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Young-Williams Animal Center to take over animal control

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
steelym@knoxfocus.com

A unanimous vote by the Knox County Commission approved the Young-Williams Animal Center to take over all aspects of animal control in Knox County and the city of Knoxville.

The vote approved the center's animal pickup and control beginning on April 1, 2024, and relieves the Knox County Sheriff's Office and the city's animal control officers. The city police

and sheriff's deputies will remain in the background and could be called on if needed. Current city and county animal control officers could possibly join the new division at the center.

When asked if YWAC would have the ability to respond to "livestock" calls, CEO Janet Testerman replied, "We will." She said the center is gearing up to assume the duties, hiring and training staff, and should be ready by April. She said the center has agreements with other agencies, like Zoo Knoxville, to handle

larger animals.

Commissioner Larsen Jay noted that both the sheriff and the city police chief "want this to happen" and told Testerman, "I hope they just don't wash their hands of it."

Under the terms of the agreement, the county and the city will each compensate Young-Williams \$157,045 for the first three months beginning in April. In addition, the county and the city will each compensate \$92,680 in personnel costs for 60 days

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Knox County Sheriff Tom Spangler spoke to the Knox County Commission last week about his department's revamping its recruitment efforts and said 190 new or returning officers have been hired and an additional psychologist has been hired to help review applicants. He said the growing number of applicants has been a result of the team effort between his department and the merit board. Photo by Mike Steely.



PHOTO BY KEN LEINART

Knoxville historian Jack Neely examines proposals for the McClung Warehouse during Thursday night's open house.

City seeks public input for future of McClung Warehouse

By Ken Leinart

The latest chapter of Knoxville's "Old City" was on display and open for comments Thursday afternoon, Nov. 16, during an open house at what is left of the McClung Warehouse on Jackson Avenue near Knoxville's Old City.

After years of neglect, the City of Knoxville acquired the McClung Warehouse properties in 2013, with the intent of managing rehabilitation of what was left of the series of red brick five- to seven-story warehouses, the oldest dating back to 1893.

Three buildings had been lost in

a fire in 2007 and two more were destroyed seven years later in a fire in February 2014.

Much has happened since then and the significance of the remaining McClung Warehouse building has become one of the focal points of

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Special guest to attend Powell's Pearl Harbor Day

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
steelym@knoxfocus.com

On Thursday, December 7, the nation pauses to remember Pearl Harbor Day and this year, the community of Powell has something special planned.

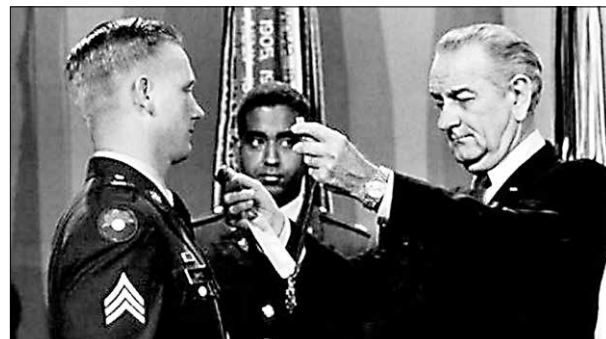
Larry Sharp, founder and president of the Veterans Appreciation Program, told The Focus that Medal of Honor recipient Sammy Lee Davis will be visiting as a guest of Disabled American Veterans Chapter 24. Sharp said that Davis will address

an assembly of Powell High School students on December 6 and a special lunch is planned on Pearl Harbor Day for honored guests.

At the luncheon there will be a moment of silence at 12:55 p.m., or 7:55 Honolulu time, in recognition of the 2,000 plus servicemen who lost their lives during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941.

Powell High School has a monument to graduates killed in action.

Continue on page 2



Footage of Sgt. Sammy Davis being awarded the Medal of Honor by President Lyndon Johnson was used in the movie "Forrest Gump" with actor Tom Hanks' image superimposed over Sammy Davis'. Davis is a very special guest in the Powell Community for Pearl Harbor Day.

KCRTA awards nine scholarships at annual awards luncheon

By Ken Lay

Nine aspiring teachers were awarded scholarships from the Knox County Retired Teachers Association recently.

The scholarships were awarded to future educators by the association at its annual Awards Ceremony and Luncheon on Thursday, Nov. 16, at the Foundry at The World's Fair Park Site in Downtown Knoxville.

The scholarships are given to offset expenses while the aspiring teachers are fulfilling their respective student-teaching requirements.

Lindsey Troop was awarded

the Tom Underwood Scholarship. Jaydon Headrick was given the Reuben and Pat Hunter Scholarship. The Colleen Bennett Scholarship went to Kadijah Tinker.

The Bill Crosland Scholarship went to Rebecca Hemans. Katelynn Jackson was awarded the Cindi Fuller Showalter Scholarship. Ashley Martinez Santiago was awarded the Betty Berry Scholarship.

The Don Loy Scholarship went to Tania Becerra. Kate Martinez Santiago was awarded the Earl Wells Scholarship and Andrea Byrd was awarded the Dan Williams Scholarship.



The Knox County Retired Teachers Association rewarded nine aspiring teachers scholarships at its annual awards ceremony and scholarship luncheon on Thursday, Nov. 16 at The Foundry at the World's Fair Park Site. The scholarships were awarded to help defer expenses incurred to student teaching internships.

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Sex On An Airplane – A Clean Story

From a distance



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

practice, judgeship, and mostly about my 30 years in Congress. It is entitled "From Batboy To Congressman – 30 years in the U.S. House."

In my career, I had many strange, funny and unusual things happen. My book is about 160 pages with 203 short stories or vignettes about my career. Some are serious, some are humorous, all are true and all were written by me – no ghostwriter.

I have stories like sex on an airplane (a clean story), desperate housewives, when some Baptists stole the airport toilet paper, the

only time the word "urinated" was used in an obituary, etc.

You will learn what Howard Baker's favorite story was and what Lamar Alexander said was the worst job in Tennessee. You will get a big laugh out of what my late wife said to Donald Trump when he called to thank me for my endorsement.

It is almost worth the price of the book to read the email I got from a little boy in Knoxville who asked if he got 2,000,000 signatures, would I do away with homework.

You will read about why

I didn't run for the U.S. Senate, even though I was offered several million dollars to do so. And what I said about moving the Capitol to Knoxville so I could run for governor.

There are stories about all the presidents with whom I served and serious comments about trying to get along with Democrats so I could get things done for my District.

I had a fascinating law practice and judgeship for 16 years before going to Congress. I tried cases involving James Earl Ray and the famous madam Hazel Davidson when I was

a judge. You will read about the Perry Mason ending to my very first case as a young lawyer – a first degree murder case.

Anyone interested in law, politics, Tennessee history, and even sports would enjoy my book. It would make a very nice Christmas present.

The retail price of the book is \$24.95 plus tax, but the UT Press allows me to sell the book for \$20, including the sales tax, a savings of over \$7.00 and some cents.

I hope you will come and bring your spouse, friend,

or child – young or old – to my book signing.

Several people who have read the book have told me it is just like I was sitting there telling these stories directly to them. A man from Kentucky who I do not know wrote to say that when he heard about my book "I knew I wanted to read it. I liked it even better than I expected." He said his wife then "read it and enjoyed it, too."

I believe everyone would enjoy my book. If you don't enjoy it, I will give you your money back – but you would have to pass a lie detector test first.

Whither the two party system?

Current events have opened up differences that pose existential threats to both the Republican and Democrat parties. For the Republicans the speaker mess has exposed pure venom



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

the pro-Palestinian groups condemning Israel and calling for a ceasefire – which would only serve to save Hamas from the Israelis' vengeance. At many of the rallies, some have carried swastikas. Previously, when white supremacists would brandish swastikas, the press was full of pictures and talking heads on CNN and MSNBC who would literally go crazy. Now that the anti-Israeli student organizations and groups are waving swastikas and calling for the elimination of Israel itself – the chant from river to sea – criticism from the media is totally absent. AOC, the Squad, the Democratic Socialists of America and Antifa have more in common with the Aryan Brotherhood and the American Nazi Party than they want to admit.

Rashida Tlaib, Cori Bush, Jamaal Bowman, Andre Carson, Al Green, Summer Lee, AOC, Ilhan Omar and Delia Ramirez. Some were totally disingenuous when they said they opposed the resolution because it did not mention a two-state solution. Either they are ignorant or think that we are because the Palestinians themselves reject the two-state solution. All 15 were members of the progressive caucus. Fifteen of the 16 are "people of color." The other nay vote was from Thomas Massie (R-KY) who supported Israel but voted no because he craves publicity.

Gottheimer a punk. Do you think reconciliation is possible between these two. Moreover, Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL) said, "Someone who votes against this doesn't have a soul."

The anti-Israelis in the Democratic party are not limited to the Congress. In North Carolina, a resolution passed unanimously only because the Democratic members walked out before the vote. Jewish legislators see this and have been critical of their "progressive" colleagues. Many comments are scathing. One wonders what is being said in private. Why are the majority of Jews Democrats when Israel's most vocal critics tend to be on the left? I have not heard of a single Republican coming to the defense of Hamas. Some like Lindsay Graham favor bombing Hamas. But then again, Lindsey Graham is in favor of bombing everyone.

Even the far left is splintering as one of the leaders of the Democratic Socialists of America has resigned over that organization's support of Hamas. Expect the Jews to scale back their financial support of Democrats and splinter the legislative caucuses. Perhaps the anti-Israeli faction will leave the party and create their own political party. Omar, Tlaib, Pressley, Bowman and AOC would likely be more comfortable in a party than in one with Steve Cohen and Chuck Schumer. Let's call it the Progressive Party.

It is likely that the Conservative Party would siphon off 20 percent of the Republicans and the Progressive Party would garner 20 percent of the Democrats. That would give us four parties with enough supporters to influence elections and could lead to a coalition government. Those governments make for strange bedfellows. Just look at Europe.

The rift amongst the Democrats showed in the vote in the House to support Israel and condemn Hamas. The vote was 410-10-6. Nine of the no votes were all the usual suspects:

being directed at the eight who toppled Kevin McCarthy. There is considerable friction among Republican members over continued funding for Ukraine. The new Speaker, Mike Johnson voted against supplemental funding for Ukraine. The question is whether the Republicans can come together and act as a party or will they continue to conduct a circular firing squad. One outcome is for the right wing of the party to splinter off into a new party. A close friend suggested the name Whigs 2.0 which is brilliant. But let's call it the Conservative Party.

For the Democrats, the schism is over Israel. The "progressives" have come to the aid of Hamas under the guise of protecting the Palestinians. They have protested in rallies with

Young-Williams

Cont. from page 1

of hiring and training. The county and the city will then each compensate \$628,178 for the first full year of the contract beginning July 1, 2024, with a 2% increase per year for the next two years of the agreement.

