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PHOTO BY KEN LAY.

The winners of Thursday night's election celebrate their respective victories. They gathered at the Republican watch party at the Crowne Plaza in Downtown Knoxville.

Local GOP candidates celebrate victories at Crowne Plaza

By Ken Lay

David Buuck makes it no secret that he is ready to get to work for the citizens of Knox County and he'll soon get that chance when he's sworn in as law director.

"I am the people's lawyer and I can't wait to go to work for the people of Knox County," said Buuck, who defeated independent candidate Jackson Fenner to replace the term-limited Bud Armstrong as Knox County Law Director, Thursday night. "I'm looking forward to carrying on the fine work that Bud has done for the last eight years."

"I'm looking forward to carrying on that work with the professionalism that Bud did."

Buuck worked for Armstrong in the law director's office and said that he learned plenty from his predecessor.

"I think we learned a lot from each other and we brought more than 40 years of experience," Buuck said.

Later, he made an acceptance speech. And he implored his supporters to relish their right to vote as the charter committee

considers whether to have the law director appointed by the county mayor rather than having that person elected by the citizens of Knox County.

"There is nothing more sacred than the right to vote," Buuck said. "But there are people out there that want to take that right away from you, and you may see that on the ballot and you may see it on the ballot in November."

Buuck also expressed gratitude to his family for their support during the campaign and the election cycle.

"When you run for office, your whole family runs with you. This year, during the pandemic, it was a little tougher because you have to go out and campaign," Buuck said.

In other local races, Eric Lutton defeated independent candidate Sherif Guindi for Knox County Public Defender.

On the county commission, Grant Rosenberg won the District 2 seat, Kyle Ward won in District 4 and John Schoonmaker won in District 5.

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David Buuck was elected Knox County Law Director Thursday night as he defeated independent candidate Jackson Fenner. Buuck replaces the term-limited Bud Armstrong and promises to be "the people's lawyer."

Some surprises in Knox County voting choices

By Mike Steely Senior Writer steelym@knoxfocus.com

Thursday's local and state election brought some surprises for Knox County on several levels for both political parties. The count of absentee, early voting and election day votes went faster than expected. Some races were very close with the winners getting very narrow margins.

Chris Davis, Election Board Executive Director, said the results will be certified on August 24. About 75,422 people voted,

slightly fewer than the 81,000 total two years ago. The mail-in ballot turnout was huge, with about 12,000 voters choosing that option during the COVID-19 pandemic. Four years ago, in a similar August election, only 21,000 people voted.

There are 226 provisional ballots to be counted but Davis said there's no chance that those ballots, even if all are approved and counted, will change any results.

While Bill Hagerty easily won the Republican Primary to replace retiring U. S. Senator Lamar Alexander he lost Knox

County to Dr. Manny Sethi, who pulled 47% to Hagerty's 44%. The winner will face Democrat Marquita Bradshaw in November, although Democrat James Mackler carried our county in that primary.

Deputy Law Director David Buuck defeated Independent Jackson Fenner to become the elected Knox County Law Director. Buuck, seeking his first elected position, got 63% of the vote. Shadowing that race is the Charter Review Committee's proposal to ask voters in November to make the law director an

appointed position by the county mayor.

In the competitive primary races for Tennessee House the surprise was the big loss for District 15's state Representative Rick Staples. That Democratic Primary went to former Knox County Commissioner Sam McKenzie in a squeaker with newcomer Matthew Park. McKenzie won with just 23 votes over Park. Staples, the incumbent, received only 21% in the race. Independent Troy B. Jones will be the November

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School Mania to be held this afternoon

School Mania II is the second annual School Mania back to school celebration hosted by Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs. The event will take place from 3 to 6 p.m. on Monday, Aug. 10 in the parking lot of the Jacob Building in Chilhowee Park via a drive thru format.

"This is different than we did it last year, but it's still going to be a great event," said Mayor Jacobs. "Our business partners—without whom we could never pull this off—have really stepped up this year. Thanks to them, we are going to be able to provide double the supplies we did last year. So even though its different, in many ways it will be even better than before."

Thanks to the generous support of nearly 60 donors and financial sponsors, the mayor's office will distribute 3,000 school supply bags. Each family will also receive a fun informational bag of goodies. All items are available on a first come, first serve basis while supplies last.

Cars will enter Chilhowee Park via 3500 Knoxville Zoo Drive and follow a one-way traffic flow to exit on Magnolia Ave. A walk-up option will be available at the KAT bus stop located at the corner of Beaman St. and Magnolia Ave., directly across from Perk City.

The event gates will open at 2 p.m. to allow cars to assemble, but no school supply bags will be distributed until 3 p.m.

Attendees are asked to remain in their vehicles to allow for safe physical distancing.

Emerald Youth Foundation to participate in food program

Emerald Youth Foundation is participating in the United States Department of Agriculture's Child and Adult Care Food Program through Sept. 30, 2021.

CACFP provides snacks after school, at no separate charge, to young people who participate in Emerald Youth's programs without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability, at the following locations: Laurel Church of Christ, 3457 Kingston Pike, and Emerald Youth Foundation facilities at 1718 North Central Street, 601 College Street and 1740 Texas Avenue.

Additional information about CACFP is available through the Tennessee Department of Human Services at https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/children/dhs-nutrition-programs/child-and-adult-care-food-program.html.

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Discussions on school opening continue at KCS work session

By Ken Lay

The start and the new look of the 2020-2021 school year again took center stage at last week's Knox County Board of Education work session.

The meeting, held Wednesday at the Andrew Johnson Building, was approximately 24 hours after KCS Superintendent Bob Thomas announced that the start of the academic year would be delayed until Monday, Aug. 24.

The issues of virtual learning, internet access, standardized testing, teacher evaluations, extra safety supplies and outsourcing the remote learning program were discussed.

"I know the delay is not ideal, but my hope is if we take a little extra time we can avoid some challenges

that might come up down the road," said Thomas, who has made it no secret that he's wanted to open the school campuses as soon as possible. "There's no question that the best situation is to have students in the classrooms with their teachers."

Thomas had originally decided to re-open schools as scheduled on Aug. 10 with extra safety measures in place while giving students the opportunity to participate in remote learning.

He then pushed the start date back to Aug. 17, but announced that schools would re-open on Aug. 24 on Tuesday.

Thomas noted that 18,500 students and their families had opted for remote learning for the first

semester of the school year. He said that the extra week was needed for scheduling since so many students selected to use the remote learning option.

"We had about 18,500 students sign up for virtual learning, which was about double what we thought," Thomas said. "It's a lot of schedule changes involved enrolling students in the virtual learning program."

The district is using the traffic light model, with green days, yellow days and red days.

On green days, schools will open with no restrictions. On yellow days, safety measures such as face coverings, temperature checks and social distancing protocols in place. On red days,

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Something To Smile About

From Blonde's Cookbook

Monday: It's fun to cook for Bob. Today I made angel food cake. The recipe said beat twelve eggs separately. The neighbors were nice enough to lend me some extra bowls.

Tuesday: Bob wanted fruit salad for supper. The recipe said serve without dressing. So, I didn't dress. What a surprise when Bob brought a friend home for supper.

Wednesday: A good day for rice. The recipe said wash thoroughly before steaming. It seemed kind of silly but I took a bath. I can't say it improved the rice any.

Thursday: Today Bob asked for salad again. I tried a new recipe. It said prepare ingredients, then toss on a bed of lettuce one hour before serving. Which is what led up to Bob asking me why I was rolling around in the garden.

Friday: I found an easy recipe for cookies. It said put all ingredients in bowl and beat it. There must have been something wrong with this recipe. When I got back, everything was the same as when I left.

Saturday: Bob did the shopping today and brought home a chicken. He asked me to dress it for Sunday (oh, boy). For some reason Bob keeps counting to ten.

Sunday: Bob's folks came for dinner. I wanted to serve roast. All I could find was hamburger. Suddenly I had a flash of genius. I put the hamburger in the oven and set the controls for roast. It still came out hamburger, much to my disappointment.

Good night, dear diary. This has been a very exciting week. I am eager for tomorrow to come so I can try out a new recipe on Bob. If we could just get a bigger oven, I would like to surprise with Chocolate Mousse.

Did you smile while reading this? I hope so. We need something to smile about during this pandemic.

Now let me add some thoughts to think about:

Give people more than they expect and do it cheerfully. Marry a man/woman you love to talk to. As you get older, their conversational skills will be as important as any other. Don't believe all you hear; spend all you have or sleep all you want. When you say, "I love you," mean it. When you say, "I'm sorry," look the person in the eye. Be engaged at least six months before you marry. Believe in love at first sight. Never laugh at anyone's dreams. People who don't have dreams, don't have much. Love deeply and passionately. You might get hurt but it's the only way to live life completely. In disagreements, fight fairly. Please, no name calling.

Remember the three "R's". Respect for self. Respect for others. Responsibility for all your actions. Lastly, spend some time alone.

Send comments to: rosemerrie@att.net. Thank you.

Several COVID-19 items on commission agenda

By Mike Steely

Senior Writer
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The Knox County Commission's work session next Monday will consider 54 different items to go on to the regular session's agenda. Many of the items deal with the Knox County Health Department and COVID-19 response.

Agenda items to be discussed are selected by Chairman Hugh Nystrom or individual commissioners. Most other items may be added to the "consent" calendar for the August 24 meeting. Among the COVID-19 items are agreements requested by the health department for contracts with Integrity Laboratories, Premier Medical Inc. and Associated Pathologists LLC for testing services.

The health department, which moved testing for the virus to the Jacobs Building at Chilhowee Park last week, is requesting a Memorandum of Understanding with the city for the use of that building. A state grant of \$321,200 for substance abuse during the epidemic is also being sought by the health department.

The election commission is asking for approval of a state grant of \$427,059 to prevent, prepare for and respond to COVID-19 pandemic.

Commissioner Charles Busler wants a discussion regarding the health department and "their actions, sanitation and sterilization on the COVID-19 pandemic." Commissioner Richie Beeler wants a discussion, delayed since July, on illegal littering and dumping on private property.

The commission may also discuss removing exceptions to the definition of hotels for the short-term rental of residential property. That would extend the current hotel and motel taxes to Airbnbs and other homes in Knox County and permit the county to accept their portion of the already-collected city taxes.

The procedure for candidate exams for Knox County employment may be amended in the Knox County Code.

Within the items requested from Knox County School Board is an approval of a contract with Whaley Construction LLC for \$1.4 million for a pedestrian bridge project at South-Doyle High School. The board is also submitting a schematic design for the new Adrian Burnett Elementary School from Johnson Architecture.

The commission is also being asked to approve a lease agreement with Concord Marina of Knoxville LLC to add 13.82 acres and authorize improvements there.

Local GOP candidates celebrate victories at Crowne Plaza

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In the Tennessee House State House, Knoxville businessman Eddie

Mannis held an unofficial 99-vote lead over Gina Oster at press time.

