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## ROAD BLOCKED

### Parking reduced at New Harvest early voting location

By Steve Hunley,  
Publisher  
publisher@knoxfocus.com

It is a shame how few people vote in City of Knoxville elections. That trend has been spiraling steadily downward in recent years. Considering that, you'd think the Knox County Election Commission would try and make early voting as convenient as possible for folks. That certainly wasn't the case when I went to New Harvest Park last Thursday afternoon. I was astonished to see a plethora of folks selling produce, as well as food trucks taking up parking spaces on the upper tier of parking right next to the building where the voting was taking place. With a Knox County Parks and Recreation vehicle blocking another exit, with the added precaution of having set out traffic cones, it left little room



PHOTO BY LISA DEMARSICO

**Canopy tents and food trucks block the west outlet on the upper tier of the New Harvest Park early voting location on Thursday afternoon. Thirty-nine of 68 parking spaces, including several handicap-accessible parking spaces, were taken for produce vendors, eliminating through-way, ingress and egress. Also the set up encroached upon the fire lane shown with the yellow stripe markings above.**

for cars to maneuver in the area where the voting was occurring. On the lower tier the parking lot, a canopy

tent was set up for mayoral candidate Eddie Mannis which was well outside the 100 foot marker where

candidates are allowed to greet voters. When compared to the tents occupied by the produce people,

the Mannis tent looked like a small outpost in the desert. Cliff Rodgers, administrator of elections

for Knox County, personally came out to the view the situation while I was there. Much to my surprise, Rodgers stated there had been no complaints, except about the location of the Mannis tent. Considering the produce folks were occupying a vast territory on the upper tier where voting was taking place compared to the couple of spaces taken up by the Mannis tent, I wondered if Cliff was seeing the same thing I was.

It was clear to me in the couple of hours I was there before Cliff arrived that some folks coming to vote, especially elderly folks, were overwhelmed or otherwise put off by the difficulty of parking near the building where voting was taking place. There is a wonderful pavilion which was unused on the site, as well as other

**Continued on page 4**

## Don't miss the history fair Saturday!



PHOTO BY RONNIE COLLINS

**General Grant, President Lincoln, Davy Crockett: Who knows who you might meet at the East Tennessee History Fair. The annual event on Saturday in downtown Knoxville is a celebration of our region's past and a fun and educational experience for the entire family. Plus, it's free!**

By Mike Steely  
steelym@knoxfocus.com

History comes alive Saturday in and around downtown Knoxville during the East Tennessee History Fair. The free event draws hundreds, if not thousands, of people to the one-of-a-kind gathering of historians, reenactors, authors, vendors, organizations, and musicians.

You might even meet and speak with the likes of Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln, Union General U. S. Grant, and maybe even Davy Crockett. There's free parking in the city garages and free trolley service to various events. While much of the activity takes place downtown and around the East Tennessee History Museum there's also a Historic Homes Bus Tour to Blount Mansion, James White Fort, the Mabry-Hazen House, Bethel Cemetery and Museum, the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame and the Beck

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## Rezoning and much ado about nothing for Knoxville-Knox County Planning

By Ken Lay

The most heavily discussed request at the monthly Knoxville/Knox County Planning Commission Thursday turned out to be much ado about nothing.

It was an effort by Carter McCall/Fulgum MacIndoe & Associates to rezone a portion of Hardin Valley Road from a planned residential area with a population density from less than three units per acre to a population density of 4.8 units per acre.

The issue was heavily discussed and debated by those who requested the alteration to those who opposed it based upon traffic flow problems around Hardin Valley Elementary School, Hardin Valley Middle School and Hardin Valley Academy.

Those who opposed the measure included Dawn Walsh, a homeowners advocate in the area.

She and others noted that the property had been rezoned several

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## Smooth take-off for 2019-2020 school year

By Anne Primm

Sixth District Chair Terry Hill called the August 7, 2019 Knox County Schools work session to order at 5:01 p.m. All nine district representatives were present for the meeting. The moment of silence and Pledge of Allegiance were led by First District Representative Evetty Satterfield.

Chair Hill began by complimenting everyone on a near flawless start to a new school year. Hill continued with an announcement for board members about the upcoming Tennessee School Board Association meeting at Maryville High School on September 17, 2019. Members wishing to attend should contact Terry Coatney so she can make reservations.

Next, Chairperson Hill asked for changes to the agenda. Being no changes, a motion was made by

Third District Representative Norman and seconded by Fifth District Representative Susan Horn to accept the day's agenda. The motion carried.

Superintendent Thomas' Report followed. Thomas shared that he, too, was pleased with the uneventful start to the new school year. Thomas said he had visited several schools during the first days and he was really impressed with what he saw. He visited a middle school that was gearing up to do 3-D printing of prosthetic hands and an elementary school where a family lemonade stand along with online giving had raised \$500 for the school. Thomas reminded everyone that the Partners in Education Breakfast will take place at the University of Tennessee Medical Center on August 20, 2019 at 7:30 a.m. He also mentioned

that schools will be closed on August 27, 2019 as this is election day in Knoxville and many schools are voting locations. Also, schools will be closed on September 2, 2019 in celebration of Labor Day.

Moving on to the Items and Contracts part of the agenda, Second District Representative Jennifer Owen asked about the cost of building a pedestrian bridge over Tipton Station Road to unite the two campuses of South-Doyle High School. Mr. Russ Oakes responded that the anticipated cost is \$1.3 million.

Next, the board considered second readings of several Board Policies. Third District Representative Tony Norman objected to the current cell phone policy and advocated for a policy that does not allow for cell phone use at all from 8:30 a. m. until 3:30 p.m.

Regular agenda items were last to be considered. Additions and renovations to Powell High School were discussed. Vice Chair Susan Horn asked about the time table for this project. Doug Dillingham answered her question by stating that he thinks the start date will be after the first of the year depending on the architect's schedule. Fourth District Representative Virginia Babb inquired of Mr. Dillingham about the amount of disruption to school operation there would be during the construction period at Powell High School. Dillingham responded that disruption would be kept to a minimum. Seventh District Representative Patti Bounds related that she had spoken with Dr. Smith, principal at Powell High School, and that he is on board and excited about this project.

No one was signed up for Public Forum and Board Forum included comments from Norman, in words of thanks and blessings for Knox County teachers and staff for another great year to come! Bounds wanted to thank Mayor Jacobs and sponsors for a wonderful Back to School Party, "School Mania," held August 5 at Chilhowee Park. This event was free to Knox County students and loaded with fun and lots of giveaways.

## Public Equipment Auction

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# Recode expected to pass City Council Tuesday

By Mike Steely  
steelym@knoxfocus.com

At the top of the Knoxville City Council agenda for tomorrow evening is the second reading of Recode and the Recode zoning map. Both items are expected to pass in a split vote, totally revamping zoning and building codes for the first time in more than 50 years.

The Recode process has taken more than two years, dozens of public and

planning commission meetings and now four city council meetings. Tweaks and changes have been made along the way but some critics contend the last revision should have gone back to the planners for approval.

The complicated plan formulated by city planners and altered several times by planners and council members will probably pass on its final reading. How a new council and new mayor

deal with the changes isn't known but at least one mayoral candidate does not support the Recode proposal.

Also on the agenda are several resolutions dealing with funding of Community Schools with Great Schools Partnership, Affordable Rental Development with Knox Housing Partnership and The Restoration House, and funding of Catholic Charities for 27 bedrooms at Samaritan Place.

The council could also vote to donate \$637,144 in an agreement with the Community Action Committee for emergency and minor home repairs and \$186,341 to Neighborhood Housing Inc. for minor home repairs in "Operation Backyard."

The Milton Roberts Recreation Center could get a roof replaced by Pioneer Builders Inc. in an agreement for \$205,067 on a

request from the Department of Engineering.

A donation of \$10,000 from The Hartford may be accepted for fire safety education and the council may approve amending an agreement with National Building Service for outdoor restroom janitorial services at park facilities.

Ordinances on first reading include amending the city code relating to the use of wireless devices by

motor vehicle operators, donations to Legacy Parks for their luncheon, a donation to Ijams Nature Center for Symphony in the Parks' annual fundraiser, renaming a street to "Taylor Homes Road" on a motion by Councilwoman Gwen McKenzie, and three resolutions to rezone an Inskip Drive home from residential to office. A property at 4330 Papermill Drive may be rezoned from Office to C-6 Commercial.

## Covington apologizes for meeting disruption

By Mike Steely  
steelym@knoxfocus.com

Last week a meeting of the East Knoxville Community was disrupted twice by audience members who shouted questions and interrupted a presentation by the Knox County Sheriff's Office. Sheriff Tom Spangler was scheduled to speak but didn't appear and his lack of appearance directed the anger at Captain Aaron Yarnell, who was speaking about the department's technology unit.

Michael Covington, who created the meeting group a few years ago to bring speakers to East Knoxville and discuss community issues, tried to keep the meeting peaceful and, during the first outburst, walked over to the small group of protesters and confronted them.

"No, no. You can stay or leave now if you're having a problem," he told them.

The loud voices began during a humorous presentation by William "Bo" Pierce, the former housing director who portrays "Brisco Darling" during Mayberry reenactments. The protesters quieted after Covington confronted them but began again



PHOTO BY MIKE STEELY

**The confrontation between 287(g) protestors continued after the East Knoxville Community meeting last week as Noah Nordstrom questions a Knox County Deputy. The meeting saw two disruptions, the last one ending the meeting abruptly.**

when Captain Yarnell was speaking.

Between the two incidents extra deputies were dispatched to the meeting at the Burlington Library and assembled just inside the library door and outside.

Shouting questions and comments about the sheriff's cooperation with ICE in the 287(g) program that involves running citizenship checks on apprehended Hispanics, the group also questioned sharing the sheriff's database with city police and

county deputies patrolling Vestal and 5 Points, which are inside Knoxville city limits.

Among the protesters were Constance Every and Noah Nordstrom, who have appeared at public forums at the city council and county commission meetings recently raising questions about the 287(g) program. Nordstrom and other protesters were escorted out of the City-County Building last month after protests during a commission meeting.

Covington was visibly frustrated with the outbursts and told the audience, "I've failed you."

He took to the internet following the meeting.

"It was a spectacle that would remind some of the Jerry Springer Show. First and foremost someone needs to take responsibility for this fiasco and that buck stops with me," he said, adding that on the first outburst "the fellow proceeded to say, 'blah, blah, blah, (expletive), blah, blah, blah.'"

"I stopped the meeting

immediately and had a 'Come to Jesus' meeting on the spot."

Covington said the meeting was adjourned because of "unhealthy interaction between a few meeting attendees and three KCSO personal in the room."

"When the door was open there was literally a sea of blue in the library vestibule," he said.

Every responded to Covington's Facebook post, charging that Covington was "over policing his event because Spangler sent his lil' puppets."

"It is quite prevalent that we will not be intimidated by bogus false threats of violations of our freedom nor do we need others to speak on Spangler's behalf," she posted.

"I will be at commission board meeting and I will let them know we do not want any of our tax dollars put into their payroll, pensions or funding," she wrote.

Covington said that Attorney General Charme Allen will speak at the meeting on October 7 and added, "There will be significant law enforcement present at that meeting."

## History fair

Cont. from page 1

Cultural Exchange Center.

