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## Powell celebrates with Independence Day Parade

By Ken Lay

Residents of Powell and surrounding areas braved the heat late Tuesday morning to celebrate America's independence at the community's annual Independence Day Parade Presented by the Powell Lions Club.

The parade made its 1.4-mile march down West Emory Road between Powell Middle School and Powell High School.

Area businesses and community leaders were on hand as they marched and rode the route, passing out candy to the children in the crowd, which lined both sides of West Emory Road celebrating the Fourth of July on a hot Northwest Knox County day. Festivities began late in the morning and concluded in the early afternoon.

The parade began with a flyover by the Knox County Sheriff's Office helicopters.

The annual Powell Independence Day Parade was one of many holiday celebrations held throughout Knoxville and Knox County.

*Members of the Rural Metro Fire Department march in the 2024 Lions Club Powell Independence Day Parade on Thursday.*



*A member of the American Legion Post No. 102 drives in the Lions Club Powell Independence Day Parade Thursday.*

PHOTOS BY KEN LAY.

*Members of a local Girls Scouts troop wave to spectators at the Powell Independence Day Parade Thursday. The parade route covered a 1.4-mile stretch between Powell Middle School and Powell High School on West Emory Road.*

## Early voting starts Thursday

### Three new precincts to open

By Mike Steely  
Senior Writer  
steelym@knoxfocus.com

Knox County voters will begin voting Thursday on a long ballot that includes everything from commission races to board of education seats. Early voting continues until July 27 and the General Election is August 1.

The Knox County Election Commission has added three new early voting locations: Gibbs

Ruritan Club, 7827 Tazewell Pike, Corryton; Knox County Election Commission west office, 109 Lovell Heights Road; and Carter Elementary School, 8455 Strawberry Plains Pike.

The other early voting places are: City-County Building, Main Assembly Room, 400 Main Street; Downtown West, 1645 Downtown West Blvd., Unit 40; Eternal

**Cont. on page 3**

## Council to hear more housing requests

By Mike Steely  
Senior Writer  
steelym@knoxfocus.com

A request for a payment in lieu of ad valorem taxes (PILOT) is before the Knoxville City Council to help with building a six-story apartment building with a parking garage and retail stores on a large parking lot. If granted the tax break would go to Marble Alley Development for 121 Union Avenue.

The request would add additional dwellings downtown and is only one of several changes coming to add more housing in the city.

The council Tuesday evening will also discuss an appeal by R. Bentley Marlow on the Board of Zoning Appeals' decision to classify a project as an "Accessory Dwelling Unit."

Opening up a property

for additional dwellings is being requested by Stephen Goodson for 606 Heins Court. He's requested a change from RN-2 single-family residential to RN-4 general residential.

A property at Zero and 1476 Lyons Bend Road may change from an RN-1 single-family neighborhood to RN-3 general residential.

A change from RN-1 to RN-2 is being sought for 1805 Ferd Hickey Road. A property at 324 Watauga Drive may change from RN-1 to RN-2 and another property at 3107 Landview Drive may also be given a similar change.

The property at 3407 Valley View Drive is on the agenda in a requested zoning change from RN-1 to RN-4.

A request for property

**Cont. on page 4**

## Knoxville Sunflower Celebration Set for Saturday

Thousands of blooming sunflowers will be showcased at Forks of the River Wildlife Management Area (FRWMA) during the sixth bi-annual Knoxville Sunflower Celebration Saturday, July 13 from 9 a.m. until 12:00 p.m.

Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, who owns and manages FRWMA, plants multiple fields with sunflowers once every two years and invites visitors to learn more about land management and habitat restoration as they wander through a sea of yellow flowers.

Touring the celebration is easy!

Visitors can take a free shuttle from Maynard Glenn Ballfields, 2100 McClung Avenue. Shuttles will run continuously from 9 a.m. until 12 noon. Limited parking is available at Ijams Nature Center and Ijams Quarry and a \$5 fee applies. No parking will be permitted within the FRWMA during the celebration.

A great way to get to the fields is by joining the Cycology Bicycles guided bike ride leaving at 9 a.m. from Suttree Landing Park, 1001 Waterfront Drive Southeast.



Additionally, Kickstand Community Bike Shop will loan bikes

to those who want to tour the sunflowers along the Will Skelton Greenway bordering the sunflower fields. Kickstand will be set up at the shuttle drop off area inside the FRWMA.

Guided walking tours of the sunflower fields are set for 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., and 11:30 a.m. leaving from the shuttle drop-off spot in the center of the fields.

Food trucks will be located at the Ijams Quarries and sunflower gifts will be available in the Ijams Nature Center Gift Shop.

Celebration goers are reminded to bring water and to wear comfortable walking shoes. They are also reminded that the weather determined how much and when the sunflowers will bloom.

The Knoxville Sunflower Celebration is presented by Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency, Legacy Parks Foundation, Visit Knoxville, City of Knoxville Parks and Recreation and Ijams Nature Center.

More information is available at legacyparks.org or by calling Legacy Parks Foundation at (865) 525-2585.

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# Becky Massey Has Been A Great Leader In The State Senate

From a distance



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

I want to tell you about an amazing woman – State Senator Becky Duncan Massey.

As most people know, Becky is my sister, so I admit I am biased. But it also means that I know her better than almost anyone other than her immediate family and very close friends.

I have known almost everyone who has been in elective office in Knox County over the last 60 years and many others throughout this state and nation.

Most have been very good people, but I have never known any official who has worked harder

or tried to meet with and listen to more people than Becky has.

Her energy amazes me. She goes to everything, is accessible to everybody, and seems to work about 80 or 90 hours a week in what was designed by the founders of our state to be a part-time job.

Our parents emphasized two things: education and hard work. No one slept late at our house. In kind, loving ways, no matter how good we did, we were always pushed to do more and to work harder.

I don't believe we could ever elect a state senator who would work harder or do more to help people than Becky has.

And she doesn't just go to public meetings and events. She has been a very effective legislator.

The Tennessee Faith and Freedom Foundation named her the Legislator of the Year for getting her bill passed to keep anyone under the age of 18 from accessing pornography on computers.