Each will make a

payment of \$166,000 within 90 days of execution of the agreement for one-time purchases specific to the transition. Upon execution of the contract or any subsequent renewal, Young-Williams will submit an invoice to the city and county for payment, no earlier than July 1 of each fiscal year.



PHOTO BY MIKE STEELY.

Larry Sharp's program on Pearl Harbor Day in Powell will feature Sgt. Sammy Davis, a Medal of Honor Winner. Sharp is shown here showing the book about Davis' life.

Pearl Harbor Day

Cont. from page 1

"Veterans Appreciation Program is my little organization that links business discounts with veterans," Sharp said. He worked with other organizations, like Wreaths Across America, Disabled Veterans Chapter 24, and Vietnam Veterans to help recognize and honor military veterans.

"I've headed the Pearl Harbor Day program for the last five years and it is an honor to have Sammy David here. State Representative Michelle Carringer was instrumental in getting him here as our

speaker," Sharp said. Sergeant Sammy Davis fought off an attack in Vietnam, saving several of his fellow soldiers although injured himself. He was awarded the Medal of Honor by President Lyndon Johnson in 1968 for his heroic actions in November 1967. Many refer to Davis as the "true Forrest Gump" as the original footage of his medal ceremony was adapted for the movie.

"It is a huge privilege to have a Medal of Honor recipient here for Pearl Harbor Day," Sharp said.



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Publisher's Positions



By Steve Hunley, Publisher
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Rosalynn Carter: A Life Well Lived

The passing of Rosalynn Carter is a reminder of a life well lived. Married to her husband Jimmy for an incredible 77 years, Mrs. Carter passed away peacefully with much of her family by her side at age 96.

"Rosalynn was my equal partner in everything I ever accomplished," former President Jimmy Carter said in a statement released by the Carter Center. "She gave me wise guidance and encouragement when I needed it. As long as Rosalynn was in the world, I always knew somebody loved and supported me." It was a tender and touching statement from a devoted partner.

Like Herbert Hoover before him, Jimmy Carter served a single term as president, his term of office pockmarked with a series of problems including the hostage crisis in Iran and rising energy prices and crippling inflation. Carter did manage to broker an important agreement between Israel and Egypt, bitter enemies until that time, which lasts to this day. Faced with an uprising in his own party led by Ted Kennedy and defeated in a landslide by Ronald Reagan in 1980, the Carters went home to Georgia.

Throughout the difficulties of his life and presidency, Jimmy Carter was fortunate to have Rosalynn with him. Faced with life after the White House, the couple created The Carter Center in Atlanta which they announced was created to "wage peace, fight disease and build hope." From most politicians, it would have been mere sloganeering. From Rosalynn and Jimmy Carter, it had the ring of genuine truth.

Rosalynn, like her husband, remained among the most modest of occupants of the White House and joined friends and neighbors when pitching in to

building homes for Habitat for Humanity.

A gentle woman, Rosalynn Carter was capable of being outspoken in her beliefs and was always firm in her own convictions. Unfortunately, we live in an age when partisanship prevents us all too often from acting like Christians and acknowledging the good in those who don't share our political beliefs. Rosalynn Carter was a woman of quiet grace and dignity, who throughout her life exemplified the very soul of a woman who loved and supported her husband, family, and most of all, her God throughout her 96 years of life.

Justice Roger Page Announces Retirement

Tennessee Supreme Court Justice Roger Page has announced he will retire from the court next year. Tennessee's State Constitution bars more than two justices to reside in any of our Grand Divisions. There are presently two sitting justices from Middle Tennessee, while two others come from West and East, which is our own Dwight Tarwater from

Knoxville. That means Governor Bill Lee will have to appoint a candidate from either East or West Tennessee when Justice Page resigns his seat.

Roger Page first entered the judiciary after being appointed to the Tennessee Court of Criminal Appeals by Governor Bill Haslam. At the time of his appointment, Page was a judge of the circuit court for Chester, Henderson and Madison counties. It was also Governor Haslam who appointed Page to the Tennessee State Supreme Court in 2016.

Senator Taylor Asks Governor Lee To Help With Rising Crime In Shelby County and Memphis

Governor Bill Lee has announced he has ordered an increased presence in Shelby County because of the increase in crime in Memphis. The governor's office said "approximately 40 additional troopers" were being sent to Memphis beginning last week. Between 15-20 more troopers from other districts across Tennessee will

augment those being sent to Memphis "for the foreseeable future."

The governor acknowledged rising crime in the country but told Memphis and Shelby County officials, "At the same time, local officials must carry out their responsibility to uphold the law and hold criminals accountable, without resorting to soft on crime plea deals that have serious consequences and too-often result in more crime and more victims."

Lee's actions follow a letter sent by state Senator Brent Taylor of Memphis, who pleaded directly with the governor to help with the rising crime in Shelby County and Memphis.

Taylor's letter came after Alexander Bulakhov, a researcher for St. Jude's Hospital, was murdered in Downtown Memphis on Sunday, November 12, while trying to protect his wife from criminals. Within 24 hours, police had arrested Brandy Rucker, 22, and Marious Ward, 23, and the two were charged with first degree murder for the killing of Alexander Bulakhov.

Bulakhov, his wife and their 2-year-old daughter were out for a walk around

8 p.m. when a man wearing a hoodie, ripped jeans and a ski mask approached the young family, waving a gun. Later identified as Marious Ward, the robber demanded "property" and Bulakhov responded by handing over his wallet. Then Ward allegedly turned to Mrs. Bulakhov, pointing the gun at her and demanded more property. That is when Bulakhov began to struggle in an effort to protect his wife and either the gunman fired or the weapon went off, shooting the young researcher. The suspects jumped into a white Toyota Camry and sped off.

The crime has rightly outraged Memphians.

Happy Thanksgiving!

We here at The Knoxville Focus hope you and your family enjoyed a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday. We hope you experienced every happiness and have much to be thankful for. The Knoxville Focus family is very grateful to you, our readers. We thank you for reading The Focus.

AMR hired as ambulance provider in split vote

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
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A split vote by the Knox County Commission last week awarded a new 5-year contract to American Medical Response for emergency ambulance service in Knox County. The company had many problems in response and wait times in recent years and several commissioners, including some who voted in the 7-4 approval, had reservations about the company.

The "No" votes came from Commissioners Larsen Jay, Kim Frazier, Kyle Ward and John Schoonmaker.

Schoonmaker noted that approval will grant AMR a \$172,000 per month stipend payment from the county. He also noted that fines for violating response or hospital wait times could be paid by AMR from those allocated county funds.

"I feel like we've taken a step backwards with the contract," Schoonmaker said.

Three other companies bid on providing emergency medical services to the county and a study by an outside consulting firm and a review by a committee appointed by Mayor Glenn Jacobs both recommended

AMR. Several commissioners were frustrated that the commission was not included in the review nor was the city of Knoxville's Fire Department.

Commissioner Carson Dailey, who voted for the contract, said the commission "will have an out" if AMR fails in its agreement and added, "One year will let us know." AMR has agreed to submit regular reports on its service.

"We are cornered, it's Yes or No," Jay said, adding, "I've lost confidence in AMR."

"We need a contract," said Commissioner Richie Beeler, who spoke of the contract and said, "I think it's better" and that he trusts Mayor Jacobs and the approval recommendations.

Chairwoman Terry Hill said the new contract "doesn't feel quite right" but spoke of safeguards in the agreement but also noted that the commission was not included in the review of the contract and was unable to change it.

The new ambulance service agreement, which will now be dispatched by the county's E-911 service, will begin on February 1.



Knox County District 9 Commissioner Carson Dailey was honored last week with a proclamation by Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs and his fellow commissioners. Dailey was chosen as East Tennessee Commissioner of the Year by the Tennessee County Commissioners Association for his service and advocacy to preserve natural beauty in his district. His civic involvement, service on the Knox County Ethics and the Fire and Technical Rescue committees, and his leadership was recognized with the Ralph Puckett Award. Monday, November 20, was proclaimed by Mayor Jacobs as "Carson Dailey Day."

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New Lantern to shine for seniors in Hardin Valley

By Ken Leinart

The Lantern at Morning Pointe made a significant investment in Knox County's Hardin Valley community some two years ago.

Wednesday, Nov. 15, they solidified that commitment with the groundbreaking for a 60-unit complex adjacent to its current assisted living/Alzheimer's care facility in Hardin Valley on Reagan Road.

"It almost seems like Groundhog Day. We were here not too long ago when we opened the building adjacent to this site here and prior to that we had a groundbreaking (for that site)," Greg Vital, president of Morning Pointe Senior Living said.

There are investments usually driven by economics. By revenue. By taxes gained for a county.

To an extent, that's true.

The new Lantern at Morning Pointe of Hardin Valley will create approximately 60 permanent healthcare positions and is estimated to have an economic impact of more than \$25 million annually, considering payroll, property taxes and local purchase of goods and services.

Those numbers are provided by the Lantern at Morning Pointe's official website.

But there are other investments — not driven by economics, but driven by something higher.

"Most of the time I get up and talk about the economic value of a project like this," Senior Vice President of Investor Development of the Knoxville Chamber of Commerce Mark Field said.

"I talk about the amount of capital investment that's made, talk about the amount of people who are going to be employed gainfully in our community."

But Field said, "They (Morning



Taking part in the groundbreaking of Phase II of the Morning Pointe campus in Hardin Valley, were representatives from government, the private sector and advocates for memory loss care. Those included a members of the contracting team, ETSB LLC, of Harrison, Tenn.; CEO of Morning Pointe Senior Living Franklin Farrow (second from left); Riley Lovinggood of Senator Bill Hagerty's office (third from left); Mark Field, senior vice president of investor development with the Knox County Chamber of Commerce; Greg A. Vital, president of Morning Pointe Senior Living; Knox County Commissioner Kim Frazier; Janice Wade-Whitehead, president and CEO of Alzheimer's Tennessee; Rodney Holloman, pastor of Hardin Valley Church; and Kevin Parton, Knox County Health Department Senior Director (far right).

Pointe) don't just care about the economics in our community. They care about the quality of life in our community."

He added that businesses and industries looking to locate in Knox County also look at "quality of life."

Facilities such as the Hardin Valley campus show a commitment to the quality of life in Knox County, he said.

County Commissioner Kim Frazier said she holds a personal connection with the new facility.

She said she is the daughter

and granddaughter of "loved ones experiencing memory loss," and she is "so grateful for the team at Morning Pointe."

For many, like Frazier, the commitment from Morning Pointe and its new facility, offer hope and a sense of "self and belonging," because the residents of Morning Pointe's facilities, "had a life, they had a career, and they had a dream."

The new facility will be dedicated to the care of those with Alzheimer's and dementia.

