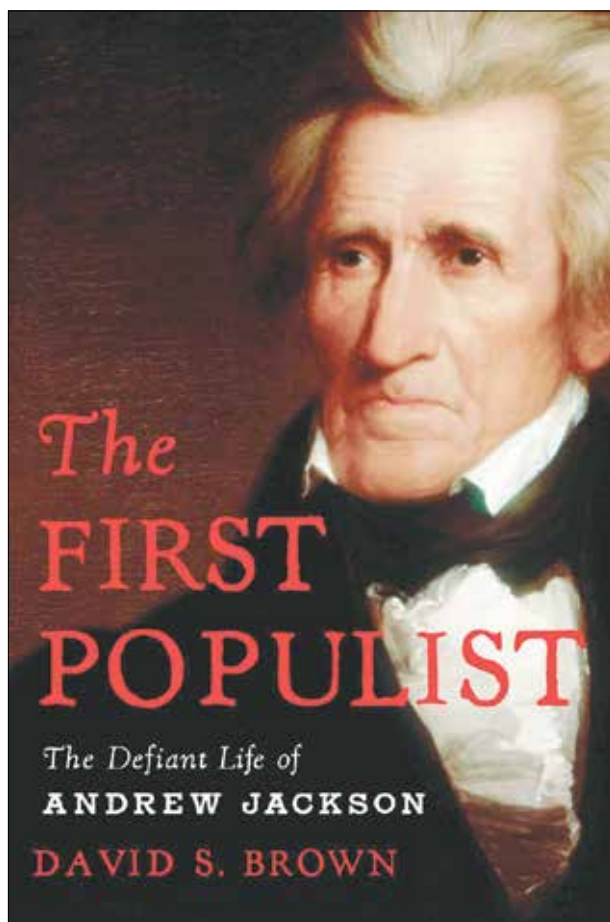
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You Will Want to Read

'The First Populist: The Defiant Life of Andrew Jackson'

By Christy Martin

Andrew Jackson, the seventh president of the United States, war hero, plantation owner, and dueler is certainly one of the most interesting figures of his era and one of the most interesting men to ever assume the role of our country's chief executive. His home, just outside of Nashville, is an intriguing and educational place to visit. "The First Populist: The Defiant Life of Andrew Jackson" was just published in April 2022 and is a well-researched and well-written account of the life of one of the most popular and controversial presidents of the United States. Jackson was born before the Revolutionary War. He never knew his father who died before he was born, and at a young age, Andrew Jackson himself was taken prisoner by the British Army. He served in Congress, Senate, and as a justice on the Tennessee Supreme Court. He was a much-lauded general, credited for defeating the British in the famous Battle of New



Orleans. Jackson's marriage to previously married Rachel Donelson caused the couple much angst. It was discovered two years after their marriage that her previous husband had not divorced her. The Jacksons immediately married again

after the divorce but were chastised for the marriage for many years afterward. Rachel died before Jackson assumed the office of the president.

As president, Jackson was opposed to federal banking but was the only

president to totally relieve the country of the national debt. His signing of the Indian removal act in his second term is a stain to this day on his legacy. He lobbied for the common man and was extremely popular in the states west of New England. He was the first president to be elected outside of the geographic location that was not part of the Virginia aristocracy. Jackson, himself a Democrat, stayed active in the party after his presidency and was in favor of the election of Martin Van Buren as his successor. Even though Andrew and Rachel Jackson lived well, he was not prosperous on his own, making bad financial deals and delegating finance management to others who exaggerated his debt. It was considerable upon his death.

In modern times many have compared him to President Trump and he was a favorite of the 45th president who visited his home outside of Nashville. Courageous, outspoken, temperamental, and unpopular with the New

England media there are some similarities between the two men. Both served as a stopgap to politics as usual but were radical sometimes in thoughts, words, and deeds. The author examines and compares the two men in this newest biography of Jackson.

David S. Brown's well-written biography of Andrew Jackson will add to the documentation of the life of one of our country's most interesting men who served his country for two terms as president and many years in other roles as a public servant. I highly recommend this book to those who are interested in the personal and political life of President Jackson. It is readable and interesting from start to finish.

Christy Martin is a retired educator of K-12 thru post-secondary and former coordinator of programs for youth in foster care. She is currently a freelance writer and book reviewer with special interests in local history and books written by local writers.

CANADA DAY at the Museum of East Tennessee History

On Saturday, June 25 from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m., the East Tennessee Historical Society will host "Canada Day" at the Museum of East Tennessee History.

Canada Day is an opportunity to celebrate when Canada came to the 1982 World's Fair. The Canada Pavilion was fun for all, and we want to thank our neighbors to the north for being part of the World's Fair. Join us as we travel to Canada by way of Knoxville!

FAMILY FRIENDLY games, trivia, and prizes will be hosted from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. with special appearances by the Knoxville Ice Bears and the American Museum of Science and Energy. To wrap up the day, a Canada Day puppet show will be hosted at 1 p.m. for children and families.

Canada Day is one of several "community days" with FREE ADMISSION to the museum throughout the summer, kindly sponsored by the Tennessee Valley Authority.

For more information, visit: www.easttnhistory.org/museum-east-tennessee-history

Jim Ross wouldn't die with a lie in his mouth

By Jadon Gibson

Jim Ross had no interest in sleeping after his visitors left on the evening of Feb. 7, 1889. He was to be hanged in Brandenburg, Ky., across the Ohio River from Indiana, the following day.

