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PHOTOS BY MIKE STEELY.

The East Tennessee Bucketeers marched in the parade, drumming on pickle buckets. Funds raised in their large red buckets will go to local firefighters.

Slight drizzle does not dampen Knoxville's 98th Veterans Day Parade

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
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The annual Veterans Day Parade, organized by the American Legion Post 2 and the city of Knoxville, filed down Gay Street downtown Friday morning. A slight rain didn't dampen the spirit of the marchers or the large crowd and the event honored Grand Marshal Captain Bill Robinson, the longest held enlisted prisoner of war in American history.

More than 100 groups marched and included everything from classic cars, motorcycles, floats, high school bands and business and civic groups. One group of young girls handed out handwritten thank you notes to veterans in the crowd along the way.

Notable was a float featuring Blue Star Mothers and a busload of Korean War veterans. The parade went north on Gay Street and everyone was in good spirits. One high school band played songs for each of the military services.



ABOVE: The Budweiser Clydesdales got a ride along the Veteran's Day route Friday instead of pulling the wagon. The animals looked out the doors of the trailers at the crowd. LEFT: Troop TN0215 of the American Heritage Girls gave many veterans along the Knoxville Veterans Day Parade handwritten notes thanking them for their service to our nation.

Fire and Rescue hears from Van de Vate

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
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The Knox County Fire and Technical Rescue Committee heard from Knox County Chief Operating Officer Dwight Van de Vate at their bimonthly meeting Wednesday. He spoke about the recent Request for Proposals for ambulance service and the administration of American Medical Response for the next five years.

The official approval of continuing with AMR, which has served as the county's official ambulance service for the past ten years, comes to the Knox County Commission in its

November meeting.

Committee Chair Jerry Harness invited Van de Vate to talk about the proposal and the COO said the process to select one out of the four companies that applied was open and fair. He said the new contract includes several changes including county funding to help hire and train employees.

"It will not fix a broken health system," Van de Vate told the committee which includes the chiefs of all the county fire and rescue units. He said the new contract requires AMR to have multiple zones, a

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Dwight Van de Vate talked to the Fire and Technical Rescue Committee last week and explained the process of selecting AMR in a new ambulance provider contract.

Charter school agreement vote fails in BOE

Board to revisit Knoxville Preparatory School contract

By Ken Leinart

An item before Knox County Board of Education to sign a formal charter school agreement with Knoxville Preparatory School failed to garner the votes required Thursday night, Nov. 9, but that does not change the plans for the all-boys school to open in the fall of 2024.

Approval for the charter school, a planned all boys school to be set up in East Knox County, was approved last April in a special called meeting by the board.

The special called meeting was held because the board did not pass

approval for it during an April 6, 2023, board meeting. The board also did not pass a reason for rejecting the vote, which is required by the State of Tennessee.

When the motion to approve the agreement was presented Thursday, District 2's Jennifer Owen voiced concerns about signing the agreement. She said she had a "lengthy list of questions," but was not going to go through them right then. What bothered her, she said, was the timeliness of the agreement being presented to the board.

"This charter administration, who's supposed to be a partner working with us, knowing full well it was well past the deadline for our agenda, and being advised that it was well

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Policy requested for school library books

By Ken Leinart

There was no request to ban books, but there was a request to set policy.

Two members of the Moms For Liberty Knoxville Chapter addressed the Knox County Board of Education Thursday night, Nov. 9, bringing to its attention some of the literature in some of Knox County's schools' libraries.

Sheri Super, who said she is the chair of the Knox County Chapter of Moms For Liberty, read an excerpt from "The Perks of Being a Wallflower" by Stephen Chbosky. Donna Trappasse, also with Moms of Liberty, read an excerpt from "Crank" by Ellen Hopkins.

The excerpts contained what can best be described as sexual

assault of teenage girls. Both excerpts also contained foul language. "Crank" describes drug use and underage alcohol use.

Super said, "over the last two months" she had communication with Knox County Schools Superintendent Jon Rysewyk, "an assistant superintendent," Knox County Schools Law Director Gary Dupler, and "one very supportive member" of the board of education, "about the explicit books in our schools' libraries."

After reading from "The Perks of Being a Wallflower," Super said there are multiple books like that one in the schools' libraries.

"It's very difficult to find

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Will It Take 10,000 More To Be Killed?

From a distance



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

"I hate war as only a soldier who has lived it can, only as one who has seen its brutality, its futility, its stupidity." - General Dwight Eisenhower in a speech to the Canadian Club in Ottawa, Canada on January 10, 1946.

A little over one year later on June 3, 1947, Eisenhower gave the graduation speech at the United States Military Academy at West Point, his Alma Mater. In that speech, he said, "War is mankind's most tragic and stupid folly... For Americans, only threat to our way of life justifies resort to conflict."

Many people remember his farewell speech warning

against giving too much power to the military-industrial complex. But Eisenhower gave probably the most anti-war speech ever given by an American President on April 18, 1953, just three months after taking office.

Speaking to a convention of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, he said: "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms... it is humanity hanging from a cross of iron."

This was a man who spent most of his career in the military, yet he had the courage in 1956 to refuse Israel's demand that the U.S. join it in its war against Egypt over control of the Suez Canal.

We have not had a president since then (several of whom I supported) who has had the guts to stand up against the extremely

powerful Israel Lobby. Every year since 1896, one U.S. Senator, alternating between the parties, reads George Washington's farewell address on February 22. In his farewell address, Washington warned against "overgrown military establishments" and "accumulation of debt." He also cautioned against "entangling alliances" with other nations.

His words from 1796 could be applied to our relationship with Israel today: "So likewise a passionate attachment of one nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favorite nation facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest... and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter without adequate inducement or justification."

The late Charley Reese was chosen as the most popular columnist by many thousands in a poll

conducted several years ago by C-SPAN. He was a staunch conservative, and he wrote in a very plain, down-to-earth way.

I agree with the words he wrote in 2004: "I harbor no ill feelings toward Israel. In many ways it is an admirable country, but it is a foreign country, and the United States should treat Israel the same as it treats every other foreign nation. We should make it clear, for example, that Israel's enemies are not our enemies. If the Israelis and the Syrians don't get along, that's their business. Our relations with Syria should be based strictly on how Syria treats Americans and America's interests."

Reese added: "We should not be involved in the Middle East at all except as purchasers of oil, but we will go on spending treasure and blood in that area until the American people elect some politicians brave enough to face down the Israeli Lobby."

In his book, "Coming To

Palestine," Sheldon Richman, a Jew, wrote that the "sheer cruelty...of Israel's treatment of the Palestinians warrants the concern of all who favor freedom and... justice, social cooperation, free exchange and peace."

In that book, Allan Brownfeld of the American Council for Judaism wrote that "the early Zionists not only turned away from the Jewish religious tradition but, in their disregard for the indigenous population of Palestine, Jewish moral and ethical values as well." He quoted a Jewish historian, Maxime Rodinson, who wrote: "Wanting to create a purely Jewish or predominantly Jewish state in Arab Palestine in the 20th century could not help but lead to a colonial-type situation and the development of a racist state of mind and in the final analysis to a military confrontation."

The Palestinians have been horribly mistreated for 75 years, and this has caused much hatred and

hostility to build up. But nothing could justify some of the cruelty by Hamas on Oct. 7. They deserve the worst imaginable torture.

But as I write this, some 10,000 Palestinians, including over 4,000 children, have been killed. One major refugee camp was hit with six 2,000-pound bombs, killing several hundred civilians to get one Hamas member.

Chris Hedges, who covered the Middle East for both the Dallas Morning News and the New York Times, said 48% of Gaza housing has been destroyed. He said what is going on now is ethnic cleansing and genocide.

Will it take 10,000 more - or 20,000 - before Netanyahu will be satisfied? All this killing could create even more Hamas members. This madness needs to stop.

Housing, trash and golf management on city agenda

By Mike Steely Senior Writer steelym@knoxfocus.com

Housing and housing-related issues will take the majority of the Knoxville City Council meeting on Tuesday, November 14, as the city moves to loosen restrictions to permit more housing units.

The council may vote to include Knoxville's most exclusive home zone area, RN-1, to be part of the Missing Middle Housing Proposal. The council may also vote to include properties within residential areas in the short-term rental permit program.

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Israel and Hamas

Hamas committed an unspeakable evil. It targeted defenseless civilians for extermination. How anyone, regardless of their feelings toward Israel, could sympathize with this barbaric act is beyond me. Israel seems intent on destroying northern Gaza and to that end is forcing its 1 million Palestinians to evacuate to southern Gaza. What is striking is that Egypt and Jordan have closed their borders to the Palestinians. Lebanon and Iran haven't opened their borders to them either. In fact, the only ones who want to accept refugees



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

are members of the Squad and their fellow Democrats. If Muslim nations do not want Palestinian refugees, then neither should we.

In retrospect, the Israelis were incredibly stupid. Israel has tough gun control laws. Less than 2 percent of Israelis are permitted to have guns. It would seem that all Israelis should have guns and that gun ownership should be mandatory in the settlements that are close to Gaza and Lebanon to counter Hamas and Hezbollah. Apparently, the Israelis thought that their military could respond quickly to any threat and protect their citizenry. They were wrong. Why they didn't have armed security at the music festival is beyond me. They need to rethink the security of their citizens who live so close to those who want to kill them. The only reason for such strict gun control is that they must fear their Muslim citizens. This is akin to the gun control laws in the Deep South that were enacted to prevent blacks from owning guns.

Those who hate Israel often refer to it as an apartheid state. Those who try to counter the charges are wasting their time and the name-callers should be ignored. Defenders of Israel point to its Muslim citizens having the vote and being in the Knesset. However, Israeli actions on the West Bank are akin to apartheid. Nevertheless, all the Muslim countries in the Middle East practice

apartheid themselves. All restrict the actions and liberties of non-Muslims and discriminate against them. They also restrict women's rights, persecute Christians and non-Muslims and are uniformly intolerant to the LBGTQ. Why aren't they called apartheid too?