Vital said Morning Pointe's

success with memory care was in large part due to the support of Alzheimer's Tennessee, who had a spokesperson at the groundbreaking.

Vital said when the 60-unit facility is open, those currently residing in the Morning Pointe facility at Hardin Valley will be moved to the new memory facility.

The new facility will solely serve Alzheimer's and dementia patients. The current facility at the Hardin Valley campus will be for assisted living seniors.

The Chattanooga-based senior

health care company develops, owns, and manages 38 assisted living and "Lantern" Alzheimer's memory care facilities in five states.

"Chattanooga is our 'Home,'" Vital said. "But our real 'Home' is with the states we serve."

Those states include Tennessee, Kentucky, Alabama, Georgia and Indiana.

The Hardin Valley campus is the 10th community in East Tennessee and the 24th Morning Pointe home in the state.

City seeks public input for future of McClung Warehouse

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growth in the Old City.

"The location is unique, it's challenging, and it's an opportunity," Rebekah Jane Justice, Knoxville's Chief of Urban Design and Development, said.

"People want to see what can happen with this site. There is an opportunity for housing, some retail, projects to really enliven the space."

Bordered by cafes, pubs, and restaurants, the McClung Warehouse site is prime property to help this part of Knoxville bloom.

And it's not just the site and its neighbors that make it so.

On the other end of Jackson Avenue, another project is underway that will redesign Knoxville's Old City.

A new home for the Tennessee Smokies AA baseball team is scheduled to open for the 2025 baseball season.

"It's an exciting time for Knoxville," Justice said.

Justice said the city "hoped" to get at least 100 surveys from Knoxville residents who attended the open house.

"This is a community input session for redevelopment opportunities," she said. "Everybody has been really excited and looking forward to this meeting and we're hoping for 100s of surveys to be completed."

"We will use this input to help guide a master plan that the city will market for an RFP."

A request for proposal (RFP) is a business document that announces a project, describes it, and solicits bids from qualified contractors to complete it.

Most organizations prefer to launch their projects using RFPs, and many governments always use them.

Thirty minutes into the open house more than 50 surveys had been filled out. The event lasted from 4 - 6:30 p.m.

Justice said the survey is also available through the city's website and will be for 6 - 8 weeks.

"We have a lot of interest in developing in our community right now. These two projects, the stadium and the McClung project are kind of filling in the edges of our downtown. It's exciting to see," Justice said.

Thursday's event looked to the future, but it also plays into Knoxville's rich history.

C. M. McClung & Company was a wholesale and mail-order supplier of hardware, stoves, and other goods, with its business based on Jackson Avenue.

The company dates back to 1820 when James Cowan started a general store on Gay Street. In 1859 this enterprise became the firm of Cowan, McClung, & Company.

In 1884, Calvin Morgan McClung bought the business's wholesale hardware division, which he named after himself. The first Jackson Avenue warehouses were built in 1893. The company went out of business in 1971.

Jack Neely of the "Old City Association" has a comprehensive history of the "Old City" at oldcityknoxville.org

Monitoring the historical aspect of the McClung Warehouse development, members of the Knoxville

Heritage Foundation attended the open house.

Though not an official spokesperson for the foundation, member Christine Cloninger said, "Obviously we're excited to see development (of the McClung Warehouse site). We hope it pays homage to what this area was."

The McClung Warehouse project has been underway since the city acquired the property, but when the stadium project began it took on a new sense of purpose.

"Complicated? It varies," Justice said of similar projects the city has undertaken. "We've done it a few times and it's always a little bit different. Each project has its own set of unique parameters."

And the McClung project?

"It is. It's pretty complex," she said.

A press release from the City of Knoxville noted: "The historical significance of the McClung Warehouse site cannot be overstated: With its location adjacent to the railroad, it was critically important to the early economy of Knoxville. It's a major downtown corridor today — clearly visible from Interstate 40 — and its next chapter will make a statement about the future of the city."

"Since then, the Environmental Protection Agency funded an environmental cleanup of the site, and a large part of the property was converted into a well-used public parking lot. The City invested \$8.7 million in 2019 and 2020 to replace and preserve parts of the historic Jackson Avenue Ramps at Gay Street."

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The Doctor is in

a weekly column by
Dr. Jim Ferguson

Cultural Marxism

War is hell. War is cruelty. There is no use trying to reform it. The crueller it is, the sooner it will be over.

William Tecumseh Sherman

Like many Americans I was horrified by the Hamas terrorist attacks October 7, 2023. There are no rational excuses for such savagery, despite attempts of leftists to justify Hamas. The savagery of Hamas is not war. It is terrorism. Savagery is the only word that can describe the slaughter of civilians and children, torture, rape and kidnapping.

Wars are always tragic and it is inevitable that innocents will suffer. However, the war between Israel and Hamas has exposed an even deeper festering wound. As a doctor, I have removed bandages and discovered even worse disease. The British word "gobsmacked" described my reaction to the fetid wound of anti-Semitism displayed in cities across America, around the world

and in American colleges.

I don't consider myself naive or uninformed. I'll admit I'm far from perfect and sometimes less tolerant of people or perspectives with which I disagree. But that is not bigotry. There is a difference between judgment and condemnation based on race, religion or creed. And antisemitism is no response to Israel's war for survival.

I am a WASP, a white, Anglo-Saxon, protestant. If I had been born elsewhere my journey would have been different. The point is we all have biases which can be controlled by reason, education and tolerance, but never eradicated. And enculturated prejudice produces deep wounds which ultimately fester.

I grew up in the south in the 1960s during the Civil Rights movement. It is wrong to condemn someone because of their skin color. And it is just as wrong to condemn someone because of their religion or

ethnic background, even their nationality. I agree with Dr. Martin Luther King: a person should be judged on their character.

For a long time I've been puzzled by antisemitism. The Jewish people I know seem to be fine Americans, and it is disturbing to now drive down Kingston Pike and see police cars in front of Temple Bethel and Heska Amuna to protect these synagogues and Jews. In recent columns, I've written about the origin of the terms Jew, Palestine and pogroms.

Dennis Prager is Jewish, a writer and the originator of PragerU, a website which I highly recommend. The internist in me searches for the cause of illness, but also why things happen. Years ago Prager wrote about the causes of antisemitism in his book "The Chosen" (not to be confused with the recent TV series).

Did antisemitism arise because Jews crucified Jesus? Actually, it was the Roman government who crucified my Lord to keep peace among the fractious first century population in Jerusalem. We've seen the scapegoat argument in Nazi Germany. Hamas attempts to justify their perversions on xenophobic racism, but no rational person can embrace this. And Prager discounts economic factors, although Jewish people are often highly educated, motivated

and successful, and their wealth sometimes provokes envy.

Prager argues that the principle cause for antisemitism is their Biblical moniker, the "chosen people" because this sets them apart from gentiles (non Jewish people). That sense of separateness has sustained them and yet separates them from the communities in which they live. Judaism is often perceived as both a religion and a "nation." The same argument was made with John F. Kennedy's Catholicism.

Clashes over land and between cultures and religions have occurred throughout recorded time. But the current war in the Middle East has suggested to me a more primal force at work within the soul of civilized man. Its name is cultural Marxism. And like a sycamore tree, when it's been shown to you, you begin to see them everywhere.

Karl Marx described economic class warfare in his 19th century book "Das Kapital." The Bolsheviks led the Russian Revolution and adopted Marxism in order to establish a "worker's paradise." It never worked, but the radical ideas spread among intellectuals in Europe, notably in Germany and Italy. With the rise of the anti-communist fascists in Nazi Germany, communist intellectuals of Frankfurt University

flod to the US. There they established themselves as "educators" at Columbia University where they developed cultural marxism, and then spread their ideas to Harvard, Chicago, Berkeley and numerous small teacher colleges.

There are many paths to transform a society. One is through violent revolution, another is the "long march through the institutions" as articulated by the Italian communist Antonio Gramsci. The Frankfurt school chose the latter as a way to "transform America," a phrase used by Obama.

The neo-Marxism of today has expanded from economic class warfare to, for instance, racial class warfare, as in BLM. Everything in Marxism is framed in terms of oppressor and the oppressed, such as racial minorities, even sexual minorities of LGBTQ+. As a result, the Osama bin Laden letter circulated on TikTok spewing anti-American vitriol and Hamas sympathizers have all glommed onto the Marxist ideology. Increasingly radical, useful idiots in universities and street "intellectuals" march to bring down the white patriarchy, Israel or anyone who disagrees with their intolerant views.

Some minorities like Hamas should be suppressed, and anyone who supports their atrocities should be branded a

pariah. The illogic of today's cultural Marxist is the identification of Israel as an oppressor, when in reality this small island of Judaism exists within an ocean of hostile Arab nations.

I admit my bias. I reject Marxism in all its iterations. I am an American and a Christian, but neither plays a role in my rejection of Hamas' savagery against civilized mankind.

The apostle Paul was said to be "a Jew's, Jew." He was a Pharisee and trained by the scholar Gamaliel. Yet, he persecuted the followers of Jesus until he encountered the risen Christ. He then spent the rest of his life as the foremost apologist for Christianity, particularly witnessing to gentiles like me.

In Paul's letter to the Romans (11:17-19) he uses the metaphor of grafting a "wild, olive shoot" onto an olive tree, to represent the incorporation of gentiles into the community of the faithful. So, in a philosophical and theological sense, Christ grafted me into the lineage of Judaism and I emerged Judeo-Christian.

So to paraphrase Paul, I will speak the truth, fight the good fight, keep the faith and finish the race no matter the consequences. Join me in this struggle against cultural Marxism and the devilish forces of darkness.

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

Getting to know Dale Nichols, a Dollywood Santa

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
steelym@knoxfocus.com

Dale Nichols is a Dollywood Santa Claus. My wife and I met him briefly after a visit to the theme park recently where we recognized that Santa beard immediately. Dollywood will be changing its theme from Autumn and Pumpkins to Christmas this week and catching a Santa right at the change of seasons was a treat.

We chatted for a while at the park and after I had returned home.

When did you first become Santa Claus?

In 2021 I bought a cheap

Santa Suit to do a parade in the RV Resort I was living in. To see the kids' faces light up — I was hooked. I love giving children and adults a few seconds of Christmas cheer 365 days a year.

What do you reply when someone asks if you are Santa?

I say, "Well, many people know me as Santa and I believe in the Magic of Christmas every day."

Tell us about being the official Dollywood Santa.

I am one of three this year, but I started as Santa for Dollywood five years ago when they needed a replacement Santa rather quickly. It was my 4th day on the job at Dollywood. The Santa's

List experience is magical for the kids, and when they come back to the park the next year — during the regular season — they recognize me.

What is your job at Dollywood when you're not playing Santa?

I am seasonal full-time. I work in Rentals, renting mobility scooters and strollers.