"I'll admit I was there," he answered a reporter's question about the murder of Benedict Rhodes. "I'll tell you what happened. I was renting a room at the home of Walter Parker who lived near the dead man. Parker bought this little farm there where he lived. It suited him and his woman but he was having trouble coming up with the money for it. One day he said, 'I know where we can get the money.'

"He told me that Mr. Rhodes lived alone and kept money in his home. He got Andy Valentine to join in on the scheme and he kept after me too. I know it was wrong but I didn't think there'd be a killing. I finally agreed I would go along with 'em."

Jim Ross then related how they snuck into Rhodes' house while he was asleep.

Ross said they quietly searched for the money until they heard Rhodes stir about and then turn over in his sleep.

They thought he was waking up so the three of them left the house.

"As we tiptoed across the porch Walt (Parker) stumbled over an ax. He picked it up and whispered, 'We're going back in.'"

Ross said Parker lit a lamp when they got back inside and started looking for the money.

"It wasn't long before Rhodes started stirring again. Parker said, 'There's no use fooling with him. We may as well knock him in the head.'

"He hit Rhodes four times with the ax. It was a bloody mess."

Ross said they continued searching through the house but only found \$1.75 and a silver watch.

"That's the whole truth and nothing but the truth," Ross said. "I'm gonna hang tomorrow and I ain't gonna die with a lie in my mouth."

Ross joined the Catholic Church about a month prior to his hanging after a series of meetings with a priest.

During this time he devoted all of his time to religious matters and was totally candid in discussing the April 6, 1888 murder. He seemed to be unconcerned about his approaching demise.

That wasn't the case with others as Sheriff J. D. Hardin was deluged with requests for tickets to witness the hanging. Some hangings were public for all to see but some had restrictions for different reasons. If officials felt parties may interfere they could impose restrictions. Many hangings were held within buildings specifically built for the purpose. On some occasions such as with Jim Ross's hanging the attendees

were limited to those receiving tickets to witness the event.

Regardless of the specifics, hangings brought large numbers to town - folks from throughout the area including Hoosiers from across the Ohio River in Indiana. Many of them arrived but didn't have tickets to witness the hanging.

Several thousand came to town without tickets as they could still witness the entourage of the High Sheriff, deputies and the doomed prisoner. They enjoyed hearing the preaching and praying that was usually part of the goings-on. It wasn't unusual for the prisoner to ask for and be granted to be baptized.

When death comes calling as it does with all of us... humans often consider what mark they made while they walked on this earth. Some consider their lives have been deficient and seek, at this late hour, peace with Jesus in their hearts. Glory!

Some attendees at hangings longed to hear the final words of the prisoner to be hanged. Does he seem at peace with the Lord?

The attendees in many instances could also view the grotesque corpse after the hanging, contorted face crooked to one side because of the broken, rope-burned neck. At times the eyes were bulging.

Hangings also brought a variety of individuals to town including peddlers, medicine men,

bootleggers, gamblers and a hodgepodge of others.

As the execution date neared, Jim Ross could hear the workers building the scaffold and a 20-foot high fence that would surround it. The scaffold was built on a hillside only a short distance from the jail.

Jim Ross was in a surprisingly good mood when guards called on him at 5 a.m. on the day of his hanging.

"How long do I have to wait," he asked with a smile. "I'm ready to go."

He ate a hearty breakfast and then smoked a cigar given to him by Sheriff Hardin. The sheriff and Deputy Woolfolk called on Ross soon after 7:14 a.m. and Sheriff Hardin read the death warrant. At 7:40 a.m. they walked to the scaffold, entering the small enclosure that was crammed with humanity.

Ross climbed the steps of the scaffold and then looked about and into the faces of those who came to see him hang.

"Do you have anything to say for yourself," Sheriff Hardin asked.

"Not a single word," Ross answered as he reached down and untied his shoes.

A black hood was placed over his head and the noose secured around his neck. At 7:46 the signal was given, the trapdoor opened and Ross plunged through. The rope snapped with a whomp, breaking Jim's neck. Many witnesses gasped... with

their hand holding a rag of sorts daubing at their face. Some looked away to stifle a moan. Soon Jim Ross was dead.

After six minutes a doctor checked his pulse. His pulse rate was 34 and after twenty-six minutes there was no pulse at all. Deputies cut the rope and took the body down. The corpse was turned over to a Louisville medical student. Ross had agreed to give his body to the student in the preceding days.

During the trial Jim Ross told about his involvement in the crime and implicated Walter Parker and Andy Valentine in the killing. A jury found Walter Parker not guilty and he promptly left Kentucky. Andy Valentine was never arrested. He showed up in Brandenburg on the day of the hanging but had no ticket and didn't witness the hanging.

Both Parker and Valentine said they were innocent. Jim Ross was different.

Jim Ross said he wouldn't die with a lie in his mouth.

Jadon Gibson is a freelance writer from Harrogate Tennessee. His writings are both historical and nostalgic in nature. Don't miss a single issue! Thanks to Lincoln Memorial University, Alice Lloyd College, and the Museum of Appalachia for their assistance.



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2021-22 HIGH SCHOOL LEADERS

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

This is the third week of the series and our June 27 issue will conclude our 11th annual year for publishing stories and pictures of our top high school leaders.

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. We hope you will continue to join us in learning about their accomplishments and applauding each one!



Grant Sterchi and Ainsley Patterson are Christian Academy of Knoxville's Student-Athletes of the Year.

Morris and Krauss are GCA honorees

By Steve Williams

At Grace Christian Academy's Awards Night this year, seniors Ali Morris and Nick Krauss were honored as the female and male student-athletes who performed with high quality on the field of play and exemplified the mission and vision of GCA.

Morris stood out on the volleyball court and Nick was a three-sport participant in cross country, wrestling and soccer.