Oster gave a concession speech Thursday night at the Republican return watch party while Mannis did not appear at Thursday night's gathering. Those candidates were competing for the seat vacated by the retiring Martin Daniel.

In the Tennessee State House, former Knox County Commissioner Michele Carringer defeated Knox County Board of Education Member Patti Lou Bounds in the Republican primary for District 6.

Several candidates ran unopposed in the primary Thursday night. Those

candidates included Tim Burchett in the US House of Representatives, Terry Hill (Knox County Commission, District 6); Kyle Hixson (Criminal Court Judge); Richie Beeler (Knox County Commission, District 8) and Carson Dailey (Knox County Commission, District 9) and Jason Zachary (Tennessee State House, District 14)

In his acceptance speech, Dailey said that his goals were simple but lofty for his district.

"I want to make South Knoxville better," he said. "I want to make South Knoxville better today than yesterday and better tomorrow than it is today."

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A recent trend in America is the use of animals in a medically prescribed way for emotional purposes. Medical research has determined that animals can provide a calming effect on individuals.

True, these animals (usually dogs, but I suppose it could be any animal), do provide a real and noticeable difference on individuals dealing with medical issues.

Some juvenile court-houses even have emotional support animals walk around the waiting area and spend time with children to provide both a distraction and to calm them down, given the stressful situation these children find themselves in.

These emotional support animals are covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in the same way that assistance dogs for the blind are. What does that mean having pets and animals while you are in a landlord-tenant relationship? That means that if a renter has an actual, medically prescribed, emotional support animal, then the landlord has to allow them to have that animal in the property and cannot evict them for having that animal. Further, they cannot charge them a pet deposit for having the emotional support animal

on the rented property.

Now, the cynics in all of us may be saying, "Really? An emotional support dog is the same as a seeing-eye dog?" Under the ADA, yes. I do not want to disparage those individuals who actually need and benefit from an emotional support animal, but unfortunately, this new designation is prone to abuse.

First, the person renting and desiring to have an emotional support dog on the property that they rent needs to document that they need an emotional support animal, typically to aid with a diagnosis like depression, which is a much more subjective diagnosis than blindness.

Second, the person who states that the animal is medically necessary for emotional support purposes need not be a doctor. The ADA and Tennessee Code state only that a "healthcare provider," so potentially a psychiatrist or other medical professional can provide the documentation stating that an animal is necessary for emotional support purposes.

Third, while seeing-eye dogs have specific training to become assistance animals, emotional support animals do not. A healthcare provider may just state, "you have a pit bull that calms you down

that you already own? Okay, the pit bull is your emotional support animal and its medically necessary that you have him live with you."

So, as you can see, while there will be legitimate cases where a support animal is needed, the system is rife with possibilities for abuse, which could be a nightmare for a landlord with a strict "no pets" policy.

Does the landlord have any rights at all to combat this? Mostly no. Tennessee Code Annotated section 66-28-406 went in to effect in on July 1, 2019, and it tries to help out the landlords if there is found be abuse of the "emotional support" designation, by stating that landlords can evict tenants if they find that falsified documentation about an animal being for emotional support purposes. A little help there, but not much. If you are a landlord, you can only hope that tenants do not abuse this ADA designation to circumvent a "no pet" policy.

Jedidiah McKeehan is an attorney practicing in Knox County and surrounding counties. He works in many areas, including criminal, personal injury, landlord-tenant, probate, and estate planning. Visit attorney-knoxville.com for more information about this legal issue and other legal issues.

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Publisher Steve Hunley

Publisher's Positions



By Steve Hunley,
Publisher
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Election Results

The election results are in and there were several big races decided last Thursday. For you political junkies, we'll take a deep dive into the results.

Bill Hagerty is the Republican nominee for the United States Senate seat being vacated by Lamar Alexander. Hagerty began the race as the overwhelming favorite and the race seemed to have tightened toward the end as Team Hagerty unleashed a barrage of attack ads against challenger Dr. Manny Sethi. Hagerty was also the choice of most of the GOP establishment in Tennessee; Senator Alexander and Marsha Blackburn were for Hagerty, as was former governor Bill Haslam. In spite of that, Manny Sethi managed to narrowly carry Knox County as Hagerty easily carried most of the rest of Tennessee.

Diana Harshbarger might well have been the biggest surprise of the night. For the last fifty years, whenever a congressman in the First Congressional District retires, everybody and his brother jumps into the Republican primary. This year was no exception. A host of candidates entered the GOP primary and Harshbarger emerged on top of the pile. I don't claim to know a lot about politics

in the First District, but everything I heard, as well as what most of my friends and acquaintances heard, indicated State Senator Rusty Crowe would win the primary. Crowe has been in the Tennessee State Senate since 1990 and has been enduringly and overwhelmingly popular inside his district. Still, it wasn't enough. Crowe and State Representative Timothy Hill were virtually tied for second place. As we went to press, the latest figures had Timothy Hill with 16.7% of the ballots cast, while Rusty Crowe had 16.1%. Hill tallied 15,724 votes with Crowe close behind with 15,170. Harshbarger won with 19.2% of the vote and 18,069 votes. Think of that folks, the Republican nominee for Congress selected by less than 20% of the electorate participating in the primary. Harshbarger carried Sevier, Sullivan, Hawkins, Hamblen, and Jefferson counties. Rusty Crowe carried Carter, Unicoi, and Hancock counties. Timothy Hill only carried a single county while finishing second place in the balloting; Hill won Johnson County. Hill's district in the State House comprised parts of Sullivan, Johnson and Carter counties, but he only managed to carry Johnson. Hill has served in the Tennessee General Assembly since winning election in 2012. Hill's brother, Matthew, has also served in the state house for eighteen years, representing Washington County. Matthew Hill was defeated in his reelection bid in a landslide. Hill was beaten by newcomer Rebecca Alexander in the primary, winning less than 37% of the vote. Another upper East Tennessee legislator lost his primary bid; Micah Van Huss lost to home builder Tim Hicks.

Two other state legislators lost their primaries last week, including one here in Knox County. State Representative Rick Tillis, a freshman legislator and brother of U. S. senator Thom Tillis of North Carolina, was trailing by about 600 votes in his district. The fourth legislator to lose in his own primary was Knoxville's Rick Staples.

Staples had succeeded veteran legislator Joe Armstrong, who was forced from office after a scrape with tax fraud. Rick Staples had run a close, but eventually unsuccessful race for the Knoxville City Council, before being named as the Democratic nominee in the most Democratic House district in Knox County. Staples won reelection without much trouble two years ago, but this year faced mounting problems with constant publicity about his personal and campaign finances. Former County Commissioner Sam McKenzie entered the race and had long been affiliated with the political machine operated by Armstrong and former school board member Sam Anderson. McKenzie's wife Gwen is a member of the Knoxville City Council and is currently vice mayor. Throughout the campaign, McKenzie clearly had difficulties in adjusting to the reality of running a modern campaign. McKenzie bought ads on Armstrong's radio station and ran commercials on TV. The third entrant in the Democratic primary was newcomer Matthew Park, who proceeded to occupy the far left of the spectrum in the race. Park's campaign was surging as Election Day arrived and the race was a nail-biter. In the end, McKenzie appears to be the winner by 23 votes. Park, who turned 31 the week of

the election, went door-to-door and pumped his campaign through social media as well as digitally. Of the three candidates, Park seemed to be the candidate with the best outreach to voters and it showed; he quite early beat an eight-year veteran of the Knox County Commission and an incumbent state representative.

The 15th District is changing; as it stands currently, the district is 60% white and 40% black; just how long more upscale communities will tolerate politicians who seem more interested in collecting a check than servicing constituents remains to be seen. If he is the winner, Sam McKenzie's biggest hurdle in holding the seat is probably redistricting. There is nothing to prevent the Republican majority in Nashville from putting McKenzie in the same district with Gloria Johnson. Say what you will about Johnson, but she is extremely well-organized, is the source of much of the growing Democratic vote surrounding her district and she would not only eat Sam McKenzie's lunch, but run over him afterward.

Speaking of Johnson, Elaine Davis was unchallenged for the GOP nomination to face off against the on-again, off-again lawmaker in the general election.

Another state House race that was closely watched locally was that to succeed veteran lawmaker Bill Dunn. Patti Bounds, a member of the Knox County Board of Education, was nudged into the race before Dunn made his retirement announcement. There were those who actually believed Bounds' declaration of candidacy bluffed Bill Dunn out of the race. Smart money never thought for a second Patti Bounds was going to

beat Bill Dunn.

Bounds, twice elected to the board of education, had never faced an opponent, serious or otherwise, so just how popular she was had never been determined. In the end, Bounds turned out to be a paper tiger, losing decisively to County Commissioner Michele Carringer. Bounds was another one of those folks tied to education, she is a retired kindergarten teacher, who seemed to believe teachers were going to carry her to victory. Amber Rountree thought the same thing two years ago and was defeated in her reelection bid. Many of the people Bounds expected to be grateful to her weren't even voting for her inside the GOP primary. The endorsements carried on Bounds' website all seemed to be either teachers or retired administrators. It's almost amusing some of those supporting Patti Bounds are grouching her loss was due largely to Bill Dunn and groups who support school choice and vouchers. It was no surprise to anybody with ears and eyes that Bill Dunn was the foremost supporter of school choice and vouchers in the Tennessee General Assembly. It couldn't especially be a shock to anyone with a functioning brain that Bill Dunn's choice of a successor wouldn't be Patti Bounds.

Carringer will go on to face Democrat Elizabeth Rowland in the general election.

Bill Dunn isn't the only state representative in Knox County retiring this year and there was a heated primary between realtor Gina Oster and former mayoral candidate Eddie Mannis for the Republican nomination to succeed Martin Daniel. At press time it looked as though Mannis would win

the election by less than 100 votes.

Seema Seems...

City Councilwoman Seema Singh is sponsoring a resolution condemning or otherwise opposing TVA outsourcing. Now, the city council has no authority over TVA, not can the Council set any kind of policy. I reckon the city council can pass all the meaningless resolutions with no force of law urging Congress to do this, that or the thing other they wish. Maybe they will actually convince some people it makes a difference. I wonder if Seema watches the news? Seema seems...well, a little late, if not out of touch. Girl, Donald Trump beat you to it. President Trump signed an Executive Order prohibiting TVA outsourcing, etc.

Congratulations to Judge Tim Irwin

Tim Irwin, Judge of Knox County's Juvenile Court, not only stands head and shoulders above most other judges, but has been selected as the incoming president of Tennessee's Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. Irwin put himself through law school while playing professional football, but his real calling is administering justice and helping kids. A devoted supporter of the Boys & Girls Club, Irwin is firm, but always fair. The judge's exterior may be gruff, but there is no doubt he truly cares about children and what's best for families. The Tennessee Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges could not have selected a better president for the next two years.