What's the most unusual thing you have encountered there as Santa?

Having an 86-year-old lady ask if she could sit on my lap. She had wanted to do that her entire life and never got the opportunity. I replied I would be honored to have her sit on my lap and tell

Continue on page 4



PHOTO BY LETTIE STEELY

Even out of his Santa costume you cannot help but recognize this Dollywood Santa. The Focus caught up with Dale Nichols in between the fall and Christmas seasons at the park.



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Santa will be busy

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
steelym@knoxfocus.com

Santa Claus is going to be very busy before the holiday, appearing in so many Knox County and nearby Christmas Parades. It's good that the jolly old elf has the power to be in more than one place at once.

The downtown Knoxville WIVK Christmas Parade is at 7 p.m. on Friday, December 1.

The following day, on Saturday, December 2, the Karns Christmas Parade starts at 6 p.m. and the Powell community's parade starts at 6 p.m. Luttrell's parade is on the 2nd as well at noon. Rocky Hill's parade is at 6 p.m. on that day.

Gibbs holds its parade on Sunday, Dec. 3 at 2:30. Kodak has its parade on the same day at 3 p.m.

The parade in Halls is scheduled for 6 p.m. on Saturday, December 9. Corryton has its parade also on December 9 at 11 a.m. and the nearby community of Blaine's parade is on the same day at 1 p.m. Seymour's 30th Annual Community Christmas Parade steps off at 3 p.m. Knoxville's Tour de Lights bike parade is on the 9th as well from 3 until 8 p.m. in Mary Costa Plaza next to the Coliseum.

The Farragut Christmas Parade is on Sunday, December 10, at 4 p.m. and Mascot's parade is at 2:30 that day.



Santa and his helpers spread holiday cheer at a previous Rocky Hill Christmas Parade.

Annual Rocky Hill Christmas Parade & Festival returns December 2

One of Knoxville's most eagerly anticipated holiday events, the Annual Rocky Hill Christmas Parade, is back for its 9th year on Saturday, December 2.

The festivities begin at 3:30 p.m. in the Rocky Hill Center (intersection of Northshore and Morrell in 37919), where a holiday market area will be open featuring an array of gifts from local artisans, local businesses, and food

options. Attendees can enjoy live reindeer, face painting, photo booths, kids' craft activities, and even a live story reading by none other than the Grinch himself!

Music lovers are in for a treat with a fantastic lineup of musical artists taking the stage. The headliner of the evening is local artist Will Carter at 4:45 p.m., with a performance by Whiskey Compass prior starting at

4 p.m.

The parade will step off at 6 p.m., featuring a colorful procession of beautifully decorated floats, marching bands, community groups, and of course, Santa Claus himself. A tree lighting by Santa will immediately follow the parade- perfect for the kids to watch. Get ready to be swept away by the magic and wonder of this heartwarming tradition- it gets better each

year. Admission to the Rocky Hill Christmas Parade and Festival is free, making it an accessible and inclusive event for everyone in the Knoxville area.

PARADE ROUTE: The Parade begins at the Rocky Hill Ballpark, passes Rocky Hill Elementary, goes down Morrell and turns on Northshore, where it ends at Rocky Hill Baptist Church.

Knox County to Host 25th Annual Holiday Festival of Lights at the Cove

Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs will flip the switch to open the 25th annual Holiday Festival of Lights at The Cove at Concord Park starting 6 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 1. (The Cove is located at 11808 S. Northshore Drive.)

Mayor Jacobs will also greet guests and hand out candy "Kanes."

The family-friendly Festival will run from 6 to 9 p.m. through Saturday, Dec. 31, excluding Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. It is free and open to the public though visitors are encouraged to bring non-perishable food items to donate to The Love Kitchen, which provides meals, clothing, and emergency food packages for the homebound, homeless, and unemployed.

Visitors also can make monetary donations via a QR code that will be available inside the River Sports Outfitter facility. Those donations will benefit the county's annual School Mania event that helps supply local students with free school supplies.

"This will be the 25th anniversary and traditions like this are what makes this time of year special," Knox County Mayor Glenn

Jacobs said. "Folks have the chance to drop by, enjoy the festive atmosphere, and even help give back to the community or just spend time taking in the lights and activities."

During the Festival, The Cove's three-quarter-mile greenway trail is illuminated by a sparkling light display coordinated to music. The Cove has several fire pits available for guests to warm up or roast s'mores. Pets on leashes are welcome.

Opening night will feature Storytime, and letters to Santa where patrons can gather under the pavilion and hear tales from traditional Christmas characters as they write their letters. The event also will feature an activity zone where children can make sugar cookies and ornaments. The department will even provide the crafts!

A concession stand will offer hot chocolate, pizza, hot dogs, nachos, and popcorn during the month. The 2023 Holiday Festival of Lights is sponsored by B97.5, which also will be onsite Dec. 1 with the Knox County Mayor's Office and the Knox County Parks and Recreation department.

Keeping The Beautiful Christmas Carols Of Christmas

Are you listening? "Silent Night." Do you hear them? "Away in a Manger."



By Ralphine Major
ralphine3@yahoo.com

Christmas carols. In many ways, the Christmas carols open the Christmas season for us. I have fond memories as a youngster of meeting at the church to go caroling. It was always fun

to go by various homes, stand outside the front door, and sing out the glorious words of the carols. Caroling is a simple but personal way to share the spirit of Christmas. Afterwards, it was a treat to meet back at the church for fellowship and hot chocolate.

In church services, Christmas carols help to prepare our hearts for worship. Recently, a generational divide seems to have pushed aside many of the timeless carols along with the inspirational stories behind them. As we enter this holy season celebrating the birth of Christ, may

you and your loved ones be blessed by these beautiful hymns that have withstood the test of time. Whether singing the carols during church worship; making memories around the Christmas tree; or making a joyful noise around the piano, may you and those with you find joy, peace, hope, and love in those classic songs we call "Christmas carols." Those who wrote the words and music had

often endured great hardships which inspired them to share their innermost thoughts and feelings. Their messages have sustained us for hundreds of years. May we never stop singing them. "Sleep in heavenly peace."

Words of Faith: "Delight yourself in the LORD, And He will give you the desires and petitions of your heart." Psalm 37:4 (AMP).



Colorful lights provide a festive setting in this beautiful nighttime picture of downtown Knoxville a few years ago, courtesy of longtime family friend Ann Arms Brogan who also shared the scripture for this week.

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Hi there! My name is **BART** and I am a male 6-year-old white Pit Bull and Terrier mix. I am always ready for snuggles and love. My favorite things are squeaker toys and playing tug of war. I am playful, sweet and social and like the company of female dogs. I would like to meet any resident dogs before coming home and prefer a house without cats. I am a gentle pup who does well with kids! Come meet me and other adoptable animals at Young-Williams Animal Center, 3201 Division St.

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Closed 1-2 p.m. for animal quiet time

The Merry Mortician

Kenneth S. Wherry of Nebraska

Pages from the Past



By Ray Hill
rayhill865@gmail.com

Kenneth Spicer Wherry is completely unknown to most readers today, but the Nebraskan was one of the better-known members of the United States Senate during his time. A superlative salesman, Wherry had taken the family furniture store and built it into an even larger store. Wherry also added an automobile dealership, a mortuary, a law office and a real estate firm, as well as the raising of livestock to his businesses. Wherry liked to describe himself as a "political fundamentalist" and he brought the same energy and passion to Republican politics as he did to his many businesses. That same zeal won him a rare distinction from his fellow GOP senators when he became the party whip as a freshman senator. In 1949, Ken Wherry became the Republican leader in the United States Senate.

One country editor recalled seeing Kenneth Wherry in his prime. Wherry was easy to spot, the writer recalled, as the senator was a frequent subject of photographers. "The graying thatch of hair, the flashing eyes and the big dark circles under them were distinctive features" of the senator. "He was not a huge man but he had a powerful-looking pair of shoulders and a barrel chest," the country editor remembered. "He wore expensively tailored clothes but there was a slouch about them that made him appear informal and very approachable."

As Senator Wherry rose to speak, he cried, "Open those windows... wide! Let me breathe the wholesome purity of those nice clean barnyard odors," the senator told his audience. "They're such a welcome contrast to what we have in Washington these days." The audience laughed in appreciation and the senator flashed a big grin as his listeners rewarded him with "near deafening applause."

The country editor noted Wherry's booming voice and wondered, "Were his lungs made of anything less durable than leather?"

The editor also recalled he developed an immediate and "intense dislike" for Wherry due to his having run against George W. Norris. In a weekly newspaper column, the writer confessed he had to be "won over" by Wherry. Invited to attend a luncheon in Omaha, the writer said his dislike of Kenneth Wherry was so deep his first instinct was to refuse the invitation. The country editor confessed the dislike dissipated and was replaced by something akin to grudging respect. Say what you might about Kenneth S. Wherry, he could never be ignored.

Wherry was a delight to

much of the press with his frequent malapropisms, such as "opple amportunity." One profile of Ken Wherry by TIME magazine said the Nebraskan's "words came so fast that he frequently lost control of them." TIME remembered when Wherry addressed Wayne Morse of Oregon as "the distinguished Senator from Junior." The senator's misstatements became known in the press as "Wherryisms."

Ken Wherry was the penultimate party man in the Senate. When Ohio's Senator Robert Taft introduced a public housing bill, Wherry darkly wondered if the Ohioan was drifting toward socialism. Yet Wherry was a constant and oftentimes effective critic of the New Deal and Harry Truman's Fair Deal. Aside from farm subsidies, Wherry was almost always in opposition to policies from Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman's White House. Senator Wherry denounced the Greek-Turkish Loan as a "military adventure."

Kenneth S. Wherry's political career was brief but also successful. At the time of his death, some saw the Nebraskan as a potential running mate for whomever the GOP nominated for president in 1952. Wherry himself said he much preferred serving as the majority leader of the U.S. Senate in a Republican administration.

Wherry came from the heartland of America and Midwesterners, Democrats and Republicans, were suspicious of foreign entanglements. The Midwest, politically speaking, was also the heartland of isolationism in the country. Like most every other congressman or U.S. senator representing a midwestern state, Kenneth S. Wherry had the same outlook. In 1951, Wherry sponsored a resolution that required the approval of Congress before the president could send troops to Europe. The Wherry Resolution was debated in the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee. There the two wings of the Republican Party snapped and snarled at one another. Perhaps the most effective witness to come before the Foreign Relations Committee during consideration of the Wherry Resolution was Governor Thomas E. Dewey of New York, twice the GOP presidential nominee. Dewey oratorically blasted the Wherry Resolution as the last "little toehold of isolationism... the last gasp of... a school of thought which basically would like to withdraw from all the world to our own shores."

"Adoption of the [Wherry] resolution would be a simple, direct notice to Stalin that we do not



FROM THE AUTHOR'S PERSONAL COLLECTION.