One thing is certain. As the war progresses people will forget the atrocities that caused it and will turn against the Israelis as the progressive Western press will blame Israel for the suffering of the Palestinians. Hopefully, Israel will ignore all noise and do what it considers best in order to survive.

The Palestinians resoundingly reject Biden's suggestion of a two-state solution. Rather they and their supporters call for a Palestine "from river to sea." This is the land between the River Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea. Here Israel is situated meaning the Palestinians want to erase Israel. These are the Palestinian homelands. But these are also the Jewish homelands and the Jews have words from the Old Testament to justify their claim. Exodus 23:31 says "I will establish your borders from the Red Sea to the Sea of the Philistines, and from the desert to the River. I will hand over to you the people who live in the land and you will drive them out before you." This was literally done and created both the modern state of Israel and its eternal enemies.

There has never been a Palestinian state. Palestine was part of the Ottoman Empire, as was most of the Middle East. After

World War I, that territory became administered by Britain. The Brits led by Winston Churchill subsequently divided the territory into nations and established Israel. Although the Palestinians did not have a nation, there were over 500 villages and 600,000 residents living in the territory that had to be either relocated or absorbed into the new nation of Israel. In many cases, the removal of the residents by force was not peaceful and, in some cases, tragic. The worst instance was in the village of Deir Yassin where Zionist paramilitary groups killed (some say massacred) Palestinian men, women and children. I had a Palestinian MBA student whose family survived the massacre and called it Palestine's Wounded Knee. In fact, the removal and displacement of the Palestinians is akin to that of the American Indians. It is a miracle that we do not have Native American terrorists killing whites and demanding the return of their Homelands.

Israel now exists and will continue to exist. The Jews who fled Europe have created a miracle in the desert. They have taken barren desert and transformed it into a vibrant dynamic economy that is as rich in human capital and ingenuity as it is empty in natural resources. However, with both Palestinians and Israelis claiming the same land and evoking the same god, peaceful coexistence will be an eternal challenge.

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Publisher's Positions



By Steve Hunley, Publisher
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Hunter Is Not A Victim

Poor Hunter Biden! The First Son is trying to write his way out of his predicament yet seems to have accomplished nothing except to dig the hole deeper. Hunter is the author of an op-ed for the USA network of newspapers and every major city in Tennessee has a USA Today newspaper, including Knoxville. The thesis of Hunter's op-ed is he that is a victim, along with his father. "My struggles and mistakes have been fodder for a vile and sustained disinformation campaign against my father, President Joe Biden, and an all-out annihilation of my reputation." So far as I can tell, his reputation wasn't that good before his father became president. Still, Bless its heart. Hunter refers to the ongoing congressional investigations as "high-pitched but fruitless," even though they have uncovered far more evidence than the notorious Russia collusion hoax. Hunter acknowledged his addiction "consisted each day of a bottle of vodka and as many hits on a crack pipe as possible" and pointed to 20 million other Americans who suffer from "substance abuse disorder."

Hunter makes a point to conclude his op-ed with the outright statement he is NOT a victim, and that he grew up with privilege and opportunity. Hunter was kicked out of the Navy for testing positive for cocaine; at least that was the story written by the Associated Press at the time. It does raise an even bigger question, which is why companies all across the world would shove millions of dollars into the hands and numerous bank accounts of a hopeless addict. The millions of dollars flowing into the Biden family bank accounts weren't earned by a high-functioning young Yale-trained lawyer with great business skills. No indeed, it was going to a Yale-trained lawyer who was chugging down a bottle of vodka every day and taking as many hits from a crack pipe as possible.

The disinformation seems to be Hunter's own. It raises more valid questions as to why any legitimate business would pay a low-functioning addict tens of millions of dollars.

Foreign Aid Abuse

It's well past time the United States reevaluated our foreign aid program. A government watchdog has revealed Afghanistan, governed by the Taliban, is receiving aid from the U. S. and other countries amounting to \$80 million every 10 - 14 days. The money, supposedly for humanitarian purposes, is apparently siphoned off by the Taliban through fake nonprofit groups and other means according to the watchdog. The Biden administration has allocated \$2.5 billion for aid to Afghanistan since the disastrous withdrawal

from that country, which left something like \$80 billion of American-owned military equipment and materials, all of which fell into the hands of enemies of this country.

The wealth of the Hamas leaders, Khaled Mashaal and Ismail Haniyeh, is estimated to be \$4 billion, while Mousa Abu Marzouk, head of the political bureau, is estimated to have a fortune of \$3 billion. That hardly seems oppressed, nor do they live in the Gaza strip, preferring luxury hotels in Qatar. Where do you suppose that money came from? Gaza doesn't pump out oil or have any industries of note. They've likely skimmed the cream and milk off the barrels of cash showered on Palestinians in the form of humanitarian aid. They live like kings while most of their people live in squalor.

Biden's Islamic Support Purely Political

Foreign policy has never been Joe Biden's strong suit. Following the slaughter of entire families in Israel, Biden announced his administration was working on a national strategy to counter Islamophobia. That pronouncement came one day after a new poll showed Arab-American support for Biden and Democrats was sinking like a stone. It also came one day after FBI Director Christopher Wray told the members of the Senate's Homeland Security Committee that while Jewish people in this country account for only 2.4% of America's population, Jewish Americans accounted for "something like 60% of all religious-based hate crimes." But the problem in

this country is Islamophobia. Really?

Release The Manifesto

Audrey Hale, the murderer in the Covenant School shootings in Nashville, left behind a manifesto in the bloody wake of her killing spree. That manifesto has been the source of much speculation and has been closely held by officials and not revealed to the public. Evidently, parts of the manifesto have leaked and is currently circulating throughout the internet. Hale, who identified as male, was motivated, at least in part, by a hatred of white people, even though she herself was white. The leaked pages indicate Hale deliberately set out to kill children, as well as stated her intent to murder "crackers" who enjoyed "white privilege."

J.D. Vance, a U.S. senator from Ohio, said, "The anti-whiteness movement, mainstreamed by American universities and corporations, has blood on its hands."

Liberal Politics Made The Obamas Wealthy

Barack Obama made a recent pronouncement concerning the Hamas-Israeli war, saying no side has clean hands. What is certain is that Obama's hands are not clean at all, having fueled Iran, the main exporter of terrorism in the world, with billions of dollars. Those remarks came during a "reunion" celebrating Obama's election in 2008. In 2016 Obama wrote, "It is important to remember that capitalism has been the greatest driver of prosperity and opportunity the

world has ever seen." The former president changed his tune to fit in with the cultural Marxism of his political party as he criticized market-based systems, which he said, "have been compatible with slavery, caste systems, colonialization, war, exploration, corruption, fraud, autocracy, the poisoning of our national environment." Certainly, the free market has been very, very good to Michelle and Barack Obama, as their net worth has steadily climbed well into the tens of millions. One estimate by an analyst of the Obama net worth was around \$245 million. The Obamas, like the former Prince Harry and his actress wife, clenched a deal with streaming giant Netflix to produce programs that have the entertainment value of a poke with a sharp stick. Had they been produced as a sleep aid, it would likely have been worth what they were paid.

The wealth generated by production deals and books has enabled the Obamas to live a very privileged lifestyle indeed with a magnificent mansion in Washington, D. C., and a lavish estate on exclusive Martha's Vineyard.

Tlaib Censured Finally

Last week the U. S. House of Representatives finally voted to censure Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib, the most rabid antisemite in Congress. Four Republicans voted against the censure resolution, while only 24 Democrats voted for it. The censure resolution was brought when Tlaib called for the eradication of Israel. Lately, Tlaib has accused Joe Biden of supporting "genocide" against

Palestinians.

More Foreign Aid Abuse

It's way past time someone calls out the facts about what is happening in Gaza. The people in Gaza voted in 2005 for a government run by Hamas. Since then, there haven't been any further elections to my knowledge. Hamas has used the foreign aid sent by the United States and other countries not for the humanitarian purposes intended, but instead used it to build a network of tunnels running under hospitals, homes, and schools to shield themselves from retaliation for their terrorist acts and protect themselves.

No society can ignore the kind of inhuman slaughter inflicted by Hamas on the Israeli people. None of the antisemites mention the butchery of babies and families while accusing the Israelis of war crimes. The crimes are pretty easy to spot; how Hamas has treated its own Palestinian people; and the deliberate and systematic murder of civilians.

One little Leftist activist found out the hard way recently in Great Britain in a video that has since gone viral. The activist, "Billboard Chris," approached several Muslim girls to get their support for medically transitioning children. One social media wag described the incident by writing "Billboard Chris" was shocked to discover the girls didn't share his views on LGBTQ+ issues, which is putting it mildly. Who would have thought?

Fire and Rescue hears from Van de Vate

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minimum number of vehicles, and be penalized for slow response. He added that the company may apply for penalty relief.

When asked why the vetting did not include first responders' perspectives, he replied, "We know the problem." He talked about the low staffing of hospitals and the problem with hiring and keeping emergency medical technicians. "Hospitals have got to be brought to the table," he said.

"Fifty percent of the EMTs hired exit after their first year," he said.

Van de Vate also said the new contract defines different priority responses and what he called "street medicine" for things like field dressings, especially for those in the "mission district" where many calls to 911 are minor medical problems.

When asked about a possible county-wide fire department, Van de Vate said that might be too much for a mayor in his final term to take up. He added that the county administration may take up the idea next year and get a study off the ground in 2025.

Sheriff has many requests before Knox County Commission

By Mike Steely
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When the Knox County Commission meets in work session today and in regular session on Monday, November 20, they will see more than four dozen agenda items. Most will be passed as consent items, approved with one vote, and those items are selected by the chair and commissioners.

Of the resolutions so far are several requests from the Knox County Sheriff's Office.

A defined service

contract to make Young-Williams Animal Center the official authority to regulate dogs, cats and other animals is requested by the sheriff and county mayor. In an agreement with the City of Knoxville, the center will be approved to regulate, capture, impound and dispose of stray animals with the help of the KCSO and the Knoxville Police Department.

The sheriff is also asking for approval of an agreement with the state for

\$46,410 for electronic monitoring costs. He is also asking for approval of a \$3,000 grant from Walmart for the Shop with a Cop program.