If you're a retro television fan of local programs the Tennessee Theater opens at 10:30 with a tour and showings of "Startime with Jim Clayton," "The Cas Walker Farm and Home Hour," and a preview of "Country Music, a Film by Ken Burns."

Reenactors in and around the fair include Native Americans, pioneers, long hunters, political figures, Civil War soldiers and Vietnam veterans. There are also hand-on demonstrations of crafts and entertainment on the Main Stage with traditional music.

Living history at the fair includes exhibits and reenactors from the Fort Loudoun State Historic Area, Regiment of Knox County Militia, the Daily Reenactors, William Thomas, Gary Holt, the Mexican-American War with Ed Archer, Tom and Sue Wright as Abe Lincoln and wife, two Civil War infantry units, Woman Suffrage Coalition, World War I, by Tennessee State Parks and the History Company and the World War II U.S. Army Airborne Reenactors.

Downtown venues include the History Center, Krutch Park, Tennessee Theater and Market Square where you will find an antique fair, art market, farmers market, food, parking and crafting. Admission to the museum that day is free and featured currently there is "Voices of the Land, the People of East Tennessee" and "It'll Tickle Your Innards, a History of Mountain Dew."

Out at Lakeshore Park, a vintage base ball game will be played and there will be an open house at the old East Tennessee Hospital for the Insane.

The fair is also awarding the Best Historic Costume and the Most East Tennessee Spirit. That event is at 10:15 followed by music at 11 a.m. through 4 p.m. all on the Main Stage. The event also features a "History Hound" costumed canine competition at Krutch Park at 9:30 a.m.

Events begin at about 10 a.m. and run until 5 p.m. There's also lots to do for children, including a Davy Crockett Birthday celebration with activities, storytelling and a birthday cake.

## Have a Blast with the Past!

Saturday, August 17, 2019  
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

# HISTORY FAIR

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# Publisher's Position

## A Chicken In Every Pot or a City Without Hope?



By Steve Hunley, Publisher  
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I was trying to remember which presidential candidate promised "a chicken in every pot" and checked with our residential historian and my memory was correct, it was Herbert Hoover. Hoover, enjoying the "Republican prosperity" of the 1920s, won a huge victory in 1928. Seven months after he was inaugurated, the stock market crashed and the Great Depression began.

Knoxville just had another mayoral forum, which was awfully enlightening. Perhaps the most interesting thing Indya Kincannon said during the mayoral forum was her support for a widespread building of housing for the homeless in every area of the city.

That is practically a revival of the extremely unpopular ten year plan to end homelessness in Knoxville, a wildly expensive program which was put to sleep by then-county mayor Tim Burchett. Also keep in mind, under Recode Knoxville there are two kinds of affordable housing; that for the homeless all across the city as proposed by Kincannon, as well as the HUD subsidized housing that can be drastically expanded after Recode.

Some Democrats holler that electing Indya Kincannon would be the culmination of incumbent Madeline Rogero's third term. Kincannon will usually announce that she attended Princeton within thirty seconds of meeting you and has bragged endlessly about her master's degree in urban and regional planning. That makes her no more qualified to be mayor of the City of Knoxville than her leading opponents, one a businessman and the other a lawyer. Eddie Mannis has built and run a successful business, paying taxes, providing good jobs to Knoxvillians and expanding the local economy. The only

recent job Indya Kincannon has had is the one Madeline Rogero created for her as a launchpad to run for mayor.

Kincannon claims to have doubled the graduation rate at Fulton High School during her service on the Knox County Board of Education all the while sending her children to attend schools outside of her own district. Her children attended schools in West Knoxville and they certainly did not graduate from Fulton. Last time I checked, the board of education was comprised of nine members and Kincannon certainly cannot legitimately claim the credit for bogus graduation rates in Knox County. Does she claim the credit for the abysmal preparation rate in Knox County? For instance, of those students graduating Fulton High School, fewer than 20% of them are prepared to either further their education or get a job. Kincannon, who was one of the most devoted rubber stamp votes on the board when Jim McIntyre was superintendent, also says she saved the custodians from outsourcing. I seem to recall the most vocal member of the board of education

against outsourcing the custodians was Mike McMillan and some of you may be surprised to learn The Focus editorialized against this outsourcing, helping save the custodians' jobs. I took the trouble of asking Mr. McMillan if Indya Kincannon deserved the lion's share of the credit for having saved the custodians' jobs. McMillan said it was true she finally voted against McIntyre with "great reluctance." In other words, Kincannon saved the custodians' jobs like Colonel Sanders saved the chickens.

Kincannon followed McIntyre like a puppy in supporting the biggest single proposed property tax increase in Knox County's history. Despite support from the Knoxville News Sentinel, favorable coverage by most of Knoxville's television stations, a \$50,000 advertising campaign by the Chamber of Commerce and their minions, it was so unpopular with the public no county commissioner would even dare to make the motion after angry voters had collapsed both the internet and phone systems in the City-County Building. Kincannon has always been

a big spender and there are some progressive candidates running for city council who bemoan the fact there are many Knoxvilleians who are having difficulty paying their utility bills. Utilities are not regulated by municipal governments. The so-called affordable and subsidized housing will still have utility bills and there's not much the city mayor can do about that. Some candidates for the council appear to be so uninformed that they have no idea that is one area where they can't soak the rich. Every rate payer in the City of Knoxville shares that burden through their utility bills.

City taxes may have to rise in any event as the city's pension system is underfunded and its beneficiaries receive regular cost-of-living raises. Kincannon's only experience with a budget is asking for more taxpayer money to spend.

While Indya Kincannon takes credit for things she didn't do on her own, she's riding her bicycle around town promising a chicken in every pot when her vision for the future kills more hope than it raises. It certainly does sound nice, but use

your head for a moment; if Knoxville becomes a Mecca for the homeless because we are going to provide them with free places to live, free groceries, free everything, do you suppose they'll ever stop coming to Knoxville? Under a Kincannon administration would Knoxville become another Sanctuary City for people who produce little but consume a lot of tax revenues?

Indya Kincannon hasn't run so much as a peanut stand and the challenges Knoxville faces are going to be difficult and hard. Knoxville needs a mayor with a real vision for Knoxville to ensure that there is a bright future for everyone, not a hallucination from someone who thinks there's a bottomless pit of money. Knoxville needs a mayor who has met a payroll, who has had to make hard choices and cuts when necessary. Knoxville needs a mayor who cares more about the working poor and middle class people instead of a limousine liberal whose personal hobby has been politics. If Indya Kincannon is elected mayor, it won't be long before you don't even have a pot, much less a chicken.

## Can I Get a Different Judge on My Case?

From time to time I will have someone come and consult with me on a case after they have already been in front of the judge a time or two, and they will ask if they can get a new judge on their case because they feel like the judge has it out for them.



By Jedidiah McKeenan  
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My answer is usually, "No, you are not getting a new judge," or occasionally, "It is extremely unlikely that you are getting a new judge on your case."

Why do I say that? Well the law presumes that a judge is competent to hear all cases that come before them. Tennessee Code Annotated section 17-2-101 lays out when a judge is considered "incompetent" to hear a case and it states that, "no judge shall be competent, except by consent of all parties to sit in the following cases..."

Weird terminology, but a

judge is deemed to be incompetent, and not able to hear a case if the judge is: interested in the events of a case; when the judge is connected with either party; when the judge has been of counsel in the case previously; when the judge heard this case at a lower court; or in a criminal case, where a felony has been committed against someone connected to the judge.

So, there is a lot there, but I would preach a practical approach. If a judge is somehow connected to someone involved in the case, you may be able to get them removed, but if that is not the case, it is unlikely you will get the judge removed. If you think the judge is biased against you, that is simply not a basis for getting a judge removed from your case. If your case is in a small county where

everyone knows everyone and the other attorney is buddies with the judge, again, that is not a basis for getting the judge removed from your case. I am sorry, it's just not, unless you can show some extreme bias or prejudice that is not present in your typical case.

There are other reasons to get a judge removed from your case, but the ones above are the ones that are typically encountered.

If one of those conditions, however, does exist, then the judge should recuse themselves from the case, and ask a different judge to hear the case. Usually the judges will do this voluntarily. Judges are just like everyone else, they do not have any great desire to do extra work, and if there is a hint of impropriety associated with them hearing a case, then they are usually happy to step back from a case and have some other judge hear it.

However, if a judge does not recuse themselves when

you think that they should, you can file a motion and ask the judge to recuse themselves. Most attorneys do not want to file a motion asking for a judge to recuse themselves because the attorney may believe that the judge will remember that and hold it against them.

However, if that kind of motion does get filed, then the judge himself will be the one deciding whether they should recuse themselves. That can put you in a tough situation. You may very well file a motion saying all of these terrible things about a judge and asking them

to recuse themselves and then they decline to recuse themselves and they decide to remain the judge on your case. Yikes! I am not saying the judge will not continue to be impartial, but I am sure they judge will not be sending you Christmas cards any time soon.

## Rezoning and much ado about nothing for Knoxville-Knox County Planning

Cont. from page 1

times.

"It should've remained agricultural," Walsh said. "It is a troubled property that has been brought up before the planning commission four or five times."

And the troubled property was a source of controversy this time around as well.

It was placed on the preliminary agenda and then amended two days before the meeting and that didn't sit well with proponent John Valliant, an area attorney.

"I've been doing this for 40 years and this is the first time that I've seen two rezoning reports with different population densities with the same recommendation," Valliant told the commission. "We made a request for a 4.5 and it was approved and then the updated report had it for three."

The population density is

currently at 2.8 units per acre and that is where it will remain after it was put up for a vote in a motion by Commissioner Art Clancy III, despite confusion.

And despite the fact that the commission recommended passage, Valliant requested that his request be removed because he noted that the landowner would soon have a building permit and passage would mean that the owner would have to begin the process again.

The Hardin Valley Community was a primary focus of the August meeting as many properties were requested to be rezoned due to the growth in the area.

"We need more houses and more places to put these people," Clancy III said at various times in the meeting.

On the last agenda item, Hardin Valley again came to the forefront as David

Harbin and Batson, Himes and Poe requested that a vacant lot be approved for detached housing.

That was also approved over the objection of homeowner Harry Chandler, who bought a home adjacent to the lot two-and-a-half years ago.

"I own the home next to the lot that [Harbin] is talking about and when I bought the home, I was given the opportunity to buy the lot, but I didn't think we would need that," Chandler said. "When I moved in, I received a property covenant that this would be for single-family home use only, and now, he wants to put two houses on that lot."

The commission approved the measure despite Chandler's contention that the new houses would drive his property down. The commission said that the property covenant was non-binding.