Autographed portrait of Senator Kenneth S. Wherry of Nebraska.

intend to back up our men in Europe and that they and Europe are his for the asking," Dewey told the Foreign Relations Committee. Governor Dewey said the United States had served such notice "America would not intervene" twice before with disastrous consequences; once to Kaiser Wilhelm and again to Adolf Hitler. The New York governor flatly stated, "fortress America is an illusion."

Once when Senator Tom Connally of Texas let fly a heartfelt "damn" on the floor of the Senate, Wherry took umbrage, saying the word was "beneath the dignity of the Senate." The colorful Texan apologized as only he could, withdrawing his use of the word and bellowing, "I know my colleagues are delicate."

A native of Pawnee City, Nebraska, Wherry began his political career as a member of the city council and later served as mayor. Wherry served a term as a member of Nebraska's state Senate where he was viewed as something of a radical. Kenneth Wherry sought the GOP nomination for governor in 1932 and lost. Two years later, Wherry ran for the Republican nomination for the United States Senate, but he was beaten by Congressman Robert Simmons. Wherry was once again elected mayor of Pawnee City and served as chairman of Nebraska's Republican Party and as director of the Western Region of the National Republican Party. During Wherry's time as chairman of the Nebraska Republican Party, the GOP saw a revival of its political fortunes in the Cornhusker State. The GOP recaptured the governorship and won a seat in the United States Senate from the Democrats under Wherry's leadership in 1940.

Wherry announced his candidacy for the U.S. Senate in 1942, seeking the GOP nomination to challenge incumbent Senator

George W. Norris. Norris was a favorite of the national media, a progressive Republican who had bolted his party to support Alfred E. Smith, a Democrat, over GOP presidential nominee Herbert Hoover in the 1928 election. Norris, knowing he would likely lose if he sought reelection as a Republican, opted to run as an Independent. Norris won the 1930 election and was reelected in 1936. Senator Norris was a favorite of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and had supported most of the New Deal. In 1942, Norris was challenged by both a Republican and a Democrat in the general election. Ken Wherry charged, "Norris has lent respectability to the New Deal."

Wherry won the GOP nomination with better than 66% of the vote and waged a hard-hitting campaign against the incumbent. While Wherry did not win a majority of the vote in the contest, he won easily, beating Norris by more than 77,000 ballots. By defeating George W. Norris, Ken Wherry had killed off a political giant and entered the United States Senate better known than most of his freshman colleagues.

Once a member of the world's greatest deliberative body, Kenneth Wherry was noticed immediately. In early 1943, Wherry was sitting at his seat in the very back of the Senate Chamber when another senator began a speech in a low monotone. "What's going on down there?" Wherry roared from the rear. "I can't hear you!" The speaker duly raised his voice and the Senate became acquainted with the new senator from the Cornhusker State who almost always said what he thought.

Only a year later, Ken Wherry's enthusiasm, energy and ability caused his Republican colleagues to name him the GOP Whip. Nor was Ken Wherry easily swayed. It did not bother

him to register his own view irrespective of what the rest of the Senate might do. Senator Wherry cast the lone vote against the confirmation of Dean Acheson to serve as under secretary of state. Wherry's opinion of Acheson never deviated from his original opposition and the Nebraskan became the most vocal critic of the urbane secretary of state inside the U.S. Senate.

Senator Wherry was also a firm political opponent of President Harry Truman and his administration. Wherry was a critic of what he believed to be excessive spending by the government, as well as price controls. Wherry charged the Truman Administration was nothing less than "creeping socialism." Senator Wherry was an advocate of the Air Force, believing mastery of the air gave any military power a huge advantage in any skirmish or war.

As an irritant to the Democrats in the U.S. Senate, Kenneth S. Wherry was never to be underestimated. One newspaper remembered the Nebraskan as "the Senate's hair shirt, the burr under the majority's saddle, the tack in Scott Lucas' (the majority leader) seat." Paul Douglas, a former professor of economics and a very liberal senator from Illinois complained Wherry engaged in "psychological warfare" against Democrats, comparing Wherry's tactics to those of the marauding Comanche Indians who surrounded whites and proceeded to "shout and indulge in their war whoops, and strike terror in the hearts of the poor travelers." If so, Ken Wherry relentlessly continued his hunt for political scalps and pressed his political raids on unsuspecting Democrats in the Senate and nationally. Wherry once baited majority leader Alben Barkley into near incoherence on the Senate floor and then honey-dripping off his words,

wondered if Barkley were too mad to yield the floor for just one more question. "I'm not mad! I'm not mad! I'm not mad!" a crimson-faced and livid Barkley screamed.

As Ken Wherry rose in the ranks of his party in the Senate, the real power inside the Republican caucus was Robert Taft. Wherry grew increasingly sensitive, especially with the members of the press. The Nebraskan was constantly reminding reporters he was the minority leader. "Taft!" Wherry screamed at the press gathered to inquire about the Republican position on the legislation. "All I hear is Taft! What will Taft do?"

"I don't know what Taft will do," Wherry snarled angrily. "I'm telling you what Ken Wherry will do."

Kenneth Wherry was ailing. Suffering from cancer, the senator underwent an operation to "remove a growth in his intestines." Wherry left the hospital to recover, but returned in November of 1959 after suffering from a fever, chills and "respiratory problems." Unfortunately, Wherry caught pneumonia and died in George Washington Hospital at 59.

The editor of the Hastings, Nebraska, Daily Tribune lamented Wherry's death, saying the senator's friends and enemies alike agreed Wherry was a man of conviction. There was nothing artificial about Ken Wherry. The Nebraskan never pretended to be a student of government nor did it bother him that he was not exalted by the national news media as were Walter George of Georgia or Arthur Vandenberg of Michigan. Ken Wherry had been content to fight for his people, who shared his convictions. One Democratic member of the U.S. Senate said Wherry "causes the Democrats more trouble than any five other Republicans." Yet the senator also acknowledged, "But how can you get angry at him and stay angry when he's such a good guy?"

Kenneth Wherry was a small-town American who made good in business and exemplified the "super-salesman" who was a thorough extrovert and never met a stranger. As one newspaper editorialized following his death, Ken Wherry "had been a sprinter at the University of Nebraska, and he never stopped running."

Nor did Ken Wherry ever hold differing opinions against others while remaining a man of strong opinions himself. Wherry remained friends with those of differing points of views or beliefs. Today that seems almost unimaginable.

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Cast Iron Cooking

It's no surprise to folks that I love to eat. However, how picky I am about what I do consume might shock some. Whether the food was prepared by my mother or my wife, I never really considered



By Joe Rector
joerector@comcast.net

the tools they used in preparations of those meals.

Mother had a couple of pans that matched. Copper bottom pots were the rage at some point, and she had a large and small one that held some of the most delicious food that was ever cooked.

My dear mother most often used the "old tools" of the trade. Yes, she had cast iron skillets. Fried food never tasted better than when it was prepared in those skillets. She kept them greased so that they continued to produce food with that "southern" flavor. A small pot sat on the stove. It contained the drippings from fried bacon or chicken or okra. A dab of that

recycled Crisco made everything a special dish.

She also had a Dutch Oven. On Sundays, she'd be up early to start dinner. That cooking pot weighed a ton even before she filled it with beef roast, potatoes, carrots, and onions. Just before leaving for church, Mother slid the cast iron pot into the oven so that the food cooked slowly. After church, she removed the monstrous Dutch Oven and served up a meal fit for royalty.

One Christmas, Daddy gave Mother an electric skillet. We fretted that the chicken she'd always fried in an old black skillet wouldn't taste as good. We of little faith discovered that our fears were unfounded. What made that chicken so delicious was a big scoop of Crisco and a ton of Mother's love. At the same time, we were thrilled that the cooking took less time.

Amy also has cast iron skillets passed down from family. She has a set of pots and pans that are stick-free, at least when she cooks. When I try my hand at the skill, gunk covers those same pots, and food is stuck to the "unstuckable" coating.

We are living in a wonderful age. So many new appliances make cooking much easier for the family chef. The Insta-pot allows folks to load a meal into it and have it ready when everyone arrives home in the evening. It's the latest version of a crockpot.

The most wonderful new product in our home is the air-fryer. We haven't eaten fried foods in years because we work to keep our bodies healthier. This machine is marvelous

because it offers consumers foods that have a fried taste without the Crisco or other oils that clog arteries and choke hearts. I personally like the air-fryer because of time. Our convection oven takes half a day to preheat; the air-fryer is ready in just a couple of minutes. I'm all about eating when hunger hits, not a half hour later.

I sometimes miss the taste of the food Mother made. However, after nearly 50 years, I prefer Amy's cooking over anyone else's. She's perfected the meals we enjoy most and uses those appliances that prepare the food in a healthy way. If I ever crave Mother's fried chicken, I can always make a stop at Gus's Fried Chicken.

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Community Christmas Day

On Sunday, December 3, 2023, from 1:00-3:00 p.m., First Farragut United Methodist Church, 12733 Kingston Pike, will host its sixteenth Christmas Community Day serving neighbors and families in our community.

The 16th Anniversary edition of CCD will feature a Toy Center, Children's Books Center, Photo with Santa Center, Children's and Adult Clothing /Coat Center and a Grocery Center. In 2022, over 100 volunteers served 392 guests who came from Knoxville, Loudon, Roane, Monroe and other

surrounding counties. In addition to clothing, toys and books, the families received a full bag of groceries and household necessities.

Reservations for this event are required and space is limited. Guests have two options to make a reservation. They may come to First Farragut UMC, 12733 Kingston Pike, and pick up a reservation card on Friday, Dec. 1 between 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. or online at www.ffumc.org/register. The parking lot opens Sunday at noon.

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Getting to know Dale Nichols, a Dollywood Santa

Cont. from page 1

me what she wanted for Christmas. Her response was, "I just got my wish, sitting on Santa's lap and having my picture made with him."

When you are Santa there what are your duties?

Having the families view Santa working in a cabin provided by Dolly to work on the Nice List. Santa also is on the Emporium Balcony each evening when the park closes to say good-bye and goodnight to everyone as they leave the park.

Tell us about yourself.

I am a retired trauma nurse. The Love of my Life, Celena, is my soul mate and Frank Edward, my 110-pound pit bull, thinks he is a 2-pound lap dog.

I am just recovering from neck cancer. In 2022 I had to go through proton therapy and chemotherapy, but for now, I am cancer-free.

"Thank you, and may you have the spirit of Christmas Each and Every Day. Makes every day better for me," he concluded.

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THE FOCUS / COACHES' 2023 ALL-KNOX COUNTY FOOTBALL TEAM

Brockwell and Barrett had special seasons

Four Webb School seniors walk out for the coin toss at David Meske Stadium this season. From left to right: Cooper Cameron, Markeis Barrett, Jack Wagner and Ari Klasky. All four are All-Knox County honorees. Photo by Dan Dunlap.