Human Resources Department on City Agenda

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
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As of this week the City of Knoxville will have a Department of Human Resources. The city council votes Tuesday in its regular session to change the city code to add a classification and compensation plan for the new department.

The yet-unnamed director will assume several of the duties previously held by the Civil Service Merit Board. Those include vetting new employees, setting up job descriptions, etc., while the merit board will continue

to handle employee complaints.

"The City has budgeted \$190,300 for the start-up of the Human Resources Department. That includes two new positions, a Director and an HR specialist. The City will advertise the job openings in the fall," Deputy Communications Director Eric Vreeland told The Focus.

Starting this week the city will have a new chief financial officer. Susan A. Gennoea certified public accountant with nearly two decades of service in Alcoa

and Blount County public financial management, has been named as the City of Knoxville's Chief Financial Officer by Mayor Indya Kincannon.

Since January 2016 Gennoea has been the City of Alcoa's Director of Finance and City Recorder, serving as the chief financial advisor to the city manager and city commission. In that role, she supervised the collection of taxes and fees, oversaw annual audits, purchasing and investments, and helped prepare and manage the city's budget.

Mayor Kincannon's appointment makes Gennoea the first woman in the City of Knoxville's 228-year history to direct the city's finances. Kincannon thanked Boyce Evans, the deputy finance director, for serving as acting CFO since December. Evans will return to the No. 2 position in the finance department.

The council will also consider amending the city code to authorize modifications for beer permits of some on-premise permit holders under declarations of emergencies including the

COVID-19 pandemic. They may also discuss changes in the language regulating landscape design standards and parking lot perimeter landscape yards. The amendment to the zoning regulations is recommended by Knoxville-Knox County Planning.

The Community Action Committee may be contracted to operate and maintain the East Tennessee 2-1-2 system through the city's 3-1-1 call center. The agreement is for \$72,000.

The council may also authorize acquiring property

at 4901 Ball Camp Pike for \$80,500 as part of the Northwest Greenway Connector Project. The mayor may be authorized to apply to the state for \$100,000 in funds to go to the police department's Forensic Unit for equipment to enhance gun crime investigations and prosecutions. That request comes from the police department.

Also the council may authorize an application to the U. S. Department of Justice for \$138,669 to improve the operation of the local criminal justice system.

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Develop until no one can move

If you are one of the many folks who travel Karns Valley Road and Emory Road, get ready for more headaches. Your drive time will grow; your frustration level will increase; and your chances of being involved in an accident will multiply.

A tract of land located at the intersection of Henderson Road and West Emory Road is proposed for subdivision development. Another tract is also being considered for housing. It's located on Karns Valley between West Emory and Beaver Ridge Road. That's right. The second one is unbelievably close to the stop sign at Beaver Ridge Road. At present, cars line up at that bottleneck as they wait to continue the journey toward Powell or to Oak Ridge Highway.

During the morning and afternoon, Beaver Ridge Road backs up with parents dropping off or picking up their children at school. Now, cars traveling from Oak Ridge or from Hardin Valley will clog the road as they futilely try to get to work or return home with the addition of hundreds of cars at that intersection.

Ball Road in the Ball Camp community has no fewer than seven subdivision roads that have been added over the past few years. Heavy traffic

piles up on this two-lane country road, and the back-up at the intersection of Ball Road and Ball Camp Pike can reach a half mile in the morning. Trains that cross the roads twice leave motorists apoplectic, and their angst is doubled when they drive another mile and hit the snarl of cars at Ball Camp School.

The same thing is happening in all parts of Knoxville. Developers seem to be building on any piece of ground that they can purchase. They slap up houses at 4-5 per acre. A small subdivision of fifty houses could possibly put 100 or more cars on the main roads.

What planning is going on with all of this development? I know that the county has the MPC to decide whether or not a project can proceed. Supposedly, that group of folks looks at the plans and makes a decision that is in the best interest of the citizens. However, some proposals are okayed in spite of the objections of the existing communities. If the MPC denies the application, the developer can appeal to the full county commission.

Of most concern to current residents of communities are infrastructure problems. Huge numbers of cars are added from new subdivisions, but they drive on the same old roads. In one case, community members objected to a subdivision because of a dangerous existing road. Residents presented photos of a fire truck that had run off the road in a curve that wasn't wide enough for it and a passing car. The

proposed subdivisions were located no more than one-tenth of a mile from that curve. An official answered the complaint by saying that the county had many narrow roads and that people would just have to learn to live with them.

Other communities are up in arms about the environmental impact new subdivisions have. Roads, yards, and homes that never worried about heavy rains are now flooded due to the runoff from those new streets. Wildlife invade neighborhoods in search of food because their habitats have been scraped clean. Roads are lined with skunks, raccoons, possums, and even deer carcasses that have been hit by vehicles.

People aren't necessarily against development. What they detest is uncontrolled building that makes communities worse. Residents want local government to address the problems of roads that can't handle the traffic before allowing more cars to travel them. They also want developers and government officials to protect against flooding and erosion.

The explosion of subdivisions is surprising when the current health and economic problems are considered. No one wants to deny "progress," but everyone wants any progress to begin only after the infrastructure can accommodate it. That doesn't seem like too much to ask. Let's hope our boards and officials feel the same way.

On the mark with Hunter

At the July event held in Ohio, he became the 2020 Scholastic Clay Target Program (SCTP)



By **Ralphine Major**
ralphine3@yahoo.com

National American Skeet Champion, Men's Senior Division! Pandemic aside, Hunter Raley is "on target!" He shot a perfect score of 200/200 in skeet!

The rising Gibbs High School junior won in a sudden death shoot off against another shooter who shot a 200. Hunter was recognized as the High Overall American Skeet Shooter across all athletes competing!

Hunter's work is not limited to the shooting range. He was named to the National All-Scholastic Team which recognizes the top student athletes in the Scholastic Shooting Sports Foundation (SSSF) Scholastic Clay Target and Scholastic Action Shooting Program for their achievements in the classroom, on the range, and in their communities. He was also named to the Tennessee All-State Skeet Team, which takes the top five shooters' scores at Nationals to compete against other states. Tennessee took second place in the Skeet state competition, and each athlete will receive a belt buckle as their award. Last year, Hunter was all-scholastic and, on the Tennessee, All-State Team for sporting Clays; he was on a three-man squad that won first place in Skeet and third place in Sporting Clays in the Open Division. How awesome that he is a part of that team for a second year and in a different discipline. In



Picture of Hunter Raley, courtesy of Stephanie Raley.

2018, Hunter won first place in Sporting Clays in the Intermediate Advanced Division. Now, accolades at the National Level is quite an achievement for this young athlete!

Hunter has deep roots in the Gibbs Community. His parents are Stephanie (Spitzer) Raley and D. J. Raley, both Gibbs graduates. He is the grandson of Les and Judy Spitzer and Darrell Raley, all Gibbs graduates, and Sandy (Shrader) Beggs, a Halls High School graduate. Les and Judy have appeared in past Focus columns. Les was a member of Coach Bob Dagley's outstanding basketball team, and Judy was a cheerleader. Congratulations, Hunter! You represent what is great about America's youth today! Good luck for next year!

Words of Faith: Hunter attends Loveland Baptist Church, and his favorite Bible verse is John 15:12 (KJV): "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you."

Discussions on school opening continue at KCS work session

Cont. from page 2

campuses would be closed, but since KCS is now a one-to-one district and students have been issued laptops, virtual teachers would teach virtually. They could instruct from home, barring any mitigating circumstances, Thomas said.

The board will vote on whether the district will use the Florida Virtual School to supplement its remote learning program, and while Thomas is "not in favor of outsourcing teaching," he said the program would be necessary for one year to accommodate the number of students enrolled in the remote learning program.

"Outsourcing is not what I feel is best, but we have

about 1,400 students right now that we won't be able to schedule in the virtual learning program unless we contract with Florida Virtual School," Thomas said. "We'll bring that contract to the board next week."

The program would cost \$1.5 million per semester and is the same model being used by schools in the Nashville Area and in West Tennessee. It would offer 190 courses including Honors and Advanced Placement classes.

Board member Jennifer Owen said she was concerned about the prospect of outsourcing.

"Anytime we're talking about outsourcing, that should be a big red flag

to everyone in this room," Owen said.

Deputy Law Director Gary Dupler said that the district is not seeking to outsource long-term, but noted that this will be to get through this school year.

Meanwhile, KCS Chief Operating Officer Russ Oaks said that the district has distributed facemasks to the schools for students and teachers and also discussed some lingering issues with the internet.

This Wednesday the board will vote on a resolution to eliminate standardized testing and teacher evaluations this year due to the circumstances brought on by the coronavirus pandemic.



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My Friend Mackie

Pages from the Past



By Ray Hill
rayhill865@gmail.com

It seems odd to be writing about my dear little friend Mackie in this column, but God help me, he belongs to the past now.

Evidently there really is such a thing as love at first sight. The very first time I laid eyes on a little Scottish terrier puppy 12 years ago, I was absolutely taken with him. I drove to Greeneville to view the ten-week old puppy and he was a delight. For several years, I had three Scot-ties until Tubby passed away. Friends urged me to get another one and I found some pretty good excuses not to buy another puppy. Then-City Councilman Nick Pavlis just ruined my excuses when he said he would pay for the puppy. If it ruined my excuses, it also begat one of the greatest blessings of my life. I started looking around and found that photograph (which is published with this column) which captured my mind and, more importantly, my heart.

I brought Mackie home with me and for more than twelve years we lived together. My devoted little friend passed away Monday, August 3.

When someone you've loved with all your heart leaves this world, it seems strange to be left behind. It really doesn't seem right for the sun to shine, a breeze to blow, or the world to keep turning without that loved one. It seems impossible to enjoy much of anything, knowing we won't see that particular loved one in this world again. Even the simplest things become hard; food ceases to have a taste, conversation evaporates, and one's heart literally aches with grief. Restlessness possesses us and happiness seems banished to some dark and distant place, perhaps never to return.

The truth is, Mackie has been so much a part of my life, it is hard to imagine

the world without him. Of course the world will be mighty different without him and try as I might, it won't be as sweet without Mackie. Some things just leave an ache in your soul and a hole in your heart.

I've had many dogs throughout my life, but Mackie was the best dog ever. His was a sweet and gentle spirit, with a truly loving nature. Mackie was also remarkably intelligent. I could tell him, "Let's go watch TV" and he would be off for the den and would be sitting on the sofa waiting for me. Mackie had a bigger vocabulary than most people. Mackie's intelligence and understanding throughout his life frequently astonished me.

I only heard Mackie growl once in his life and he never offered to bite anything or anybody. Mackie loved everybody and was equally convinced everybody loved him as well.