Overtime reimbursements from the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces are also being requested from the commission for \$ 5,000 and \$10,000 for costs incurred by the sheriff's department.

In other action the commission may vote

to purchase a Dutch-town Road property for \$100,000 for the Cedar Bluff Flood Mitigation Project, debate the re-hire of AMR as the 911 ambulance service, and hear from Commissioner Kyle Ward on his suggestion for the District 4 seat on the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Mayor Glenn Jacobs will name appointments and re-appointments to the Visit Knoxville Board and the Air Pollution Control Board.

Charter school agreement vote fails

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past the deadline, wanted to push forward and give to us even after our agenda had been published," she said.

"I think that just shows an amount of disrespect for the chartering authority ... that we shouldn't allow to go on because we are expected to have some kind of oversight."

Owen said letting the Knox Preparatory "get away" with that so early in the process "sets us up for a very bad relationship."

Ninth District Board member Kristi Kristy asked Knox County Assistant Superintendent Theresa Nixon to address the situation. Nixon is working with

the charter agreement and oversight for Knox County Schools.

Nixon said the board of education is the chartering authority and that she works for them, but that until an agreement is in place she doesn't feel she "can have the oversight and authority to ask questions."

Kristy also noted that even without the charter agreement being passed, Knox Preparatory School will continue with its process of being ready to open in the fall of 2024.

When a vote was called for, Owen voted "no."

First District member Rev. John Butler and 4th District's Katherine Bike passed. Both had said they,

too, wished the agreement had not been presented so late to the board.

Steve Triplett (District 7), Betsy Henderson (District 6), Susan Horn (District 5), and Kristy all voted, "yes."

Daniel Watson (District 3) and Mike McMillan (District 8) were absent from the meeting, leaving the vote at 4-1 with two passes and short the majority needed.

Gary Dupler, lay director for Knox County Schools, said the board had to have a contract with the charter school, whether it was the one presented Thursday or another one "with tweaks," and the board could take that up at its December meeting.

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Charges against Kyle Ward dismissed by ethics committee

By Mike Steely
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In a brief meeting Tuesday morning the Knox County Ethics Committee, on the suggestion of Chairman Michael Covington and Law Director David Buuck, voted to dismiss the ethics complaint filed by Michael R. Casstevens.

Casstevens had filed a complaint that Commissioner Kyle Ward had received property for only \$20 in exchange for a favor to nominate someone to a position. Covington told the committee that Casstevens had an opportunity to update or revise the complaint but had not done so.

"He chose not to come forward with any additional information," Covington said and then called for a motion to dismiss the complaint. The vote passed.

The ethics committee members then chose the future chair and vice chair with Covington and Kathryne Ograd nominating, respectively. Covington remains chair following a 5-0-2 vote.



PHOTO BY MIKE STEELY

Michael Covington was selected again to serve as chairman of the Knox County Ethics Committee and Kathryne Ograd was chosen as vice chair.

Two new members, Krystal Gibson and Marcus Hilliard, were absent from the meeting.

Ograd was then selected as vice chair in a 5-1-2 vote. Covington announced the next meeting will be February 14.

Housing, trash and golf management on city agenda

Cont. from page 2

Variances dealing with stand-alone parking lots in the South Waterfront area may be discussed.

Property along Piney Grove Church Road may be permitted to change from RN-1 to Agricultural zoning. The lot at 121 Union Avenue is up for a change from Downtown District to Boulevards Subdistrict.

A change from RN-1 to RN-2 is proposed for the property at 707 Delapp Drive and Zero Westridge Drive may change from Civil and Institutional to Low-Density Residential zoning.

A lot at 114 Sylvia Drive could see a North City

Sector Plan change and move from RN-1 to RN-5 if the council approves.

Likewise, a property at 4600 Ernestine Drive could go from RN-1 to RN-2.

Three lots, at 1500 Fort Promise Drive and 1203 and 1331 West Oldham Avenue, could be rezoned from RN-5 to C-N Neighborhood Commercial.

In other action, the council may extend the agreement with Indigo Sports LLC to manage the Whittle Springs and Knoxville Municipal golf courses. Waste Connections of Tennessee Inc. may be contracted for nearly \$1.5 million

per year in an agreement that includes the hauling and disposal of city solid waste and construction debris and the installation of a compactor.

The late Larry G. Cox will be honored and \$72,000 may be allocated for ten community-based organizations with programs for youth and young adults.

The Appalachian Mountain Bike Club's Fall Festival may get a \$3,000 donation and the mayor seeks approval for several appointments and reappointments to the Neighborhood Advisory Council.

Policy requested for school library books

Cont. from page 1

one book, where it's located, and cross reference and make sure the books we're talking about actually are this explicit," Super said.

"We are not book banners. We just want to have some kind of policy to label these books, segregate these books, have parental opt out options, or in the event that some of these are too graphic, removal from the school."

Super said she appreciates Knox County School Board's self-censor efforts, but she said having parents and students do it was not fair and "put them in the firing line."

Super also noted Knox County's procedures do not exclude the director of schools or policy makers from excluding a book.

She asked the board to review its policies.

Before reading from "Crank," Trappasse said the book is carried by Bearden Middle School Library, and others, and the sixth, seventh, and eighth graders at Bearden Middle School

have "unfettered access" to the book.

Trappasse said parents and educators may not be aware of the sexually explicit and erotic content of the book, but the 11, 12 and 13-year-olds at the schools are.

"This book is currently out on loan to one of the 1,277 students," she said.

Trappasse said she didn't come to the school board meeting to debate if it is appropriate to have "erotic, sexualized" material available for children.

"That matter has already been debated and precedent has been set," she said.

She pointed out the Motion Picture Association of America and television shows assign an age appropriate guide, as well as the placement of parental guidance warnings on music.

"We as a society have already established young children do not necessarily have the ability to determine what is most appropriate for themselves," she said.

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The Doctor is in

a weekly column by
Dr. Jim Ferguson

Cargo

"You have too much cargo."
Aboriginal Chieftain

After more than two decades, the above quote from Jared Diamond's Pulitzer Prize-winning book, "Guns, Germs, and Steel," still intrigues me. While walking along the beach with an aboriginal chieftain, the polymath Professor Diamond was challenged to defend Western culture and explain why Western civilization became the preeminent culture of the world. The book is complicated, but it remains unquestionably relevant as civilized man confronts Hamas savages and neo-Marxist anarchists like BLM and ANTIFA.

It was the chief's opinion that our modern culture has too much stuff, which he labeled as cargo. He may be right because we have a lot of stuff.

We have an extended family member who has

been forced to downsize because of health issues and the frailties of aging. No one wants to give up their independence, but it is a reality that if you live long enough you will need help and often a protected environment. And when you downsize what do you do with the stuff you've collected over a lifetime?

Becky and I are from Knoxville and have always lived here except for a few years in Memphis. Our roots are in Knoxville, and since we have seldom been forced to move we have acquired considerable cargo. The same goes with our loved one who has far more cargo than can be put in her new apartment. By comparison, a friend has lived in a lot of places because of job transfers. She jokingly avers that it is best to move every five years and take nothing with you!

Have you noticed how many storage facilities

there are around K-town? They're everywhere. We rented space at one of these to store our loved one's stuff. Perhaps it's sad that most of our "treasures" are not wanted by younger family members who apparently just want new stuff or to acquire their own cargo. Of course, there are exceptions. Our West Coast daughter loves "vintage" cargo, but shipping costs are prohibitive. As a result, we're organizing a fire sale after a few items were passed on to family members.

We have a rear entrance to our 20-acre farm property that is accessed from the cul-de-sac of a neighboring development. I'm glad we have this alternative entrance which faces west and is more passable in winter months than the north-facing main entrance that is occasionally ice-bound.

Recently, we were driving through the neighboring condo development and it seemed more like a parking lot than a roadway. Cars were parked everywhere on the street. Apparently, the condo owners have lots of cars and I guess the small garages are filled with cargo. As a result, street parking has become a necessity and has turned the local neighborhood into a parking lot.

I'm not complaining about American affluence

or our mobile society. We are blessed, but sometimes take these blessings for granted. As I observe the Israel-Hamas war, I feel sorry for the Gaza citizens who live under the thumb of Hamas and are often used as human shields by the terrorists. If the Hamas leaders, who are billionaires and live in Qatar, would help their people instead of themselves, things would be different in that wretched part of the world. However, in a recent New York Times interview, the Hamas leadership said they have "no interest in governing in Gaza." Instead, they want a "permanent state of war" with Israel.

I thank the Lord daily for another day of life and things like running water, power, a hot shower and stocked grocery shelves. While it is true that Gaza citizens voted for Hamas to lead them, I suspect the elections were rigged. There seem to be a lot of fraudulent elections these days. Some believe that it was Joseph Stalin who said, "It's not the people who vote that counts; it's the people who count the votes."

Capitalism has raised more people out of poverty than any other system. Bill Maher recently said the same thing. This is especially true when capitalism is compared to socialism

or communism. The clueless AOC graduated from Boston College with a degree in economics. And Ivy League schools like Harvard, don't teach reality, but instead seem to focus on anti-Americanism and antisemitism. Someone should tell supporters of AOC and her squad that the slogan, "From the river to the sea" is a call for genocide of the Jewish state of Israel.

Cars are representative of American individualism and freedom. I may whine about Knoxville traffic on I-40 or the construction project underway on Alcoa Highway, but I don't want to surrender my truck or my freedom. I resist the Progressive's assault on fossil fuels and cars. I don't want to be crammed into an urban center or dependent on mass transit. Cars are representative of Americanism, and I will surrender neither to the left. I will offer one word of caution: When you're on the road, be vigilant and drive defensively. But you also better watch out in parking lots where pedestrians and other drivers don't pay attention.

The Democrats and Progressives have brought us a lot of baggage, the type of cargo no thoughtful person would choose. Democrats and Progressives have corrupted our education systems,

the courts and intelligence agencies, and, along with Washington RINOs, are bankrupting the country. I've lived a long and full life; my time is about done. However, it breaks my heart that my children and grandkids will pay a horrible price for my generation's foolish dependency on government rather than God. I'm no polymath like Professor Diamond, but as a self-trained student of history, scripture and the humanities, I know we're on the wrong track and we are making the same mistakes other cultures have made down through history. And it always ends badly.