By Steve Williams

Gibbs running back Boone Brockwell was a touchdown maker and Webb wide receiver/ defensive back Markeis Barrett had a knack for catching the football on either side of the line of scrimmage.

The two seniors are special players on The Focus / Coaches' 2023 All-Knox County Football team, which is based on the 10-game regular season.

Brockwell, who ran for 1,244

yards, edged Bearden sophomore Jayzon Thompson for the rushing title. But what really got the attention of the fans in Corryton were the two records he set along the way. He scored a single game record six touchdowns and set a single season record of 29 touchdowns.

"The key to Boone's success was he battled through adversity his first three years with several different injuries," said Gibbs Head Coach Brad Turner.

For the most part, Brockwell

stayed healthy this year, added Turner.

"Boone has always had a lot of talent; even as a freshman," said the Eagles' coach. "He worked hard this past off season to get bigger and stronger and it paid off."

Twenty six of Brockwell's 29 TDs were on running plays. He caught a touchdown pass and returned a punt and interception for the other two.

Meanwhile, one of the Knox **Continue on page 2**



PHOTO BY JASON CANTRELL

C.J. Smith (44) and Anderson Smith (18) were thorns in the Walker Valley Mustangs' side much of the game, including a fumble on the first play from scrimmage, which Smith recovered.

HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL Anderson County outduels Lady Panthers in 3-point shootout

By Ken Lay

It was a shootout at Powell High School as the Lady Panthers renewed acquaintances on the hardwood Tuesday night. And when the dust had settled, the Lady Mavericks left the Jeff Hunter Gymnasium with a hard-fought 77-73 victory.

Anderson County and the Lady Panthers combined to knock down 25 three-point shots.

It was the Lady Mavericks (3-2) who got the best of things from distance as they buried 16 shots from beyond the 3-point arc. Powell, which opened an early 9-4 lead, made nine long-range jumpers and held a narrow 34-33 lead at halftime after the teams matched baskets in the first quarter and were locked in a 14-14 after opening frame to a late run by Anderson County.

The two teams played at **Continue on page 6**

West D-feats Walker Valley, 38-3

Title rematch with Page Patriots Friday

By Steve Williams

The West High Rebels make defensive football fun to watch.

For their fans anyway. For the opposition, it may seem more like a nightmare.

Coach Lamar Brown's team had a ball Friday night, turning back Walker Valley 38-3 in the Class 5A semifinals at Bill Wilson Field.

West has now played

17 straight quarters without allowing a touchdown. That includes the four playoff games and the fourth quarter of the regular season win over Powell.

"Our defense is doing a great job chasing the football," said Coach Brown. "They have been a fun group to watch. They play with a lot of effort and energy."

Now it's on to Chattanooga for a shot at a second straight state championship and the school's third overall. Page High of Franklin will

be the opponent again. The Patriots lost last year 47-13. Page also played Powell for the title in 2021 and fell 42-34.

Friday night's game at Finley Stadium will kick off at 7. Both teams are 13-1. West has won 28 of its past 29 games.

The Rebels took command of the semifinal contest right from the start, knocking Walker Valley quarterback Evan Schwarzl loose of the ball on the game's first play from scrimmage and seeing big C.J. Smith corral it at the

Mustangs' 18-yard line. Running back Marshaun Bowers capitalized with a 5-yard TD run three plays later.

Schwarzl had a strong arm but made some costly errors. After a 45-yard kickoff return by Hudson Makuch, Walker Valley got in scoring range on its second possession but had to settle for Eli Wilson's 39-yard field goal.

Later in the quarter, the West defense struck hard again as Anderson Smith and Aeman Mohammed had back-to-back tackles

for loss. The Mustangs' QB, who also is the punter, tried to fake a punt and run, but was tackled by Mesijah Wrenn for a 9-yard loss.

The Rebels took over at the visitors' 39 and Bowers raced in from 14 yards out for his second TD. Patrick Schmid's second PAT made it 14-3.

On the ensuing kickoff it got worse for the Mustangs as Makuch fumbled and Ryan Scott recovered it at the 39. Wrenn got credit for causing the turnover.

Continue on page 6

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COACH OF THE YEAR: HALLS' BRENT HUGHES



PHOTO BY RANSOM WAYLAND

Halls Coach Brent Hughes speaks to his team after its win at Gibbs in Week 2. Hughes was voted the Knox County Coach of the Year after the Red Devils' turnaround season.

McMillan: He played and coaches 'the right way'

By Steve Williams

After a 2-8 regular season record last year, Halls got off to a hot start in August.

In his second year as head coach at Halls, Brent Hughes said before the start "we are going to lean heavily on our offensive and defensive line. They are going to be the heartbeat of our team."

After a 42-7 win at Carter, the Red Devils were 5-0 with Powell their next opponent at home. There was a lot of interest in this Halls team.

The Panthers put out the fire with a 34-17 victory.

Halls lost only one more before the end of the regular season and that was a 20-9 defeat at West.

The Red Devils would have liked to have enjoyed some success in the playoffs, but drew a tough road test in the first round and fell to Morristown West 35-14.

Still, it had been a turnaround season for Coach Hughes and his peers have selected him The Knoxville Focus / Coaches' Knox County Coach of the Year.

"He did a phenomenal job turning around a team that was 2-8 a year ago and is going 8-2 this year," said Central's Nick Craney, who



PHOTO BY STEVE WILLIAMS

Halls Coach Brent Hughes fits a player with shoulder pads back in the preseason.

was one of the coaches to vote for Hughes.

Jeff McMillan's Fulton Falcons also lost to Halls 21-0 this past season and he came away very impressed with Hughes.

"Brent is a first class young man and excellent football coach in that order," said McMillan. "He has done a great job with the program at Halls. I've enjoyed watching him grow from a high school player who played the game the right way into a high school coach that runs his program the right way. He was a great competitor when I coached against him as a player, and

he brings that same passion as a coach."

The perfect 5-0 start led to Hughes being named the Week 4 Tennessee Titans' High School Coach of the Week after the Red Devils' win over Carter.

Hughes grew up playing football in Halls from the Hopper division through high school, said longtime youth coach Ted Williams.

Brad Turner of Gibbs was second in the voting. Others receiving votes were Don Mahoney of Webb, Josh Jones of Bearden and Lamar Brown of West.

Brockwell and Barrett had special seasons

Cont. from page 1

County statistical leaders on the defensive side was also an offensive threat. Barrett, a Mr. Football finalist, intercepted nine passes – four more than his nearest competitor. The Spartan had enough receiving yardage (739 yards) to be in the Top 5, but even better than that, Markeis had the moves, speed and hands to rank No. 1 with 12 TD catches.

The team's receiving corps also includes Carter senior athlete Spencer Russell.

The field general of the offensive backfield is Catholic junior Jayden Neal, who earned the

quarterback spot on the team by passing for 2,168 yards and 21 touchdowns. Center Byron Finger, a 45-game career starter at Powell, leads the offensive line.

Shane Cherry, Austin-East junior, is an Athlete on the first team. Known more for his basketball talents, he came out for his first year of football and raised a lot of eyebrows. As the Roadrunners' quarterback, he passed for 1,443 yards and nine touchdowns and ran for 777 yards and 13 TDs.

On the defensive side of the All-Knox County team, Central Coach Nick Craney said his junior nose guard,

Jake Holbert, made two game-winning stops at the 1-yard line this past season, with the second one at Heritage wrapping up a playoff berth for the Bobcats.

Player of the Year Steven Soles Jr. of Powell and West's C.J. Smith are big-play DEs.

The linebacker corps includes Ryan Scott of West, who no doubt is on his way for more All-State honors this year. Webb LB Cooper Cameron was a Mr. Football semifinalist and Halls linebacker Kameron Bates was also a determined competitor as a running back for the Red Devils.

THE FOCUS / COACHES' ALL-KNOX COUNTY FOOTBALL TEAM

FIRST TEAM

Offense

QB-Jayden Neal, Catholic, jr.
RB-Boone Brockwell, Gibbs, sr.
RB-Jayzon Thompson, Bearden, so.
OL-Jesse Massengill, Powell, sr.
OL-Jackson Alvey, Halls, sr.
OL-Byron Finger, Powell, sr.
OL-Nick Goodwin, Halls, sr.
OL-Cooper Wyatt, Central, sr.
WR-Spencer Russell, Carter, sr.
WR-Tyreek King, Catholic, soph.
WR-Dante Strickland, Central, sr.
Ath-Shane Cherry (A-E), jr.

Defense

E-Steven Soles Jr., Powell, sr.
L-Ari Klasky, Webb, sr.
L-Jake Holbert, Central, jr.
L-Wyatt Deroche, West, jr.
E-C.J. Smith, West, sr.
LB-Cooper Cameron, Webb, sr.
LB-Ryan Scott, West, sr.
LB-Jack Alley, Farragut, sr.
LB-Kameron Bates, Halls, sr.
B-Markeis Barrett, Webb, sr.
B-Torin McAfee, Central, soph.

Special Teams

KS-Owen Taylor, Halls, sr.
PK-Benji Angola, Gibbs, sr.
P-Nathan Holbrook, HVA, jr.
RS-Braylon Harmon, Catholic, sr.
LS-Roger McNeer, Farragut, sr.

SECOND TEAM

Offense

QB-Jack Wagner, Webb, sr.
RB-Connor Wheeler, Powell, jr.
RB-Jalen Hill, Webb, sr.
RB-Marshaun Bowers, West, sr.
L-Avrey Mohr, Farragut, sr.
L-Nathan Harville, Farragut, sr.
L-Luke Tidwell, Gibbs, sr.
L-Blake Neely, Powell, sr.
L-Judd Taylor, Carter, jr.
TE-Drew Ross, Halls, jr.
WR-Syxx Hoard, West, jr.
Ath-Deuce Rodgers, Powell, so.

Defense

E-Michael Stewart, HVA, jr.
L-Antori Hamilton, Catholic, sr.
L-Vershaun Cash, Fulton, sr.
L-Caleb Turner, Halls, sr.
E-Charvon Thomas, Powell, jr.
LB-Anderson Smith, West, sr.
LB-Wyatt West, Gibbs, sr.
B-Harvey Niendorf, Webb, sr.
B-Markus Jackson, Powell, sr.
B-Landis Davila, Farragut, sr.
B-Sam Cummins, Bearden, sr.

Special Teams

K-Daniel Kinney, Bearden, jr.
P-Lucas Hollifield, GCA, sr.
KR-Tory Beaufort, Bearden, soph.

HONORABLE MENTION

Austin-East

WR-DeMarcus Allen, sr.
OL/DL-Tylan Baker, sr.
S/CB-Mike Gladney, jr.
RB-Dimere Ligon, jr.