Like any good companion, he was sensitive to my moods and he was quite content to lay on the sofa with me during the evenings or doze beneath my desk as I wrote columns. Mackie slept beside my bed on his very own little Serta mattress and there was many a morning when I awoke to see him standing beside me, his bright little eyes twinkling at me, patiently waiting for me to get out of bed. Perhaps the best description of Mackie is he was a teddy bear come to life.

We were separated only once during our time together; that was the 3-4 weeks when I had my heart surgery and went from the hospital to the rehabilitation center. Mackie was much on my mind while at the hospital and he was in the care of the older of my two sisters. I asked about him often and imagined and reimagined our joyous reunion in my head. When the time came and I



My friend Mackie,
a very good boy.

was leaving the rehabilitation center to go home, my sister brought Mackie with her to pick me up. The reimagining was nothing like the real thing. Mackie was sitting in my nephew's lap and he peered around the front seat, looking at me reproachfully. Eventually I coaxed him to come and sit with me in the back seat. I was so happy to see him I cried. Mackie was still put out with me.

For several months, I couldn't lift anything heavier than 10 pounds. Mackie weighed more than twice that and after he had forgiven me for having deserted him, he seemed puzzled as to why I wouldn't pick up him when he stood up beside my chair. Instead, I cuddled with him on the sofa until the day came when the doctor lifted the weight restriction. The first thing I did when I came home was pick Mackie up and sit him in my lap. He placed his head against my cheek and let out a deep sigh of contentment.

It was following my heart surgery we began our regular walks. Mackie loved nothing better than going for a walk; it didn't matter where we walked or how far we went, he simply enjoyed every moment of it. After my heart surgery, we went on numerous walks daily - - in parks, up and down the street, or anywhere we took a notion to go. It was during one of our walks that

I noticed Mackie was passing blood with his urine.

That necessitated a trip to the vet's office and Mackie had a really good veterinarian. Mackie had surgery, but the vet suspected bladder cancer. The surgery left him leaking, but I did all I could to make life normal for us both and him comfortable and happy. I was determined to let him live out his days without undue suffering. I also got Mackie a friend; a Jack Russell terrier named Billy.

Billy was less than a year old when I brought him home and he was frankly scared and trembling on the way home. I suppose that is only to be expected when some stranger snatches you up and totes you off to Lord only knows where. Billy was none too sure about me, but the moment he came into the house and saw Mackie, he was thrilled. Mackie was equally delighted and was immediately captivated by his new little friend. I am convinced Billy helped to prolong Mackie's life and happiness and for that I will always be profoundly grateful.

Mackie and Billy played for several hours each day. They were so loud I couldn't have a telephone conversation for the barking and running. The both of them crowded on the sofa, but I knew Mackie loved Billy when Billy went to time out and Mackie laid beside Billy's crate until he was released.

When somebody you love is sick, fear grabs hold of your heart and squeezes it with an icy grip that can literally snatch one's breath away. One grasps onto any sign of hope even in the least sign of good health or activity nor is it uncommon to experience anticipatory grief when the loved one's health seems to drag a bit. Like so many aspects of the human existence, it is something of a rollercoaster ride.

During his lifetime there were folks who made Mackie's life --- and mine --- all the better. For his entire life, Mackie was groomed at "It's A Ruff Life", where Karen and her staff were profoundly considerate and kind to him. Until his final illness, Mackie was remarkably healthy. Mackie was tended by Dr. Harry McLeod at the Dogwood

Animal Clinic on Chapman Highway, and then by Dr. J. R. Killey. Both vets were thoughtful and unfailingly kind to both Mackie and me.

Mackie was himself to the very end and I reminded myself that in human terms, he was somewhere between 77 - 84 years old. Yet it was not long enough. The time passes all too quickly.

As a Scottish terrier, Mackie possessed a dignity that must be rooted in the very DNA of the breed. Mackie kept that dignity until his last breath and for that I am surpassingly grateful. When I reflect back upon his life, I think he sensed the end was coming. I noticed on those beautiful days Mackie would find excuses to linger in the sunshine, his fur rippling in the breeze, gazing at his surroundings. I would watch him looking around, surveying the entirety of his own little domain, the world he had lived in his entire life. Mackie never lost interest in being with me. As time and illness pursued him, Mackie's insistence in being in the same room with me seemed to intensify. Billy had a habit of sprawling on top of me, but Mackie would move the younger fellow out of the way and lie across my thigh so I could scratch his ears.

Mackie, like me, always loved his food. His favorite treats were adding hard boiled eggs to his supper and bites of apple before bedtime. As he began to fade and his appetite diminished, I would fret and worry. When he no longer ate his kibble, I prepared fresh meat --- steak, chicken, or pork --- which he ate until the last few days of his life. A good day was one where Mackie ate his food; every bite was a victory to stave off what I so deeply feared. When Mackie no longer drank his water, I knew the time had come. Still, no matter how well I cared for him, it was nothing compared to all he had given me.

My grandfather and father dearly loved dogs. My grandfather once told me, "All a fellow really needs in this life is a dog and a good book." That same love of reading and dogs has followed me throughout my life. I believe we can love all the many dogs in our life at the

various times of our lives; the dogs of our childhood, as well as those shared with family and friends. Yet, I think there are those singularly special dogs, one who we have bonded with so deeply and that particular dog is the dog of a lifetime. For me, that dog of a lifetime was Mackie.

That last day, I took Mackie outside one final time. We sat on the sofa together and I talked to him and scratched his ears before we took the ride to the vet's office. At the end, I was able to hold him in my arms and tell him how much I loved him and that I would see him again as he drifted away from me and out of this world. Mackie never seemed afraid and for that I'll always be grateful, along with the tenderness shown by Dr. Killey and the nurses.

When I came home alone, Billy seemed confused. He darted through the house looking for his friend before settling in beside me. Even before Mackie was gone, the tears would come all too easily. When he was gone, the tears became a flood of grief. The sorrow at his loss was as vast as an ocean without shores.

It sure is hard to go on without someone you loved with your whole heart, but as I write this, I think of Mackie's last day. It began with a gentle sprinkling, the skies gray and overcast. After Mackie was gone, I stood outside with Billy and the sun came out and there was a delicate breeze whispering through the leaves. I looked up at the blue sky and thought to myself, there is a little Scottish angel sitting at the foot of God's throne. It lifted my spirits, which is something Mackie managed to do every day of his life. There is no greater gift than that.



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Bars reopen with 10 p.m. curfew

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
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Less than a week after the Knox County Board of Health ordered all bars closed because of the COVID-19 increase the same board voted Wednesday to allow bars to immediately reopen and operate until 10 p.m. daily. The idea came from Dr. Patrick O'Brien, a former partner of a brew house, and was seconded by Mayor Glenn Jacobs. Jacobs is a member of the board and had voted "No" to mask wearing and "No" to closing the bars.

The weekly board of health meeting followed a public comment session in the small assembly room of the City-County Building where 13 citizens each addressed the board by Zoom. A few of those citizens supported the board's restrictions but several bar and tavern owners spoke in what appeared to be a coordinated effort to get the drinking establishments reopened prior to students returning to classes at UT.

The public forum was an idea Jacobs introduced at a previous board meeting and the members agreed although they said they receive plenty of response from the public. Jacobs introduced each public

speaker, including the owner of Cotton Eyed Joe, Chuck Ward, who said it was unfair to county bars and venues because people could drive ten minutes into adjoining counties and drink in bars. Several other bar owners told the board that the closures are unfair because restaurants continue to serve alcohol. They said the 50% of food vs. drink rule was not right.

After Dr. O'Brien made a motion to allow the bars to open until 10 p.m., which Mayor Jacobs seconded, Dr. Martha Buchanan was asked her opinion. She said the majority of restaurants and bars are following the guidelines and, from a bar standpoint, a curfew would be "more palatable."

She said allowing the bars to reopen "might actually increase compliance" with the health regulations and would show the board of health is "thoughtful." She said there have been no clusters of the virus related to local bars.

Board member Maria Hurt made an unsuccessful motion to include restaurants in the 10 p.m. curfew on serving drinks. Jacobs said restaurants have a more controlled environment than bars. The curfew expires August 20 and the board will continue to review the situation

as it meets weekly. Board chairman Dr. Jack Gotcher told the meeting the curfew is "a matter of fairness" and that microbreweries have spent time, effort and money to comply and the closing was "a blunt approach."

Hurt said the closure vote had been taken in anticipation of what can happen and reopening can impact the spread of the virus. She reminded the board the closure order came from the "best information we have available." Hurt became the lone "No" vote in the 7-1 decision to allow reopening.

"We can't base our decisions on real-time data, we're always a step behind," Hurt said.

Dr. Gotcher said bar owners have "tried very hard to be responsible."

O'Brien urged the board to "give it a try" and to review it on a regular basis, adding that the "economy outweighs the spread." Dr. Buchanan said her staff would do "spot checks" on the 10 p.m. curfew.

Dr. Buchanan also said the health department is considering setting up an internet forum for board members to use between meetings to share information.

Earlier in the meeting Mayor Jacobs asked Dr. Buchanan how

the health department plans to spend a \$7.1 million grant and she replied the department would hire additional contact tracing employees in order to move its staff back to their regular jobs. She also plans to use the grant to increase the department's support and testing staff and increase information going out to the public.

Dr. James Shamiyeh reported that since the mask mandate began, cases of hospitalizations have dropped and he projected that, if the trend continues, they may continue to drop. He said the number of cases of COVID-19 in the region and in Knox County "might be starting to flatten."

A few bars did remain open during the three-day closure order. Knox County Sheriff Tom Spangler said that his deputies would not enforce the order and had pointed to the health department as being responsible in enforcing it. The board has said publicly they do not want to enforce or fine businesses for violations.

Board members reported seeing most citizens obeying the mask wearing order.

The board also discussed holding a public forum session once a month.

Herd immunity works says Knoxville doctor

One of the 13 speakers to talk during the public forum at last week's Knox County Board of Health meeting said that herd immunity works.

"We need to get everyone exposed," said Dr. Russel Rhea, who went on to say that a vaccine exposes people to a little bit of the virus so the person becomes immune. He also said that the COVID-19 virus "isn't going away" and eventually everyone will be exposed.

He also said there's no proof that asymptomatic people spread the virus.

Dr. Rhea said that people who wear a mask while shopping repeatedly touch their mask and then touch items in the store. "The mask becomes a reservoir and it transmits to the hands."

Some surprises in Knox County voting choices

Cont. from page 1

challenger. Eddie Mannis narrowly won the Republican Primary for State House 18 nomination, defeating Gina Oster 50 to 49%. He'll face Democrat Virginia Couch in the General Election.

Commission Vice Chairwoman Michele Carringer defeated former School Board Chairwoman Patti Lou Bounds for the Republican nomination to replace

retiring State Legislator Bill Dunn. Carringer pulled 58% of the vote to 41% for Bounds. Carringer will face Democrat Elizabeth Rowland in the November General Election.