With over 530 kills and 300 digs in her senior season, Ali's play led the Lady Rams to a Top 8 finish in the state as they advanced to the TSSAA Division II-A quarterfinals.

Morris received numerous post-season accolades, from the team and district level to the national level. She was GCA's Most Valuable Player, All-District, a District All-Tournament selection, District Hitter of the Year, District MVP, All-Region honoree plus made the Tennessee Sports Writers Association's All-State team.

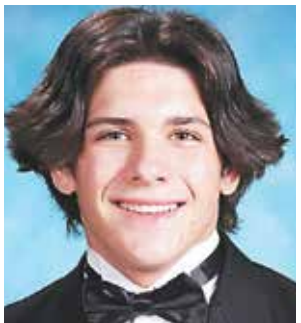
Ali also was named to

the PrepXtra and 5-Star Preps first teams. Last but not least, her list of awards included receiving All-America honorable mention, All-Region recognition and the Best & Brightest Award from the American Volleyball Coaches Association.

The versatile Krauss stayed busy throughout the school year. Last fall, Nick ran on the cross country team for the first time and made an immediate impact, finishing fourth in the region and helping the team qualify for the state. He received the team's Ram Charger award.

Krauss was a veteran on the wrestling mat during the winter, recording a 34-8 record as he topped the century mark in career victories. His fourth place finish at the state tournament also earned him All-State honors. Nick received the wrestling team's Co-MVP Award, too.

In soccer this past spring, Krauss was the Rams' goalie and their leading shot-stopper, recording multiple shut-outs during the season.



Grace Christian Academy's Ali Morris and Nick Krauss are Student-Athletes of the Year.

Sterchi will be going to Naval Academy

CAK's Patterson is female honoree

By Steve Williams

The pieces are falling into place for Grant Sterchi.

Christian Academy of Knoxville's male Student-Athlete of the Year will be attending the United States Naval Academy this fall in Annapolis, Md., and now it appears he may also get the opportunity to be a walk-on on the football team.

"It would be hard for me to think of a player that I've coached over the last two decades that is more deserving of an appointment to the USNA than Grant," said CAK Head Football Coach Travis Mozingo. "He's a great student, a great athlete and a young man of great character."

Sterchi, a wide receiver and defensive back, was recruited this past year by the football staff and Navy,

recalled Mozingo, but he never was able to solidify an official offer.

"When Grant received his appointment, we reached out to the football staff and made them aware of this development," said Mozingo. "After a few conversations, the football staff is optimistic on Grant 'walking-on' and being part of the Navy football team this coming fall.

"To say I'm proud of Grant would be a huge understatement - he's earned this opportunity, and I'm excited for both him and the United States Navy."

Sterchi received the ACSI Distinguished Christian High School Student Award for Leadership at CAK. He also played on the Warriors' baseball team.

"His teachers and coaches describe him as dependable and hardworking," said **Continue on page 3**



Grant Sterchi runs with the football for the Warriors. 'He's a great student, a great athlete and a young man of great character,' said CAK Coach Travis Mozingo.

Bring us on vacation with you.

(We won't take up much space)

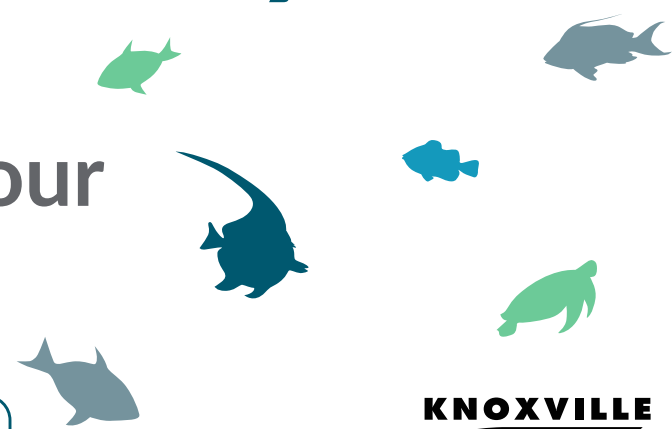
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2021-22 HIGH SCHOOL LEADERS

Atwell led Admirals to memorable win over Bearden

Talented Strickland is female honoree

By Steve Williams

season and district tourney, earned All-Region recognition and also received first team All-State honors from the Tennessee Sports Writers Association.

“He’s been a great pleasure to coach and to have as an ambassador for our program that we in Admiral Nation are really proud of,” said Higgins.

Atwell will be continuing his education in the fall at UT.

Avery “Ace” Strickland is Farragut’s female honoree.

A first team All-State selection in basketball, the 6-1 shooting guard powered the Lady Admirals to Class 4A state runner-up honors in March. She will be continuing her career on the hardwood at the University of Pittsburgh.

One of the top all-round athletes to come out of Farragut, Strickland played on the school’s 2021 state championship softball team.

This past spring, she chose to compete in track and field and qualified for the TSSAA state meet in two events (4x800 and 4x400 relays). Farragut finished third in the 4x400 and sixth in the 4x800.

For the first time in over 20 years, Dillon Atwell led Farragut High to the district basketball tournament championship this past season.

The 6-2 senior point guard scored 23 points as the Admirals defeated rival Bearden 73-62 for the District 4-4A title.

That victory and Atwell’s hard work through the season contributed to him being chosen the 2021-22 FHS male Student-Athlete of the Year.