She helped lead the fight to not allow sexually-suggestive drag queen shows in public buildings and places where children were present.

When I was in Congress, among many other things, I chaired the Highways and Transit Subcommittee for six years. During that time, we were able to get more highway money than almost any other district to fix "malfunction junction" and expand our interstate lanes.

Most highway money comes from the federal government, but where it is spent is largely up to the state. Becky has followed my work by becoming chairman of the Transportation Committee.

We really need her in this position because of all the growth in and around Knoxville. She led the passage of the largest transportation bill in our state's history and has been responsible for most of the road work that has gone on here in the 13 years she has been in the Senate.

In the last session, she was able to pass 31 bills and, almost unheard of, all but one passed unanimously. Several were minor, but all were requested by her constituents or a local organization.

Becky has been one of the most consistent conservatives in the state Senate her entire time in office and not just at election time.

She is very anti-abortion except in the most extreme situations, as are the overwhelming majority of the people.

She headed the Sertoma Center for mentally challenged children and adults for 25 years and co-chairs a national legislative committee on mental health, and has worked to get more and better mental health facilities in Tennessee.

She has also fought very hard to keep the state from being flooded with illegal immigrants.

I was often described as the most conservative member of the Tennessee

Congressional Delegation. Becky is just as conservative as I am, and thankfully, hers is a kind and respectful conservatism.

She is not a hateful extremist, always on the attack but never getting anything done. She reminds me of Ronald Reagan, who was a smiling, friendly conservative.

Reagan used to say if you found someone you agreed with 80% of the time, that was about as good as it gets. I would say that most of the people in East Tennessee would agree with Becky about 95% of the time.

Becky has cast over 7,000 votes since she has been in the Senate. Her opponent has cherry-picked less than 10 of those votes to criticize her about. Every bill in the legislature and in Congress is given a motherhood, apple pie title that sounds good on the surface. But a lot of very bad legislation is buried in the body of bills that sound good at first.

Also, some bills are weak

at first, and Becky has voted against very few that sound good and then has voted for them after they have been amended and improved.

Becky has worked in Republican campaigns both locally and across the state since she was a teenager. Her opponent, as far as most people know, has not been active in any Republican campaigns, but now, all of a sudden expects the Republican Party to give her its nomination for the state's third-highest office.

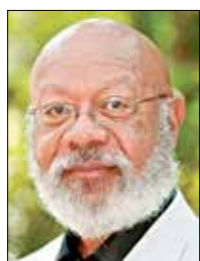
If you want a state senator who is honest, kind, intelligent, and extremely hard-working, that is what you get with Becky Massey. If you want a state senator who is a proven conservative, both fiscally and socially, that is also what you get with Becky Massey.

I am very proud of her and the way she has represented us in Nashville, and I hope and believe her hard work will lead to a very big victory on August 1.

# Where is the equity at the Westminster Dog Show?

I'm a dog person and dogs know it. Perhaps they sense it because they very seldom are aggressive toward me. I once was called by my vet who wanted to know if I was interested in another female German shorthaired pointer (my favorite breed). They said her owner was terminally ill and wanted to find her a nice home. The only problem was that she didn't like men. I said, "She will like me."

When I went to see her I met her in the back of the building. She came right to me, wagging her



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

bobbed tail and looked at me with sad brown eyes. I took her home. Her name was Greta. She was wonderful and protective. She was patient and loving with my grandkids, including my

then-young grandson. But if a strange male came to the door she would literally attack the door. However, if I told her it was all right and let someone into the house, she would either go into her crate or lie on her pillow and forget about the visitor.

I would occasionally host a poker game. Greta with my other two GSPs would

be on pillows in the kitchen while we played in the dining room. I would tell the players to ignore the dogs and don't pet them. Once I was ignored and one player reached down to pet Greta. She bit him. He never played in our game again.

The only time she threatened a woman was when my other half was recovering from a horrific automobile accident. A nurse would come to the house periodically to take blood and do other ministrations. One day the nurse hurt her while drawing blood and continued even though told to stop. Greta jumped up on the bed and growled deeply at the nurse who asked, "Is she going to bite

me?"

"Yes, if you don't stop." The nurse stopped. From that point on, Greta had to be put in another room whenever that nurse appeared.

A few years ago a German shorthaired named CJ won best in show at Westminster. CJ made my GSPs look like mutts and got me wondering which breeds had never won best in show at Westminster. I was shocked to find that 11 of the top 20 breeds had never won best in show including the Labrador retriever and the golden retriever. In fact, 160 breeds have never won best in show. Obviously, the judges are prejudiced with blind spots.

How else to explain it? The breeds that have won the most are the wire fox terrier with 15 wins, the Scottish terrier (my other half's favorite breed) with eight, and the English springer spaniel with six wins. The standard poodle has won four times and this year the winner was the miniature poodle. Personally, I hate the poodle cut and would disqualify the dog because of it.

If your breed is one of the 160 that has never won best of show, then why bother showing up? All the goldens, all the Labs, the dachshunds, rottweilers, Welsh corgis, Great Danes, Shih Tzu, miniature schnauzer, Australian shepherds and French

bulldogs are just wasting their time. Even those that have only won once have the odds stacked against them like the Pomeranians and cocker spaniels. They might as well stay home.

In today's world, there should be massive protests by those on the left demanding equity and fairness at Westminster. Even though the best of every breed gets a participation trophy, equity would demand that one of the 160 win best in show. That means that for the next 160 years, one of those dogs should take home the top prize. It would only be fair!



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## Highlands of the Smokies Luxury Condos rebuilt after Gatlinburg Fires of 2016



The new Highlands of the Smokies Gatlinburg vacation condo rentals will leave you spellbound by the million dollar views of the Smokies and downtown Gatlinburg along with all the amenities of a first-class resort.

"The iconic Highlands of the Smokies condos burned in the Gatlinburg fires of 2016 and have been rebuilt to be one of the most unique luxury vacation condos in the area," said Joy Maples, managing partner of the Highlands of the Smokies.