Democrat Courtney Durrett defeated Republican Grant Rosenberg for the District 2 county commission seat, getting 54% of the vote. She will replace Michele Carringer. Fellow party member Dasha Lundy

defeated Reginald M. Jackson with a huge 77% of the vote to replace outgoing District 1 Commissioner Evelyn Gill who was defeated in that party's primary.

Kyle Ward defeated Todd Frommeyer for the District 4 seat and will replace Commission Chairman

Hugh Nystrom who chose not to seek re-election.

Commissioner John Schoonmaker of District 5 easily defeated Kimberly Petersons to return to office with 71% of the vote.

Eric M. Lutton, the interim Public Defender, defeated Independent Sherif

Guindi, and retains the office.

In the Democratic Primary for state Senate District 6 Jane George bested Sam Brown to take the nomination and will face Republican incumbent Becky Duncan Massey in the General Election.

Congressman and former Knox County Mayor Tim Burchett will face Democrat Renee Hoyos again in the November election. Hoyos defeated Chance C. Brown in the primary voting. Both may see two independent candidates on the ballot.

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Dover steps down as Farragut boys soccer coach

By Ken Lay

For five seasons, Ray Dover has been a part of a successful run as Farragut High School's boys soccer coach.

But all good things must come to an end. Dover's tenure with the Admirals was officially terminated Tuesday when he resigned as the program's coach.

He had high hopes for the squad in 2020 but those aspirations were dashed when the school year and the spring sports were prematurely ended.

Dover announced his resignation in a letter to his players.

"These last five years have been some of the best and most rewarding years of my life," Dover wrote. "The profession of coaching is one of the best ways to have an impact in the lives of people. I've learned that coaching is like a mirror, you see yourself through the eyes of those that you coach and that has helped me grow as a person..."

"I will be resigning my position as head coach of Farragut Soccer's Boys program effective August 4, 2020. I want to take time away from coaching to focus on myself, my relationships, my work and to evaluate where I want the profession of coaching to fit into my life."

Dover, who has guided the Admirals to three consecutive Region 2-AAA Championships and an appearance in the 2017 Class AAA State Tournament, thanked Farragut athletic director Donald Dodgen for the opportunity to coach the Admirals.

"A special thanks to Donald Dodgen, my athletic director, for the guidance and support," said Dover, a graduate of Farragut and former player for the Admirals. "I would also like to thank my principals at Farragut in John Bartlett, Ryan Siebe and Stephanie Thompson. I have been very lucky to have such a professional group of administrators."

Dover also had kind words for the players he's coached with the Admirals as well as their parents.

"And to all the parents who put endless amounts of service hours into helping make Farragut Soccer what it is and making my job so much easier, I thank you from the bottom of my heart," Dover continued. "To my players, you are the reason I coached."

"You are loved by all of us. I know that each and every one of you will grow into outstanding men."

HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL 2020 PREVIEWS



KARNS FOOTBALL 2020

PHOTO BY STEVE WILLIAMS

Tyson Taylor (black shorts) carries the ball during a play from scrimmage as the scout team offense goes against a mixture of first and second team defenders during a Karns practice Aug. 5.

Run game and defense may give Beavers a head start

By Steve Williams

Head Coach Brad Taylor believes Karns' strengths – its running game and defense – are well suited for the "short turnaround" to the start of the 2020 high school football season.

Because of the pandemic and restrictions on contact sports, it looked like season-opening games wouldn't start until Sept. 18. But now the original TSSAA schedule is back in place with the first Friday night kickoffs set for Aug. 21.

Taylor said that left his team with just two weeks to practice and then Game

Week.

"We've been doing stuff all summer, but it's been very limited – no real practice, no team type stuff – so you definitely want to be able to run the football and play some defense. Those things come along faster than other aspects of the game."

So Taylor, entering his fifth season at KHS, is hoping Desean Bishop, one of the top running backs in the area, and an improved defense will give the Beavers a leg up on the competition.

Karns opens against Walker Valley in Cleveland. The Mustangs nipped the

Beavers 42-40 in last year's high-scoring opener.

The 5-11, 176-pound Bishop scampered for over 1,000 yards last season as a freshman. He plays what Karns calls the "A back" or tailback position. Desean also will play some strong safety on defense and return kickoffs.

"He's put together. He's a good looking guy," said Coach Taylor. "Even as a freshman, he didn't look like most freshmen."

"Physically, he's matured even more. He's got another year under his belt. He'll

Continued on page 2

BOYS' CROSS COUNTRY 2020 PREVIEW

Hardin Valley and Catholic's Riley Smith eye state titles

By Steve Williams

For several years, the Knoxville area has been strong in cross country, even with runners standing out on the national and international scene.

This year could again produce some championships on the state level.

Heading into the boys' cross country season, Hardin Valley has to be the favorite for the Division I Large Schools state crown as Coach Bryan Brown's team, which placed fifth in 2019, returns its top five runners and six of the seven who competed at Percy Warner Park in Nashville last November.

Siegel, which captured the state title, has only one of its top five returners back. Runner-up Bartlett returns

three, third place Central Magnet three and fourth place Brentwood four.

Hardin Valley also could be on the verge of putting together back-to-back state crowns as it enters this season with a junior dominated team.

HVA leader Kaden Keller placed 11th individually last year as a sophomore, covering the 5,000-meter course in 16:09.62. Teammates Nathan Hillis (16:54.9) and Mitchell McCown (17:03.85) came in 38th and 47th.

Nate Lawson, a senior this year, finished 53rd, Isaac Legault 58th and Daniel Blackston 78th for the Hawks.

Trevor Coggin of Farragut made a

Continued on page 3



Knoxville Catholic's Riley Smith on his way to a sixth place finish in last season's TSSAA Division II Large Schools Cross Country meet. Smith is expected to be a contender for the state title as a senior this season.

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HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL 2020 PREVIEWS



Karns defensive line coach Randall Scott works with a lineman on taking his first step while using his hands in this drill Wednesday.

Run game and defense may give Beavers a head start

Cont. from page 1

be more of a leader on our team, too. He's a hard-working kid, a great kid and he likes football, and it's always fun to coach people who like football."

Taylor said the team has other good running backs too. The "B back" is senior Austin Samples (5-7, 139). "Our B back can run the ball, but he's more of a blocker than runner, more of a fullback-type," explained the coach.

Karns returns three out of five offensive linemen that started or played a lot last season.

Those up front include senior Logan Ewing (5-10, 239), senior Austin Bailey (5-9, 266), junior Timmy Robbins (5-11, 250) and also senior Cameron Glenn (6-0, 233).

"Defensively, we were really young last year, so a lot of those guys have gained a year of football experience," said Taylor,

who now has Lee Warren on board as his new defensive coordinator.

Senior inside linebacker Zach Fisher (5-10, 232) is one of a half dozen returning starters.

"Zach is a good young man and has really worked hard and has tried to do everything that we've asked," said Taylor. "I think that will pay off for him."

Senior Michael Elliott is another linebacker Karns is counting on. "He had a high ankle sprain and missed about four games in the second half of the season, but he's returning and has worked hard," said Taylor.

"There are a couple of other guys there that have some experience as well."

Ewing and Glenn also are returning starters in the defensive front as well as senior Keyshaun Billingsley (5-9, 234).

In the secondary, Adarion Patton (6-3, 158) started last year as a freshman.

Devin Sanz (6-1, 153, senior) returns as a defensive back and also will see action on offense. Bishop will help when needed in the secondary.

Jace Harvey, a junior, returns as punter after missing several games in the middle of the season after having arthroscopic knee surgery. "He's also a good athlete on both sides of the ball," said Taylor.

Karns' place-kicker graduated, leaving three freshmen and a senior soccer player competing for the job.

One reason Karns enters this season depending heavily on its run game is because Trey Hawkins, a talented and versatile receiver, and Jalen Tucker, a receiver who was needed at quarterback, graduated.

Taylor said he currently has "four good young quarterbacks that we are excited about" and he doesn't know which one will get the majority of snaps.

"I don't know if I want to throw out any names, but we've got a good group of freshmen that we are excited about," added Taylor. "Even though we've gained some experience on the defensive side of the ball, we're still going to have some young guys in there that will have to develop and come along. It's a really good, strong freshmen class for us that we haven't had in a couple of years as far as numbers-wise."

Karns finished 2-8 overall and 1-5 in Region 3-5A in 2019, with wins over Fulton and Heritage and close losses against Walker Valley and Campbell County.



Karns sophomore Desean Bishop lines up on the defensive side of the ball during pre-season practice Wednesday. He also is the Beavers' top running back and will return kick-offs this season.

Rams have 'chemistry' on the gridiron in 2020

By Ken Lay

As Rusty Bradley prepares for his fourth season as Grace Christian Academy's football coach, he makes no secret that he has some lofty expectations once the campaign gets underway.

"We have experience and we have chemistry and we have a unity about us," said Bradley, who guided the Rams to a 9-3 record in 2019.

For the second consecutive season, Bradley is hoping that the majority of his starters won't have to play on both sides of the ball. That's a tall order for any Division II-AA team, but it worked out pretty well for the Rams last season.

"We did it last year and we have enough depth to do it again this year," Bradley said.

That doesn't mean, however that the Grace players aren't experienced on both sides of the ball.

"Our starters on offense, most of them are backups on defense and our starters on defense are our backups on defense," Bradley said.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced schools in Tennessee, both public and private, to be shut down in March, so the teams lost a majority of their offseason workouts and spring practice.

But most teams were allowed to return to the weight room and do some summer conditioning in late May provided that they maintained proper social distancing and wore cloth face coverings.

Being a coach at a private school, Bradley said that he didn't face the same restriction that Knox County Schools imposed.

"We were pretty much able to have our spring practice in June," Bradley said. "We didn't have the same mandates that they had in Knox County. I'm happy with where we are mentally and physically and I'm pretty much happy with where we are

GRACE CHRISTIAN FOOTBALL 2020

heading into the dead period.

While the coach was pleased, he's more concerned with when the season may start and how to maintain a proper balance.

"We may scale back a little bit because we don't know when we're going to get the season started," Bradley said. "We're hoping to get the chance to play."

The Rams have 15 players back who either started or saw significant playing time in 2019.

Top returners, according to Bradley, include Cooper Riggs (senior, quarterback); Caleb Curcio (senior, running back); Grant Warwick (senior, wide receiver); Garrett Staley (senior, defensive lineman); Johnny Eller (senior, linebacker); Michael Feiden (senior, free safety); Michael Human (a senior wide receiver, who played defense last year); Riley Burnett (senior, offensive lineman); Camden Cross (senior, linebacker); Jared Long (senior, outside linebacker); Devan Coffey (senior, outside linebacker); Dane Nussbaum (senior, cornerback); Gage Maynard (senior, running back); Noah Bruhin (junior, offensive lineman) and Ben Francisco (junior, offensive lineman).