Bearden

LB-Kai Ironside, jr.
P-William Pendergrass, jr.

CAK

Ath-Sloan Helton, CAK, sr.
WR-Will Kelley, jr.
RB-Lincoln Rich, jr.
LB-Maddox Mozingo, jr.

CARTER

Ath-Jody Scruggs, Carter, so.

Catholic

DE-Keilyn Smith, sr.
ILB-Bryson Gardner, sr.

Central

RB-Frank Johnson IV, sr.
TE/LB/Ath-Daniel Sackie, jr.
DT-Cassen Garrison, soph.
DB-Javaston Badgett, soph.

Farragut

RB-Wyatt Drummy, sr.

Fulton

QB-Dexter Moulden, sr.
RB-Albert Johnson, jr.
WR-Derrick Smith, jr.
LB-Travari'a Allen, jr.
OLB-Joe Moore, jr.
OL-Garrin Bailey, jr.

Gibbs

LB/RB-Brady Hughes, jr.
DE-Cash Mount, sr.
CB-Levi Allison, jr.
OL-Wyatt Bentley, soph.
LB-DaJuan Harris, soph.

Grace Christian

Ath-Steven Riffey, GCA, sr.
QB-Weston Edmondson, jr.
LB-Jackson Coffey, fr.
LB-Parker Whittaker, soph.
WR-Blake Perkey, soph.
RB/Ath-Terrion Thomas, fr.

Halls

QB-Amari Lethgo, soph.
DB-Gavin Harrop, sr.
DB-Michael Harrop, sr.
LB-Brody Rogers, soph.

Hardin Valley

LB-Tommy Joseph, sr.
SS-Pierce Palmer, sr.

Karns

WR/DB-Walker Lockhart, sr.
Ath-Alex Idol, jr.
OL-Brody Cassell, sr.

Powell

PK-Dylan Stooksbury, jr.
OL-Joshua Fife-Offshack, sr.

South-Doyle

QB-Maddox Cupp, sr.
WR-Marquail Patterson, jr.
WR-TJ Tipton, jr.
WR-S Bryan McCelwee Jr., sr.
K-Jonah Mitchell, soph.

Webb

DL-Ethan Klasky, sr.
OL-Xavier Hickman, sr.
WR-Greg Tate, soph.

West

OL-Britton Carver, sr.
OL-Jack Codevilla, sr.
TE-Dominique Davis, jr.
DB-Antwain Burdine, jr.
LB-Bryson Leyva, sr.



PHOTO BY JJ SPEARS

Two members of the All-Knox County first team -- Carter's Spencer Russell (left) and Gibbs' Boone Brockwell -- go against each other in Week 8 at the newly renovated Ernest Whited Stadium in Corryton.

Farragut's Jack Alley, also one of the first-team linebackers, finished his prep career with the Admirals ranked second all-time in tackles. The Air Force commit had 132 tackles in the regular season, with 84 being solo stops.

Owen Taylor's spot on the

first team is "KS" for kicking specialist. The Halls senior had the second best punting average, second most kicking points and was second in touchbacks. He's also a Mr. Football finalist.

Braylon Harmon of Catholic also is part of the Special Teams as a return

specialist. During the regular season, he returned four kickoffs and two punts for touchdowns.

The All-Knox County team also includes a second team and an honorable mention list.

'I'm not changing my offense for anyone'

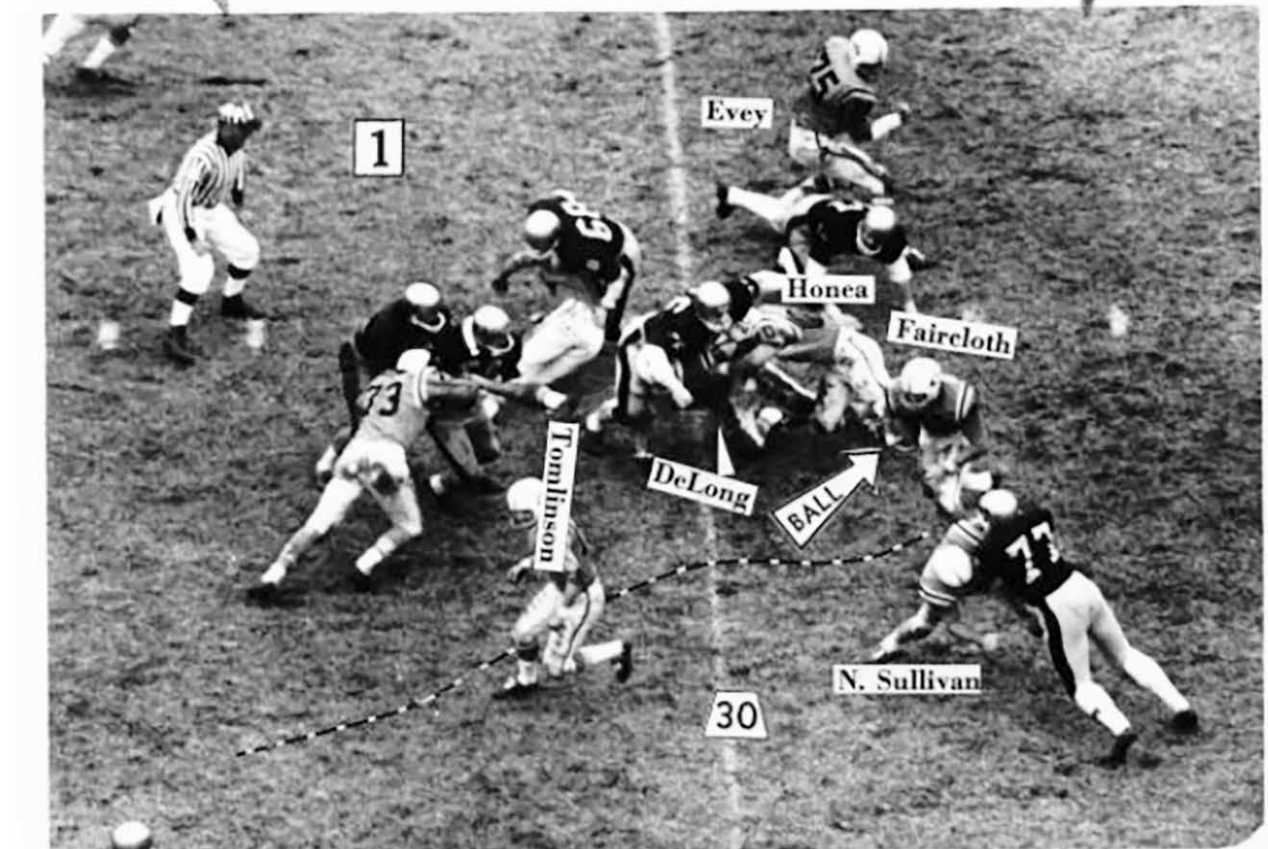
The single-wing offense, a staple of Tennessee football since the ascension of Bob Neyland as head coach in 1926, took its last breath on Nov. 30, 1963, as the Vols took a 14-0 decision over Vanderbilt. It was a cold, wet Saturday on Shields-Watkins Field, the final contest of a 5-5 season.

Mallon Faircloth, a senior from Cordele, Ga., earned the plaudits of history as the last single-wing tailback, running for 179 yards, including a 72-yard touchdown run. Sophomore fullback Stan Mitchell got the other score after a fumble recovery by sophomore linebacker Frank Emanuel. It was also the final game as head coach for Jim McDonald, hired in June after Bowden Wyatt was let go.

No one billed the game as "Tribute to the Single-Wing Day," but events leading up to and during that weekend made it clear the times were definitely changing football-wise on the Hill.

History was in one of its cycles of change, as News Sentinel Sports Editor Tom Siler wrote in 1970 describing the 1963 college football landscape.

"The high school boy, by 1964 infected with the virus of pro football, saw stardom ahead," wrote Siler. "He was playing the 'T' in high school, wanted to play the 'T' in college,



Mallon Faircloth, Tennessee's last single-wing tailback, is shown in the 1963 Vanderbilt game wearing the so-called "Halloween" jerseys

and further prepare himself for the golden years in pro football."

Tennessee "was defeated before it got started in recruiting until Doug Dickey came along," Siler wrote.

The poster boys for the switch to the "T" from the single wing were both Tennesseans, quarterbacks Steve Spurrier of Johnson City and Steve Sloan of Cleveland. Spurrier ended up at Florida, Sloan at Alabama.

In his book on head basketball coach Ray Mears, Ron Bliss writes that Ray was involved in a momentous plan that could have changed the course of Tennessee athletic history.

Mears wanted to have Spurrier to play football and basketball and asked him "what it would take for him to sign with Tennessee in football," knowing that he was too good a football player to come to Knoxville for hoops only.

"Steve told me he didn't like Wyatt's wingback offense, and he'd have to change to more of a passing offense before he'd consider coming," Mears said. "So, I went back, told Bowden and he said, 'I'm not changing my offense for anyone.'"

There was also the reverence among segments of the Vol fan base for the glory days under Neyland

and Wyatt. "They had grown up on the single-wing, loved the matchless precision of it, and naturally hated to see it go," Siler wrote.

There were also indisputable facts, however. The Vols hadn't been in a bowl game since 1957, and the Vols were in the upper half of the SEC only once between 1958 and 1963. The record in those years was 30-27-3, not what Vol fans had become accustomed to. The Vols had finished 10th in the conference in 1962 and eighth in 1963.

Home attendance in 1963 averaged 30,141 in a 51,527-seat stadium. There had been

highlights, streak-breaking wins over Auburn and LSU in 1959, and lowlights, losses to Chattanooga and Florida State in 1958, but there was a rising feeling the game had passed the single-wing by. LSU, Auburn, Alabama, and Ole Miss were acknowledged national powers. Georgia Tech, another long-time rival, was still strong.

Things came to a head at a contentious meeting of athletics board members and key trustees before and after the Vanderbilt game. McDonald was made an assistant athletic director, and new athletic director Bob Woodruff was given approval to hire

the new head coach. That new coach was Arkansas assistant Doug Dickey, Woodruff's quarterback in the early 1950s at Florida. It was a decision that caught media and fans alike off guard.

After a 4-5-1 record in 1964, Dickey brought Tennessee back to glory in 1965, and the Vols have stayed there over the next decades, with a few, but not very many, rough patches along the way.

Dickey believed strongly in the adage, "If you're not the lead dog, the view never changes." Coming to the Vols having played for Woodruff and having coached under Frank Broyles, who played for Bobby Dodd, Dickey understood the Tennessee winning tradition.

"The Neyland years were not that far back. Bowden Wyatt had done a great job of coaching wherever he had been. Things had gotten a little out of hand. Some changes needed to be made by the university, and they were," said Dickey.