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The Highlands of the Smokies is open

*The million dollar view from a private balcony at the rebuilt Highlands of the Smokies in Gatlinburg.*

year-round and is located at 855 Campbell Lead Road in Gatlinburg, Tennessee. For more information or reservations call (866) 266-9005, visit [www.Highlandsoft-hesmokies.com](http://www.Highlandsoft-hesmokies.com) or email [stay@highlandsoft-hesmokies.com](mailto:stay@highlandsoft-hesmokies.com).



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Publisher ..... Steve Hunley  
Editor, Art Director ..... Marianne Dedmon  
[editor@knoxfocus.com](mailto:editor@knoxfocus.com), [design@knoxfocus.com](mailto:design@knoxfocus.com)

Managing Editor ..... Lisa DeMarsico  
[managingeditor@knoxfocus.com](mailto:managingeditor@knoxfocus.com)  
Mike Steely, Senior Writer ..... [steelym@knoxfocus.com](mailto:steelym@knoxfocus.com)  
Jamie Schnell ..... [schnellj@knoxfocus.com](mailto:schnellj@knoxfocus.com)  
Sales ..... [sales@knoxfocus.com](mailto:sales@knoxfocus.com)  
Pam Poe ..... [phpoe2000@yahoo.com](mailto:phpoe2000@yahoo.com)  
Ruthie Akers ..... [Ruthie@knoxfocus.com](mailto:Ruthie@knoxfocus.com)  
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# Publisher's Position

## Liberal Propaganda Exposed During First Presidential Debate



**By Steve Hunley,**  
**Publisher**  
publisher@knoxfocus.com

When Special Counsel Robert Hur found that Joe Biden was "a sympathetic, well-meaning, elderly man with a poor memory," the White House went into a tizzy to do damage control, wailing such language was unnecessary and wrong. When the Wall Street Journal reported Biden was believed to be slipping mentally inside the White House, operatives sprung into action to label them nothing more than partisan "smears." The White House has denounced as "cheap fakes" the clips and photos of Biden looking lost. Unfortunately for the Biden administration, it was all too obvious when Joe

showed up for the debate with former President Donald Trump. It became undeniable.

It was a revelation. Joe Biden was not only doddering, but empty. It could not be disguised, nor could it be ignored. It was on display for all to see.

For years the Democrats and the corporate media have doubled down on their preferred narratives, insisting none of us saw what we'd seen. That has been the prevailing theme of the last 3 1/2 years. The southern border is secure, the economy is booming, taxes are low, our energy dependency on foreign governments is good for the climate, Joe Biden is sharp as a tack. . . the list is practically endless.

Biden's performance in his first debate with Donald Trump presents the mainstream media with a difficult set of choices, the first being insisting we didn't see what we saw. Only the deluded and the elite still believe the American public is so stupid to believe what they tell us, especially when our eyes are telling us the exact opposite. The debate

was absolute confirmation of why Biden's handlers in the White House have so carefully shielded him for the last 3 1/2 years. Everybody already knows Trump agreed to an early debate on the most favorable terms for Biden imaginable. With everything in his favor, including the debate being hosted by a network which was openly and aggressively biased against his opponent, everybody watched Joe Biden give an abysmal performance that sent shock waves throughout the country and set off a panic inside the Democratic Party. In their arrogance, the Biden White House had taken a gamble on having a debate so early before either candidate had been officially nominated by their parties. They lost that gamble and badly. The strategy of the Biden campaign was to flip the polls in his favor by a strong performance after a week of preparation at his home in Delaware and Camp David.

Donald Trump showed astonishing restraint, ignoring the insults flung at him, batted away the attempts by the biased moderators

about January 6, the idea of political retribution and abiding by the results of the election.

The debate between a sitting president and a former president was historic, but never before have opponents slung back and forth names like "liar," "felon," and "criminal." The truth is the personal animosity between Biden and Trump is shared by tens of millions of Americans. The disdain of the Left in particular for those who have voted for and would again vote for Donald Trump is unmatched. But it is a microcosm of the division between political camps, especially the Left and the Right.

Trump took a big gamble, too, in accepting the early debate, especially under terms and conditions clearly in place to benefit his opponent. The former president believed he would be more coherent and more presidential than Joe Biden and he was right.

The result of the debate left the corporate media in an emotional tailspin, wringing their hands, and wailing. There is a very good reason

why families and businesses have departed California, Illinois, New Jersey and New York. The Democrat policies in those states, like Joe Biden's administration, has left things in a terrible mess. Even those rare Democrats who don't hate Israel or believe in defunding the police or any other facet of Leftist orthodoxy, rarely raise their voice and simply march in lock step with the others.

Almost immediately following the debate, a panel on MSNBC was already speculating about replacing Biden on the ticket. Anybody who thinks Gavin Newsom is an acceptable replacement for Joe Biden is out of their mind. Newsom shares the failure at the southern border and California is beginning to resemble a third world country.

Virtually every position taken by Joe Biden is one also taken by Gavin Newsom.

For years the corporate media and the White House have been telling us all how brilliantly competent Joe Biden was. Of course, Joe Biden ran as

the candidate of national unity and the country is more divided today than ever. Once again, anything they didn't like, they labeled "misinformation." Everyone who saw the debate immediately recognized they had been lying. We saw a poor old man who was incapable of finishing a sentence and incoherent. Nobody who saw the debate can possibly believe Joe Biden is actually running the country. We are being governed by a class of privileged, non-elected elitists who believe in neither self-government nor democracy.

Biden's performance at the debate must have been like falling off a cliff for those people who have believed the stories printed by the propaganda press. It is well to keep in mind the enemies of our country saw it as well.

It is now obvious to everybody but the deranged and deluded exactly why Attorney General Merrick Garland has refused to turn over the audio of the Robert Hur interview. Now there is no need, we've all seen it.

## Early voting starts Thursday *Three new precincts to open*

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Life Harvest Center at Five Points, 2410 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.; Knoxville Expo Center, 5441 Clinton Highway; Meridian Baptist Church, 6513 Chapman Highway; New Harvest Park, 4775 New Harvest Lane; Halls Recreation Center, 6933 Recreation Lane; and Karns Senior Center, 8042 Oak Ridge Highway.