An area of concern for the future for GCA is the lack of numbers in the junior class.

"We only have two juniors who play," Bradley said. "We have a lot of seniors, two juniors, and then we drop off and have a lot of sophomores."

Key returners looking to make an impact include Pierce Browning (sophomore, wide receiver); Dylan Doerfler (sophomore, cornerback) and Roman McCarthy (sophomore, inside linebacker).

18 starters return to lead Lions

By David Klein

KING'S ACADEMY FOOTBALL 2020

In the weirdest offseason in history, schools had to put spring football practice on hold because of COVID-19, a respiratory disease that has killed approximately 159,000 Americans as of Thursday, August 6.

Before Tuesday, July 28, the football season was a great unknown. There were contingency plans to play an eight-game season, a nine-game season, shorten the playoffs. The King's Academy in Seymour, a private school, was waiting to see how many games it would play.

"Obviously as a coach, we want to play, regardless of how many games that is," King's Academy Head Coach Jonathan Sellers said at high school football media day on July 10. "We understand the situation and understand the health of the community is of utmost importance. For a lot of kids this is the last opportunity to play. Hopefully we get this decision here soon."

That decision came on Tuesday, July 28, when the Governor of Tennessee, Bill Lee, issued an executive order that said schools can resume contact sports. As of right now, the season is scheduled to start August 21. Whether that stays the same next week, is anyone's guess.

Sellers said he was excited that the season would start on time and that King's gets to keep the first two weeks of the season in

which the first game would be against Seymour High School across the street on August 21.

The Lions return 18 starters. "For the most part, these kids are returning two year, or even three-year starters," Sellers said. "I've told a bunch of people when we started back in June, we just called plays, they just go back out and haven't missed a beat," Sellers said.

Senior Zak Acuff returns at quarterback. "Arm has never been a problem for him," Sellers said. "I don't think there's a throw on the field he can't make. Obviously, we're excited to see what he can do. We're expecting a lot out of him this season."

"On offense, we're a balanced team," Sellers said. "We operate out of the spread offense. We're a zone read team. We like throwing it underneath and then throwing it deep," Sellers added.

"On defense, we're a 3-stack team," Sellers said. "That's what we base out of. We try to send as much pressure as we can on most snaps."

Tyler Mink and Ja'Chim Williams are two returning senior starters and play offense and defense. Mink plays wide receiver and defensive back. Ja'Chim Williams also plays wide receiver and plays linebacker on defense.

"I've always played wide-out," Mink said. "I love it man, I love running. I love

catching. I love trying to make moves. Our quarterback, we always have connections."

"The quarterbacks, we always try to throw and get our timing and stuff up," Williams said. "In games, we just try to push the ball forward."

Mink praised the leadership on the team. "Everybody has a leadership mentality," he said. "Everybody is always going back and forth at each other. All the seniors on our team are all leaders; they're all hard workers. Iron sharpens iron."

With no physical contact until Monday, August 3, Lions players had to do a lot of running and conditioning. "Obviously, we've had to pick up our conditioning regimen a little bit," Sellers said. "We've been social-distancing in the weight room. With 30 guys on your roster, it's easier to social distance."

Schedule-wise, the Lions play in a private school division, Division II-A East. "We have kids from all different kinds of counties," Sellers said. "We formulate our own plan; it adheres to a hodgepodge of what all the surrounding counties do."

In these uncertain times, Sellers emphasized what he and the players can control. "We got to control us. That's what I keep telling them. We got to control what we can control. We got to be ready to play the next play."

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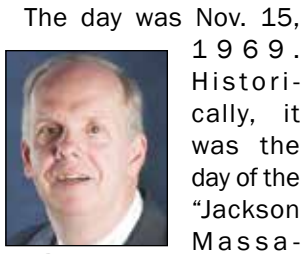
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The Jackson Massacre



By Tom Mattingly

The day was Nov. 15, 1969. Historically, it was the day of the "Jackson Massacre," the 38-0 loss to Ole Miss at Mississippi Memorial Stadium that put a considerable damper on the 1969 Tennessee football season.

Tennessee was No. 3 in the nation and headed for bigger and better things, maybe even playing Notre Dame in the 1970 Orange Bowl. The Vols had won seven in a row to start the season, highlighted by home wins against Auburn (45-19) and South Carolina (29-14) and road wins at Alabama (41-14) and Georgia (17-3). There was talk of a national championship around Big Orange Country.

The No. 18 Rebels, led by junior quarterback Archie Manning, had lost one-point decisions to Alabama (33-32) and Kentucky (10-9) and had a more decisive

loss to Houston (25-11). Uneasy, however, lies the head that's even close to the crown. That's not a direct quote from William Shakespeare, but it indicated this would be no ordinary Tennessee-Ole Miss game.

Just before the season started, media types had asked Vol All-American linebacker Steve Kiner about Ole Miss having the "horses" to contend for the SEC title. According to Russ Bebb's history of Tennessee football, Kiner's response was, "They played more like mules up here last year." That comment would come back to haunt the Vols later that season.

Ole Miss head coach John Howard Vaught, no slouch during his career in the motivation department, took advantage of this and every other opportunity to get his team at fever pitch for the game. To be honest about it, it didn't take much. Even Archie got into the act.

"We want Tennessee — more than anybody wants 'em," Archie had said before the game. "They can be

had. They weren't 31 points better than us last year, or this year."

Vol boosters wore orange and white buttons to the game that read "Archie Who?" Many of these buttons ended up in the bushes outside the stadium.

Ole Miss, primed to a fever pitch, simply took the Vols apart once the opening whistle blew. It was 21-0 at the quarter, 24-0 at the half, and the Rebels never looked back. It was Tennessee's worst loss since a 51-7 loss to Vanderbilt in 1923.

When Ole Miss kicked a field goal late in the first half, the ball hitting the crossbar and bouncing over, Haywood Harris had the shortest quote that had ever appeared in Sports Illustrated: "Dang!" Not "Gosh-dang!" as you might have expected from Haywood.

The Vols recovered to win against Kentucky (31-26) and Vanderbilt (40-27) to annex an SEC title, second in three years. That was little consolation as

the Vols lost 14-13 to Florida in the Gator Bowl and then saw head coach Doug Dickey leave for Gainesville, Fla., early in 1970.

It might have been the worst weekend in Tennessee football to that time. The Vol freshman team had lost to Alabama's rookies 35-0 the preceding afternoon.

The next year, the Vols were 11-1 and No. 4 in the nation. For whatever reason, Ole Miss was not on the schedule for the first time since 1955, and you wonder what the demand for tickets might have been had the Rebels been scheduled to show up at Neyland Stadium.

If you believe that time heals all wounds, consider this. Manning and Tennessee quarterback Bobby Scott ended up with the New Orleans Saints in 1971 and became close friends.

As the Vols prepared for spring practice in March 1976, there was a birth announcement from New Orleans that caught the attention of very few Vol



fans. That was the day, March 24, 1976, that Archie's second of three sons was born, a youngster named Peyton Williams Manning.

Move ahead quickly to the 1993-94 recruiting season. Peyton Manning was now a prized recruit, a "franchise player" for whatever school had his name inked on a grant-in-aid form.

Tennessee did, and the rest is history.

No one who heard or saw the 1969 game could have imagined what might take place over the next 25 years or so.

What type odds could you have gotten outside Mississippi Memorial Stadium in November 1969 that any son of Archie Manning would end up playing at Tennessee and become one of the most popular Vols ever?

Crazy, you say? It happened.

The inexorable passage of time can lead to some pretty interesting developments.



Top local returnees for the 2020 boys' cross country season are (from left) Hardin Valley Academy's Kaden Keller, Mitchell McCown and Nathan Hillis, Farragut's Trevor Coggin and Catholic's Riley Smith.

HVA and Catholic's Riley Smith eye state titles

Cont. from page 1

strong showing at the state as a freshman last fall, placing 34th with a time of 16:49.27, so it will be interesting to see how he progresses as a sophomore.

Other runners in Division I Large Schools who ran under 18 minutes at the state meet and return are Farragut's Liam Allison, Tyler Ebbert and Riley Hanson and West's Zach Lagan.

Knoxville Catholic senior Riley Smith, who competes

in the Division II Large Schools division, appears to have the best shot at a state individual championship this season. He placed sixth last year with a time of 16:57.53. The only runner finishing ahead of him that returns is Cayden Dorough of Brentwood Academy, who was clocked in 16:53.97 and placed third.

"Based on last year's results, I believe that Riley should definitely be in the mix to win a state title this

year," said Catholic Coach Sean O'Neil. "He had a bad ankle sprain last winter, but he has worked hard to come back from it. He put in a lot of work over the summer, and he is starting the season well ahead of where he was this time last year."

Junior teammate Spencer Stovall came in 15th last fall for the Irish.

Seth Jinks of L&N STEM Academy was state champion in the Division I Small Schools division as a senior

last year. Senior Evan Carr, 13th last season, is expected to carry the Gryphons' banner at the state this year.

Dwayne Morris returns for Austin-East after leading the Roadrunners to eighth place at the state last season.

In Division II Small Schools, Webb returns its top three harriers, including Kaden Narayani, who placed ninth at the state, along with Billy Robinson and Cooper Wood.

Halls riding 'upward trend'

By Mark Nagi

Up in North Knox County they've said that "Halls Has It" for decades...

Do they have a high school football team that will be competitive this Fall?

HALLS FOOTBALL 2020

We will know the answer when we see how they adjust to life without running back Jake Parris. He played on both sides of the football for the Red Devils. Last year he scored twelve touchdowns in Halls' last three regular season games, helping them advance to the playoffs (they lost in the first round to Daniel Boone).

"We could throw it to him out of the backfield. He was a hard-nosed runner," said Halls head coach Scott Cummings. "He had enough speed to take it to the house and the first guy never tackled him. He made me look good even when I called a bad play sometimes. A guy like that you can't just replace, so it's gonna have to be more of a team deal. We are gonna have to do more by committee, but we do have more overall speed than we had last year with our young kids. We have to get some young guys coached up in a hurry."

Cummings added, "We lost some big kids. We lost three guys on the offensive line three guys that were all 280 pounds or above, so we won't be nearly as big. Hopefully we can find some kids that can replace them that can move, so we can pull more."

On offense Halls will welcome back six starters and have a lot of experience at the receiver position. At quarterback, Ty Humphrey returns, but will also work at LB in spring practice. Caden Cummings and transfer freshman Jesse Romines will also compete to make it a three-way battle to the starting spot.

On defense they bring back five starters, including standout linebackers Ethan Crawford and Josh McSwinney.

Continued on page 4

Powell eyeing Cookeville in 2020

By Mark Nagi

POWELL FOOTBALL 2020

2019 was a terrific season for the Powell Panthers. They won their first twelve games before falling in the Class 5A quarterfinals to Knoxville West.