“I think it’s a great honor for a great kid, who worked extremely hard this past year to do something great for our team and to accomplish that,” said Farragut Head Coach Jon Higgins, adding Dillon was a “leader for our team that would do whatever it took for us to win a basketball game.” Atwell was selected the District 4-4A Most Valuable Player in the regular



Avery “Ace” Strickland shows off the silver basketball trophy she helped win for Farragut at the 2022 TSSAA State Championships. Farragut’s Dillon Atwell was the MVP of District 4-4A this past season, so the jersey number he wore was quite fitting.



FBA’s Sikes and Solomon earn Golden Eagle Award

By Steve Williams

Riley Sikes and Cole Solomon were recipients of First Baptist Academy’s Golden Eagle Award, which recognizes the overall best female and male student-athlete for Christ-like character, academic achievement, leadership and athletic excellence over the past school year.

Riley and Cole were in the Class of 2022 and will be continuing their education in college.

Sikes was FBA’s starting pitcher in softball and has signed to play at Carson-Newman University. She also played volleyball for First Baptist.

Riley also stood out in academics, graduating as FBA’s co-Valedictorian this year.

She is described as “a strong leader that our younger students look up to and who has a great heart to serve.”

Solomon was a three-sport athlete at First Baptist Academy, competing in soccer, golf and track.

Darin Mercer, who coached the soccer team,

pointed out Cole was the Eagles’ leading scorer on this year’s team as he played a striker (forward) position.

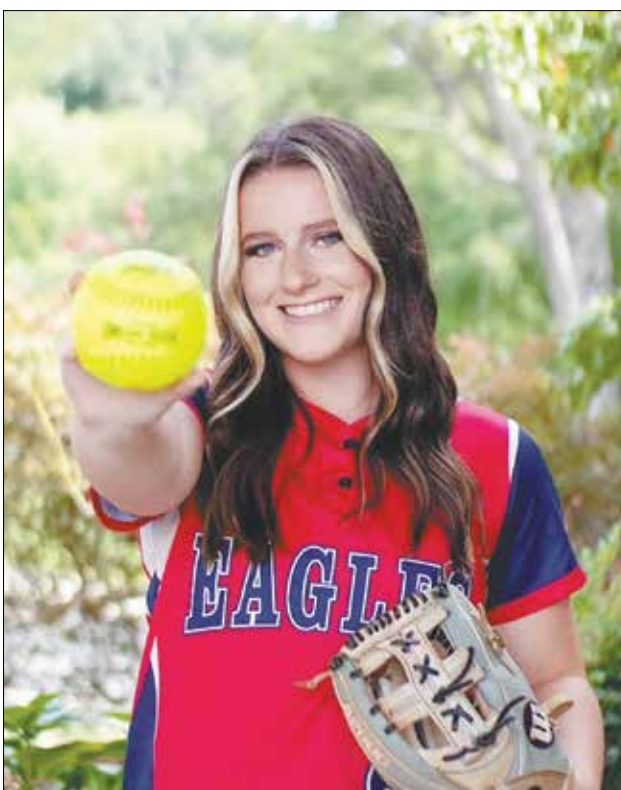
Solomon also is an excellent student and graduated FBA with a 4.27 GPA. He is planning to attend the University of Tennessee this fall and major in Mechanical Engineering.

Cole’s teachers and coaches describe him as “a leader with a servant’s heart.”

L&N tabs Moody and Shupe top Student-Athletes

Athletic Director Mark Waxmonsky took time to comment on seniors Elizabeth Moody and Hunter Shupe, L&N STEM Academy’s Student-Athletes of the Year.

“Liz only played golf for two years but made it to the TSSAA State



Riley Sikes and Cole Solomon were recipients of First Baptist Academy’s Golden Eagle Award.



Hunter Shupe started playing tennis his freshman year at L&N and was the captain and No. 1 singles player as a senior this spring. Elizabeth Moody of L&N STEM Academy made it to the TSSAA State Championships in golf in her first two years in the sport.



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Championships in both her junior and senior seasons. This past season, she was the Region champion and finished in 13th place at the state tournament.

“Liz has also been a member of the ultimate

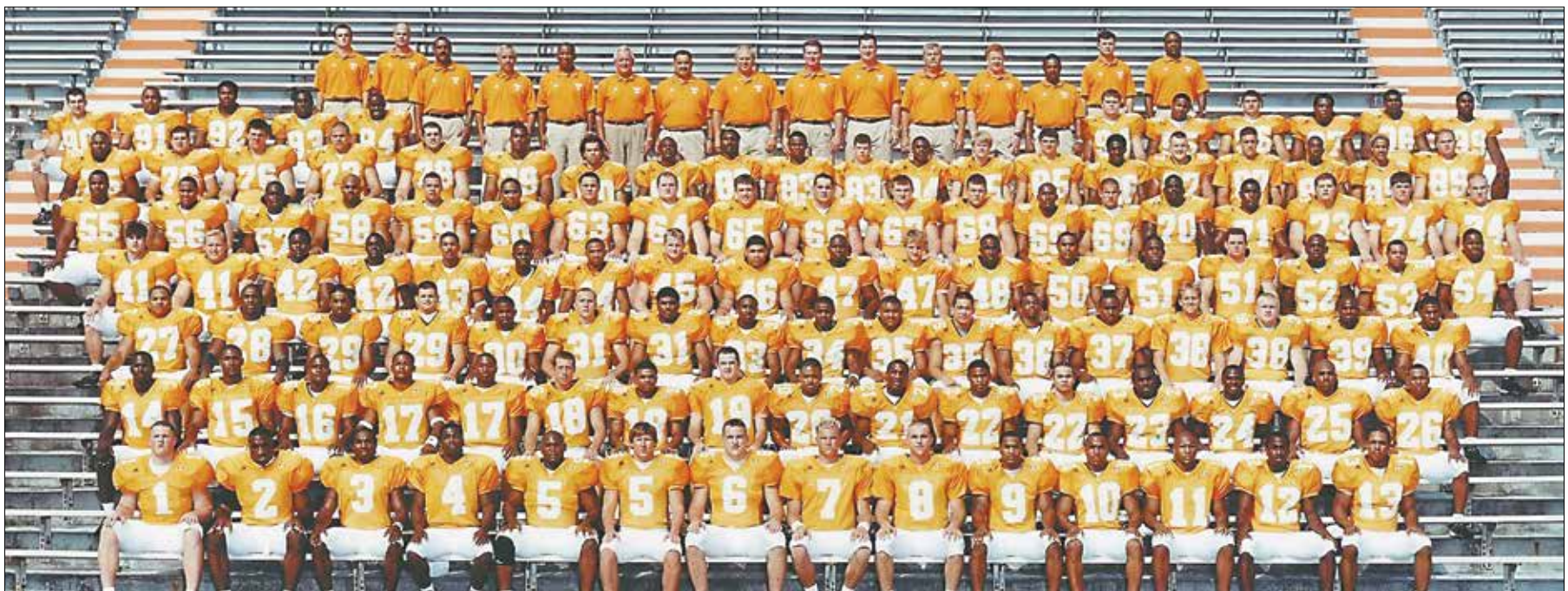
frisbee team and excels in the classroom while taking several AP courses.