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 AUGUST 30 - VACATION DAY  
 SEPTEMBER 2 - LABOR DAY HOLIDAY, NO SCHOOL  
 OCTOBER 11 and 14 - VACATION DAYS  
 NOVEMBER 11 - VACATION DAY  
 NOVEMBER 27 - HALF DAY  
 NOVEMBER 28 and 29 - THANKSGIVING, NO SCHOOL  
 DECEMBER 23-JANUARY 3 - CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY  
 JANUARY 6- ADMINISTRATIVE DAY, TEACHERS ONLY  
 JANUARY 20- MLK DAY, NO SCHOOL  
 FEBRUARY 17 - INSERVICE DAY, NO SCHOOL  
 MARCH 3- INSERVICE DAY, NO SCHOOL  
 APRIL 10 - HALF DAY  
 APRIL 13-17 - SPRING BREAK, NO SCHOOL  
 MAY 11- INSERVICE DAY, NO SCHOOL  
 MAY 25 - VACATION DAY, NO SCHOOL  
 MAY 29 - ADMINISTRATIVE DAY, TEACHERS ONLY  
 JUNE 1 - LAST DAY FOR ALL STUDENTS

**GO EAGLES!**

# ROAD BLOCKED

**Cont. from page 1** — parking for voters entirely. (Donila did apologize for his rudeness to me before I left the premises.)  
 I realize how difficult it is for the election commission to select appropriate sites for early voting locations and know it is not easy. It seems to me the priority should be the convenience of the voters and it isn't going to really inconvenience anybody wanting to buy corn or squash to walk down a few steps or park on the second tier.  
 Mike Donila, the public relations person for the Knox County Parks and Recreation Department, came down to view the site and aside from being dead rude, missed the point of adequate ingress and egress and convenient parking for voters entirely. more in the way of conversation or collaboration with the Parks and Recreation Department regarding the potential problems of ingress and egress for voters on produce Thursdays.  
 Rodgers said neither he nor his personnel had no other complaints. Well, Cliff, you do now and this article is my complaint. Let's work together to make this as easy on the voters as possible during early voting.  
 You can see more pictures of the New Harvest Park parking situation at [www.knoxfocus.com/archives/the-daily-focus/new-harvest-park-photos/](http://www.knoxfocus.com/archives/the-daily-focus/new-harvest-park-photos/)



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## Community Impact Drives Concord Christian

By Amy Box Fellhoelter

Meeting teachers, reconnecting with friends, orientation, and receiving schedules were all part of the "Back 2 School KICK OFF" fun celebrated at Concord Christian School and Preschool last Friday night, August 9. As the largest private school in Knoxville with an enrollment of more than 1,100 students, Concord Christian will be in full gear for the 2019-2020 school year as it begins its first day of school tomorrow Tuesday, Aug. 13.

New to this school year includes some new employees to welcome to the Concord family, a freshly painted gym, a remodeled milk room as well as new vans for transportation. As a one-to-one school for student technology beginning in eighth grade, new Mimio boards have also been



added to every high school classroom.

This fall also welcomes an administrative change with the addition of a first-time K-8 assistant principal Karen Littleton. Littleton will work beside Leigh Ledet, the current kindergarten through eighth grade principal.

"It's a new model for us and a new model for our families to learn ... so it will be an interesting experience for everyone ... it will be an easy transition. Just something that's new," explained Stephanie Mason, Concord director of admissions and marketing. Also, Shane Mynatt,

previous assistant athletic director, will be taking over the role of interim athletic director.

Another exciting event to come is the preschool program — tending to children from six weeks old to five years old — will be celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. As a ministry of First

Baptist Concord Church that began in 1969, the program has grown to having graduated 119 children into kindergarten last spring, and improved with activities such as a music therapy class for infants and toddlers.

Newly adopted math **Continue on page 4**

## Search for new E-911 Director begins

By Mike Steely  
steelym@knoxfocus.com

The search for a new executive director for the Knox County Emergency Communications District is underway. Knoxville Fire Chief Stan Sharp, who heads the E-911 Personnel Committee, told The Focus a series of two interviews are being held. The first was Wednesday when Sharp said that four applicants, Mathew Hobson, Judith Duff, Chris Cord and Richard Holbert, were interviewed by the search committee.

This coming Wednesday five more applicants will face the committee. They are Casey Swetlik, Jeffrey Caudill, Brad Anders, Jennifer Lanter and Joseph Cowan.

Once the interviews are complete the search committee will make a recommendation to the board of directors. That board includes Sharp, County Mayor Glenn Jacobs, Knoxville Mayor Madeline Rogero, John Fugate, Dr. Russell Frazier, Ken Knight and Brad Anders as citizen representatives, Sheriff Tom Spangler, City Police Chief Eve Thomas, and Daron Long, the EMT Representative.

The Knoxville-Knox County E-911 has been wrestling with radio problems over the past few years, the ouster of a former director, and has been operating under an interim director.

In 2016 then Director Bob Coker was terminated following a vote and given a buyout of \$34,700. Alan Bull, the director of technical services, was asked to temporarily lead the unit and later named executive director. Bull has notified the board he would not be staying and is waiting for the selection of a replacement.

Anders, who serves as 6th District county commissioner and is a Knoxville police lieutenant, is the only E-911 Board Member to apply for the position.

## Capt. Yarnell speaks about Sheriff's Department Technology Division

By Mike Steely  
steelym@knoxfocus.com

Despite the disruption at the East Knoxville Community meeting (see story on A2) Captain Aaron Yarnell told the meeting about the Knox County Sheriff's Department's development of the technology division. Yarnell, along with the department's Communications Officer Kimberly Glenn, were attending the meeting in the absence of Sheriff Tom Spangler.

"I'm a policeman hiding in a nerd's body," Yarnell, a 22-year veteran of the department, told the audience. He said when he joined the force there were only two people assigned to that computer department and now there is a staff of twenty-two.

He said his department has been nicknamed "Future Crimes" and talked



The odd pillars of the walls above the Mineral Springs Bridge and the two arches below make the old span beautiful and historic. Built in 1910 as the area was developing as an entrance to the historic Whittle Springs resort area, the new bridge is longer but may resemble the current one a bit.

## Historic Mineral Springs Bridge being replaced

By Mike Steely  
steelym@knoxfocus.com

If you've driven to Whittle Springs Golf Course or Whittle Springs Middle School, or anywhere in that neighborhood you've probably crossed First Creek dozens of time. Bet you never thought about that small bridge you cross or its unique design or history.

Minerals Springs Road begins on North Broadway just before I-640 and is located just beyond

the Mega Peddler's location in the former K-Mart store.

The Mineral Springs Bridge leads to the neighborhoods in and around Whittle Springs, which was once a huge health spa and resort with a golf course. The unique bridge is supported by two high arches but you won't see the underside of the span unless you walk around and push back the overgrowth.

Atop the two-lane bridge are

beautiful concrete pillars on both sides that support the railing. Built in 1910 as a 52-foot bridge the new bridge will be much wider and 68 feet long.

Jim Hagerman, Knoxville Director of Engineering, said the design of the new bridge will closely match the upper appearance of the present bridge and include a crash-tested rail approved by the state.

**Continue on page 2**



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# Special places

Last weekend, Amy, Dallas, and I traveled to Cookeville. She attended a luncheon with some high school classmates, and afterwards, we spent time at the Cookeville fair. It's the kind of fair that brings



By Joe Rector  
joerector@comcast.net

back memories to some of us when the TVA&I Fair was a fun, safe event. What was most special to me was riding around Cookeville and the campus of Tennessee Tech and sharing memories with my son.

Highway 70 to the County Farm Road. That's where Amy and her parents lived back in 1973. I remember driving to her house that first time. Nerves were frayed, and they were still in bad shape when I met Papa and talked to Amy's mother. By the end of the evening, I knew that Amy Alice Moore was the most spectacular girl I'd ever met. I made trips down that road and to that house a couple of thousand times over the years dating and then visiting with Amy and

the children.

After driving to see the new Academy Sports complex and looking at other new places, we drove to a corner lot on Scott Avenue. A large business office is near there now, but years ago, Parkview Methodist Church sat on the property. That is where my brothers, their wives, and I attended church, and so did Amy. We met there, and at first, neither of us was much impressed with the other. It was the badgering of the minister, Bill Menees, that led me to ask Amy out the first time. He must have had some kind of divine intervention to have pushed me to do so. We married in that

church, but even though it was destroyed by fire several years ago, those good memories survived.

We drove by the TTU baseball field and softball complex. Amy and I spent a fall afternoon walking where that softball field is now located, and it was a time when I marveled at how lucky I was to have found someone so beautiful and kind to love. Friends all knew that with her, "I'd outkicked my coverage!"

Dallas and I next drove to the student center on campus. A new upper deck has been added to the back of the building. We found rocking chairs there and sat for a spell.

The parking lot in back has been replaced with sod, but I still recall more good things that occurred in that area. A couple of days after our first date, I was leaving the student center and exited just as Amy's PE class ran by. She passed me and waved. Her hair was in a bun, and her shorts and t-shirt were much different from the outfit she'd worn on our date. Still, she was gorgeous.

Standing in the parking lot not much longer after that, Amy and I told each other how we felt. She doesn't remember that occurring, but I sure do. Why wouldn't I? There stood a wonderful girl who

told me she loved me. How much luckier could a plain person like me be? I've never been more stunned, excited, or happy in my life.

I could have taken Dallas to more special places to me for quite some time, but I didn't want to bore him too much. Instead, we made a trip to Ralph's Donuts, a must stop anytime a person travels to Cookeville. Before long, Amy called for us to pick her up from the restaurant. I looked at her when she got in the car and smiled at how lucky I was and still am nearly 45 years later. It was a good trip to Cookeville and down Memory Lane.

## Capt. Yarnell speaks about Sheriff's Department Technology Division

**Cont. from page 1**  
about the growth and the sheriff's support of their efforts.

"We feed patrolmen and detectives information. We can monitor offenders and spot patterns," he said. He noted that everyone has a "digital fingerprint" through the many business, city, county and state cameras, the use of credit cards, red light cameras, etc. He said the growth of home doorbell cameras, cell phones, and other devices have added to that surveillance.

Yarnell said the community can help by looking at the department's Community Crime Map and submit a tip. He said this time of year that theft is up and urged everyone to lock their vehicles at 8 p.m. each evening to discourage robbers.

He said that "Submit a Tip" on the department's website can be used to send any information of suspicious activities.

"We want to know what's going on. We live in the community too," he said.

He added that the sheriff's vision is about communication with the community.

Asked about the department and the city police Yarnell said information is shared between city and county from the same database, adding, "We have a great relationship."

Asked about increased patrols in the city by county deputies Yarnell said the city is in the county and often the sheriff's cars are there because of reports from neighbors or for increased security.

## Historic Mineral Springs Bridge being replaced

**Cont. from page 1**

The city is removing the historic old bridge starting in September. The \$1.18 million project was designed by Alfred Benesch and Company and Jones Brothers got the construction contract.

Construction will last about a year. Traffic will be diverted to Walker Boulevard and North Broadway and access to local businesses will be maintained.

Monica Lauber, who owns The Village Mercantile at the east end of the bridge, told The Focus that the detoured traffic may actually help her community store.

The land beyond the bridge to the east was part of a North Carolina land grant to the Whittle family dating back to 1790. The Whittle Springs Hotel was built in 1890 as a 10-room boarding house and was later expanded to 46 rooms. The popular hotel

was served by the Fountain Head Railway and later by electric trolleys.

The Whittle Springs Hotel offered therapeutic spring waters, hence the "Mineral Springs" name. The initial hotel was replaced in 1917 by a 125-room hotel.

Events there featured live music on a pavilion, an 18-hole golf course, and WNOX Radio bought the building in 1954. The huge hotel was demolished in 1964. Today along the route are the Whittle Springs Golf Course, several apartments and homes, the Whittle Springs Middle School and a unit of the Knoxville Fire Department.