Apparently, it just hasn't gotten bad enough for us to vote the bums out of office, tighten our belts with serious budgetary cuts and close the border to stop the invasion. We should be supporting the police and locking up miscreants and criminals who threaten citizens. And we should be alert for the next attack from terrorists who have slipped into America on Biden's watch and have vowed to kill us after they finish with the Jews and Israel.

It may already be too late for America. You will know in 2024.

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

New city judge, one new council member elected Tuesday



By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
steelym@knoxfocus.com

The City of Knoxville will have a new municipal judge. Tyler M. Caviness defeated long-time incumbent Judge John R. Rosson Jr. in the final election count Tuesday. Caviness received 9,450 votes or 61% to Rosson's 5,925 or 39%.

South Knoxville's Debbie Helsley won big, with 71% of the vote over R. Bentley Marlow. Helsley led in early and absentee voting and eventually captured 10,576 votes over Marlow's 4,303 for the city council at-large

Seat B to replace Janet Testerman, who did not seek re-election.

Incumbent Councilwoman Amelia Parker easily won re-election over challenger Tim Hill with 60% of the vote.

Incumbents with no challengers on the ballot, at-large Councilwoman Lynn Fugate and District 5 Councilman Charles Thomas, won re-election.

The total turnout for the early, absentee and general election was 15,696 registered voters.

The election staff at Pleasant Ridge Elementary School poses for a Focus picture during the slow afternoon of voting Tuesday. Knoxville voting has been low across the early voting and on election day. Photo by Mike Steely.

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Field growing for 2024 local elections

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
steelym@knoxfocus.com

The field of candidates for Knox County offices continues to grow as people pick up petitions before the December 14 qualifying deadline. Next year's elections involve local, state and national primaries and general elections in all categories.

So far, as of last Thursday, 31 people have petitions; most of those for Knox County Commission seats. Judge Hector Sanchez is the only candidate with a petition for Criminal Court Judge Division II, District 6, so far.

So far only past Republican Party Chairman Daniel Herrera

is the only one with a petition to challenge incumbent Knox County Law Director David Buuck.

John Whitehead is term-limited as property assessor and that seat is being sought by Republicans Phil Ballard and Jackie Raley.

Six people have petitions for school board seats for Districts 3, 5 and 8.

The race for seven of the eleven seats on the Knox County Commission thus far is drawing much of the attention. Some current commissioners are term-limited and two others are not seeking re-election.

Commission District 1: Dr. Dasha Lundy is not seeking re-election

and people with petitions for that seat include Democrats Evelyn Gill and Damon L. Rawls. Charles Frazier has a petition as a Republican.

Commission District 2: Incumbent and former commission Chairwoman Courtney Durrett has a petition for the Democratic Primary and Ethan Grantham has one as an Independent.

Commission District 4: Current Commissioner Kyle Ward is not seeking re-election for that seat. Republican Garrett Holt and Democrat Shane Jackson have petitions to replace Ward.

Commission District 5: Commissioner John

Schoonmaker is term-limited and four people have petitions for his seat. Those include three Republicans: Angela Russell, Dale Skidmore and Brian Walker. S. Arthur Moore has a petition as a Democrat.

Commission District 6: Current Commission Chair Terry Hill has a Republican petition along with fellow Republican Julie McBee-Fritts. Daniel Edward Greene has a petition for that Democratic primary.

Commission District 8: Commissioner Richie Beeler is term-limited and fellow Republican D.J. Corcoran has a petition. Democrat Charles V. Chandler also has a petition.

Commission District 9: Term-limited in that district is Commissioner Carson Dailey. Five people have picked up petitions including Republicans Andy Fox and Barry Neal. Mathew Park has a petition as a Democrat and Stacy Smith has a petition as a Republican and an Independent.

Board of Education: In the primary for school board, Angie Goethert, a Republican, has a petition for the District 93 seat. District 5 has three candidates so far: Republicans Renee Jackson and Lauren Morgan and Democrat Terry Whitaker.

District 8 has two Republican petition holders: Tommy Lakins and Travis Wright.

He never had a childhood

Our dad passed away in 1965. For the last 58 years, Jim and I have been without a father. No, we don't whine about it, nor have we ever used it as an excuse for misbehavior or bad decisions. Still, that's a long time ago, and I sometimes fret that I don't remember him correctly. I hope I never have a second that I can't recall his image or his way of doing things.

I've come to one conclusion my dad didn't have such a good life. He quit school after the sixth grade to go to work to help with the family. I'm not sure what my grandparents did to contribute to the household income. At some point, my grandfather worked as a janitor at the same plant where Daddy worked. The man died when Jim and I were 5, and from what vague memories I have of him and the stories I've been told, he seems to have lacked the moral courage to make him a better man.

Dad Rector never had a



By Joe Rector
joerector@comcast.net

childhood. He was too busy working to help his family get by. He was a Depression child and knew what going without was like. He never played ball, shot baskets or hung out with friends. Nope, Daddy had to work. He worried about his parents and brother and sister; my grandmother told me once that the man worried all his life and told her that he would die at an early age.

Daddy joined the army at some point in his life. He wasn't a "boots on the ground" type of man. Instead, he was assigned to the mess hall and served as a cook. The story isn't a glorious one in comparison to the ones told by soldiers returning from World War II. Yet, he would tell us that his job led to special things. The staff would cook and serve the soldiers that came through. Then, they'd go to the back, cook up steaks, and eat like kings. That sounds like a good deal to me.

He and mother built a

house in the 1940s. After work, they traveled to the country where the land was located. Together, they made the blocks for the entire house. People stay exhausted after a day's work; my parents worked their shifts and then spent hours in construction labor.

Money was tight in our family, especially when Mother and Daddy didn't know twins were on the way until we arrived. I remember Daddy and a green coffee cup and an ashtray beside him at the kitchen table. He took out a small notebook he kept in his pocket and "figured." For a man with no formal education, he could plan a budget to make sure everything was paid each month. I'll never know how my parents could pay the bills and then find a way to buy orthopedic shoes for Jim and me and pay for braces to push my teeth back into my mouth.

Daddy went on one vacation with us to Florida. The rest of the time, he stayed at home and worked when we took off for our annual week in the Smoky Mountains.

The man was too serious. His eyes usually had a sad look as if he were carrying the weight of the world on his shoulders. After one doctor told him he had

allergies and a stomach problem that kept him sick, Mother sought the opinion of another physician. He immediately declared that Daddy suffered from terminal lung cancer. The last year and a half of his life was one of pain and misery and worry. He wanted to make sure his family would be okay after he was gone.

The answer was that we weren't fine, but we did survive. Life was doubly hard on Mother. She had double duty with teaching and taking care of us, and she also had a couple of more years of school at night and in the summer to finish her degree.

He only sometimes looked happy, and when he did, his green eyes twinkled, and a small smile appeared. I hope that my dad found some peace and happiness in the next life. He and mother might have time to just enjoy being now. I'd like for him to have been around longer so I could have known him better. One of these days, I'll meet him again, and we can make up for lost time in a place where time doesn't exist. I'm in no hurry to go because I love being with my family, but I won't fear the time when leaving arrives. Those whom I love will be ready to greet me.



Sunlight filtering through the American flag at historic Fort Sumter, South Carolina. Photo by James Acuff.

United States Still has Reason to Give Thanks

By Ralphine Major
ralphine3@yahoo.com

They came to America to have religious freedom. I wonder what the Pilgrims would think of America today. Freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and so many other freedoms are the very values on which America was founded. Sadly, 2023 brings much unrest, hatred and political divide in our country. Wars rage in foreign lands. News reports are filled with words such as ceasefire, death and destruction. It is difficult to unsee images of structures that were once homes bubbling with life and laughter in the land of an American ally.

The long-awaited fall season has brought us to November. Thoughts of pumpkin pie, turkey and all the trimmings, fellowship and thanksgiving are in the air. It is likely that thankfulness for our freedoms

will take on a new meaning for many of us this year. As our loved ones come together to celebrate this treasured national holiday, may prayers for peace, harmony, and love be included along with prayers of thankfulness. We have much to be thankful for — our faith and our family; homes, schools, and churches; food, clothing, and shelter; and above all, our Creator and Saviour. The Lord of miracles who parted the Red Sea is still the living God we worship today. Have a safe, memorable, and blessed Thanksgiving!

Words of Faith: "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:6-7 (KJV).

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John E. Miles of New Mexico

Pages from the Past



By Ray Hill
rayhill865@gmail.com

For 60 years, John E. Miles was a fixture of New Mexico's political scene. Miles held numerous elected and appointed positions throughout his life and lived long enough to become a senior statesman of New Mexico's Democratic Party. Throughout his political life, Miles was a strong adherent of party unity and loyalty. A man who was criticized by his enemies for being slow to act, his friends insisted he was a person who thought long and hard about what was the right course.

John Esten Miles was a native of Tennessee, having been born in Murfreesboro on July 28, 1884. Miles lived in Tennessee until he was 17 years old when he set out for Texas where he farmed for a living. Miles never finished high school and, as a result of his lack of formal education, highly prized learning. Miles married Susie Wade while living in Oklahoma, who was a member of the Choctaw Indian Nation. Eventually, John and Susie Miles settled in New Mexico. John and Susie Miles were the parents of seven children, but their union was dissolved when they divorced. A later second marriage also failed.

Miles became interested in politics and ran for public office for the first time at age 32. Defeated in his first bid for Quay County Commissioner, years later John Miles said, "If you can't take defeat, then you shouldn't get into politics in the first place." Four years later Miles set his sights on the assessor's office and won.

Governor Arthur T. Hannett appointed Miles as secretary of New Mexico's State Tax Commission. Miles also became a newspaper publisher, owning the Las Vegas, New Mexico Independent and the New Mexico Democrat in Santa Fe.