They feel it is time to take another couple of steps forward.

"I couldn't be more proud of last year's team but I don't think anyone on that team or on this staff would argue that we fell a little bit short of the goal," said Powell head coach Matt Lowe, who is now in his third season in his second stint on the Panthers sidelines. "There were a lot of great moments that these kids will take with them for the rest of their lives and those are things that will never change. Those are moments that we got to share with them that were extremely special, but at the same time this year's group is coming back and their job is to do one better. Their job is to win it all."

Lowe added, "We lost a very talented group last year. I think six of them are playing college football.

There was major talent in that group, and we couldn't be more proud. But we also have some very talented kids returning as well."

Defensively the Panthers were very strong a year ago, allowing an average of just over fourteen points per game. It looks like they have most of the personnel in place to match that success.

"We have to fill in some holes up front defensive line-wise but we feel really good about our linebackers Cannon Lusby and Jordan Brown. Obviously, we have some guys in the secondary with J.R. Jones and Gianni Magdos and Jason Faust that certainly have played a lot of football, so we think those guys will be able to handle things on the back end."

On offense the question will be who replaces Walker Trusley at quarterback. He has graduated and will play baseball for ETSU this spring.

"Jordyn Potts and Cassen Huffaker are here

competing for the job," said Lowe. "Those guys take steps forward every day."

Whoever earns the starting spot will have some weapons to work with. "At receiver, Adarius Redmond, Jaden Collins and Jason Foust are guys that started for us last year," said Lowe. "At running back, we are extremely excited Fernando Francis gets to come back. Jordan Brown certainly got a lot of quality reps last year and J.R. Jones should get some carries there as well. There is a big offensive line with Jake Wyrick and Cameron Gann leading that offensive line up front as returning starters."

Does this team have what it takes to make a deep run in the postseason?

"Cookeville is the goal every year," said Lowe. "I think that's the goal for every program is to win a state championship. Those are the standards that you set at the top of everything. Come January that is the

only goal that you are talking about in the weight room. That's the only goal you are talking about heading into summer. That's the only goal you are talking about heading into the start of the season."

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Returning starters abound at CAK

Warriors look for strong '20 campaign

By Bill Howard

If Christian Academy of Knoxville's 2020 football season ends up in disappointment, it won't be because coach Travis Mozingo's squad lacks experience. Mozingo, entering his fifth season with the Warriors, has nine returning starters on offense, and 10 on defense.

The Warriors' offense last year was almost perfectly balanced: they ran the ball 51% of the time and passed 49. Leading the aerial attack this year will be second-year senior starter Ryan Degges, who threw for just over 2000 yards last year and 16 touchdowns. Backing up Degges will be sophomore Thomas Simpson.

"Probably the biggest thing about Ryan is his leadership ability," Mozingo said. "Ryan leads by example, his work ethic."

Degges' first hand-off recipient will be junior J.D. Dunn (5-7,160), who ran for 596 yards last year on 92 carries. Sophomore Dario Love (5-3, 140), who saw very limited action last year, will likely share reps with Dunn.

Arguably Mozingo's most potent unit will be at wide receiver. Three of last year's strong corps return, led by senior Caleb Sparkman, who hauled in 45 passes for 531 yards and seven scores. Complementing Sparkman in pass-catching will be senior J. D. Presley (5-10, 155) and junior Grant Sterchi (6-1, 170). Together last year, Presley and Sterchi caught 63 balls for 809 yards and six touchdowns.

"We have three receivers who have real game-time experience," Mozingo said. "They're definitely gonna draw attention from defenses. We really like our receiving corps."

Mozingo should feel equally good about his offensive line. Four returning starters will attempt to protect Degges and open holes for Dunn and Love. Junior Garrett Brady (5-8, 187) returns at center;

junior Jacquez Turman (5-10, 263) returns at one guard spot. The other guard will be sophomore Eli Milam (6-2, 194).

A pair of senior returners will man the tackle positions: Jake Rogers (6-1, 234), and Ethan Fogle (6-3, 192).

"Having four returners is pretty good for us," Mozingo said. "They work really well together and have good chemistry."

Both defensive ends for Mozingo started last season. One will be senior Noah Olsen (6-6, 218); the other is two-year junior starter Malachi Harrison (6-1, 271). Together last year the pair had 125 total tackles. The tackles will be Turman and freshman Austin Delp (6-2, 360).

"We like Noah and his athletic ability ... Malachi, he's right there with him at the other defensive end," Mozingo said. "We're excited to see Austin and his development."

The only known starter in the linebacking corps will be Luke Myers (6-1, 167). The junior started last season, and had 60 solo tackles, 54 assists, and 12 tackles for loss. Others likely to see action are junior Chi McNeil-Harrison (6-2, 173; 51 total tackles last year, including six sacks), senior Knox Woidtke (6-1, 179), and sophomore Jude Goldenberg (5-10, 172).

"Myers brings a ton of experience," Mozingo said. "He plays from one sideline to the other. Chi is looking to have a big year. (Jude) has the physical tools." Knox stepped away last year but he'll be ready for the competition."

While Presley and Sterchi will team up to catch passes from Degges, they'll also be teammates in the secondary, Presley at corner, Sterchi at safety. Junior Kanye Harris (5-9, 150) returns at

the other corner, while junior Denzel Jackson (5-7, 160) gives Mozingo yet another returner at the other safety.

"We're excited about these four guys returning," Mozingo said.

Senior Ross Badgett V will do the kicking for the Warriors. Fogle will be the long snapper and Degges the punter.



CAK's Grant Sterchi goes up for a touchdown catch in the Warriors' 24-14 win over visiting Webb School last November in Division II Class A action. Defending for the Spartans is Charlie Robinson. Both players return to the field this year.

Mozingo likes Badgett's work ethic.

"He's a hard-working individual," Mozingo said. "In high school kickers and specials kind of get lost. Special teams is one of the most overlooked parts. There's a lot of hidden yardage in the special teams."

The Warriors went 8-3 last year, losing to Chattanooga Christian in the first round of the Division II, Class AA playoffs. Parity among the seven teams in their region (AA, East) is the norm.

"It's gonna be really competitive," said Mozingo. "Chattanooga Christian is always tough. Our goal for out guys is to host game 11.

'Bigger' Spartans look to rebound from disappointing 2019 season

By Bill Howard

Dave Meske's storied career as Webb School of Knoxville's head football coach includes seven state titles and 270 wins, among other accolades. Last year's 3-7 record, including a first-round playoff loss, will hardly be remembered as one of his better seasons, at least on the field.

Meske believes big improvement is coming this year. "This year we have a lot of experience. Right now we're bigger than what we were last year. They've learned the offense, they've learned the defense...they're older. We feel like we're gonna have a very successful year this year."

One reason for Meske's optimism is experience.

Nine offensive starters return to the offense, led by senior quarterback Joseph Moore (6-3, 190), who was 47 of 110 last year for 655 yards. Backing Moore up will be sophomore Charlie Robinson (5-11, 160).

Leading the Spartans' running game will be senior Elijah Bane (5-9, 185), who ran for 415 yards last year on 106 carries. Juniors Garrett Carnathan (5-9, 180) and Dominic Vance (5-10, 190) will complement Bane in the backfield. Both both have considerable experience, and each averaged more than five yards per carry in '19. "They're all hard runners," Meske said.

Senior Jackson Baker (5-11, 175) and junior Bradee McCoy (5-11, 180) will be Bane's primary targets as wide receivers. Baker had 19 receptions for 228 yards and a score last year. Junior Ford Wagner (6-1, 190) is the tight end. Meske vows to throw the ball more this year than usual. "We're gonna line up in the shotgun, and throw it more," he said. "It fits our system this year to do that."

Returning experience abounds on the offensive line. Senior Luke Julian (5-11, 260) will be at center. For both guards and tackles, a trio of players will rotate. The guards will be senior Brik Boruff (6-3, 240), junior Leo Bonifacio (6-2, 225), and

Steven Beaty (5-11, 230). All three tackles are seniors: Corey Williams (5-11, 265), Jackson Bradley (6-5, 300), and Tabb Layton (6-3, 250). Bradley's football career will definitely go beyond high school, according to Meske.

"Division 1 football player," Meske said of Bradley. "We have more depth on our offensive line than we've had in years."

Meske's team numbers often require players to contribute on both sides of the ball. This year will be no exception, and eight starters, many of whom play offense, return on defense. Williams, Layton, Julian, and Bradley will rotate at defensive tackle. Boruff and senior Joey Fulcher (6-3, 225) will play on the edge.

Williams and Bradley combined for 31 tackles last year; Fulcher and Boruff combined for 40.

Bonifacio and sophomore brother Joey (6-0, 220) bring a combined 95 tackles from last year to this year's linebacking corps. Leo will play on the inside, Joey on the outside. Senior Will Hamilton will help in the linebacker corps as well.

"Joey's gonna be an outstanding player," Meske said.

Bane will be another two-way player for Meske, in the secondary at cornerback. Other corners will be Robinson (48 tackles, two picks, four pass breakups last year) and junior Knox Foss (6-3, 180). Senior Tayor Dunn (6-1, 180) will be one of the safeties; Moore will play the position as well. Carnathan will play a hybrid position of both linebacker and strong safety.

Junior Otto Niendorff will handle both punting and kicking responsibilities. "He's a very good kicker," Meske said.

Meske sees better consistency as a key to the improvement he wants. "I think we need to be a lot more consistent than last year," he said. "We'd make a big play, then have a poor play. I think we're gonna mix it up more than what we've done in the last couple of years."

SPORTS NOTEBOOK

Champion Sevier County thanks Tennessee Smokies

By Steve Williams

The Sevier County Cavaliers won a championship and more by playing in the East Tennessee High School Baseball League this summer.

The Cavs defeated Tennessee High of Bristol 3-0 on Saturday (Aug. 1) in the deciding game at Smokies Stadium to take the best-of-three league championship series.

It was originally scheduled to be a best-of-five series, but a doubleheader was rained out at Cardinal Park in Johnson City on July 30.

Sevier County finished with an overall record of 32-5, including league games, the Western Division playoffs and weekend tournaments. The Cavaliers lost only one game – against the Seymour Lumber Kings – in league play.

"We were able to gain a lot from what the Tennessee Smokies provided," said Sevier County Coach Casey Taylor. "First of all, a huge 'thank you' to Chris Allen along with his staff, including Tim, Alex and his grounds crew guy

Eric for allowing all of us the opportunity to play there ... They treated us like kings and did a top-notch job in a first class manner."

The Tennessee Smokies set up the summer league after the high school season was cut short and the minor league professional season was cancelled by the coronavirus pandemic.

"For our team," said Taylor, "we were able to simply be together, play guys who missed out on a high school spring season, get a look at guys for future plans, while also allowing past seniors the chance to somewhat get their season back.