The neighborhood east of the bridge has several parks including Fairmont Heights, Alice Bell, North Hills, Boright and the Roseanne Picnic Area.

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# Tennessee's 'Unholy Trinity' Mr. Jim Cummings

## Pages from the Past



By Ray Hill  
rayhill865@gmail.com

"Live so that when you die, even the undertaker will be sorry."

Sign that hung in the business office of Jim Cummings.

James H. Cummings is likely a name unfamiliar with most readers, but during his time he was a power and a man to be reckoned with. When he died in 1979, "Mr. Jim" Cummings had served longer in Tennessee's state legislature than any other man in our state's history. Living in the tiny hamlet of Woodbury, Tennessee, Cummings influenced events and pushed rural interests while serving in the legislature. Jim Cummings was powerful enough in Nashville to vex Edward Hull Crump, master of the Shelby County machine and was a strong supporter of Tennessee's influential U. S. Senator Kenneth McKellar, while also allied with McKellar's political nemesis Gordon Browning. Always colorful, "Mr. Jim" joined with two other long-serving rural legislators, I. D. Beasley of Carthage and W. D. "Pete" Haynes of Winchester, Tennessee. The three constituted a powerful bloc inside the legislature, promoting rural interests and were widely known as the "Unholy Trinity" by those who had the misfortune to tangle with them, either singularly or collectively.

James H. Cummings was born November 8, 1890 and like many young men of the time, Cummings taught school, earning \$35 a month and recalled, "I remember carrying water and wood to the school house. I decided then that there had to be a better way."

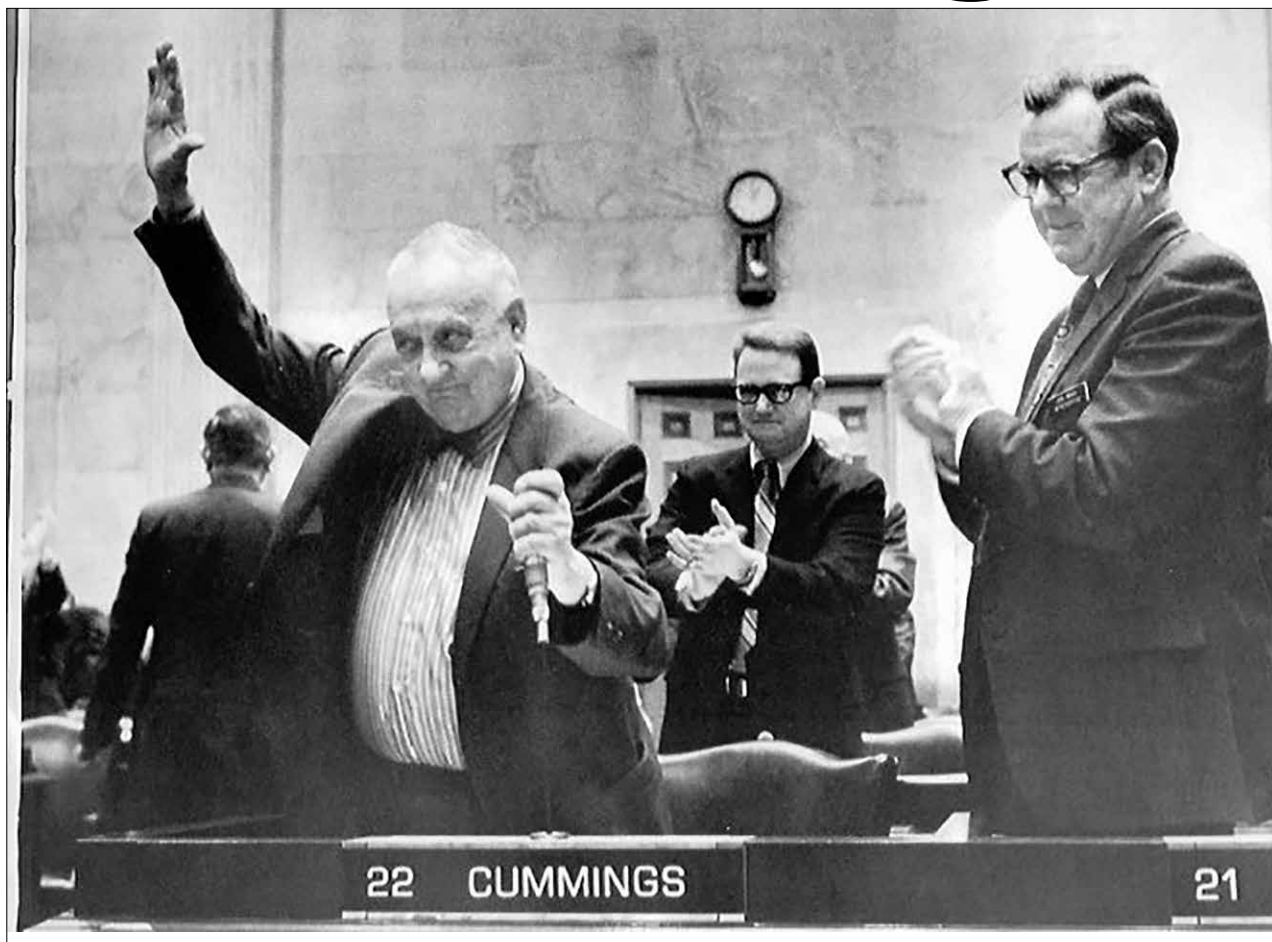
The better way for Cummings was becoming Circuit Court Clerk in 1912. While serving as Clerk, Cummings also became the publisher for the Cannon Courier. Cummings left office in 1920 and accepted a job in the State Comptroller's office in Nashville while attending the YMCA law school at night. Admitted to the bar in 1922, Jim Cummings went to Cumberland University in 1923 where he received his diploma. A real estate boom in Florida lured Cummings to the Sunshine State where he went to work for a developer in 1925. The boom went bust in 1927 and "Mr. Jim" came home to Woodbury where he opened a law office and began five decades of practice as a country lawyer. "I learned a lot down there," Cummings said of his time in Florida. "One of the things I learned was I couldn't get along without Hesta." Cummings was referring to Hesta

McBroom, a local girl whom he married. "Miss Hesta" ran a small insurance business out of the Cummings law office.

Jim Cummings went to Nashville in 1929 having been elected to serve as the state senator from a small cluster of counties surrounding his own Cannon County. For the next forty years, Jim Cummings would be a fixture in the legislature with the exception of four years when he served as Tennessee's Secretary of State and two years when he opted not to run, as he was managing Gordon Browning's unsuccessful gubernatorial campaign in 1938.

"I always figured Nashville and Memphis, with their big delegations would take care of the urban areas in the legislature," Jim Cummings once recalled. "Well, I lived on a little dirt road, and I figured I could do something for the rural counties." Cummings, along with his allies I. D. Beasley and "Pete" Haynes frequently frustrated the aims of the urban interests led by E. H. Crump and Hilary Howse, Nashville's mayor. Crump was particularly appalled that legislators like Jim Cummings (as well as governors like Austin Peay) collected money from the urban counties and spent it in the rural counties. Although Jim Cummings admired Senator McKellar, his admiration did not extend to Mr. Crump. Cummings oftentimes referred to his native Middle Tennessee as "free Tennessee." The triumvirate of Cummings, Beasley and Haynes, according to the Nashville Tennessean, "operated together like a well-oiled, if miniscule political machine." As each of them accumulated experience, each gained contacts and an exhaustive knowledge of parliamentary procedure, allowing the "Unholy Trinity", united or occasionally one of them alone, "on occasion to outmaneuver the entire 132-member legislature, and the governor and the Crump political machine to boot."

Cummings once sent Governor Prentice Cooper and Crump into a spiral in 1941 when he suddenly demanded all bills in committee be brought to the floor for disposal. Nor were any of the three, especially I. D. Beasley, above playing pranks on anyone and everyone. Governor Buford Ellington remembered, when any of the three legislators paid him a visit "the first thing I'd do was hide my personal memo pads. If I didn't, they stole them and used them for their own purposes." Ellington was



AP PHOTO FROM THE AUTHOR'S PERSONAL COLLECTION.

Mr. Jim Cummings (on the left with hand raised) on the floor of the Tennessee House of Representatives in 1971.

referring to a long-standing habit where one of the three would forge a note from the governor, almost always when there was a close vote pending on the floor, which urgently requested a legislator on the other side come to the governor's office or for a special conference in a Capitol hideaway. By the time the puzzled legislator finally figured out the governor had not summoned him, the vote had been taken and recorded.

Ellington realized the strength of the three rural legislators. "If those three decided to kill you on a particular bill, they could kill you," Ellington recalled. "It's as simple as that. They could scan a bill in a few minutes and tell anyone exactly what was in it. They were experts on parliamentary procedure, and could tie up a session in giant knots of red tape if they were against a bill being considered." Cummings served as Ellington's floor leader in 1959.

The 5'3 and 230 pound I. D. Beasley died in 1955 and if anything, he was even more colorful than "Mr. Jim" Cummings. Beasley was remembered as "the Mockingbird of Capitol Hill" for his uncanny ability to mimic anyone, man or woman. Supposedly, Beasley was such an excellent mimic, a man's wife could not tell the difference.

When Beasley took the oath of office that same year, it marked his thirteenth term in either the state senate or house, a record later broken by Jim Cummings. Beasley had impersonated the voice of Frank "Roxy" Rice, Crump's generalissimo in charge of legislative affairs to dupe a fellow legislator from Chattanooga. Pretending to be Rice, Beasley proceeded to tell D. M. Coleman Crump had changed his mind and was supporting Pete Haynes to be Speaker of the House. Crump had gone to Hot Springs, Arkansas to revive himself, while Roxy Rice went to Pasadena, California to watch the Rose Bowl game. It did not take either the Memphis Boss or Frank Rice long to figure what had gone awry. Pete

Haynes became speaker by Beasley's deception, much to Crump's dismay and displeasure.

I. D. Beasley also caught a blind legislator on the steps of the Capitol and impersonated Governor Austin Peay and asked the poor fellow to change his vote, which he did.

Nor was Jim Cummings safe from his friend I. D. Beasley. Sharing a hotel room while the legislature was in session, Jim Cummings had gone to bed and was asleep when Beasley convinced an obliging drug store clerk to fill his mouth liberally with toothpaste and foam at the mouth. Beasley switched on the lights and began screaming bloody murder. Cummings came awake staring into the face of the frothing clerk and leaped out of bed, grabbing a chair and shrieking, "Kill him! Kill him!"

No one was safe from Beasley pranks and district attorney Baxter Key remembered, "One day a stranger came to town looking for me and I. D. told him I was deaf - - - that I could hear only if he shouted at the top of his lungs. That was 30 years ago and I can hear it yet."

Jim Cummings explained the alliance years after I. D. Beasley had died and Pete Haynes had retired. "We were three country lawyers connected by our interest in rural Tennessee. We tried to work together for the common good." Cummings' philosophy was simple. "I believe in collecting the taxes where the money is - - - in the cities - - - and spending it where it's needed - - - in the country," Cummings said before adding, "Now that's not as unreasonable as it sounds."