Seventeen local offices are up for election including the Knox County Law Director, Assessor of Property, four Knox County Board of Education seats, seven Knox County Commission seats, a U.S. Senate seat, District 2's House of Representatives seat, seven Tennessee House seats, and one Tennessee Senate seat.

The early voting and August 1st general election have two sets of ballots: The general election for all Knox County offices and the primary election for all state and federal offices.

### Knox County General and Farragut Municipal Election

The local county commission races on the ballot are for Districts 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9. At least five of the races will see new commission members elected and, should the two incumbents lose, seven new members will take office.

In District 1, Republican Charles Frazier faces Democrat Damon L. Rawls to replace Dasha Lundy who chose not to seek re-election. District 2 has incumbent Democrat Courtney Durrett facing Republican Debbie Phillips and Independent Ethan Grantham.

District 4 has Republican Garrett Holt facing Democrat Shane Jackson to replace Kyle Ward, who chose not to seek re-election. District 5 has Republican Angela Russell facing Democrat S. Arthur Moore. Both seek to replace term-limited John Schoonmaker. District 6 has incumbent

Republican Terry Hill, currently serving as commission chairwoman, facing Democrat Daniel Edward Greene.

District 8 Commissioner Richie Beeler chose not to run and the race has Republican Adam Thompson facing Democrat Charles V. Chandler. Republican Andy Fox will face Democrat Matthew Park and Independent Stacey Bryan Smith in District 9. The three vie to replace term-limited Commissioner Carson Dailey.

Also on the ballot is the race for Knox County Law Director with incumbent Republican David Buuck facing Democrat Jackson Fenner.

The assessor of property race pits former assessor Phil Ballard as the Republican nominee and Drew A. Harper as the Democrat in that race.

The board of education has four districts on the ballot: Districts 2, 3, 5 and 8. All are contested races except for District 8.

District 2 incumbent

Jennifer Owens, running as an Independent, is challenged by Democrat Anne Templeton and Independent Pat Polis.

District 3's race to replace Daniel Watson has Republican Angie Goethert and Democrat Patricia Fontenot-Riley seeking the seat.

District 5 has Republican Lauren Morgan and Democrat Terrye Whitaker seeking to replace Susan Horn, who chose not to seek re-election.

District 8 only has Travis Wright, the Republican nominee, seeking to replace the late Mike McMillan. There is no Democrat or Independent opposing Wright.

Republican Hector I. Sanchez is seeking re-election for Knox County Criminal Judge, Division II, and has no Democrat opponent.

In the Farragut non-partisan election for aldermen, Alexander J. Cain faces Jeffery Devlin in Ward 1 and in Ward 2, incumbent Drew Burnette faces Randal Roberts.

### State Primary

Seven Tennessee House races are on the ballot in the primaries. At present there is only one state House race with no primary or general election opponent as incumbent Gloria Johnson seeks to retain her seat in District 90. Her state-wide Democratic primary race against three opponents will determine if she runs for the U.S. Senate in November and that will affect her race for state House.

Otherwise every other race for the state House will see a challenger after the primary.

District 14 incumbent and Republican Jason Zachary will face Democrat Amanda Collins in November. Neither have a primary opponent.

The 15th District's Democratic primary pits Democratic incumbent Sam McKenzie against Knox County Commissioner Dasha Lundy. The winner will face Republican Justin Hirst.

Incumbent Republican Michele Carringer is

unopposed in her primary and will face Democrat Lauren Carver and Independent Sean Eastham in the general election for the District 16 seat.

District 18 will see incumbent Republican Elaine Davis facing Democrat Bryan S. Goldberg in the general election.

Incumbent Dave Wright is unopposed in the District 19 primary.

In the 89th District, incumbent Republican Justin Lafferty has no primary opponent and will face Democrat Cary Hammond in the general.

Tennessee state Senator Becky Duncan Massey has a Republican primary opponent in Monica Irvine. The winner will face Democrat Domonica Bryan in November.

**See D1 in this week's Focus for a sample ballot.**

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## Young-Williams Animal Center

Hope supper is ready because this big boy is ready to eat! **JACKS** had to come to the shelter through no fault of his own. In his previous home he lived with other dogs and children as young as infants. He loves cuddling, playing, running, and eating! His ideal home would have lots of love, lots of fun, and lots of food. Get ready for a life of excitement and adopt Jacks today!

Meet with **BARON!** Baron likes to adventure outside during the day and snooze on the couch at night. He had done well with other adult dogs in his previous home. He does well with older kids (10+), but is not toddler and baby fan. He has a lot of energy and likes to play! His favorite thing to do is to hang out with his friends and play with toys. Baron even knows tricks/commands. He is described as loving, playful, and energetic. His ideal home would be very active with time for training!

**Young-Williams Animal Center** 865.215.6599  
3201 Division Street, Knoxville, TN 37919  
www.young-williams.org 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. daily  
Closed 1-2 p.m. for animal quiet time

# Parrott-Wood Memorial Library receives TOP grant



Left to Right: Secretary of State Tre Hargett, state Representative Andrew Farmer, Mayor Mark Potts, Library Director Donna Phillips, Library Clerk Teresa Clark, state Senator Frank Niceley, Library Board Chair Paige Bolton and Friends' President Sharon Redden.

Secretary of State of Tennessee Tre Hargett and his wife Dawn visited Parrott-Wood Memorial Library on June 26, 2024, to award them with a \$7,133.00 Training Opportunities for the Public (TOP) Grant. This grant is made possible through the Tennessee State Library and Archives.

Tennessee Senator Frank Niceley, State Representative Andrew Farmer, and Jefferson County Mayor Mark Potts and many others were on hand for this celebration. Friends of the Parrott-Wood Memorial Library provided light refreshments and all were so excited about the news of this amazing grant.

This grant will allow

Parrott-Wood Memorial Library to increase their internet speed to 2G by purchasing updated equipment. A portion of the grant will be used to provide the community with free basic computer training.