The 1963 Vanderbilt game and its aftermath ended one era and started another, passing the torch to a new generation. It was a significant and memorable time in the history of the Tennessee program.

The transition may not have been picture-perfect, but the verdict of history reflects positively on the happenings that last November Saturday.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR: STEVEN SOLES JR.



Left: Knox County Player of the Year Steven Soles Jr. of Powell goes airborne to try and block a West kick in the Class 5A quarterfinal game on Nov. 17. Right: Powell defensive end Steven Soles Jr. has a pensive look in the Panthers' game at West that ended his senior season in the playoffs. Soles was voted the Knox County Player of the Year and West Coach Lamar Brown said he is the "most explosive" player he has ever coached against.

'Most explosive' I've ever coached against – Brown

By Steve Williams

The Knox County 2023 Player of the Year continues to work and loves to play football.

Powell High senior defensive end Steven Soles Jr. has been chosen for The Focus / Coaches' award, which is based on the 10-game regular season.

"I feel so proud of the young man," said Powell Head Coach Matt Lowe after being notified of the results in the voting last week.

"Since the time he was a freshman, serving through his sophomore season and last year as a junior, he's continued to work. He's a

young man, who I've said for multiple years now, that loves playing football. On a Tuesday at practice he loves playing football. And certainly on a Friday, he loves playing football.

"When you follow those guys and they happen to be built in a great frame, with great athleticism, it's amazing how good of football players they become."

The 6-2, 225-pound Soles totaled 81 tackles, with 63 solo stops, 12 TFL and seven sacks as Powell went 7-3 prior to the playoffs. He also had 39 QB pressures, five forced fumbles, four PBUs, one interception, two blocked kicks

and one touchdown. Soles, a Kentucky commit, still got double-teamed a lot this year, even though the Powell coaching staff tried to find a way to stop it.

"Instead of him being out on the edge, we'll put him down inside," said Coach Lowe. "He seemed to be getting double-teamed the most of this year. We certainly tried to avoid the double teams."

Because of it, Soles "hasn't had the statistical year like he's had in the past," said Lowe. "Last year he had 16 sacks, this year nine. "It's allowed some

one-on-one matchups for other guys.

"It's not like he had a bad year," continued the Powell coach. "For most people, those stats would be a phenomenal year. We're all just used to Steven putting up video game-type numbers on a year to year basis."

West's Lamar Brown, who was one of the coaches who voted for Soles, said: "Steven is the most explosive young man that I have ever coached against. He is a player that makes you game plan around him. I believe that he will make an immediate impact at Kentucky. He has a very bright future playing this

game." Another coach who voted for Soles, Karns' Lee Warren, emailed: "Can't be blocked one versus one. Elite physicality and get off. Extremely versatile within the front 7."

Other votes went to Farragut's Landis Davila, Gibbs' Boone Brockwell, Carter's Spencer Russell, Bearden's Jayzon Thompson and Catholic's Braylon Harmon.

An excited Steven Soles Jr. jumps and smiles at The Jungle, where Powell won some big games en route to a Class 5A state championship in 2021, his sophomore season. Photo / Lizzi Lowe.



HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL

Defensive change helps Panthers remain undefeated

By Ken Lay

For the first half of its early-season basketball game against Anderson County, Powell High School's boys basketball team struggled to contain the Mavericks. The Panthers faced a halftime deficit.

But a defensive adjustment proved to be the element that would help Powell keep its perfect record intact with 61-52 victory Tuesday night at Powell's Jeff Hunter Gymnasium.

"We came out and we started in full-court (man-to-man defense) and we weren't really prepared for that because we've only had our football players out for a couple of days," Panthers' coach Gary Barnes said. "I thought they were getting by us, so we switched to half-court man after halftime.

That worked as Powell (3-0), which recently got its football players after the Panthers were eliminated by West High in the TSSAA Class 5A quarterfinals of the football playoffs on Nov. 17.

The switch in defensive tactics proved to be just what the Panthers, who trailed, 17-13, at the end of the first quarter and trimmed the deficit to 30-27 by halftime.

But Anderson County (1-4) did its part to help Powell pick up the win according to its second-year head coach Jordan Jeffers.

"They took the press off us a little bit and we took some bad shots," Jeffers said. "We took some bad shots and made some bad shots in the first half and that was fool's gold.

"You can't shoot 25 percent from the floor and even worse from three and miss free throws and expect to win. Defensively, we probably played well enough to win, but we were absolutely atrocious offensively and that's my fault."

Anderson County scored just 22 points after the break and was held to just nine points in the third frame. Still, the Mavericks were only down, 45-39, heading into the final eight minutes.

While the Mavericks struggled, Powell's



PHOTO BY TAMMY HEARD.

Powell High's Nathan Russell (34) takes it to the hoop as Anderson County's Ryan McGhee trails the play. Russell scored 18 points as the Panthers defeated the Mavericks, 61-52, Tuesday night at the Jeff Hunter Gymnasium.

top two offensive players heated up after the break. Kaleb Walker scored 23 of his game-high 28 points in the second half and Nathan Russell 10 of his 18 points over the final 16 minutes.

"Both of those guys are great players," Barnes said. "They play with great intensity and they do things the way we want to do things."

Despite their offensive struggles, the Mavericks had three players post double figures in the scoring column. Reigning District 4-3A Most Valuable Player Brandon Dake had 16 points. Cole Russell added 14 and Ryan McGhee finished with 12.



PHOTO BY JASON CANTRELL

West's Mesijah Wrenn tackles Walker Valley QB/P Evan Schwarzl for a 9-yard loss on a fake punt in the first quarter. The Rebels will go against Page Friday night in Chattanooga for their second state title in a row.

West D-feats Walker Valley, 38-3

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Again the Rebels capitalized as Devin Jamison scored on a 36-yard run behind good blocking on the left side of the line to increase the advantage to 21-3.

West ended the first half with a 15-play march that resulted in Schmid's 21-yard field goal. Quarterback Hunter Dance picked up a first down with a 13-yard run in the final minute of the drive.

The Mustangs got in the red zone on their first possession of the second half, but Smith stopped the threat with a pair of 8-yard sacks.

Dance and Bowers connected for a 41-yard TD pass play to boost the Rebels' lead to 31-3 late in the third quarter.

West linebacker Jack Keith stripped the ball out of receiver Spencer Makuch's hands and returned it 16 yards to the WV 21. The Rebels

couldn't cash in however as Schmid missed a 35-yard FG.

Anderson Smith ruined the Mustangs' next possession with a 4-yard sack on third down and then blocking their punt.

West took over at the West Valley 24. Wrenn carried the ball five of the next six plays and scored on a 4-yard run on the left side with 1:40 to go.

A trip to Wyoming

By Mark Nagi

A few years ago, I came to the realization that life is short, and we shouldn't take it for granted. Yes, this is something that we might talk or think about in passing, but I made it a point to change my attitude and actions with regard to my mortality.

A big thing that I find myself doing more and more is travel. I love East Tennessee, but I also want to make sure that I see as much of this great country of ours as time and finances allow.

I also try to combine my trips with a sporting event of some sort, and recently I made another trek with some friends to Wyoming.

Why Wyoming you ask? Why not! I visited there a couple of years ago and couldn't wait to go back.

Now, there is no flying on this trip. One day's drive to Kansas City, one more day's drive to Laramie. Approximately 20-22 hours total by car. I'm 6'1" and that's a long time to be sitting, but still worth every future trip to the chiropractor.

This journey was centered around the Wyoming/Colorado State game, known affectionately as the "Border War." These teams, these fans, these schools... they don't like each other. Not one bit. The Cowboys student section had chants that would make a WWII soldier blush.

This would be the 115th meeting between these schools, and Wyoming was looking for its 3rd straight victory. This would allow the coveted "Bronze Boot"

trophy to stay in Laramie for another year.

Wyoming prides itself on its altitude, with its campus 7220 feet above sea level. I've been out there a couple of times and you certainly can feel the difference. Breathing at times can be a struggle. Sadly, it takes a few days to really get acclimated to the conditions... right around the time I'm heading back to Knoxville.

Despite being 1500 miles from home, we made sure to represent Tennessee with clothing and car stickers. We had a man from Maryville stop by our tailgate, and he proceeded to get a nearby DJ to play Rocky Top and Copperhead Road. While the rest of the Cowboys and Rams fans were confused by the song selections, our group was fired up.

The strangest moment came as we walked into the beautiful War Memorial Stadium. We were stopped by a young man named Tanner Serrato, a Maryville native who saw our group and wanted to say hi. Serrato was at the game with his girlfriend. Taking this chance of fate as a sign from the gods, Serrato pulled a ring out of his jacket pocket, got down on one knee and proposed to his girlfriend.

She said yes.

Tennessee. Wyoming. Romance.

Oh, as for the game, Wyoming edged Colorado State 24-15, and celebrations lasted well into the night in Laramie as the Boot stays where it belongs.

The rest of the trip was spent seeing the wonderful little towns (Dubois,

Sheridan, Parkman, etc.) and beautiful sites (Grand Tetons National Park, Snowy Range, Bighorn Mountains, etc.) of that part of the country.

Words really don't do them justice. And honestly, neither do pictures.

The drive back was... how can I put this properly... not fun. Drives to your destination are filled with adrenaline. Drives back from your destination are mile after mile of boredom and sleepiness.

That all said, when you are looking to get out of town and see the world, might I suggest Wyoming? Just do me a favor and don't tell anyone else. Wyoming is one of the best-kept secrets this country has to offer.

Anderson County outduels Lady Panthers in 3-point shootout

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Powell early last season and the Lady Mavericks made just one 3-pointer in that game and Anderson County coach Mitch Cupples, who has a long memory, recalled that after the game.

"I don't know if you remember last year but we were 1-for-21 on 3-pointers over here," Cupples said.

Tuesday night was certainly a different story as four different players knocked down shots from beyond the arc for Anderson County.

Macy Basford made six three-pointers, including five in the first half. Emily Mustard converted five. Bethany Lowe had three

and Jaylynn Bullock had two for the Lady Mavericks, who led, 60-52, at the end of the third stanza.

Powell would trail by as many as 15 points in the fourth quarter after Mustard buried a 3-pointer to make it 68-53, with 6 minutes, 35 seconds remaining in the game.

But the Lady Panthers, who are still in search of their first win of the 2023-24 season, wouldn't go away. They battled back and pulled to within 68-66

when Izy Wilds made three free throws with 4:03 to go. But Powell wouldn't come any closer.

Mustard had a game-high 23 points, while Basford and Lowe scored 22 points apiece for the Lady Mavericks.

Powell (0-3) had three players post double figures in the scoring column. Payton Richmond led the Lady Panthers with 20 points. Krysta Madison added 19 and Aliana Schroeder finished with 10.

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