Friend or foe, Jim Cummings managed to keep more or less cordial relations with every governor, save for Prentice Cooper. Once, in a fit of pique, Governor Cooper denounced a statement of Cummings as "the howl of a disappointed, hungry politician." Cummings could hold his own and snapped back the governor was merely playing the "role of a hit dog" and was speaking "for his masters," meaning E. H. Crump.

When Gordon Browning made his triumphant return to Nashville after a decade out of office, Jim Cummings was elected Secretary of State. Although Browning attempted to win a third two-year term in 1952, Cummings was running for the legislature once again. Cummings promptly became Governor Frank Clement's floor leader. When Cummings announced he wanted to become Speaker of the House in 1967, all the other candidates promptly withdrew. At home, no one ever bothered to run against Jim Cummings, such was his personal popularity.

The last years of Jim Cummings' service in the Tennessee House of Representatives was devoted to fending off legislative reappointment, a battle he eventually lost. As long as the battle was confined to the state legislature, Jim Cummings was able to keep reapportionment at bay. It took a federal court to best Jim Cummings. After 1963, Cannon County would not have its own representative in the legislature and Cummings realized with the addition of the more populous Rutherford County to his district, his days were likely numbered. Yet, Jim Cummings endured for another decade. Cummings remained adamant in his disdain for apportioning representative on the basis of population. "We must not allow numerical concentrations of people to be the sole gauge of the number of representatives alive. It's not healthy," Cummings complained.

He remained a spokesman for rural interests, confessing, "I guess I'll always see things from this side of the bank." Cummings did not see that rural problems were that much different from those plaguing the cities. "I mean, they have problems in the cities with ghettos, but we have them of sorts, too. There are houses around here where a dog could jump through the cracks."

Never having lost an election and past eighty, Jim Cummings announced in 1972 he would not be a candidate for reelection

to the Tennessee House of Representatives. James Lanier, a fellow legislator, said, "He was probably the most shrewd and astute politician I've ever known" yet said Cummings had a gentleness about him. Still, despite his increasing years, Jim Cummings remained a chain smoker, frequently lighting one cigarette from another. Nor did "Mr. Jim" lose his fondness for libations. Cummings enjoyed an overflowing liquor cabinet on the floor of the House chamber until an inquiring reporter finally exposed its existence. Lanier marveled that Cummings stamina, noting the veteran legislator "could go with the youngest man up there all night long and sit through committee meetings all the next day."

Following retirement, a wing of the War Memorial Building was named for Cummings and the legislature met in special session in Murfreesboro, Tennessee to name a dormitory in his honor.

Serving with eight governors, "Mr. Jim" began to wear out from old age. Ill, Cummings went to St. Thomas Hospital in Nashville for surgery and continued to fade. He died a week before his eighty-ninth birthday.

For forty years "Mr. Jim" Cummings had worked for the interests of rural people all across the State of Tennessee and was a devoted friend to education especially. The lives of the people his service encompassed and touched is impossible to measure, but they and their descendants still walk amongst us. When "Mr. Jim" died, even the undertaker was sorry.

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# Community Impact Drives Concord Christian

**Continued from page 1**

curriculum has been chosen for kindergarten through twelfth grades, and a physics-based science program — which begins the freshman year for students — are two more differences made this year.

With a retention ratio at the 90th percentile, a wait list for some classes, and its largest freshman class of 60 students, school board members and church leadership continue to collaborate as they currently examine a facility growth review of the Concord campus to ensure spaces either off-site or on-site are used well according to the mission and vision of the school.

Concord Head of School Donald E. Snider commented, “As you know, the ability to teach from a biblical worldview and to pronounce the Lordship of Jesus Christ in everything we do sets us apart. Our faculty and staff are called to Christian education with the primary goal of building meaningful Christ-centered relationships with your child.”

“Concord Christian definitely has a great place in our community. We have about 80 churches that are represented, so even though we are located here on First Baptist Concord campus and we are a ministry of this church, it represents what is great about faith because we have so many people from different church homes who have their children going to school with us,” Mason responded when asked what makes Concord unique.

“The focus of Concord is the influence, to do it better, continue to take what we are doing and perfect our craft. To benchmark what is happening in education throughout the nation and find opportunities that we can bring on our campus to influence the nation’s leaders, the community’s leaders for faith, as well as what will be happening in the coming

years in our nation. Our dreams are how we can do it better with the people we have on our campus. It’s about an influence and an impact on our local community, and the people who are in our school, and the people they touch in the world,” clarified Mason.

Concord parents appreciate a safe environment with an eight to one teacher ratio, average class size of 17:1, strong parent-teacher relationships, a taught Biblical worldview, and excellence in fine arts, athletic opportunities and academics. “We are blessed to have a full package that we are able to offer our families,” Mason added. Because the school is a ministry of First Baptist Concord Church some costs are absorbed by the church. This allows the school to offer affordable tuition fees that average \$8,000 per student.

Some past examples of positively impacting others are: preschool students collecting needed supplies for those impacted by the flooding in the Midwest; fourth grade students raising funds for special needs students to attend a summer Joni & Friends camp; middle school students introducing recycling to the Concord campus; the 2019 senior class serving refugee camps in Clarkston, Ga.; and eighth grade students distributing Christmas gifts to Oneida schools through Mission of Hope.

Each student of the 2019 graduating class will continue to pursue higher education this fall. Of the 34 graduating seniors, 3.2 million

dollars was awarded in scholarships at schools such as Samford University, Clemson University, Lee University, Union University, ETSU, Maryville College, University of Tennessee Knoxville and others.

Located at 11704 Kingston Pike, Concord CS serves infants through twelfth grade,

and provides the community with an after-school program for kindergarten through eighth grades.

For more information about CCA, visit the Concord Christian School Facebook page, [www.concordchristianschool.org](http://www.concordchristianschool.org), or contact Stephanie Mason at 865-966-8858.



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## The Nieces

By **Ralphine Major**  
[ralphine3@yahoo.com](mailto:ralphine3@yahoo.com)

“Do you remember when we took you to school?” Dorothy asked. I knew exactly what she meant. It was on the last day of school—60 years ago!

The year was 1959. Three girls were finishing eighth grade at Gibbs Junior High School. Students Dorothy Stormer, Wanda Shaver, and Georgia Ann Major were planning something special. I would have thought the trio of girls had plenty to occupy their time. Summer vacation was just starting, and they would be entering their freshman year in high school the next

time they were on the school campus. Of course, there is always much to talk about in the way of latest fashions, hairstyles, boyfriends, and ballgames. But, the three teenagers realized they had something in common: they each had a niece. Sometime during lunch, or perhaps after school, they came up with the idea to bring the nieces to school on the last day. Dorothy’s niece was Sherry Lynn Stormer, her brother’s daughter. I knew Sherry Lynn from church as she often came with her grandparents, Ross and Jeanette Stormer, to Fairview Baptist Church in Corryton. Wanda’s niece was her sister’s daughter, Karen Shelby. Karen was the youngest of the nieces by at least a year. Georgia Ann was my father’s youngest sister. On the big day, we all dressed in our Sunday best. It was my first school bus ride before actually starting school. The nieces were much too young to realize what a special moment the teenage aunts had created and one that would be treasured so many decades later. (To be continued.)

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## FALL FOOTBALL PREVIEW YOUR GUIDE TO HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

### CENTRAL FOOTBALL 2019

# Central looks strong to defend its state title

By Bill Howard

Three years ago, Knoxville Central High School's football team made the 4A state championship game, falling 27-3 to Memphis East. A year later, playing in 5A, the Bobcats took a small step backward, losing to eventual state champion Catholic in the semis.

Last year Central began the season with consecutive losses to Tennessee High and Fulton. At 0-2, it appeared the Bobcats' elite status might be on the downturn. Thirteen consecutive wins later, Central was 5A state champs.

Bobcats' head coach Bryson Rosser attributes the recent success not only to his players, but the culture of the program. While he wants to win games like any coach, helping young men developing is equally important.

"There's a level of accountability here," said Rosser. "We do a lot of things off the field here, community service. We really invest in the kids as young men, not just as athletes. It's more about the kid underneath the jersey than it is the number on the kid."

If Central is to defend its title, Dakota Fawver, a three-year starter at quarterback, will need to avoid injury. His backup, sophomore Ryan Bolton, has no varsity experience. "(Fawver) needs to stay healthy," said Rosser.

"Dakota is a really good leader for us; he's mature and was the News Sentinel's Comeback Player of the Year last year," he said. "He's a dual-threat guy and I'm looking forward to what he brings to the table."

Carrying the load at running back will be senior Jason Merritts (5-11, 190), who ran for more than 700 yards in 2018, and scored eight touchdowns.

"He's a versatile, third-down back," said Rosser. "He can catch it coming out of the backfield and he's very shifty. Senior Makhi Anderson and sophomore Shannon Mills will get carries as well."

Fawver's top target will be senior speedster Braden Gaston (5-10, 165), who had over 600 yards in receptions last year and seven touchdowns. Senior Isaiah Osborne will catch passes as well.

Rosser's offensive line has limited experience, though it does have a pair of seniors - Zac Ridener (5-10, 310) at

**Continued on page 3**



PHOTO BY STEVE WILLIAMS

New Halls High head football coach Scott Cummings talks to his team at the close of practice Aug. 6.

# Cummings working on keeping players home and toughness

By Steve Williams

Scott Cummings is trying to build the Halls High football program from the inside out.

Since becoming the school's new head coach in February, he has already overseen a renovated team room plus a \$50,000 weight room upgrade and says his next project will be to build a new locker room.

The reason for the improvement in facilities is to give Halls players a reason to stay and play at Halls and not go somewhere else.

"If Halls had all the kids right now that are supposed to be at Halls, (but) that have gone somewhere else, we would be state championship contenders, no doubt about it," said Cummings after a humid preseason practice session last week.

"We've got to give them a reason to be here."

A new "community-based" Knox County middle school football league also should help Cummings build the Halls program from the youth level up. The new league will have its games played on the high school turf fields.

"It also gives the head coaches at the high schools a direct relationship with their feeder programs, so we can invest in our middle school coaches, get them running the same systems that the high school is running," added Cummings. "It will get the players coached up at an earlier age instead

of starting from scratch when they get to high school.

"Hopefully, after a couple of years of that, it will really help our program and the football IQs of our kids within our offensive and defensive systems."

As for now and the 2019 season, Cummings is trying to get his Red Devils tougher physically and mentally.

"It's just a process and it's a culture that we've got to get to here," he said. "We've got good players. We're as big as I have ever been in my career ... but their potential is not even close to being tapped. We're trying to learn how to play the game in a way that Halls has to play it to be successful."

Jake Parris, a 5-11, 185-pound senior strong safety and running back, is an "example" of what Cummings is looking for in a football player.

"On any team I've ever had, Jake would be a good player," said the former Knoxville West coach who guided the Rebels to Class 5A state runner-up and state title seasons in 2013 and 2014.

"That boy (Parris) can play some football," added Zach Brown, who coordinates the team's new 3-4 defense. "He is fast to the ball and he has an attitude when he gets there. He is 100 percent effort. I've never had to tell him to run faster. His motor is always going. He will help us win football games this year."

Another Halls tough guy will be Avery

Robertson, a tight end on offense and a "blitzing" outside linebacker in what Brown calls a "do or die defense."

Bubba Wilson, listed at 6-4, 340, has to be one of the biggest nosemen in the state. Trying to block him requires several people, said Brown.