“Hunter has been a member of the boys’ tennis team since his freshman year. This season he was the team captain and played in the

No. 1 singles spot. He finished the season with a 7-3 record and advanced to the semifinals in the District tournament doubles event.

“Hunter also played golf his senior year. He has been an outstanding

student in the classroom, a leader and a great teammate over the last four years.”



Bobby Graham, Buck Fitzgerald, John Finlayson, and Xavier Mitchell all contributed to some memorable moments during their Tennessee football careers, Graham against Memphis in 1999, Fitzgerald and Finlayson at Florida in 2001, and Mitchell in 2006 against Air Force.

There's no 'I' in 'Team'

When the experts say football is a "team game," they really mean it. It takes a "team" to win. That's been true since the days of Pop Warner and Amos Alonzo Stagg. Tennessee coaches from the days of Bob Neyland on have preached and praised the concept of "team." Players have been primed to be ready when their number was called.

Game heroes come in all shapes and sizes, however. Sometimes the heroes are not the ones you might expect. They might be an older player buried on the depth chart or a youngster who only needed a chance to prove himself.

The history of Tennessee football is replete with players who have stood tall,

making a key play at exactly the right moment. In each of their cases, their contributions should not be forgotten.

Anybody remember former Vol wide receiver Bobby Graham, defensive back Buck Fitzgerald, tight end John Finlayson, and defensive end Xavier Mitchell?

Think back to the critical moments in the 1999 Memphis game, the 2001 game at Florida, and the 2006 Air Force game. The Vols won them all, but it wasn't easy. Each of them "saved" a game, as we look back at what they contributed through the prism of history.

Graham, who wore No. 11 as a Vol, was a sophomore wide receiver from Statesville, N. C., who seemed destined for obscurity until Homecoming Day, Sept. 25, 1999. The Vols trailed Memphis 16-10 late in the

fourth quarter.

The Vols had lost at Florida a week earlier. A loss on Homecoming Day could have proven catastrophic. Losses to Memphis have that impact, real or imagined.

Things really looked bleak, and fans were expecting the worst until Tee Martin threw what seemed to be a desperation pass in Graham's direction toward the east side going to the north end.

Graham hauled it in, with the play covering 53 yards. That put the Vols in position for the winning score and sent fans scurrying to their game programs to see who No. 11 was.

Afterward, Graham emerged from the shadows to become a capable receiver, often called a "possession receiver" by media pundits.

He wasn't the fastest guy in the world, but he could

catch the ball.

When Bobby made his first major contribution as a Vol, Tennessee fans, old and young, breathed a sigh of relief. There would be no loss to the Tigers that afternoon.

Bobby had proven emphatically what he could do, if only given the chance.

Fitzgerald, a defensive back from Nashville who wore No. 36, and Finlayson, a tight end from Selmer (McNairy County) who wore No. 96, were also not household names across Big Orange Country. They had made the travel squads, but there was precious little to remember them by. They would, however, establish a legacy when it mattered most.

On Dec. 1, 2001, the Vols and Gators squared off on Florida Field to decide the SEC Eastern Division crown. That game turned out to be Steve Spurrier's

final game in the "Swamp." Florida was a prohibitive favorite. Media members gave the Vols little chance.

It was a back-and-forth game all day, momentum shifting quickly from the Vols to the Gators. Tennessee led going into the final, frantic moments.

The Gators had pulled to 34-32 when Fitzgerald stepped to the front. Fitzgerald made the play on Jabar Gaffney when Rex Grossman looked to Jabar for the tying two-point conversion.

The Gators never had a chance. Buck's coverage was that good. Gaffney had been on the good end of a controversial call a year earlier in Knoxville. This time, the call went Tennessee's way.

Moments later, Finlayson corralled an onside kick, one that initially took a scary bounce. John grabbed the ball and fell to

the turf, setting the stage for the "victory formation" and a wondrous flight home.

Then came Mitchell's turn to make a play. The date was Sept. 9, 2006, against Air Force. The Vols won 31-30, and a stop by Mitchell, who wore No. 93, was one of the game's biggest stories.