Parrott-Wood Director Donna Phillips stated that this grant is a blessing. Phillips has been applying for this grant and having free classes to for many years. She states the library could not offer this wonderful service to the community without these funds.

The free computer classes will start in late September. Anyone interested in taking the free basic computer classes may call 865-933-1311. Registration will be required.

## Council to hear more housing requests

**Continued from page 1**  
at 277 Ogle Avenue to change from CG-1 to CG-2 general commercial is also on the agenda.

The council will also discuss several applications for grants including one for \$450,000 for the School Resource Officer Program for training and equipment, salaries and benefits for officers at six Knox County schools within the city. The grant is from the state Department of Safety and Homeland Security.

An application to the state for \$100,000 to support the Chamber's eKnox digital literacy program is on the agenda and the council may also approve applying for \$1.1 million from the state with a city match of \$125,000 to build a greenway along North Broadway.

A request to the U. S.

Department of Justice for a \$300,000 grant may be passed to help fund the Knoxville Police Department's Forensic Unit for enhanced gun crime investigations and prosecutions. The request comes from the Police Department.

In other action, Vice Mayor Tommy Smith is asking that Knoxville historian Jack Neely serve on the Public Property Naming Committee and Dusty Brock may be approved to serve on the Audit Committee.

The council will also discuss pay raises for professional stormwater engineers and recreation interns, signal light improvements at Chapman Highway and Fort Avenue, and acceptance of a quitclaim deed for the Serene Manor Hospital at 970 Wray Street.

## Changes coming for county beer board

**By Mike Steely**  
Senior Writer  
steelym@knoxfocus.com

When the Knox County Commission meets for its agenda review next Monday, the second and final reading of changes to the Beer Board may be heard. Sponsored by Beer Chair and Third District Commissioner Gina Oster, the proposal decreases the number of commissioners serving on that body and allows commissioners to decline membership.

The matter was postponed from June following some objection from one of the commission members who wants to serve although they are opposed to beer sales.

The informal agenda review meeting begins at 3 p.m. next Monday. It will be followed by a separate public hearing at 4:30 on changing CA and CB commercial zonings to open up those

zones for multi-family housing.

While the full preliminary agenda has yet to be announced, several items on the working agenda that could see discussion include two changes to the Knox Sheriff's Employees' Merit System Board. One of the changes would permit employees who are on suspension to file a grievance over the loss of pay.

The other merit board rule change before the commission includes changing the rule to prohibit employees to appeal a denial of a request for reclassification.

One item flagged for discussion is a Parks and Recreation request to accept property donations for use as park land in South Knox County.

Another agenda item that might be discussed is changing the vesting requirements for employees in the county retirement system from 10 to 5 years.

The commission's main agenda for the July 22 full meeting also includes honoring the UT baseball team for winning the 2024 College World Series in a motion by Commissioner Courtney Durrett and honoring Mike and Pam Duncan for the 80th anniversary of the Duncan Boat Dock and their impact on the Rocky Hill and Riverbend Neighborhoods.

The resurfacing of North Cedar Bluff from Sherrill Blvd. to Middlebrook Pike is also on the agenda with the funds from the state and the local contribution not indicated yet.

Spring Place Park may be approved to get a "sister" millstone from from Buffat Mill and a design contract may be awarded for the Hardin Valley Community Center.

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## The Doctor is in

a weekly column by  
Dr. Jim Ferguson

### The Potemkin Presidency

"Campaigns are snapshots and sound bites."  
Dan Bongino

They all knew, and by now, so do we. They lied to us repeatedly, just as they lied about Russian collusion, Covid, January 6, Charlottesville and I could go on. So again, we were duped by the mainstream media and Democrats, just as we were duped by the Intelligence Community regarding Hunter's laptop - by the way, "the IC are neither intelligent nor a community."

Americans are like Charlie Brown who trusted Lucy to hold the football. We trusted the mainstream media to tell the truth about Joe Biden, and they lied repeatedly. Only a fool would now believe anything they say.

In last week's essay I listed signs of change I'm seeing. I now add

additional signs: anti-socialist movements in European elections and important Supreme Court rulings stating that presidents have immunity for their official decisions, unelected bureaucrats cannot make "law" through their interpretation of Congressional Law and governmental agencies like the SEC can't serve as prosecutor, jury and judge in disputes with citizens. And, of course, there was the Biden debate debacle and the subsequent fallout in Democrat-land.

What would it be like if you woke up some morning and you discovered that everything you believed true was a lie? We watched it happen in the presidential debate. The curtain was pulled back to reveal that "the emperor has no clothes." Have you ever had that weird dream where you were somewhere in

public and exposed? Well, Biden may have felt he was in that bad dream. We saw an elderly, frail, confused man with a sickly complexion, mouth agape and minimal facial expression.

I don't mean to be morbid, but as a physician I've seen lots of people die. Most recently, Becky's mother passed away at home at 104. One minute she was there and the next...she was gone. As the spirit left her body, her facial animation slackened and then ceased.

The contrast between the animated, cogent President Trump with robust facial color and the deathly pale Biden, whispering often unintelligible gibberish was striking. You can't "unsee" what Democrats and their media toadies tell you was just one bad day and a cold.

Biden was given a clean bill of health by his physician in February 2024. (Not a good reference for this doctor.) Even the dinosaur Democrat Carl Bernstein recognized 15-20 cognitive lapses of the man with the nuclear football in the last 28 months. Democrats, Rasputin-like Dr. Jill and the mainstream media can no longer hide the naked truth. Nor can they blame anyone but themselves for the mess they've created by hiding the truth from the

American people.

A friend asked me if I was going to write about the debate. I told him my anger would have to subside before I could write cogently. This is one instance where a weekly column affords me the opportunity to calm down and not pop off. My ancestry is Scots Irish and I'm a bit feisty. Check my picture closely and you can see the crooked nose from a hockey stick and popping off to boys bigger than me. My point is, Americans have been lied to by the media and our leaders, and I'm mad. My trust in them has been destroyed. It won't come back soon, if ever.