Other returning starters on defense include inside linebacker Brett McMahan, cornerback Ty Hurst and free safety Jackson Cates. Rounding out the unit are ends John Williams and Paul Bethencourt, outside LB Ethan Crawford, inside LB Hayden Woods and corner Seth Simpson.

Junior quarterback Ty Humphrey (5-10, 205) showed "a lot of toughness" in Halls' first scrimmage against Hardin Valley, said Cummings.

Other returning starters on offense are Parris and Robertson, left tackle Zayne Glenn (6-6, 295) and center Aaron Coley. They will be joined by running back Hunter Cox, wide receivers Jaydin White and Simon Williams, and left guard Sean Holloway (6-3, 305). Starting positions have yet to be filled at guard and tackle on the right side.

Sophomore Jake Marcantel will take over for his brother, Briggs, who was an All-Knox County placekicker last season.

Aeneas Halouma, an offensive tackle and defensive end, is expected to rejoin the team this week. He has been sidelined with a head injury.

**Continued on page 4**



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# FALL FOOTBALL PREVIEW

# YOUR GUIDE TO HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

## Catholic moves to Division 2

By Alex Norman

Times have changed in high school football across the state, and those changes certainly can be felt at Knoxville Catholic High School. This year, the Fighting Irish join private school programs across the state in the move from Division I to Division II. Knoxville Catholic will play this season in Division II-AAA, which means matchups against traditional powerhouses like Brentwood Academy.

"It'll be a challenge but when you are a competitor, you want to play at the top level against the best," said Knoxville Catholic head coach Steve Matthews. "As a program we are excited about the opportunity. We know it will be tough, but we are looking forward to it."

"Higher competition. It'll bring out the best in us, I'm pretty sure," said Knoxville Catholic offensive lineman Cooper Mays. "I'm happy about the challenge. It's the best football in all of Tennessee. We are all happy about it here at Catholic."

Cooper is one of a handful of Fighting Irish players that will take their talents to the college game a year from now. He recently verbally committed to Tennessee. Earlier this year, fellow offensive lineman Bryn Tucker verbally committed to defending national champion Clemson. Like those two, strong-side defensive end recruit Tyler Baron is ranked in the top ten players in the state by 247Sports. Baron, who transferred to Knoxville Catholic from Ensworth, has yet to make his college decision known. Baron's father is Patrick Abernathy, who holds the title of Player Development with Tennessee's football program.

Each of those Knoxville

### CATHOLIC FOOTBALL 2019

Catholic student-athletes is a four-star recruit.

"We have some very good players," said Matthews. "It's just one of those deals, they come in cycles. But it shows that we are developing our players. The colleges know that when they come here, the players know how to act and their academics are in order. I'm proud of those guys and proud of their achievements."

In addition, three-star wide receiver prospect Chancellor Bright has verbally committed to Marshall. Inside linebacker Cody Duncan will also likely find himself on a college roster next season.

In terms of the skill positions heading into the 2019 season, dual threat quarterback Jack Jancek is the returning starter from a year ago. He will be pushed in Fall camp by Kaden Martin and Caden Buckles.

Knoxville Catholic welcomes back leading rusher Keondre' Jarmon, as well as top receiver Tommy Winton. Both are only going into their sophomore seasons, but that hasn't stopped colleges from already looking their way. In fact, Winton has an offer from Tennessee in the Class of 2022.

"We feel really good about our skill positions in the future and hope to continue developing lineman," said Matthews.

Offensively the Fighting Irish bring back up to nine starters from a year ago, including all five offensive linemen. Defensively, they return seven starters.

Knoxville Catholic opens the 2019 season at home on Friday, August 23 against Chuckey-Doak.

## Grace Christian has depth to play two-platoon football

By Ken Lay

The 2019 season will give Grace Christian Academy football coach Rusty Bradley the opportunity to do something that he hasn't been able to do in his three stops as a head coach.

And that's coach a largely two-platoon football team and he's doing it at one of Knox County's smaller schools.

"This year, we're going to concentrate on having a lot of guys play on just one side of the ball," said Bradley, who begins his third year as the Rams' head coach after stops at University School of Jackson and Christian Academy of Knoxville where he won consecutive Class 3A State Championships in 2011 and 2012. "I've always wanted to do that but I've just never been able to."

"This year, I think we have the numbers so we can do that. Last year, we finished with 49 guys and this year, our numbers are up a little bit. We have 52 players in the program in grades nine through 12."

Grace Christian went

### GRACE CHRISTIAN FOOTBALL 2019

5-6 in 2018 and was eliminated in the first round of the Division II-AA State Playoffs. Bradley said he'd like to make another trip to the postseason and make a deeper run, but the coach said that he honestly doesn't know what to expect from the Rams this season.

"Honestly, I don't know what to expect," Bradley said. "That all depends on how well we stay healthy and it all depends on what everybody else in our league has."

"I just don't know what everybody else has got. I really don't know much about the other schools."

He also noted that depth is an area of concern but that is no surprise at a school Grace's size. Depth can potentially always be an issue.

The team's major strength, according to Bradley, is experience.

"Last year, we had basically sophomores and juniors with a sprinkling

of seniors," Bradley said. "We have a lot of guys back who played a lot, saw a lot of time last year and we're even able to focus on having guys play on one side of the ball."

That's a luxury that most area high school teams don't have --- especially in Division II.

Top returners for the Rams include: Jalen Greer (senior, wide receiver); Grant Warwick (junior, wide receiver/kick returner); Michael Feiden (a junior running back and free safety, who was an all-state defensive player as a sophomore in 2018); Reece Kirkwood (senior, wide receiver); Lucas Ellis (senior, center/defensive end); John Michael Lott (senior, offensive tackle/defensive end); Noah Bruhin (a sophomore offensive guard, who started as a freshman last season); Johnny Eller (junior, linebacker); Ben Stansbury (senior, linebacker); Devan Coffey (a junior outside

linebacker who played running back last season) Jared Long (a junior outside linebacker, who played at free safety last year); Chase McCullar (senior, placekicker/punter); Cooper Riggs (a junior who will start at quarterback in 2019 after playing at a wide receiver spot over the past two seasons); Dane Nussbaum (junior, defensive back) and Michael Human (junior, defensive back).

Key newcomers are: Caleb Curcio (a junior running back who sat out last season after transferring from CAK); August Jordan (a senior offensive tackle who also transferred from CAK); Garrett Staley (a junior defensive lineman who also transferred from CAK); Tabb Layton (a junior defensive tackle who transferred from Farragut) and Camden Cross (a junior linebacker who transferred from Hardin Valley Academy).

The Rams open their 2019 campaign at Stone Memorial on Friday, Aug. 23.

## Adversity, Experience Prepares West to Make Noise

By David Klein

### WEST FOOTBALL 2019

For the West High School Rebels, a 4-7 finish in 2018 was an anomaly. The team had been used to winning, only four years removed from a state title in 2014 and losing felt odd. This year, senior linebacker Drew Francis and senior defensive end Tyrece Edwards hope to extinguish last season and go out with a bang. Both Francis and Edwards have

committed to play for the University of Arkansas next year.

Francis shared some of the ways he has developed at linebacker since he's been at West. "The biggest thing I had to learn, was to learn how to play in space," he said. This year, he said he is learning how to play middle linebacker.

Francis is coming off of a labrum (shoulder) injury last year. "It was kinda hard coming back from doing my regular weight room work," he said. "I'm getting a lot better. It was really tough at first, watching my teammates do stuff without me. You just got to take it day by day."

Both Francis and Edwards mentioned the team chemistry has improved since Head Coach Lamar Brown started coaching three years ago. "Something I've noticed

before Coach Brown, a lot of our locker room was divided," Francis said. "Since Coach Brown came along, it feels more like a family," he added.

Edwards also mentioned the team chemistry getting better. "When I first came in, the team was not really all together," Edwards said. "Everyone was kinda doing their own thing by themselves. Every year we became closer and closer. This year, we hang out all the time. We're always together. We're building a stronger relationship. I like how we have all come together and can be one."

Entering his third year of coaching, Brown sees the change in his team too. "This senior class has been with me ever since they were sophomores," he said. "The culture is really starting to change. Their practice

habits have gotten a lot better. The biggest change is the kids take the weight room a lot more serious now than they did three years ago. That really helped us on the football field."

In talking about the offense, Brown emphasized the players up front. "The biggest key on offense is that we got all five of our starting offensive linemen back."

Returning junior quarterback Baker Dance has earned high accolades from Brown. "He had a great spring practice and he's carried that over into the summer and in 7 on 7s. He also can help us in the running game. He's gotten a lot stronger. As a freshman, he was really skinny. The weight room has really helped him and he's really matured. He's going to be a really good football player for us the next two years."

**Continued on page 4**

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# HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS NOTEBOOK

## Rimmer steps down after 19 years as Carter baseball coach

By Steve Williams

Longtime Carter High baseball head coach Scott Rimmer has stepped down from his coaching duties.

Rimmer, who will continue to teach economics at Carter, was the Hornets' head coach from 2001 through 2019 and had an overall record of 315-244-1.

He began his high school coaching career as an assistant at Central High under Bud Bales in 1995 and stayed with the Bobcats for six seasons.

When offered the Carter post in 2001, Rimmer also was offered the Central job at the same time after Bales retired.

"Coach Bales taught me so much, not just about coaching baseball, but about dealing with young men," said Rimmer.

Chris Armstrong, a former Gibbs player who was the head coach at Sweetwater the past three years, will take over the Hornets' program.

Scott Bray, Rimmer's assistant for 17 years, will assist the new Carter skipper.

Rimmer's wife, Lisa, teaches at Carter Elementary School. Their son Ethan will be entering Carson-Newman University this fall and will be playing on the golf team. Their daughter Annie is a senior at Carter and has committed to swim at the University of Tennessee. Daughter Sarah Grace is in the fifth grade at Carter Elementary.

**NEW AT POWELL:** Josh Warner has been named the Panthers' new head baseball coach. He succeeds Logan Dalton, who has joined the college coaching ranks at Campbellsville



Scott Rimmer has resigned after 19 seasons as Carter's baseball coach. He will continue to teach economics at the school.

Grace Christian's Andrew Gouge, Fulton's Trey Sewell and Central's George Hall.

Volleyball: Austin-East's Hayden Hopkins, Halls' Hollie Kilgore, Hardin Valley's Joy Waller, Fulton's Jennifer Hubbard and Central's Daniel Carroll.

Cheerleading: Carter's Hunter Chollman, GCA's Jennifer Mackey and Catholic's Randi Nelson.

**NEW IN HOOPS:** First Baptist Academy has hired a girls basketball coach. Paul Baird comes to FBA from Ohio, where he was a very successful coach at a private Christian school, reports Athletic Director Jay Scarbro.

The Eagles earlier announced Jonathan Cox, former Fulton assistant, as their new boys basketball coach.

**CHECK SIGNALS:** Powell versus Greenville won't be the first prep football game to be played in the state this season after all.

Due to a scheduling snafu, two Chattanooga area schools - Whitwell and East Ridge - have that distinction and will kick off the season on Wednesday, Aug. 21, at East Ridge.

The odd date occurred after Whitwell, during an offseason coaching change, had inadvertently scheduled two opponents - East Ridge and Bledsoe County - on Aug. 23.