Air Force had rallied and had a chance to win the game, needing only a two-point conversion to take the lead and win the game. Mitchell would have none of that, stopping a toss sweep to the right side at the south end. Somehow, the Vols survived.

One thing is certain about all of their contributions. When each of them was given a chance, they made the most of it.

Of such big plays are legends and traditions created.

TSSAA alters Division I baseball playoff format

By Ken Lay

Just days after the 2022 Spring Fling in Murfreesboro, the TSSAA altered the state baseball playoff format.

The TSSAA Board of Control voted on June 8 to change the Division I state sectional to a best-of-3 series. The state sectionals were previously contested in a one-game single-elimination contest with the winner of that tilt moving on to the state tournament.

It will be the second alteration for Tennessee high school baseball as the TSSAA added the fourth classification for Division I baseball in 2022.

The change will take effect in 2023 and be the same format as the Division II State VIII or quarter-final round.

Both Division II-A and II-AA send four teams to Spring Fling in Murfreesboro while each classification of Division I sends eight teams to Murfreesboro and the Volunteer State's grand stage.

Under the new format, the regional tournaments will also undergo a facelift.

The top two finishers in their respective leagues will still advance to the regional tournament.

The first round of regional tournament play will no longer be a single-elimination contest.

The four-team region tournaments will now be hosted by one of the district champions with those hosts alternating on odd and even years. The change mandates that district tournaments be

completed by May 9, 2023.

The region tournament will now be played over two days. Those tournaments will begin on May 12 and will be contested in a double-elimination format.

The first-round games pit one district champion against the other district's runner-up with those contests being played on Friday.

The two semifinal winners will play on May 13, 2023, with the winner of that game being claimed region champion.

An elimination game will follow between the two first-round losers. The winner of that game will then play the remaining team for the right to be declared region runner-up and advanced to the sectionals.

Why Do We Care So Much About Sports?

By Mark Nagi

I love sports. I've always loved sports. I love playing sports but knew from an early age that I wouldn't be a pro athlete. But watching sports has given me some of my fondest memories.

One of the best days of my life happened in April 1981 when my Dad took me to Yankee Stadium for the first time. The Yankees beat Texas 5-1. Rudy May got the win.

In 1994, the NY Rangers snapped a 54-year title drought, winning the Stanley Cup. I had just graduated from SUNY Geneseo, was nervous about the future, and took that as a sign that life was going to be ok.

In 1999 I used all my frequent flyer miles and spent money I certainly didn't have to fly to Arizona to watch the Vols win their first consensus national championship in 47 years.

That's the good. In 1982 I saw Dwight Clark catch Joe Montana's prayer of a pass to beat Dallas in the NFC championship. I was nine years old. I cried all night. I went to school the next day and as the only Cowboy fan in my class, I got ripped on and cried again.

In 1983 my Dad took me back to Yankee Stadium to see the Yankees face the White Sox. Ron

Guidry vs. Tom Seaver. We got all the way to The Bronx... and the heavens opened. After three hours they gave up and called the game. It was a sad three-hour car ride home.

That's the bad. I can give you more examples of the good and the bad. I'm sure that you have your own. Maybe even some recent ones.

Last weekend I saw my NY Rangers lose in Game Six of the NHL's Eastern Conference Finals, and the next day the spectacular season for the Vols baseball team came to a shocking end in the Super Regionals against Notre Dame.

During those games, I couldn't help but ask myself... why do we care so much about sports? I mean, the odds are that you never played at a pro or high college level. You probably don't know anyone that plays on the teams you root for.

I am sure we can rationalize it. Those teams give us a sense of belonging. It's a shared experience when our teams are playing. It gives us something to talk about with family, with friends, in the office...

But at the end of the day... aren't we just rooting for laundry? I mean, the names change, the athletes and coaches change... heck sometimes the teams even just

pick up and move away.

This spring I was on pins and needles watching my adopted soccer team, Tottenham Hotspur, fight for a Top 4 spot in the Premier League and the Champions League riches that go along with it. Tottenham rallied to achieve that lofty status, and I was pleased for days and days.

Keep in mind I've been to London once in my life and seen Tottenham play in person exactly one time. I have no real connection to the team other than as a spectator for a couple of hours on a rainy Saturday in England some 22 and a half years ago.

Why on earth should the result of a game thousands of miles away have any true effect on my mood, my outlook on life?

I wish I had some profound answer to the question I posed you, the good reader.

Being a sports fan isn't rational. It just isn't. But that's not going to stop us from that existence.

Sterchi will be going to Naval Academy

Continued from page 1

Abby Williams, Assistant Athletic Director. CAK's female Student-Athlete of the Year is Ainsley Patterson, Class of 2022.

She excelled in academics with highest GPA in Personal Finance, CP Physics and AP Calculus AB.

Ainsley also was a member of the Student Senate, NHS and MU Alpha Theta.

"Her teachers and coaches describe her as ambitious and dedicated," said Williams. In athletics, Patterson competed in soccer and track. She ran on the 4x800 and 4x200 relay teams her senior year.

"Ainsley is a fierce competitor and approaches all things with intensity and passion," said Bart Kareken, CAK's track and field coach. "She works hard to improve as an athlete and is willing to be coached. She carries herself with integrity



Ainsley Patterson carries the baton for a Lady Warrior relay team this spring. 'Ainsley is a fierce competitor and approaches all things with intensity and passion,' said CAK track coach Bart Kareken.

and excellence, which is why I can't wait to see what she accomplishes in the future."

Patterson said she is going to UTK to major in Kinesiology and pursue a career in occupational therapy.