Folks, we are in a very dangerous time. The Democrats and their propagandist media are losing their power and, like wounded animals, they are increasingly frantic and dangerous. You might imagine Americans as an abused spouse who has finally had enough and makes plans to leave. Studies have shown that this is the most dangerous time because the abuser wants to reassert control.

Furthermore, foreign leaders and the world saw Biden's debacle. A friend in England sent me an email and asked, "What's going on in America and with

Biden?" I told him that the western world is entering a very dangerous time.

In early stages of dementia patients realize something is wrong. In the late stages, demented patients tragically don't know their family, forget how to swallow and are often mere shells of what they once were.

Though I am not privy to Biden's medical situation, as a board certified internist with secondary boards in geriatrics, I perceive Joe Biden in the moderate stages of his disease where he no longer is aware of his cognitive debility. I think it's important to remember that the president had a previous brain hemorrhage and two brain operations for vascular aneurysms. I can tell you that this medical history is more troubling than CTE (Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy) from repeated sports concussions.

Perhaps the Democrats and the media hoped for a debate miracle. They didn't get it. And now we are left with media rats deserting the sinking SS Biden. The long knives are out to get Biden to make the LBJ move and step down, not for the good of the country, but for the media to cover their own booties and for Democrats to retain power. "Joe's gotta go," but he

won't, he can't because he needs to cover up the Biden family's malfeasance.

As I hurry to finish this essay on July 4, I think about all the trials and tribulations our country has overcome: The Revolution, The Civil War, two World Wars, The Depression, 9/11 attack, etc. We will overcome this Potemkin President and his destructive, progressive-Democrat cabal who created the invasion on illegals with cartel drugs and trafficking, inflation with the average cost of a July 4th cookout up 30% compared with five years ago, danger on Main Street and to children and threats to We The People with F-14 fighter jets.

Sound bites and snapshots do matter. The first presidential TV debate was between Nixon and Kennedy and showed a sweaty Nixon with a 5 o'clock shadow and a cool and collected John Kennedy. We have our own presidential snap shots and Bidenese gibberish from the recent debate. It is time for Americans, even Democrats, to choose "love of country to take priority over hating President Trump."

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

## Halls High Class of 1954 celebrates milestone reunion

By Ken Lay

The Halls High School Class of 1954 recently celebrated its 70-year reunion.

The class, which has met every year since 1992, had its annual get-together on Saturday, June 22.

Some of the annual reunions have taken place in Nashville. Most, however, have been held at the residence of Dollie Leach, who makes her home in Halls.

There were approximately 20 class members at this year's event. The graduating class had more than 50 members, 22 of which are still living. Spouses and



Members of the Halls High School Class of 1954 celebrate their 70-year class reunion recently in Halls. Photo Submitted.

friends of the class members were also in attendance at the most recent reunion.

This year's reunion was

catered as a family member of one of the class members provided the meal.

The annual meetings provide the class members

the opportunity to visit and share memories of the old days and discuss their lives as they celebrate many years of friendship.

## SKNBC holding candidate forum tomorrow

By Janice Tocher and Lisa Horn  
SKNBC Co-Chairs

The South Knoxville Neighborhood and Business Coalition invites the public to an event to increase information and turnout for the August 1 election. It will be held on July 9 at 6:30 p.m. in South Knoxville. SKNBC is composed of volunteers from neighborhood associations and businesses south of the Tennessee River in Knoxville who meet monthly to address a variety of issues affecting our community and neighborhoods.

All candidates that influence South Knoxville were invited including

U.S. House and Senate, state Senate District 6, state House Districts 15, 18 and 19, Knox County Commission District 9, Criminal Court Judge Division II District 6, Property Assessor, and County Law Director. As of May 7, with 23 candidates invited (Siobhan Costanzo will be on the ballot but withdrew), 17 responded and a majority (14) were available on July 9.

The March Primary had low voter turnout and some races were decided by just a few votes. Now, most of the news is about the November presidential election but this August election is in many

Cont. on page 2

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# Fireworks

The day began with my rising at 5:00 a.m. to go to work. By 5:30, I was mowing tee boxes with the mower headlights on. By 9:00, I was finished and on the way home. Once there, I took a shower to wash the grass clippings and mud splatters away. At 1:30, I was back at the golf course to play a round with friends. After that, we met up to ride together to watch the Smokies play ball. By the time I arrived at home, my old body was worn out, but the day was one I'll remember for a long time.

We ate at the game, and for the most part, our attention was more on talking and exchanging tales than on watching the game. Our team defeated the Lookouts handily, and because it was free hotdog night, the larger than usual crowd was loud and excited. The grand finale was a fireworks display. I thought the event would be minimal at best, but the Smokies brought out some of the best fireworks that I've seen.

Fireworks have always been fascinating to me. When we were small, Daddy would buy sparklers for us to hold or to make designs as we moved them in swirls in the night air. As we grew older, packs of firecrackers were added. If we carefully unwound them, we could fire the things for several minutes. Then, the celebration was over. We didn't have money to spend on things that simply blew up.

When my children arrived, I wasted money on exploding things. We traveled to the store at Watt Road or to the stands in Lenoir City to choose the ones Lacey and Dallas wanted. Still, I was cheap and refused to spend too much on momentary excitement. When the

skies darkened, our family would go down to my mother's yard to make noise and view some pretty colors as they spread across the sky.

The most elaborate fireworks drew large crowds to downtown Knoxville. Boomsday was spectacular in the number of explosives and the music that was synced to the explosions by the local radio station. I never made the trip to Boomsday. I don't like crowds, and I had school the next day. My children went with friends a few times, while I stayed home and watched the event on television. I avoided the crowds and saved money by not having to buy drinks, popcorn, cotton candy, and other unnecessary things.

Yes, Boomsday and ballgames and even some megachurches give the public plenty of exciting shows when their fireworks begin. For this old guy, the fireworks displays that I loved the most were located at the TVA&I Fair. As boys, Jim and I were given the choice of going to the fair or receiving \$5.00 cash. In later years, we took the money, but in our younger years, we always chose the fair. It was a day filled with rides, games and food. We walked miles between Chilhowee Park and the Midway. At the end of the night, we stood with Mother and watched fireworks. People oohed and aahed as the sky filled with smoke from the colors and designs from the explosions. Yes, those were the grandest shows because they came only once a year. They were special parts of our lives because of their rarity.