John E. Miles became chairman of New Mexico's Democratic Party and managed the successful campaigns of Clyde Tingley, who was elected governor in 1934 and reelected in 1936. Tingley and Miles fell out in 1937 when the governor sought to overturn the two-term limit imposed upon New Mexico's chief executive officer. Miles was the favorite that year as Democrats contemplated their state convention to nominate a successor to Clyde Tingley. The governor called the legislature back into special session to pass a direct primary law. It was an attempt by Governor Tingley to derail Miles' ambition to succeed him. The primary law was enacted by the legislature, but the majority was not large enough to make the law effective immediately. As expected, John Miles

won the Democratic nomination for governor and beat GOP nominee Albert K. Mitchell in the general election.

Miles won a second two-year term as governor of New Mexico in 1940. John E. Miles was term-limited and went out of office in 1942. While it is unusual for a politician, especially one elected to statewide office, to run again for a lesser office, it is hardly unknown. Clyde Tingley had left the governor's mansion and ran for his old post as chairman of the Albuquerque City Commission and served from 1940 to 1953. John E. Miles decided to run for New Mexico Commissioner of Public Lands, a statewide elected office. In fact, the race for commissioner of public lands in 1944 was a battle between two former governors as Richard C. Dillon was the Republican nominee. Dillon had served two terms as governor from 1927-1931. The race between the two former governors was close, with Miles winning by just over 4,000 votes in a year when President Franklin D. Roosevelt was carrying the state easily. The contest between the two former governors was one of the closest on the statewide ballot that year.

New Mexico's politics had always been a bare-knuckled affair and Democrats frequently fought fierce battles inside the primary. In a state with a small population, successful candidates knew a host of people. There were also personal rivalries inside the Democratic Party in New Mexico like that of John J. Dempsey and Dennis Chavez. Dempsey, a former congressman and governor from 1943-1947, challenged Chavez in the Democratic primary for the United States Senate in 1940 and 1946.

Miles was a candidate for reelection as commissioner of public lands in 1946. Miles had near-universal name recognition in New Mexico and ran his usual frenetic campaign. 1946 was a difficult year for Democratic candidates as voters were dissatisfied with several things and tired of the deprivations induced by the Second World War. Miles eked out an even more narrow victory over his Republican opponent in the general election, winning by just over 2,000 votes.

New Mexico had become increasingly Democratic due to a heavy migration of people from Texas. Some Republicans began to grumble New Mexico was becoming part of the South.

Georgia Lusk had been the elected superintendent of schools, a statewide office, in New Mexico four times, demonstrating



FROM THE AUTHOR'S PERSONAL COLLECTION

Autographed portrait of Governor John E. Miles of New Mexico.

her popularity with New Mexicans. In 1946, Georgia Lee Lusk won a seat in the U. S. House of Representatives. 1948 dawned with intense speculation that former Governor and Commissioner of Public Lands John E. Miles was running for Congress against Mrs. Lusk. At the time, both of New Mexico's two congressmen were nominated and elected at-large, meaning both ran statewide. The incumbent congressmen from New Mexico in 1948 were Antonio "Tony" Fernandez and Georgia Lusk. By the beginning of the year, it appeared no less than nine other Democrats coveted a seat in Congress, including former Governor John E. Miles.

Miles made his congressional bid official on April 1, 1948, when he announced he was running for the Democratic nomination. "I feel that my long experience as a public official will be valuable to the people of New Mexico in the congress," Miles said.

"As secretary of the state tax commission, as governor, as member of the old conservation commission and as land commissioner, I have gained a broad background concerning our state," Miles declared. At the time, Miles was the fifth person to officially announce a campaign for Congress as a Democrat.

John E. Miles ran first in the crowded Democratic primary with Congressman Antonio Fernandez more than 2,000 votes behind to claim second place. Congresswoman Georgia Lee Lusk's brief career in the House was over when she ran third.

1948 was as good a year for Democrats as 1946 had been for Republicans and the entire ticket swept New Mexico. Once again, John Miles led the ticket in the general election, as he and Fernandez soundly defeated the GOP nominees.

Miles could very likely have remained in Congress as long as he wished but

instead left his seat in the House to run once again for governor. John Miles faced three other credible candidates for the Democratic nomination, including David Chavez, brother of New Mexico's senior United States Senator Dennis Chavez. Miles won the Democratic nomination, albeit with only a plurality. David Chavez had surrendered a federal judgeship to make the run for the gubernatorial nomination and it had been a bitter campaign. Both Chavez and his brother, Senator Dennis Chavez, pledged their support of the Democratic ticket in the fall campaign, but the wounds inflicted during the primary never entirely healed.

In the general election, Miles faced Edwin L. Mechem, who would go on to become the most successful GOP candidate in the Land of Enchantment for two decades. The nephew of Merritt Mechem, who had served a term as governor of New Mexico, Ed Mechem had been an FBI agent before winning election to the New Mexico House of Representatives in 1946. Few observers gave Mechem much of a chance of winning against the veteran campaigner John Miles when the gubernatorial election began. The last Republican to be elected governor of New Mexico had been Richard Dillon in 1928.

Ed Mechem proved to be an adept and aggressive candidate with a knack for campaigning, which seemed to take Democrats, including John Miles, by surprise. Mechem lambasted the previous gubernatorial administration headed by John E. Miles as well as others. Miles snapped, "When the chips are down, it becomes apparent the Republicans have nothing to offer the people of New Mexico. The Democrats, on the other hand, do have something to offer and it is a progressive program that has proven during the past 20 years to be good for the entire state."

Ed Mechem fired back that the principles of Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson "mean nothing to the men in charge of the state machine."

New Mexico's Young Republicans weaponized the very words of the Democrats used during the primary campaigns in the general election. The Young Republicans turned the accusations and denunciations into radio spots. Radio ads featuring Senator Dennis Chavez or his brother David hitting John Miles proved to be very effective in the campaign. "The political manipulation of Charles Rose, state school superintendent, and John Miles make it evident that the election of Rose was a mistake and the election of John Miles would be a tragic error for our school children," David Chavez's voice cried in one ad. Another featured Senator Chavez saying, "I hope New Mexico's good people will blast to perdition the political dynasty that rules New Mexico today."

On Election Day, the two decades New Mexico's Democratic Party had dominated the Land of Enchantment ended. Ed Mechem won a comfortable majority over John Miles. The rebuke of Miles was more personal, as the rest of the Democratic ticket won, but the defeat did reinstate New Mexico being a two-party state.

Miles made his final bid for public office in 1956, seeking to return to the commissioner of public lands' office. The former governor only narrowly lost the Democratic nomination, the first statewide defeat he had suffered inside the Democratic primary.

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It marked the end of the 71-year-old John Miles' career as a candidate.

For the remainder of his long life, John Esten Miles continued to appear at Democratic events and assumed the status of an elder statesman. The former governor counseled prospective candidates for any number of offices with his intimate knowledge of New Mexico and her people. Miles became an invaluable resource to younger generations.

John E. Miles celebrated his 87th birthday in July of 1971 and the former governor was honored as one of the Land of Enchantment's statesmen. Governor Bruce King issued a proclamation making it "John E. Miles Day" in New Mexico. Albuquerque television station WNME aired an hour-long program honoring the life and career of the former governor. The television program was originally intended to be a half hour, but so many friends of the former governor clamored to say a kind word about Miles that the producer had to expand it to a full hour. Just over two months later, John E. Miles died. Miles had ruefully concluded he could no longer live by himself as he had for the last two decades of his life. For a brief time, the former governor lived with one of his daughters but eventually went to live at the Four Seasons Nursing Home.

By the time he died, John Esten Miles had not only become an elder statesman but was known throughout New Mexico as "Mr. Democrat." Funeral services for John Miles were held in the rotunda of New Mexico's State Capitol. The former governor was eulogized by the Reverend Monroe Miles, a half-brother, as a man who didn't even know how to quit; a man whose most prominent characteristic was his iron-clad loyalty to his friends, political party and state. Five former governors gathered to pay their last respects to John Miles, along with people of every class, for Miles had friends everywhere. The casket holding the former governor's mortal remains was carried to its final rest by eight of John Miles' grandsons.

The Albuquerque Journal published an editorial remembering "Johnny" Miles as one who had emerged from the darkness of political defeat to become revered as an elder statesman outside of public office and the Grand Old Man of New Mexico's Democratic Party.

One couldn't have a better epitaph.

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TSSAA FOOTBALL SECOND ROUND PLAYOFFS

Bearden advances, beats Jefferson County 23-20

By Mark Nagi

The Bearden Bulldogs expected a battle in the second round of the playoffs. After all, the Jefferson County Patriots were 10-1, and won the Region 1-6A title this year.

In a very competitive game in Dandridge, the Bulldogs got a clutch field goal from Daniel Kinney and hung on for a 23-20 victory. The win puts Bearden into the state quarterfinals.

"Jeff County is a tough team," said Bearden head coach Josh Jones. "Big team, physical team, Coach (Spencer) Riley and his staff have done a really good job with this group. This was a good, hard nosed football game and we were fortunate enough to make one more kick than they did."

The game did not get off to an ideal start for Bearden. Patriots running back Omari Mills sprinted 72 yards through the middle of the Bulldogs



PHOTO BY TAMMY DAVIS KREGEL

Freshman running back Paxton Parrott takes a handoff from his brother Drew Parrott, a junior quarterback, and plows into paydirt as Bearden beats host Jefferson County 23-20 Friday night in Class 6A second-round action.

defense on Jefferson County's opening drive. Only three minutes into the game, Bearden trailed 7-0.

At the end of the first quarter, Bearden got on the scoreboard with a short TD run, making it 7-6.

The extra point attempt was blocked, which kept the Bulldogs from tying the game.

In the second quarter, Bearden running back Jayzon Thompson scored on a 1-yard TD run. This

time the extra point was good, and it was 13-7 Bulldogs.

It looked like Bearden was in control of the game, but Drew Parrott's pass floated into the hands of Jefferson County

defensive back Shawn Jackson, who returned it 36 yards for a touchdown. Their extra point attempt was no good, and the game was tied at 13.