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Radcliffe to lead The Knoxville Focus All-County Soccer Team

By Ken Lay

The recently completed 2022 high school boys soccer season packed plenty of excitement as many players had a stellar campaign. Three area teams made it to the Spring Fling in Murfreesboro.

Bearden reached the Class AAA State Championship match. West High made its first Class AAA State Tournament appearance since 2008. Austin-East, the 2021 Class A State Champion, made the Class 2A quarterfinals in 2022.

The Knoxville Focus recognizes some of the area's top performers on its all-Knox County Team.

Coach of the Year: Ryan Radcliffe, Bearden High School: Radcliffe guided the Bulldogs to their second consecutive championship game appearance in 2022. The Bulldogs went undefeated in District 4-3A, claiming both the regular-season and tournament titles. Bearden won the Region 2-3A Tournament Championship with a 1-0 overtime victory

against West.

Player of the Year: Lucas Nordin, Junior, Forward, Bearden High School: Nordin set a single-season program record for goals. He tallied 38 markers for the Bulldogs. He also dished out eight assists.

aaJake Spirko: Senior, Goalkeeper, West High School: The Rebels made their first Class 3A State Tournament appearance since 2008. They swept both the District 3-3A regular-season and tournament championships.

Spirko, who will play collegiately at Milligan, finished the 2022 campaign with 11 clean sheets and 115 saves. He allowed just 16 goals in 25 games between the goalposts.

Spencer Bernard: Senior, Midfielder, Webb School of Knoxville: Bernard, a Rhodes College signee, had nine goals and nine assists for the Spartans, who reached the State VIII round of the Division II-AA Playoffs.

Taylor Aaron: Senior, Forward, Central High School: Playing in

Fountain City, Aaron emerged as one of the area's top scorers in his two-year career with the Bobcats. He tallied 22 times in 2022 and dished out three assists. He scored 47 goals in two years at Central.

Masudi Nyembo: Senior, Forward, Austin-East High School: Nyembo helped the Roadrunners make their second straight trip to Murfreesboro. Austin-East, the 2021 Class A State Champion, reached the Class 2A quarterfinals this season. The Roadrunners were district and region champions. Nyembo scored 19 goals and had eight assists and was the District 4-AA Most Valuable Player.

Dylan Kolnick: Senior, Midfielder, Bearden High School: Kolnick, a steady force in the midfield for the Bulldogs, scored six goals and dished out seven assists as Bearden made a run to the Class 3A Championship game.

Omar Bartolome: Senior, Defender, Central High School: A top defender in the area, Bartolome scored four goals in 2022 for the

Bobcats and coach Chris Quinn labeled him "a big part of what we do."

Chase Stokely: Junior, Midfielder, Christian Academy of Knoxville: The Division II-A East Region Midfielder of the Year led the Warriors with 16 goals and 19 assists in 2022.

Mason Sandidge: Senior, Defender, Hardin Valley Academy: Sandidge was the District 4-AAA Defensive Player of the Year as the Hawks went up against some of the top teams throughout the Volunteer State.

Nima Bahrami: Senior, Defender, West High School: Bahrami anchored a backline for the Rebels, whose defense posted 11 shutouts and surrendered just 16 goals in 2022. West won its first district championship since 2009.

Jacob Eubanks, Junior, Forward, Halls High School: Eubanks, one of the area's top scorers helped the Red Devils reach the state sectionals.

Ezekiel Nsabiyunva: Senior,

Forward, Austin-East High School: Nsabiyunva helped the Roadrunners make a second consecutive run to Murfreesboro and Spring Fling.

Julian Strickland: Senior, Midfielder, Bearden High School: Strickland, an anchor in the Bulldogs' midfield, helped Bearden win district and region championships and post a runner-up finish in the Class 3A State Tournament.

Will Gallagher: Senior, Defender, Farragut High School: Gallagher was an all-district and all-region performer for the Admirals.

Jackson Novinger: Junior, Midfielder, West High School: Novinger helped the Rebels make their first Class 3A State Tournament for the first time since 2008. He scored a goal against Oak Ridge in the District 3-3A Championship match.

Jackson Lore: Senior, Goalkeeper, Central High School: Lore posted five clean sheets for the Bobcats in 2022.



Farragut seniors pose for a picture prior to their TSSAA sectional game against Dobyns-Bennett in May. Left to right: Autumn Caywood, Sarah Livingston, Emily Musco, Vivian Boles, Ellie Gorfido, Lauren Brakovec and Avery Flatford.

Even state titles can leave behind bitter sweetness

By Steve Williams

Saying farewell wasn't easy for Farragut High's Nick Green.

Losing seven seniors who contributed to back-to-back state softball championships, 80 victories and a ton of fun the past two seasons is quite a loss.

"I am sad to see them graduate, as they were freshmen my first year as head coach," said Green. "I am happy to see them move on to their next phase in life (college) and that so many of them will get an opportunity to play softball in college."

Six of the seven seniors were starters on both state title teams, including this season's District 4-4A Player of the Year Lauren Brakovec and District Pitcher of the Year Avery Flatford.

"This year's team had confidence in their abilities, the experience of winning a state championship, but also high expectations and the stress of competing for another state title," said Coach Green. "They worked together and overcame several forms of adversity before and during the

season. We were able to keep our sights on the goal directly in front of us without looking too far ahead.

"We will have several holes to fill for next year and there will be opportunities for our next class of players to make their mark on the Farragut softball program."

Following the game at Alcoa this season, the Farragut coach was asked to compare the 2022 team with the 2021 team. He said he thought the 2021 was better overall, but the 2022 team was good enough to win a state title, too.