To get out of a buyout penalty and a forfeit, Whitwell will play at East Ridge Aug. 21 and at Bledsoe County three days later on Saturday, Aug. 24.

Powell will host Greeneville Thursday, Aug. 22, at 7 (EDT). It will be among seven games statewide to be played that Thursday.

University in Kentucky.

Warner was an assistant coach under Mike Guinn at Pigeon Forge last season. Warner also formerly coached at Jefferson County.

**NEW HEAD COACHES** in fall sports as the 2019-20 school year gets underway in Knox County include Carter's Makayla Dudley, Austin-East's Steve Prince, Fulton's Douglas Graves and Central's Matt Lay in cross country.

Football: Carter's Scott Meadows, Halls' Scott Cummings and Hardin Valley's Mike Potter.

Girls Soccer: Halls' Tamara Wissing and Powell's Victoria Weinhandl.

Golf: Powell's Austin White, Career Magnet Academy's Joshua Murdock,

## Central looks strong to defend its state title

Cont. from page 1

center and Noah Parker (5-10, 250) at left tackle.

"The O-line is the biggest area on the offense where we need to improve," Rosser said. A bunch of guys played sparingly last year and now it's time to be the starter ... we finally got some depth. Our roster now has about 80 kids on it; when I first got here we had about 45."

After the two losses, the Bobcats yielded just nine points per game while scoring more than 36. One of his defensive ends this year - senior Eli Sharp (5-10, 230) - is a returning starter.

"My D-line works real hard in the weight room so I feel good about that," Rosser said. "Still trying to find the right four up front."

Rosser's most experienced unit is linebackers. Senior Tyler Bost (5-10,

215) is a three-year starter. Junior Kalib Fortner (6-0, 220) was all-state last year.

The secondary will be a work in progress. Gaston at cornerback is the only returning starter. Ryan Bolton will handle the punting; Jarred Swislosky the kicking.

"We're very senior-heavy, looking for a lot of leadership from those guys," said Rosser. "We have really good team chemistry...kids know the expectations from top to bottom. Now it's just a matter of us playing with great attitude, great effort and being disciplined."

Central romped through regional (2-5A) play last year, winning by an average of 36 points. They should be a strong favorite to repeat this year. The Bobcats open the season Aug. 23 against Cleveland

High School at home. The rematch with Fulton is the following Friday on the road.

"There's always high expectations," said Rosser. "There's a lot of things that

have to go your way to get back to state. The ultimate goal is to hold them accountable and continue to work hard and hoping we're on the winning end more times than not."



PHOTO BY STEVE WILLIAMS

This is the busiest time of the year for Michael Human, but he loves what he's doing as a member of both the football and golf teams at Grace Christian Academy.

## Human juggles golf and football at Grace Christian

By Steve Williams

This is the busiest time of the year for Michael Human, but he's good enough of an athlete to handle it.

Michael plays golf and football for Grace Christian Academy, two sports that overlap particularly in the months of August and September.

And his junior year is going great so far. He won two of GCA's first three golf matches of the season, while also preparing for the upcoming football campaign as a starting cornerback and being in the receiver rotation of the Rams' pass-happy offense.

Both first-year head golf coach Andrew Gouge and head football coach Rusty Bradley are okay with sharing Human's talents.

"Michael did this last year and it was definitely a busy fall for him, but he's such a good athlete," said Bradley. "He works really hard. He does a good job of managing his time."

If it's a day the golf team is having a match, Human usually plays with the golf team. If both teams are just practicing, he's with the football team.

The golf season starts

earlier than football and ends around the middle of football's regular season.

"It's always difficult as a high school player when you're trying to do two different sports, but he seems to be managing pretty well right now," said Coach Gouge.

"We do the best we can to work with him and kind of let him go where he wants to go. But he's been doing a great job out here so far."

Michael loves both sports and found it hard to choose one over the other.

"I've been playing them both my whole life," he said.

As a freshman, Human played only golf. Last year, he got back into football too.

He got off to a great start in golf this year, firing a 35 to win at Beaver Brook in a match against Hardin Valley Academy, Powell and Halls.

In his third match last week at Dead Horse Lake, he carded a 38 over nine holes to prevail against L&N STEM Academy.

Instead of playing in Thursday's match against Maryville and Alcoa at the Egwani Farms course in Blount County, Human practiced football. Grace Christian

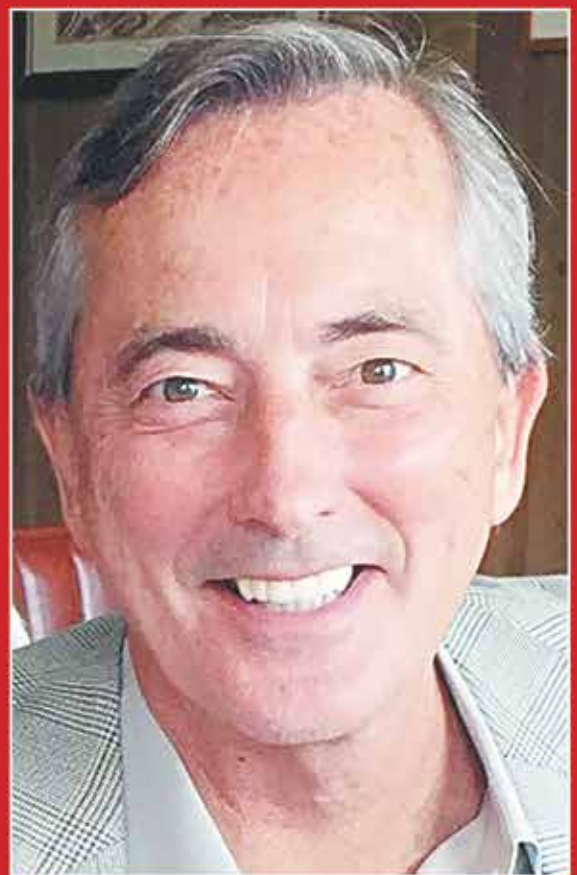
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# Bob Thomas City Council



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# MAC brings middle school football to Knoxville

By Ken Lay

Knoxville now has middle school football. The new Middle-School Age Conference made its debut on Saturday, Aug. 3 at a jamboree at Bearden High School's Bill Young Field.

Middle School football is a first for Knox County and the new league will feature teams from eight schools including Bearden, Gibbs, Halls, Farragut, Karns, Hardin Valley, Alcoa and Carter.

The Hornets, however, will play only a junior varsity schedule in 2019 due to a lack of eighth graders in the program.

The new league, which many say has been needed for a long time, is the brainchild of Bulldogs' coach Nathan Meeks, a longtime youth football coach for Bearden and West and Meeks, who has a true love for the game.

"Tennessee has middle school football in 93 of its 96 counties but Knox County isn't one of them," Meeks said. "We wanted to give these kids a chance to play middle school football."

While the league represents Knoxville's first full venture in to middle school football, Meeks noted that is not affiliated with Knox County Schools or the Knox County Parks and Recreation League.

"We are independent of Knox County Schools and we are independent of the Knox County Recreation and Parks Department," he said.

But that doesn't seem to matter in Farragut or Hardin Valley.

"I think I was one of the players to play [junior high] football and I remember what it was like," Farragut coach Dee Smith said. "This is something that has been needed for years."

"It's needed because when you played in the county Parks and Recreation league, you played your games far away at either John Tarleton Park [just west of downtown] or at Tommy Schumpert Park in Halls, and sometimes you played at 8 o'clock at night so the teachers and some of the kids



PHOTO BY KEN LAY.

**Bearden quarterback Jackson Landry prepares to block after making a handoff at the inaugural MAC Jamboree at Bearden High School. The event marked the debut of middle school football in Knoxville.**

couldn't come and see you play. You just didn't have the community support when you played in the county league."

The county recreation league was open and now, players will play largely with their classmates. Each team may have three players not in their zone and Hardin Valley coach Jason Lay said that's made a big difference for his team.

"We were starting to go on the decline," said Lay, a Hawks' youth coach for several years.

That's not the case in 2019.

Hardin Valley had to suspend its registration early and now has 69 varsity and junior varsity players in its program and since the Hawks will play their home games at Hardin Valley Academy, community support is coming in faster that Lay can keep track of it.

"Since we joined, we picked up 25 additional kids," Lay said. "We had 44 kids last year."

"We did that because these kids think they're playing for their middle school team. The community has really gotten behind us. We had an orthodontist make our guys custom

mouth pieces and every other day, my wife and I get a call from somebody in the community wanting to know what they can do to help us out."

Meeks, Smith and Lay are three of the leagues head coaches. Alcoa is coached by Mike McClung. Carter's coach is Melvin Burns. Gibbs is coached by Joe Currington. Halls is coached by Don Starnes and the Beavers are coached by Al McDuffie.

In addition to football, the league offers opportunities for cheerleaders and some for bands.

The league also stresses academic achievement and offers tutoring. Community service is also a key component as the league is partnered with the Scarecrow Foundation, which combats hunger in East Tennessee.

Local middle school teams will play on Thursday nights and the games will be at area high schools.

The regular season opened Thursday night and Farragut downed Karns 30-0. Alcoa edged Bearden 13-12 in overtime and Halls toppled Gibbs 35-0.

# Human juggles golf and football at Grace Christian

**Cont. from page 3**

opens its season Aug. 23 against Stone Memorial in Crossville.

Human, a 6-foot, 180-pounder, doesn't have a favorite position in football. "Anywhere they put me, I'll do my best," he said.

He admits that playing two sports puts him behind a little in football.

"It kind of does, missing the practices, missing reps, but it all works out I guess."

Human, whose father Mike was a quarterback at West High and Maryville College, also played baseball and basketball growing up.

Michael has played golf as far back as he can remember.

"My dad took me out and we started playing probably when I was around 5 or 6 years old and I still remember going out there for the first time."

As an eighth grader, Human tied for first place in the state middle school tournament and lost in a playoff hole.

"My freshman year I did okay," he said. "I didn't play good my sophomore year, so I'm trying to make a run this year and see what I can do."

He's been putting in extra practice time on the weekends and plays year round when it's not too cold.

"The practice is paying off," he said.

One of Human's goals is to get back to the state.

"He has a ton of potential," said Coach Gouge. "He comes out here and he just looks like he's always calm and doesn't really let the mind game get to him too much."

"He's pretty consistent, so the more he can fine tune a

few areas, I think he can be a really strong player. I've even told him I think he could be a contender for a potential state, if not this year, maybe next year, if he could work out a little bit more. But he's been doing a great job handling both sports."

Human's long-range goal is to play college golf.

"I'm trying to work on golf and see if I can get a scholarship," he said. "But as far as football, I'm probably not going to play in college."

On missing some practice time in football, Coach Bradley says Michael is good at checking to see what the team went over.

"Usually if he misses a day with us, it's a Tuesday or Thursday and just a walk-through."

As a football player, Bradley says Human has great hands, change of direction and ball skills.

"He's very athletic, with natural good instincts, a lot of things that you really don't coach. You just have it or you don't and he has it."

While some high school coaches want their athletes to play only their game, Bradley is not that way.

"These guys have only one chance to be in high school," he said. "They need to experience it to the fullest. Michael is too good of a golfer to not play golf and he's too good at football to not play football."

I'd rather have Michael and what we can get out of him than not to have him at all. I think the golf team feels the same way."