"We were able to somewhat gain closure to what would've been another good year for our team, especially after seeing us start the high school season 7-1 and 2-0 in district play.

"This was definitely the best of a bad situation for sure."

The Western Division of the league also included four Knoxville teams – the Carter Mean Green, the South-Doyle Knights, the Hardin Valley Knox Hawks

and the Hardin Valley Valley Hawks.

Camden Lovin from Morristown West was the recipient of the Bush's Best MVP Award. Lovin batted .389 and had five RBI and six stolen bases. He also pitched 21.2 innings and had 29 strikeouts, a 1.29 ERA and a 2-0 record.

HELPING HAND: Lexanne Halama, Farragut senior and one of the state's top prep golfers, is scheduled to play in the Tennessee Women's Amateur at the Tennessee National Golf Club in Loudon this week (Aug. 11-13).

"My dad, Scott Halama, will be caddy for me in that event," said Lexanne. "He has been a caddy for me many times before, so this will be another experience we are blessed to share with one another!

"My dad is very helpful during the practice rounds in helping me plan out what to do. During the tournament, his main job is to push the cart, but he also helps me read wind direction and commit to our plan for each shot."

But, says Meske, the season was not without its special moments.

"At our banquet there were tears because it was ending," said Meske, entering his 36th season at the helm of the Spartans, who play in the East Region of Division II, AA. "We didn't win a lot of games last year but I was proud of our players because they practiced as hard at the end as they did at the beginning. They could have quit at any time, but they didn't. We just didn't get over the hump in a lot of different games. We weren't that far away."

wide receivers. Baker had 19 receptions for 228 yards and a score last year. Junior Ford Wagner (6-1, 190) is the tight end. Meske vows to throw the ball more this year than usual. "We're gonna line up in the shotgun, and throw it more," he said. "It fits our system this year to do that."

Returning experience abounds on the offensive line. Senior Luke Julian (5-11, 260) will be at center. For both guards and tackles, a trio of players will rotate. The guards will be senior Brik Boruff (6-3, 240), junior Leo Bonifacio (6-2, 225), and

Halls riding 'upward trend'

Continued from page 3

Cummings is perhaps best known for his thirteen years at Knoxville West, and for winning the Class 5A title back in 2014. After spending four years at Cleveland High School, he returned to the Knoxville in December 2018 to rebuilding the Red Devils program. Now in his second season at Halls, Cummings likes the direction of this program, but says that there is more work to be done.

"We have a great community park at Halls. It has always been that way," said Cummings. "But we have more work to do with our youth program. We have more work to do with this middle school program that we started last year, which was a great thing for us, and all schools involved, so we have to continue to progress with that. We need to start teaching more of the schemes and techniques that we will use in high school and progress with that as far as our programming."

Cummings added, "There is an excitement about football in the school and in the community, so that's good. We just have to continue to foster that. We made tremendous gains in our field house and upgrades to our facilities with new lockers. Things are in an upward trend. We just have to continue that momentum."

Mark Nagi is the author of "Decade of Dysfunction," which takes an up-close look at Tennessee's crazy coaching search in 2017. The book is available on Amazon.



The Doctor is in

a weekly column by
Dr. Jim Ferguson

Positivity

With all the miserable news that daily bombards us, is it any wonder why people are despondent and huddle in fear? The journalistic mantra of, "If it bleeds, it leads," is on full display these days. A recent Gallup poll found that 84% of Americans believe the media is the major cause of our divisiveness. Actually, the media mantra has become, if it hates it leads.

Recently I found myself rousing about "fake news," negative and hackneyed campaign ads, BLM and Antifa riots, rising murder rates in blue cities, the destruction of sports by politics and religious pogroms as churches are closed and anarchists burn Bibles in Portland.

Then, I caught myself. I was falling prey to media manipulation by pseudointellectuals who spin everything as Trump hatred. Even Trump's positive comments about the economy

and COVID-19 are lampooned. Apparently, the intelligentsia never heard of Norman Vincent Peale who wrote the book of how to avoid negative attitudes. Personally, I try to avoid "nattering nabobs of negativity."

These days, I find myself asking, "What is working?" Actually, a lot! Space X is a huge triumph. America now has a way to put astronauts in orbit and bring them home safely without using Russia. Since Democrats still see Russians everywhere, you'd think that might make them happy. Don't count on it. Elon Musk's program can even reclaim the booster rockets by landing them on ships! My marriage to the lovely, Becky, is an astounding success. My faith has never been stronger. I know where I came from and my purpose in life. And I'm no longer conflicted about what is wrong and what is right.

Too often we get caught up in the negatives and take for granted what is working. The internet is a beautiful thing for people with curiosity, and it is virtually free, if you pay your electricity bill. And we take for granted gas at the pumps and food in the grocery store.

Former Democrat presidential candidate, Michael "Doomberg," infamously opined that farming is as simple as putting a seed in the ground. However, like Joe Biden and Diane Feinstein, he also said the Chinese government is not our enemy. To clueless elites, farming is tough and China is not our friend. I am thankful for my bounteous harvest this year of wonderful peaches, corn, pears and enough cucumbers to make Becky wave a white flag because she's run out of canning jars for her sublime pickles. Her pickles certainly bear no resemblance to Mayberry's Aunt Bee's "kerosene cucs." However, as a gentleman farmer like Mr. Douglas of Green Acres, I couldn't feed myself, let alone my family. So, I am thankful for farmers.

When I was younger, I took life for granted. You've heard the adage that teenage boys consider themselves bullet proof and immortal. I no longer think as a child. Since I've walked through the

"valley of the shadow of death," aches and pains of aging can be suspect. These days, I thank God each morning when I wake up that I've been granted another day of life.

I'm thankful for excellent medical care in my community. My doctors know me as a person, not just a patient with various medical issues. Additionally, most things I need are in our neighborhood. My older daughter lives in Portland, Oregon, which is similarly organized as numerous small neighborhoods. I'm blessed to live in Knoxville which is not besieged by anarchists or subject to looting as in numerous large blue cities. And unlike Minneapolis where citizens are now advised to just surrender their wallets to criminals, we support our police, the thin blue line that protects our community. Interestingly, a new poll showed that 80% of African Americans do not want police protection reduced. So, why do Democrats want to defund the police?

Having traveled extensively, I am thankful to live in Knoxville. In fact, I've found only two places where I might consider moving. One is Wellington, New Zealand, and the other is Victoria, British Columbia. Never take the blessings of our city, freedom, the Constitution or

America for granted!

As Democrats promote defunding police departments amidst anarchy and lawlessness, abolishing ICE despite criminal illegals on our streets, promote Green New Deals, increasing taxes and regulations, and cozying up to socialists and Marxists, I am thankful for the brash man from Queens who resists these Democrat socialists, their media mouthpieces and the enemies of America. Actually, I like Trump's tough talk. I don't want America burnt down, the economy destroyed or education held hostage to the demands of teachers unions.

I recently heard two comments which sealed my support for Trump. The NYT's Thomas Friedman was asked when the chaos would end, and he said "after" the November election. In other words, the Democrats want the chaos (economy problems, COVID-19 isolation), to continue as an election issue despite the harm done to the country.

The second comment was from Dan Sterling, the owner of the NBA Los Angeles Clippers, who said sports should continue so as to provide a platform for athletes to protest. I have written off the NBA and major league baseball teams like the Yankees,

Miami and San Francisco who kneel or pander to the Marxist BLM. We'll see about pro football because I just learned that the NFL is launching a voter registration program! What does this have to do with football? I will not "show up" to see my country, the flag and the national anthem bashed by jocks and limousine liberals.

It is hard to be positive amidst negativism. As a student of history, what is happening in our country has happened over and over in other places and times, always with disastrous consequences. As a historical example, I cite the Bible as the greatest existing history of a people, the Hebrews. When they followed God they prospered, only to fall away and suffer destruction until a remnant refocused on God and they returned to prosperity.

To stay positive the doctor prescribes: turn off the so-called "news" when it becomes too much for your soul; avoid social media and instead interact with friends, neighbors and positive people instead of marching to protest of some imagined "first-world" grievance; and as the ancient prophet Micah said, "Act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with your God."

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

What Jesus Did for Education

When Jesus changed jobs from the carpentry shop to the pulpit, that shift changed the world. It all began one day in his hometown of Nazareth on a Sabbath. Jesus went to the synagogue and unrolled the



By Mark Brackney, Minister of the Arlington Church of Christ

Isaiah scroll to a passage and read it (Luke 4:18-27). This first sermon of Jesus went over like a ton of bricks. His words infuriated the religious leaders so much, they wanted to throw him off the nearby cliffs to his death. What they didn't like about Jesus' words was his

proclamation that Gentiles accepted God's message from the prophets more than the Jews did. Jesus was saying that Jews and Gentiles alike deserve to hear God's Word.

Jesus was the master teacher. He was able to challenge the smartest people as well as help the simplest minded. For Jesus, teaching was not just the transfer of information; it was the changing of lives. God's desire was for people to love him with all of their being (Deut. 6:4). In Jesus' final words to his followers before his

ascension, he told them to teach all nations everything he commanded them (Mt. 28:18-20). "Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah" (Acts 5:42). Followers of Jesus took seriously their role to teach.

Fast forward to AD 150. Justin Martyr formed schools in Ephesus and Rome to integrate Jesus' words with a classical education. Unlike the Greco-Roman world that only allowed male children from families of wealth to be educated, the Jesus followers wanted to

teach all children, slave or free, male or female, rich or poor. Libraries and church buildings with Biblical scrolls and writings began to grow, but by the sixth century, Europe had no libraries left due to the fall of the Roman Empire. The people would have become totally illiterate if it were not for the Christian monasteries that sheltered sacred texts and where monks copied texts. From these monasteries arose the first universities. They were called universities because those who began them believed God created the universe. We were created with reason, purpose, and value. God wanted us to think and

to love God with all of our mind (Mark 12:30).

The Reformation, led by Martin Luther, emphasized the principle of the priesthood of all believers. All are to be priests, not just a select group. All should be able to study the Bible for themselves (2 Timothy 2:15). Within six years after the Puritans landed in Massachusetts, a college was established. The student handbook stated: "Let every student be plainly instructed and earnestly pressed to consider well, the main end of his life and studies is, to know God and Jesus Christ, which is eternal life (John 17:3), and therefore to lay Christ...as the only

foundation of all sound knowledge and learning." That college was Harvard. After Harvard came Yale, William and Mary, Princeton, and Brown. Each had the same purpose - that the main end of one's life and studies is to know God and Jesus Christ. 92% of the first 138 colleges founded in America were started by followers of a carpenter turned itinerant teacher.

Let us love God with all of our mind as we grow in our knowledge, wisdom, and understanding. May we also instill within others a love for God with their minds and the ability to read the Scriptures for themselves.

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