Maybe we all might appreciate things in our lives more if they came less often. We expect too many special events for even the smallest occasions. Think how important phones, cars, televisions and fireworks were to those of us who grew up without the Internet, cell phones and video games.



By Joe Rector  
joerector@comcast.net

# Visiting Big Stone Gap

## A Day Away



By Mike Steely

Just over two hours north-east of Knoxville is a special small town loaded with history, scenery and myth. Big Stone Gap, Virginia, is in Wise County and near the Virginia-Kentucky state line and at the foot of a gap in the Cumberland Mountain range.

Visited by early explorers Thomas Walker and Christopher Gist in 1750, several forts were built in the area after 1774 and the noted and feared Cherokee Chief Bob Bengie was killed nearby in his last raid on white settlements in East Tennessee and Western Virginia.

I recall my wife and I visiting Big Stone Gap several years ago when I was invited to speak there at the Southwest Virginia Museum about the legend of John Swift's silver mine. The building was a mansion built by Rufus Ayers, Virginia's Attorney General. The last owner donated the old rock home to the

state in 1946 and the building now holds a collection of items and information about the history and development of the area.

The town was a center of area coal mining and has an interactive kiosk of life back then. Once called "Mineral City" the town was promoted as the "New Pittsburgh of the South."

Big Stone Gap was also the home of author John Fox Jr. and Wise County houses Virginia's two largest state prisons. The Fox home is available for small tours. Downtown offers a vintage gas station, the movie set of the "Big Stone Gap" film and a visitor center with a display of movie items from the "Trail of the Lonesome Pine," which is also presented as a live play in the community each year since 1964 in June through August. Adriana Trigiani, who wrote "Big Stone Gap," also wrote "Big Cherry Holler" and "Milk Glass Moon."

There's a good website for the visitor center and you can call (276) 523-2303 for more information.

The June Tolliver House and Folk Art Center is listed on the National Historic Landmark Register and features antiques and paintings donated by local artists, plus a gift shop.

Big Stone Gap's Historic District contains several other

architecturally significant buildings. The Slemp Federal Building, Christ Episcopal Church, Terrace Park Girl Scout Cabin and Tri-State Coach Bus Terminal are all within walking distance.

You could make a day trip to Big Stone Gap by taking Broadway/Maynardville Highway north to Cumberland Gap via Highway 25E and then east on Highway 58 through the valley past Wilderness Road State Park and Jonesville, Va. If you continue on Highway 58 you'll take a left turn in Duffield to Highway 23 and follow that to Big Stone Gap.

At the intersection in Duffield, you could follow Highway 23 south a bit and visit Virginia's Natural Tunnel State Park. Or you could visit the tunnel on your way back to Knoxville via Highway 23 to Kingsport, Tn. and return to Knoxville along Highway 11W through Rogersville, Bean Station and Rutledge.

You can find more information about Wise County on the internet or call (276) 395-0349.

Sometimes just having a day away from home or business is refreshing and informational, especially if you take a friend or family member.

## SKNBC holding candidate forum tomorrow

**Continued from page 1**

ways more impactful on citizens of Knox County.

All candidates will have up to five minutes to introduce themselves and answer three questions: Why do you believe you are the best qualified person for the position? What do you know about South Knoxville/

South Knox County? What, if anything, will you do to improve the area?

There will be time after introductions for the public to meet and speak with candidates one-on-one.

The event will be held at South High Senior Living at 835 Tipton Avenue. This facility

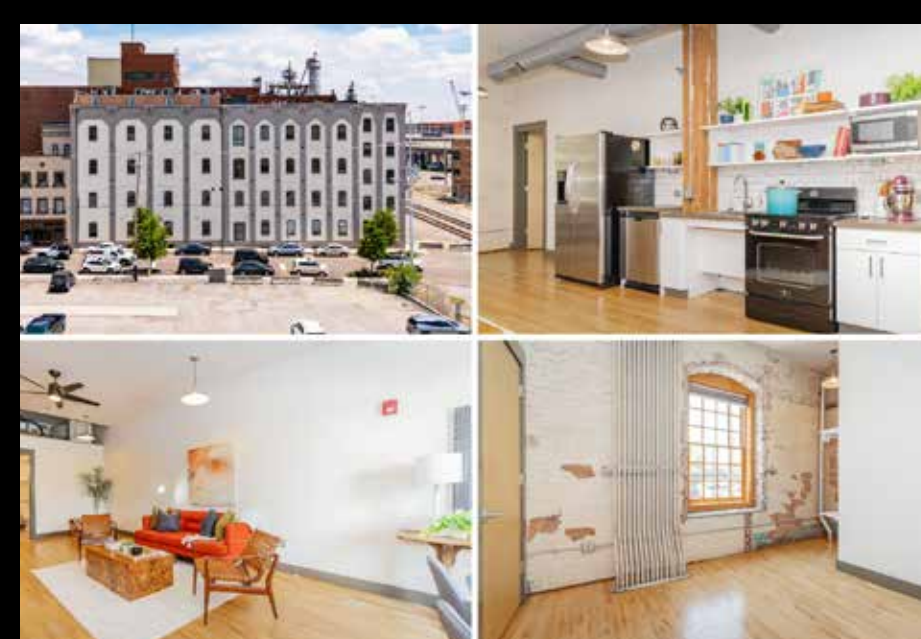
has been a great community asset in hosting two previous SKNBC-sponsored candidate events. Light refreshments will be served.

SKNBC thanks South High, the candidates, and all the South Knoxville neighbors and businesses who are coordinating this important event.

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# The War Referendum

## Congressman Louis Ludlow of Indiana

### Pages from the Past



By Ray Hill  
rayhill865@gmail.com

Louis Ludlow is largely forgotten today, but during his heyday in the 1930s, he was one of the most well-known members of Congress. A newspaperman by trade, Ludlow became famous for proposing legislation that would require Americans to vote in a referendum before a declaration of war could be made. Congressman Ludlow's bill would have changed the Constitution to require the referendum without exception save in the case the country was actually invaded. To give modern readers an idea of how popular the Ludlow Bill was with the public, it took President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his administration to use every means at their collective disposal to beat back Ludlow and his legislation and they won by only 21 votes in the House of Representatives.