But Parrott immediately **Continue on page 3**

High School Football Scores and Schedule

- Playoff Scores**
Second Round Games
Nov. 10
Class 3A
 Alcoa 47, Austin-East 6
Class 4A
 Greeneville 42, Gibbs 0
Class 5A
 Powell 31, Sevier Co. 7
 West 30, Morris. West 0
Class 6A
 Bearden 23, Jeff. Co. 20
Division II-AA
 FRA 50, Webb 15
Division II-AAA
 Catholic 31, MUS 28

- Playoff Pairings**
Quarterfinals
Nov. 10
(Kickoff time 7 unless noted)
Class 5A
 Powell (9-3) at West (11-1)
Class 6A
 Bearden (9-3) at Bradley (12-0)
Semifinals
Division II-AAA
 Catholic (7-5) at Baylor (9-2)

A GLANCE BACK AND A LOOK AHEAD

West defense notches its third shutout

By Steve Williams

West High's heralded defense notched its third shutout of the season in a 30-0 win over visiting Morristown West in Class 5A second round playoff action Friday night.

Linebackers Ryan Scott and Anderson Smith led the way for the Rebels' D. Scott had eight tackles and five assists for a total of 13. He had one tackle for loss. Smith had six solo stops and two assists for a total of eight. He had three tackles for loss and three sacks.

West (11-1) will host Powell Friday in the state **Continue on page 4**

Powell rushes past Smoky Bears, 31-7

Panthers could be without QB Rodgers

By Steve Williams

Opportunistic Powell took advantage of Sevier County's kicking woes en route to a surprisingly easy 31-7 win over the Smoky Bears Friday night at Sevierville.

All the news wasn't good for the Panthers, however, as Deuce Rodgers, their standout sophomore quarterback, departed the game with an apparent injury early in the second quarter and never returned.

That puts the 6-3, 220-pound Rodgers' playing status in question for this Friday night's quarterfinal rematch at West. The Rebels defeated Powell 24-23 in overtime in the



PHOTO BY LIZZI LOWE

Powell's Dylan Stooksbury, surrounded by Smoky Bears, dives into the end zone after catching a pass from Jaylon Benjamin. It was the only pass in a 19-play drive that ended with the game's final touchdown in the Panthers' 31-7 win.

regular season finale.

"We had to win at the line of scrimmage," said Coach Matt Lowe when asked the key to the second-round playoff win. "It

hasn't changed for us all season. Offensive line, defensive line, defensive box, running backs, we knew we had to create and control the line of

scrimmage. If you win the line of scrimmage, you have a great chance of winning the game."

The victory gives Powell a 9-3 record going into

this week's battle. West, which shut out Morristown West 30-0, is 11-1 and has won 26 of 27 games since claiming the Class 5A state championship last season.

After the snap went through his hands and over Sevier County punter Taylor Madison's head and Powell recovered at the SC 39, Deuce Rodgers faked a handoff and kept the football for a 27-yard TD run. Dylan Stooksbury blocked the last Smoky Bear on the outside, then added the PAT kick for a 7-0 lead a little over four minutes into the first quarter.

On its next possession, Sevier County drove to midfield, but Madison got off only a 9-yard punt, setting up Powell at its 40. Rodgers threw a 28-yard **Continue on page 2**

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Webb's Wagner and Johnson honored as BSA Eagle Scouts



Jack Wagner (left) and Baxter Johnson received the prestigious Eagle Scout award this year. It is the highest achievement attainable in the Scouts BSA program of the Boy Scouts of America.

By Steve Williams

Webb School senior quarterback Jack Wagner completed four passes to sophomore wide receiver Baxter Johnson in the second half of the Spartans' first round playoff win over Evangelical Christian School on Nov. 3.

The last two of those connections covered 16 and 35 yards to set up Webb's last scoring drive in the 34-7 victory at David Meske Stadium.

Another earlier throw from Jack to Baxter resulted in pass interference on the Eagles and set up a TD

on the following play that gave Webb some breathing room midway into the third quarter after ECS had pulled within 14-7.

Yes, Wagner and Johnson were key parts of the Spartans' offense in 2023, but they also have stood out in another important role off the field.

Jack and Baxter each received the prestigious Eagle Scout award this year from the Boy Scouts of America, whose trademark slogan is "Prepared. For Life." They are members of Webb School Troup 757.

Eagle Scout is the

highest rank attainable in BSA. Since its inception in 1911, only four percent of Scouts have earned this rank after a lengthy review process. College, business, the military, and community service leaders all respect an Eagle Scout.

"I have been dedicated to the scouting organization for many years and I am pleased to see all my hard work on merit badges and my Eagle project pay off," said Wagner in the Focus' online interview with the two honorees. "I am pleased to earn this honor that takes an extreme amount of time

and commitment while keeping excellent grades and being an athlete."

Doing a service project is an important part of earning the award.

"For my service project, I re-landscaped the entrance at Green Magnet Academy in downtown Knoxville so the students and staff would have a beautiful entrance to the school," said Jack.

"In conjunction with that landscape project, I held a children's book drive so the students would have books to take home for the weekend and read. The

Continue on page 4

- MIDDLE SCHOOL BASKETBALL -

Slagle leads Farragut to comeback triple OT victory

By Ken Lay

For the first half of its game against Hardin Valley, the Farragut Middle School girls basketball team struggled. The Lady Admirals scored just eight points in the first half, and things didn't get much better in the third quarter.

But in the fourth quarter, Farragut turned up the offensive pressure. They would also manufacture enough offense to send the game into overtime. In fact, the Lady Admirals had to play three overtimes before escaping Hardin Valley Middle School with a 39-34 victory Thursday night,

"I need a nap after watching this game," Farragut coach Devan McIntyre said. "But this game showed me what we were made of."

The Lady Hawks started fast as they opened an 8-2 lead in the opening frame. They continued to build upon their advantage, extending it to 17-8 by halftime. They held a 10-point advantage at the end of the third stanza as they opened a seemingly large 21-11 lead.

Farragut completely shut down the Lady Hawks' attack and closed regulation on a 10-0 run.

The Lady Admirals got a big fourth-quarter boost from Livi Slagle, who



Farragut Middle's Livi Slagle dribbles into the front court as Hardin Valley's Katelyn Coffman defends. Slagle scored 16 points to lead the Lady Admirals to a 39-34 overtime victory Thursday at HVMS.

scored the final seven points of regulation. Her free throw midway through the final frame made it, 21-15, before she knocked down a pair of consecutive 3-pointers and tied the game, 21-21 with 1 minute, 10 seconds remaining in the fourth quarter.

In the first overtime period, Farragut seized the upper hand early as Jayna Carbaugh scored the first basket and Slagle converted 3-of-4 free throw attempts to give the Lady Admirals a 26-21 lead. Then, after a lengthy

scoring drought, Hardin Valley would answer as Sarah Galloway reeled off five consecutive points, including a game-tying free throw to make it 26-26 with 0.2 seconds to go.

The Lady Hawks darted out to a fast start in the second extra period and took a 30-26 lead on back-to-back buckets by Emma Rhoden. But the Lady Admirals would have the answer as Audrey Vann made a free throw and Elin Rotan tied the game with a long-range jumper with 12.1 seconds left to

send the contest to a third overtime.

In the final overtime frame, Farragut would outscore Hardin Valley, 9-4, and polish off a hard-fought comeback.

Slagle scored 12 of her 16 points after halftime to lead Farragut on the comeback trail. Post player McKenna Hartley scored eight of her nine points after halftime for the Lady Admirals.

Alaina Lineberry had a game-high 19 points for Hardin Valley. She helped the Hawks build their big early lead.

Admirals start fast, run past Hardin Valley

By Ken Lay

Farragut Middle School boys basketball coach Lynn Allen warned his team that Thursday night's game against Turkey Creek rival Hardin Valley wasn't going to be easy.

"You better be ready because this is going to be a war," Allen told his team as it entered the HVMS gymnasium.

Allen fully expected that his team would have to withstand a few haymakers in a heavyweight fight because no game is easy in the Knox County Middle School Basketball Conference.

But this one turned out to be as the Admirals notched a 51-24 victory before a packed and spirited crowd.

But Allen's warning to his team was issued because its defense wasn't great against Karns in the league opener earlier in the week.

"We didn't feel like we played well defensively against Karns, and it's all about defense for us," Allen said. "We played better defensively tonight."

"We have a great group of young men. They're working hard and we'll see how the Lord blesses that. We're looking for our group to come closer as a team and as a family."

The Admirals all but put this one away early as they opened a 12-5 lead in the first quarter and extended that advantage to 24-11 by

halftime as Braylen Gibbs provided the majority of Farragut's firepower, scoring 14 of Farragut's 24 first-half points.

He was one of two Admirals to post double figures in the scoring column as he finished with a game-high 24 points. He even dazzled the fans with a slam dunk early in the fourth quarter. His dunk appeared to put an exclamation point on the night's events.

Brooks Johnston added 12 points and scored eight after halftime to help Farragut open a 42-22 advantage by the end of the third stanza.

The win was undoubtedly a boost for the Admirals, but a long season remains and Allen knows that matchups with Powell and West Valley are looming later in the campaign.

"We're chasing Powell and West Valley," Allen said.

While Farragut was having its way against the Hawks, the Wolves edged the Panthers, 38-35, at West Valley.

Hardin Valley's Charlie Gibson had 10 points against the Admirals. The Hawks had their struggles against Farragut, en route to suffering their first loss. Coach Alexander Oliver was succinct after the contest.

"We just have to keep working and we just have to get better," he said.

Powell rushes past Smoky Bears, 31-7

Continued from page 1

TD pass to Stooksbury over the middle to make it 14-0 with 10:57 on the second quarter clock. That was Rodgers' last appearance in the game.

The Smoky Bears' Bryson Headrick returned the ensuing kickoff to the Powell 16. After a personal foul on the Panthers, Malachi Pate scooted into the end zone from 14 yards out. Pate's PAT cut the deficit to 14-7 and gave Sevier County some life after its poor start.

But SC's kicking woes continued as its kickoff went out of bounds at the 50-yard line, again giving Powell great field position. With freshman Jaylon Benjamin (5-11, 205) taking over at quarterback, the Panthers put together a 12-play scoring drive, capped by Benjamin's 7-yard pass to tight end Clayton Matthew, upping Powell's lead to 21-7 midway into the second quarter.