"Michael is a great young man," added Coach Gouge. "We're really proud of him and glad he is representing us at Grace."

## Adversity, Experience

### Prepares West to Make Noise

**Cont. from page 2**

West is a power spread team on offense. Brown said, "We want to be balanced (running and throwing the football). I feel like we have a lot of weapons at wideout."

One of those weapons at wideout is senior Omari-an Wright. "Omarion has a had a great offseason and has really stepped up to be a leader on this football team," Brown said. "Anytime he touches the football, he's a threat to go the distance."

On the defensive side, besides Arkansas commits Francis and Edwards, Brown said junior Andrew Gilbert returns at noseguard. "I don't know if we have a kid on our team that plays as hard as Andrew," Brown said. "He gives his all every snap."

West plays in Region 3-5A and will face a monster schedule. "I don't think there's a question that it's the toughest 5A Region in the state," Brown said. "You've got Fulton, you've got Powell, you've got Oak Ridge. It is a tough region week in, week out. There are no off days in it. You throw in our out of region schedule against all 6A teams: Bearden, Farragut, Hardin Valley, and

Jefferson County. I would put our schedule up against anybody's in the state," Brown emphasized.

By playing in so many close games last year, Brown said the Rebels got valuable experience. "I think the experience we had last year gives us an advantage. We were 4-7, but could have easily been 9-1. We really grew up a lot last year, going through that adversity and losing in such heartbreaking losses that I really believe our football team really carried that over into this offseason. And they knew that there was something different that we had to do to finish those ballgames to win them. They have put in the work and I'm really excited to see this team go play."

"Everybody's sleeping on us this year," Edwards added. "It's going to be a really special season this year for sure. Everybody (the Rebels) knows what they're doing this year. We're just more like one team. I just feel like we got something to prove this year."

West opens the year Saturday, August 24, and hosts Bearden at 7 p.m.

## Cummings working on keeping players home and toughness

**Cont. from page 1**

"He's squatting almost 600 pounds and power cleaning in the 300s," said Coach Brown. Last year, the 6-foot, 285-pounder injured his knee early in the season and had to have surgery.

"He's got his strength back," said Brown. "We're just trying to get him over that mental side of being hurt."

"Once he gets back into

the swing of things, he's a tremendous football player. He's extremely strong and aggressive and really smart. He somehow ends up in the right place every time and is hitting everybody as hard as he can on every single play. There's no slow gear with him."

Halls will kick off the season Aug. 23 with a battle just down East Emory Road against rival Gibbs.

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**The Doctor is in**

a weekly column by  
**Dr. Jim Ferguson**

**Apostasy**

Here we go again. Deranged people shoot up a big box store and then a bar. Politicos grandstand and perversely fundraise on tragedy. The media manipulates the situation and people lament as they demand the government do something to fix the ills of society and the darkened hearts of men.

Guns are tools which can be used for good or for evil. If the government abolished the Second Amendment and confiscated all guns, criminals would find a way to acquire firearms as they do in Chicago, Illinois, which has the most stringent gun laws in the country. Yet 300 people have been murdered this year in the windy city.

Actually, reasoned people know that gun violence is but a symptom of more profound societal issues. I believe we should toughen gun laws with stringent background

checks in gun stores and gun shows. However, laws do not work with criminals, Jihadis or the insane.

Would a normal, sane person walk into a school or a Walmart and kill strangers? We have blurred the notion of normal, and because definitions are no longer adhered to, even the concept of insanity or right and wrong is debatable. The postmodern ethos of moral relativism has brought us to this place of chaos.

Acceptance of time honored ways of living, along with definitions of normal are under assault. I believe if you remove absolutes there is no arbiter of normalcy, and moral rot ensues. My opinion may challenge the postmodern politically correct, but dispute the logic instead of screaming invectives or running to your safe zone.

I don't believe people

with mental illness should have firearms or, for that matter, machetes. However, I believe people with mental illness are more a danger to themselves than society. So removing guns from law abiding citizens or the mentally ill will not fix gun violence. I am not mentally imbalanced, and I have a legal carry permit. These days, I rarely leave my property unarmed. I may be shot in Walmart, but I will not stand idle and be slaughtered.

Many factors are operative in gun violence. I consulted a psychiatrist friend who confirms FBI data that mental illness is a factor, but he notes that undiagnosed personality disorders can also be roused to violence. I can envision violent video games and movies challenging reality in the minds of marginal people. I can envision inflammatory rhetoric in the news or on social media raising passions to boiling points, perhaps more readily in impaired individuals. And the visceral hatred espoused by some of our titular leaders and stoked by the media actually sickens me and is just evil.

In the wake of the Christian-Newsom torture-murders, I wrote that "Sometimes, the best explanation for the otherwise inexplicable, is evil." Our nation

is in serious trouble. As one media person observed we are suffering from "cultural rot." As an internist I always seek the why in a patient's illness. I posit the cultural rot in America is the result of a renunciation of the absolute arbiter of right which I recognize as God. And as a student of history, I know what happens when God is excluded from citizenry, public discourse and government. The resulting destruction has occurred over and over throughout recorded history.

Jesus turned an ancient negative phrase into the positive axiom we know as the Golden Rule, and he challenged us to love God and our neighbors as ourselves. It is difficult to hate unless you renounce these tenets and then vilify and dehumanize a person or groups. Nazis claimed that Jews were animals. Talib and the Squad aver the same. The alt-left and the Democrat party leadership labels 50% of Americans as deplorable, Russian rubes and now white supremacists since the labels of racist, sexiast and homophobe did not work. The only white racist I've observed is depicted on the FX/Netflix drama series Justified. Actually, as the comedian Jeff Foxworthy might say, if you see race in everything, you might be a racist.

I had hoped Democrats might offer policies beneficial for America rather than just hating Trump and proposing free stuff to illegals and minorities. Why isn't Kamala Harris' proposal to give \$100 billion to black people or Cory Booker's reparations scheme not racist?

Now, even avuncular Joe Biden, driven by the rabid, progressive-socialist Democrat base, has lost his remaining wits and embraced the racist, white supremacist rants. Honestly, the pandering Democrat presidential candidates make leftist Nancy Pelosi appear "moderate," and she is not.

Friends, America is in trouble. For the first thirty-five years of my life I was focused on sports and girls, then college and medical school and finally marriage, starting a family and building a medical practice. However, for the last thirty-five years I've paid close attention to national and international situations. America has many challenges. We are in a non-shooting war with China, Russia and Iran. The rule of law and our borders are not enforced. Our profligate spending and the national debt are destroying our children's future. However, I have never observed anything like the current hatred,

cultural rot and resulting violence. We are at each other's throats, not seen since the Civil War. We have banned God from our midst. And we wonder why marginal people resort to violence. Actually, hatred and violence are just the human manifestations of evil. And unfortunately, evil is relentless and does not tire.

So where do we go from here? A treatment can be considered only after a diagnosis is made. My diagnosis is apostasy. God has been supplanted in schools, government and the public square with the new religion, secularism. It's not that people don't know of God; it's that too many see no relevance of Emmanuel (God with us).

A recent poll showed that 20% of millennials say they have no friends. Statistics also show that many perpetrators of violence are loners. God's most frequent promise in the Bible is "I am with you." Is it any wonder that the lost and disaffected have difficulty acting lawfully, selflessly or with agape?

The answer to America's problems is not open borders, new government programs or impeaching Trump. The answer is reconnecting to the Divine nature which resides within all of us.

You may email Dr. Ferguson at [fergusonj@knoxfocus.com](mailto:fergusonj@knoxfocus.com)



**Rosie's World**

spot, the baggy eyes, and the sagging butt. Often I'm shocked by that old person that lives in my mirror (who looks like my father/mother). However, I don't agonize over those things for long.

I would never trade my friends, my wonderful life, and my family, for less grey hair or a flatter belly. I've become kinder to myself and less critical of myself. I've become my own friend. I don't chide myself for eating that extra cookie, or for not making up my bed. I am entitled to a treat, to be messy or to be extravagant (buy something I don't really need).

I have seen so many friends and relatives leave this world so soon, before they understood the great freedom that comes with aging. And whose business is it if I choose to read or play on the computer until 4 a.m. and sleep until noon.

I will sing and dance by myself to those wonderful

tunes of the '40s and '50s and if at the same time I wish to weep over a lost loved one, I will. I will walk on the beach in a swimsuit that is stretched over a bulging body and will dive into the waves with abandon if I choose to; despite the pitying glances from the jet set (they too will get old).

I know at times I am forgetful, but there again, some things in life are just as well forgotten, however, I will eventually remember the important things. Sure, over the years my heart has been broken, how can your heart not be broken when you lose a loved one, or when you see a child that is suffering, or even when somebody's beloved pet dies? But broken hearts are what give us strength and understanding and compassion. A heart never broken is pristine and sterile and will never know the joy of being imperfect.

**Continue on page 4**

**In Loving Memory  
 Melissa Gail Underwood Carringer**

Melissa Gail Underwood Carringer, born August 27, 1971, age 47, of Knoxville, TN gained her wings and took leave of this world and entered into her eternal home on August 3, 2019 Knoxville, TN surrounded by loved ones. She was a Rule High School Golden Bear, class of 1988. She was a Christian and cherished member of the great Salvation Army family of the Knoxville Corps; active in Home League and many ministries such as the corps youth program as long as her health allowed. She was formerly employed by Kindred Healthcare, Boys & Girls Club and Knox County Schools.

Gail was preceded in death by her parents, George and Jewell Underwood, and brother-in-law, Charles Baxter. She is survived by her caretaker and husband of 24 years, Terry Carringer; two wonderful children of whom she was very proud, son, Benny (Crystal) Carringer of Henderson, KY; and daughter Tammy Carringer of Knoxville, TN, three grandchildren who were the joy of her heart, Judah, Raymond and Gracie; siblings left to grieve this great loss include sisters, Mary Baxter and Kathie Lynch, brothers, Mark Underwood, Joe (Trudy) Underwood and several

nieces and nephew who loved her macaroni and cheese. Her fantastic "adopted" sisters, Sandra, Lara, Sylvia and Sonja, shared, "although physically we cannot hold you here on earth again, we will forever and always hold you in our hearts. You were truly an amazing and loving woman and would give anyone the shirt off your back, just as you opened your heart and home to your 'adopted' sons, Shannon Newman and Andy Williams.

"Our hearts are shattered into thousands of pieces; our eyes are filled with tears that stream down our cheek with each passing memory of you."

Matthew 25:21 (KJV) His lord said unto him, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

As Gail would say, "Joy comes in the morning just don't know what morning."

Join family and friends for a Celebration of Life service for Melissa Gail Underwood Carringer on Saturday August 17, 2019 at The Salvation Army 409 North Broadway, Knoxville, TN 37917. Receiving of friends from 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. with the service to follow.

**Growing Old**

A friend of mine sent me this many years ago. Every once in a while, I like to read the contents and also remember his friendliness.

Some time ago I was asked by a young person how I felt about being old. I was a little shocked, for I don't think of myself as being old (although I am). It was an interesting question, and after much thinking, I believe this would have been my answer.

Old age, I decided, is a gift. I am now, probably for the first time in my life, the person I have always wanted to be. "Not my body, though." I sometimes despair over my body, the wrinkles, the



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