"The answer would still be the same only because the 2021 team was able to do so many things offensively," Green said after this season ended. "That team hit for a very high average, hit for power and we had several left-handed hitters that were able to hit and play the short game. We were very fast (stealing 130 bases).

"The 2022 team was definitely a great offensive team in their own right, but we were a little one dimensional in that we lacked the

abundance of left-handed speed and the short game. But what we lacked in speed, we made up for in power hitting with 50 home runs (compared to 30 HRs in 2021).

"The 2021 team had a deep bench with several reserves that could have started most any other year. The 2022 team did not have that luxury; we had several departures from last year and during the preseason."

Looking back, however, it really all evened out.

"The 2021 team may have been better, but the 2022 team's achievement was probably greater due to the high expectations and adversity," said Green.

Offensively, Brakovec, senior first baseman, led the Lady Admirals with 12 home runs, 15 doubles and 61 runs batted in.

Sophomore outfielder and leadoff batter Addison Pressley led in most hits (58), triples (five) and stolen bases (20).

Sarah Livingston, senior outfielder, led in runs scored (63).

In the circle, Flatford, a southpaw, finished with a



Lauren Brakovec (left) and Avery Flatford were seven years old in 2010 and played on different teams in the Cedar Bluff Farragut Optimist youth softball league. Lauren played for the CBFO Reds and Avery the CBFO Cardinals. They were the District 4-4A Player of the Year and Pitcher of the Year, respectively, this season as Farragut High won its second straight TSSAA state title. Many of the Lady Admirals played in the CBFO youth league growing up.

23-1 record, 1.31 ERA and 10 shutouts. The Tennessee Tech signee struck out 233 batters in 133.7 innings pitched. She gave up 66 hits and 51 bases

on balls. Sophomore right-hander Emma MacTavish pitched well when Flatford was forced to miss some games due to shoulder issues.

MacTavish ended up with a 20-2-1 record and a 2.09 ERA. She struck out 100 batters in 127.3 innings, while giving up 111 hits and 33 bases on balls.

Naturalist Week rewards for heading outside, June 20-25

TOWNSEND, TN — On June 20-25, 2022, Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont is hosting Naturalist Week, a virtual event designed to connect people with nature from wherever they are. Throughout the week, kids and adults are encouraged to explore their backyard, local park, neighborhood garden, schoolyard, or any other patch of green they can find to start noticing nature around them.

“Research from the Environmental Protection Agency shows that people, on average, spend 90 percent of their time indoors,” says Tremont representative Erin Rosolina. “We know, however, that spending time outside provides a host of health benefits, both mental and physical. It also helps people feel more connected to the environment and their planet. Naturalist Week is our call to action to experience and appreciate nature, wherever you are.”

To provide some guidance and incentive for participation, Tremont is hosting the Level Up Challenge, where individuals can earn points for their nature-based activities during Naturalist Week. Points can also be earned for climbing trees, watching a sunrise, using a field guide, catching fireflies, or many other outdoor activities. Those who earn 25 points during the week will receive

a small prize, and one lucky winner will be selected for a custom Tremont experience.

To kick off Naturalist Week, Tremont is hosting a viewing of “Hidden Rivers,” a one-hour film that explores the rivers and streams of the Southern Appalachian region, North America’s most biologically rich waters. The film follows the work of conservation biologists and explorers throughout the region, revealing both the beauty and vulnerability of aquatic life.

Representatives from Conservation Fisheries, a Knoxville nonprofit featured in the film that is dedicated to the preservation and restoration of native fish populations, will join Tremont staff to answer questions following the screening. The screening will take place on Monday, June 20, at 6:30 p.m. at Hi-Wire Brewing at 2020 Barber Street in Knoxville. This event is free and open to the public; Hi-Wire Brewing will donate \$1 from each flagship beer purchased during the event to support Tremont’s work.

On Wednesday, June 22, Tremont is hosting The Big Day, a twist on a birding “big day,” where they are challenging people to document as many species as they can find - including plants, mammals, fungi, insects, birds, and lichens - and share their findings



PHOTO BY DAVID BRYANT

A student writing in their nature journal. Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont provides in-depth experiences through educational programs that celebrate ecological and cultural diversity, foster stewardship, and nurture appreciation of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Learn more at www.gsmiit.org.

on Tremont’s social media.

“We want to highlight the amazing biodiversity that can be found across our region, not just in the Smokies,” says Rosolina. “So many people think of nature as a place that they go to visit, but we want folks to recognize that nature is everywhere - we can’t separate ourselves from it.”

Those participating in the Level Up Challenge will earn 10 points for attending the “Hidden Rivers” showing, and can earn one point per species observation that they share on

Naturalist, a free app that supports community science research.

The virtual Naturalist Week is taking place at the same time as an in-person Naturalist Week on Tremont’s campus inside Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The in-person event is an overnight environmental camp for adults, and campers will be participating in many of the same activities that virtual participants will be doing, including The Big Day.

“This is an exciting week for us,” says Rosolina.

“This will be the first time we’ve ever had this adult summer camp, and we’ll be able to share some of the activities and lessons the adults are experiencing on campus throughout the week with our virtual audience. It’s a way to share the Tremont magic with those who aren’t able to attend in person.”

A few spots remain for the in-person Naturalist Week camp; learn more at gsmiit.org/event/naturalist-week.

Though not required to participate, Tremont does

encourage making a donation to RSVP for Naturalist Week; the funds raised throughout the week will support the nonprofit’s year-round work to connect people of all ages with nature, both through on-campus experiences in the Smokies and through educational outreach in the surrounding communities.

To learn more about Naturalist Week activities, including the Level Up Challenge point system and reporting, visit gsmiit.org/naturalist.

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