Madison, under pressure from Powell's defensive rush, shanked a punt, setting up Powell again at midfield.

The Smoky Bears never got back in it.

"We ended up making some plays

in the pass game," said Coach Lowe. "The young quarterback did a good job coming in (for Rodgers). Deuce did a good job when he was in. I was very proud of how we played all the way around. But I am a firm believer you win playoff games at the line of scrimmage."

Headrick intercepted his 12th pass of the season and Sevier County took over deep in its own territory with 2:10 remaining in the first half. An unsportsmanlike conduct foul on the Smoky Bears kept them in a hole at the 5-yard line.

After a punt to the 37-yard line, a 17-yard pass to Connor Wheeler gave Powell a first down at the SC 20. With time running down, the Panthers settled for a 32-yard field goal by Stooksbury for a 24-7 command seven seconds before intermission.

A not-very-pretty second half saw Sevier County freshman QB Cooper Newman get picked off by Powell freshman Brodie Hollowell on the opening possession. The Panthers, starting at their 28-yard line, ran the ball 18 straight plays before Benjamin hit Stooksbury with a 9-yard TD pass on the 19th play. That made the 24-point difference on the

scoreboard.

Powell's Steven Soles Jr. had a 12-yard sack and Abu Keefer partially blocked a SC punt, but the ball was touched by a Panther and the Smoky Bears kept possession.

Fabby Neiwoh had a long punt return nullified by a penalty.

Wheeler was a workhorse and led Powell's run game with 106 yards on 26 carries plus caught two passes for 23 yards. Keshawn Jackson added 62 yards on the ground on 13 carries.

"Powell is very talented," said Todd Loveday, who is in his third-year as Sevier County's head coach. "We had some miscues in the first half to give them real good field position. We just couldn't get over that hump. They did what good teams do and kept it from us a little bit. We just didn't make the plays when we needed to make them, but our guys kept scraping and kept fighting. That's just the way it goes." The Smoky Bears finished the season 10-2.

Powell's Fabby Neiwoh brings the Panthers' "Knoxville's Best" flag onto the field at Sevier County High Friday night. Powell is one of Knox County's four teams still alive in the state playoffs. Photo by Lizzi Lowe.



Known then as now as the 'Swamp Rat'

The immediate future might not have looked bright for the Vol program in the fall of 1963. The last bowl game was in 1957, and the Vols had compiled records of 4-6, 5-4-1, 6-2-2, 6-4, and 4-6 since that time.

The final tally for that season was 5-5 under head coach Jim McDonald, with a change in football philosophy on the way, as the Vols were moving from the single-wing to the "T" a year later.

With the advantage of hindsight, however, an observant fan can look at that season's rookies and find a number of young men who would contribute to the renaissance of Vol football under Doug Dickey.

There were some historically relevant names from this class found in a story in the Knoxville Journal from Sept. 12, 1963, nine days before the season opener against Richmond.

A story titled "Frosh Team Features Big Line" tells us there were 52 freshmen on hand for that fall campaign, with 40 on scholarship and

12 out on their own. Dale Haupt was the freshman coach that season and was impressed by what he had seen.

"We have some big line-men," he said, "and several of them have shown some real promise in scrimmage work against the varsity. I'm sure a lot of them will be playing a lot of varsity ball next season."

There were some big names on the list, some of the integral pieces of Tennessee Vol history.

One was Knoxville's Ron Widby, who earned 1966 All-American honors as a punter and as a forward for Ray Mears in hoops in 1966-67.

"John Mills, a member of the Journal-Coaches' All-East Tennessee team last fall as a quarterback," the story read, "has been converted to end and has made the transition in fine style. Another end with major league potential is Paul Naumoff from Columbus, Ohio."

Mills, known in his Tennessee playing days as "Johnny," did make it at wide receiver. Naumoff found his niche on the defensive side of the ball, at end, then at linebacker.

He was All-SEC and

All-American in 1966, with Mills also being named All-SEC. Paul had a distinguished career with the Detroit Lions from 1967-78.

The story also took note of "Fayetteville's Joe Graham, a 6-1, 205-pounder, and Bobby Morel, 210-pound star from Battle Ground Academy." Graham became an offensive lineman and was one of the standouts of the 1967 bunch, one of the best in Vol history. Morel was a spunky nose guard who got by on sheer determination and grit. Derrick Weatherford, who came to Tennessee from Darlington, S.C., contributed mightily during his career.

At wingback were Ron Jarvis of Pittsford, N.Y., and Harold Stancell of Karns High School in Knoxville. Jarvis played fullback. Stancell was a starter in the secondary from 1964-66.

Among the contenders at blocking back was Doug Archibald from Sarasota, Fla. He started as the "monster" (a floating linebacker/strong safety deployed in unexpected places) in 1964 and as a more traditional linebacker in 1966. He had the game-clinching interception and touch-down return in an upset win against Georgia Tech

in 1964. Knoxville's Rod Harkelroad was listed among the centers. He didn't play a lot, but before Rod died several years ago, he and Elliott Gammage helped steer Outland Trophy winner Steve DeLong through a rough patch in his life.

Then came the topper of them all, a player who came out of nowhere to be a star.

He was a tailback from Savannah, Ga., signed by assistant coach Bob Woodruff, aided immeasurably by former Vol center Lamar Leachman, his high school coach. He had a famous nickname that has spanned the generations, known then as now as the "Swamp Rat."

He was Dewey Warren, and we all know well how things worked out for him, once he discovered jersey No. 16 and earned his chance against Ole Miss. Never mind that, when Charlie Fulton was injured that day in Memphis, Dewey found himself in the Vol huddle without his helmet. "Humming that tater."

Never lacking in confidence, Dewey brought his own brand of "swagger" to the Vol offense. His game-winning scoring run in the



Dewey Warren, shown here in the 1966 Gator Bowl game against Syracuse, was not hesitant in the least to do whatever it took to get the ball in the end zone

1965 UCLA game, the famed "Rosebonnet Bowl," is always worth another look. It was a 1-yard run that took forever, but as Dewey has always noted, the official raised both hands skyward when he found the goal line.

You also had the impression that if Dewey started walking down the street, teammates would fall in behind him just to see

where he was going. Even when things might have looked bleak in the Vol program, there were players on campus ready to make a positive impact on Vol fortunes. There weren't many of them, but all they needed was an opportunity. It was a memorable time in 1963-64 that led to many memorable moments in the years to come.



PHOTO BY TAMMY DAVIS KREGEL

Bearden coaches and players on the sideline view the action on the field as the Bulldogs battle the Jefferson County Patriots. Bearden will be on the road again this Friday at unbeaten Bradley Central in a Class 6A state quarter-final game.

Bearden advances, beats Jefferson County 23-20

Cont. from page 1
responded from that adversity. On Bearden's next drive he launched a pass downfield to Troy Beaufort, who broke a tackle at the Jefferson County 35, and ran the rest of the way for a 63-yard touchdown.

An entertaining first half finished with Bearden leading 20-13.

But on the second play of the second half, Mills again broke a huge touchdown run for the Pats, this time taking it home 81 yards. That tied the game at 20.

Late in the third quarter came perhaps the biggest play of the game as Daniel Kinney lined up for a 50-yard field goal attempt for Bearden. That's a long way to kick a football, especially on a cold East Tennessee night. But Kinney drilled it through the uprights, and Bearden was back on top 23-20.

In the fourth quarter Bearden (9-3) was driving for another score when Parrott was picked off by Pats linebacker Emmitt Newman at the Jefferson County 5-yard line.

"We have to find a way to be more consistent on offense," said Jones. "We had some good drives, but we have to finish more drives and that starts with me. I've gotta find better ways to coach them."

The Pats had one final drive in which they could have tied or gotten the go ahead score. They converted on two fourth downs and got the football down inside the Bearden 5-yard line. But a field goal attempt hit the upright with 1:30 to go.

Some shaky clock management gave Jefferson County one last chance at winning the game with one snap from the Bulldogs 28-yard line with three seconds left. But a hail mary pass was intercepted in the end zone as the clock struck zero, giving Bearden the stress-filled victory.

"Coming out of spring ball we felt like we had a good football team," said Jones. "But with such a tough schedule we didn't know what it would equate to in terms of wins and losses. But it isn't a shock to us that we are still playing in the quarterfinals. We have good players and good players will win you ballgames."

Next week the Bulldogs hit the road to face top-ranked Bradley Central, a team they lost to 46-14 in the final week of the regular season. That win gave the Bears the region title.

"We will turn the page and try to come up with a good plan and go down and play against a really good team and see what we can do," said Jones.

Intergenerational play space opens at Beverly Park

By Ken Lay

A new addition to Beverly Park will make it possible for Knoxville residents to bridge the generation gap as Legacy Park Foundation officially opened an intergenerational play space on a warm Wednesday afternoon in North Knox County.

In addition to the new play space, which includes storybook trails, a music area, a rubberized track, playground equipment and an area for physical therapy, Beverly Park is also home to a dog park and par-3 golf course.

The construction of the play space was made possible by partnerships with Humana and others. Trinity Health Foundation also donated a \$150,000 two-phase grant to research, design and create the play space. Humana sponsored the therapeutic area, while Hillcrest Healthcare sponsored the soft-surface walking path, dedicating it in honor of Mark



Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs tries out the new equipment at the new intergenerational playground, which officially opened Wednesday in North Knox County.

Walker in recognition of his 16 years of service on its Board of Directors. Siddiqi Foundation funded the music garden, which features a xylophone, chimes and drums. The TVA Retirees Association/Bicentennial Foundation sponsored the benches.

"This park was made possible by our many partners

that supported and funded the project," said Legacy Parks Executive Director Carol Evans. "We have become an age-segregated society, but we're happy to be here today to provide opportunities for generations to come together."

Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs said that the park has quickly become

one of his favorites in Knox County.

"There's something here for everyone, from the dog park to the golf course," he said. "This project shows how we get things done."

"People demand these parks, these amenities. When you live close to a park, your property value goes up 20 percent."



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For many, National Signing Day is the culmination of a long recruiting journey!

LOCAL COLLEGE SIGNEES

According to athletic directors at high schools in The Knoxville Focus' coverage area, here's a list of student-athletes who have signed or will be signing Letters of Intent in the National Signing period, which began Nov. 8 of the 2023-24 school year, and later will be enrolling in college for the 2024-25 school year.

BEARDEN

Nyla Blue, women's soccer, UT
Jaden Morrell, men's golf, UT-Martin
Bre Mendoza, women's soccer, Dayton
Lauren Spainhower, softball, Gardner Webb
Allie Seritt, softball, Walter State
Liv Stott, women's soccer, UT

BEREAN CHRISTIAN

Celeste Hoaglund, volleyball, Johnson U.

CENTRAL

Andrew Hill, baseball, ETSU
Shelby Miler, softball, Bryan College
Drew Bolton, golf, Tennessee Tech

CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Wesley Alig, baseball, Kennesaw St.
Kyla Hill, softball, Harding Univ.
Izzy Proffitt, basketball, Anderson Univ.

FARRAGUT

Brady Livingston, soccer, Lenoir-Rhyne
Lauren Leslie, soccer, ETSU
Hailey Nichols, softball, Tusculum
Addison Pressley, softball, Cornell
Laney Shrader, softball, Roane State
Sydney Romer, golf, Roane State
Owen Queener, golf, Roane State
Jake Merrick, baseball, UAB
Braylon Hall, baseball, Lee Univ.

Lukas Buckner, baseball, Mississippi St.
Cade O'Leary, baseball, Mississippi St.
Landis Davila, baseball, Mississippi St.
Charlie Bozeman, baseball, Samford
Brennon Seigler, baseball, Tennessee
Stratton Scott, baseball, Tennessee
Matt Heflin, baseball, Ranger College
Gavin Brewer, baseball, Cincinnati
Eli Evans, baseball, ETSU
Braxton Lewis, baseball, Tenn. Tech
Ryan Wallace, baseball, Cleveland St.
Ben Johnson, baseball, Cleveland St.
Mason Grube, baseball, Alabama St.

FIRST BAPTIST ACADEMY

Cooper Roberts, golf, Trevecca Nazarene

FULTON

Sammy Taylor, women's basketball, Furman

HALLS

Ethan Whitaker, golf, UT-Chattanooga
Reagan Corvette, golf, Roane State
Ava Garrett, women's soccer, LMU
Brenna Hunley, softball, Walters State

HARDIN VALLEY

Maddie Archdale, cross country, UT
Tinsley Brown, volleyball, Morehead St.
Henry Ferguson, baseball, ETSU
Brady Nichol, diving, Air Force
Gracie Waite, track & field, Lee Univ.
Reese Wilson, soccer, Kentucky

KARNS

Abby Harris, track & field, Emory & Henry
Conner Clark, baseball, Union (KY)

KNOXVILLE CATHOLIC

Sydney Mains, basketball, Florida Atlantic
Addison Moss, soccer, Brevard College
Eleni Liakonis, tennis, Samford
Caroline Krueger, basketball, Milligan
Hudson Lutterman, baseball, Virginia Tech
Jack Judd, baseball, King University
Grant Tallent, baseball, Johnson University

WEBB

Blake Carter, baseball, Lipscomb Univ.
Colin Eckerman (CC / track & field), Furman
Anna Graves (CC / track & field), Furman
Palmer Sykes (women's golf, Tenn. Tech)

(Schools which reported having no signees at this time: Austin-East, Fulton, Gibbs, L&N STEM, TSD, West.)

- Compiled by Steve Williams

CROSS COUNTRY

Eckerman sets all-time state meet record

By Steve Williams

Webb School's Colin Eckerman didn't just win the Division II-AA title at the recent TSSAA Cross Country State Championships; he set a new all-time state meet record of 14:51.54 over the 5,000-meter course at Sanders Ferry Park in Hendersonville.

Jack Bowen of McCallie came in as "the favorite to win," said Webb Coach Bobby Holcombe, but finished a close second and Knoxville Catholic junior standout Keegan Smith placed third.

"We knew for Colin to win, he would have to do some aggressive stuff towards the end and he did," said Holcombe.

"With about 600 meters to go, Colin was about three meters down and decided to go ahead and start his kick. He took off and regained contact with Jack with about 250 to go. Another surge was to go ahead and take the lead and then beat them at the end."

It was definitely a breakout win for Eckerman, who has come a long way in his high school cross country career.

"He got cut from the basketball team in his freshman year and decided to come out for cross country," Holcombe recalled. "In his very first race he was



PHOTO BY BARRY HOUGHIN

The Eckerman family celebrate Colin Eckerman's Division II-AA victory in the TSSAA State Cross Country Championships this season. The Webb harrier also ran an all-time best time in the state meet.

timed in 23 minutes, so we never knew in a million years this guy was going to go on and win state.

"His work ethic has been remarkable throughout the years."

Colin has become a late-bloomer.

Coach Holcombe said just six months ago, Eckerman went to a state 3200 championship meet and didn't even qualify.

"It was a major chip on his shoulder that he wants to show that he belongs there (with the best)," said Holcombe. "He was determined this year and the goal was to win the race."

"When we set team goals back in August at team camp, and he said it

all season, 'I belong here. I can beat these guys.'"

He has signed with Furman, a Top 10 team in the nation.

Coach Holcombe also was pleased with his girls team's state championship, the first since 2018 and after four consecutive runner-up showings.

"The goal this year was to get our Top 5 runners in the Top 15 at the state and also win the race," he said. "That was accomplished too."

The Lady Spartans were without their No. 2 runner as senior Anna Graves was sidelined with a stress reaction in her foot, noted Holcombe.

That didn't stop Graves,

however, from being a team leader.

"She was still there as team captain and a great leader," Holcombe said. "She's a wonderful person to have on the field, but also great off the field and helps our team out."

"She would have loved to been out there running. The rest of the girls stepped up."

"After the race, she was excited for her teammates."

Webb's boys and girls will be competing in an upcoming regional meet soon at Cary, N.C. that includes runners from eight states.

"We hope Anna can go to Cary and be able to run," said Coach Holcombe.

West defense notches its third shutout

Cont. from page 1

quarterfinals.

Meanwhile, Knoxville Catholic (7-5) logged its second straight Division II-AAA post-season victory in school history as it won at Memphis University School 31-28.

Junior place-kicker Gavin Menard provided the winning margin with his 24-yard field goal as time expired.

Irish quarterback Jayden Neal passed for 394 yards and three touchdowns. Braylon Harmon and Tyreek King were the leading receivers, as both picked up over 150 yards through

the air. King also tallied two TDs.

Catholic will face a tough assignment in the semifinals Friday night at Chattanooga Baylor, which beat the Irish 42-0 in the regular season finale.

MR. FOOTBALL TIME

The Tennessee Titans' Mr. Football Awards will be presented to the top players in nine classifications of the TSSAA on Tuesday, Dec. 5 at Nissan Stadium. The top kicker in the state also will be recognized with a Mr. Football Award, regardless of classification.

Five semifinalists have been announced for each classification and the Kicker of the Year category.

Knox County has four semifinalists in the running. They are Steven Soles Jr. of Powell in Class 5A, Markeis Barrett and Cooper Cameron of Webb in Division II-AA and Owen Taylor of Halls for Kicker of the Year.

POWELL 'D' PRAISED

Sevier County Coach Todd Loveday was asked what impressed him the most about Powell after Friday's 31-7 loss to the

Panthers.

"Overall team speed, especially on defense," said Loveday. "Soon as the middle opens up, it closes pretty quick."

"They got a chance to do some damage for sure."

GOOD FOR GOODALE

Senior running back Grayson Goodale filled three spots in the Catholic Superlatives' Individual Category for Most Rushes: 21, Most Rushing Yards: 186, and Rushing Touchdowns: 4 in the Irishmen's first-round playoff win over Father Ryan.

Webb's Wagner and Johnson honored

Cont. from page 2

project turned out great as we had many volunteers and collected over 300 books. I loved serving my community."

Baxter's service project had a similar theme and it too had a nice touch at the end.

"My service project was renovating a little garden that was full of weeds for the Wesley House in Lonsdale," he said. "I cleaned out the area, pulled weeds and then I applied gravel on top of this and installed a bike rack."

Baxter went on to say his experiences as a Boy Scout over the years have helped him "branch out more to

people" that he probably would not have gotten to know as well.

Johnson also said being a Boy Scout has given him an "appreciation of the outdoors" with all of the trips his Troop took over the years.

"I think that the BSA has provided me with different characteristics that have laid a foundation of leadership and how to treat others," added Baxter.

Wagner said by living the scout oath and scout law have helped shape him as a person. "Such principles as being trustworthy, loyal, friendly and helpful have translated to all aspects of my life," he pointed out.



Eagle Scouts Jack Wagner (left) and Baxter Johnson also played football this season for the Webb Spartans, who posted a 10-2 record.

Jack also said such principles as "hard work and dedication" he has acquired by being a boy scout will be important to him in the future.

What ways are being a scout and athlete similar?

"It takes a lot of hard work and dedication to become an Eagle Scout," answered Wagner. "It is not easy and requires a lot of follow through and teamwork as well as leadership to get the Eagle project complete. Similarly in sports, you have to work

hard, be disciplined and show leadership to have success on the field."

Baxter's reply: "I think being a scout and an athlete are similar in ways of showing work ethic. As a scout, you have to be committed and work at things that you may not be great at in order to achieve your goal of Eagle Scout. As an athlete, you really have to work hard to be able to achieve your end goals and never quit when things get tough in scouting or sports."

SIGNING PERIODS

Division I Basketball (Early Period): Nov. 8 through Nov. 15.

Division I Basketball (Regular Period): April 17 through May 15.

Division I Football (Early Period): Dec. 20 through Dec. 22.

Division I and II Football (Midyear JC Transfer): Dec. 20 through Jan. 15.

Division I and II Football (Regular Period): Feb. 7 through April 1 for Division I and Feb. 7 through Aug. 1 for Division II.

All other Division I and II Sports: Nov. 8 through Aug. 1.