Tall, gray-haired and bespectacled, Louis Ludlow was not an especially impressive-looking tribune of the people. The congressman looked like exactly what he was: a former newspaperman from the Hoosier State. During his service in Congress, Ludlow always considered himself to be a typical Indianan.

As might be expected, the Ludlow Bill became highly controversial with opponents pointing out its imperfections and failings while proponents hailed the idea of war being the result of a collective decision, taken out of the hands of professional politicians. The issue of isolationism versus internationalism isn't as clear-cut as many revisionist historians like to think. During the 1930s, the great majority of Americans remembered the sacrifice of blood and treasure paid by the United States during the First World War. That same majority was highly averse to the idea of engaging in foreign wars yet again. It would be foolish to surmise the elected representatives of the people, congressmen and U.S. senators, simply flouted the will of their constituents by insisting America remain an island amongst the nations of the world. Those same congressmen and senators were in office because, by and large, they reflected the opinions of those who sent them to Washington, D.C.

With some notable exceptions, the national news media of the day was more internationalist than what they termed as "isolationist," especially the publications of Henry Luce. Husband of glamorous playwright and sometime Congresswoman Clare Booth Luce, Henry Luce was one of the most powerful publishing magnates in the country. He was the

owner and publisher of two of the most widely read publications in the country, TIME and LIFE magazines, which were read by millions weekly. TIME magazine's first issue was released on March 3, 1923. It was the first national news magazine to be printed in New York City. Henry Luce and his co-founder, Briton Hadden, had in mind that the magazine could supply its readers concisely all the important news of the week in a more efficient and to-the-point fashion. Hadden insisted the news magazine be fun as well, which caused TIME to publish articles on popular culture featuring not only politicians, but also celebrities, movies, and other entertainment. Hadden died in 1929, leaving Luce to rule over his burgeoning media empire. Henry Luce became one of the important figures in the history of 20th-century media in the United States.

Luce's fingerprint was well stamped upon his publication and those who preferred America tend to its own business were almost never given good publicity inside the pages of TIME magazine. Quite to the contrary, TIME writers were highly skilled in writing to-the-point scathing personal descriptions of their quarry. Although Henry Luce was personally a Republican, he played no favorites, happy to skewer both Republicans and Democrats who were against an international role for America. Congressman Louis Ludlow was dismissed as "a rabid isolationist."

At the time and since, much of the news media portrayed the viewpoint of those in Congress against a greater international role for America as the result of "xenophobia, racism and nativism. . ." For most of the congressional isolationists, it was less isolationism than it was putting America before any other country and most of those representatives and senators charged with isolationism by an unfriendly new media insisted not only were they representing the people that had elected them, but also putting the interests of the United States first. Personally, Congressman Louis Ludlow was strongly in favor of equal rights for women, as well as Blacks throughout his political career. Like many of his colleagues, Ludlow had been deeply affected by the results of an investigation made of the banking and munitions industries, which had reaped handsome profits from the First World War. Many progressives - - - and the bulk of congressional isolationists were considered to be progressives at the time, both Republicans and Democrats - - - were



NEA PHOTO FROM THE AUTHOR'S PERSONAL COLLECTION.

Congressman Louis Ludlow of Indiana in 1939.

profoundly influenced by that same investigation. Congressman Ludlow worried a declaration of war by the United States was unduly influenced by both propaganda from the media and influence from corporations. "I am willing to die for my beloved country but I am not willing to die for greedy selfish interests that want to use me as their pawn," Ludlow insisted.

TIME also referred to the "hulking ex-newshawk" who had come to the House of Representatives after a career as a reporter and journalist. Ludlow first came to Congress in 1928 when he defeated incumbent Ralph E. Updike, who had been elected when only 30 years old. Ludlow nudged Updike out of office by just over 6,000 votes to represent the City of Indianapolis in the House of Representatives. Louis Ludlow remained personally popular inside his district and remained in Congress until his voluntary retirement in 1948. Throughout his political career, Ludlow staved off quality GOP candidates due to his diligence in representing the people of his district, as well as reflecting their opinions in the House of Representatives.

Ludlow's thinking had been molded from his time covering Congress for a local Indiana newspaper. Unlike most newly elected congressmen, Ludlow understood Washington better than most. Louis Ludlow also covered the frequently heated debates held in the House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate over American entry into the First World War. Following the war, Ludlow worried American participation in the League of Nations would increase the risk of the United States becoming involved in more global conflicts and wars. In 1927, Louis Ludlow reached the apex of his career as a newspaperman and journalist, having been elected president of the National Press Club. By the end of that same year, Ludlow had the full backing of Indiana's Democratic Party organization to challenge Congressman Ralph Updike in the 1928 election.

At one time, the Ku Klux Klan enjoyed considerable

political power in Indiana's politics. Ralph Updike had not only been a member of the KKK but also an officer in the organization. As the political power of the Klan began to ebb in Indiana, Louis Ludlow campaigned saying his candidacy offered voters "redemption" from the KKK. The argument was persuasive, as Ludlow beat Updike decisively, the only Democrat to win in Marion County.

The Indianapolis Star acknowledged Ludlow's familiarity with Washington, D. C. and the Congress, writing, "Perhaps no man ever entering Congress has had the goodwill of so many members on both sides of the aisle." Even prominent and partisan Republican Senator James E. Watson said, "Everybody has a fondness for Louis Ludlow, and as a congressional colleague, he shall have the cooperation of my office in the advancement of whatever he considers in the interest of his constituency."

During his first few years in Congress, Louis Ludlow concentrated upon those parochial matters that keep congressmen in office. Ludlow helped to locate a hospital for veterans in Indianapolis, as well as convincing Postmaster General James A. Farley to add the city to the Post Office Department's air mail route. Congressman Ludlow is best remembered today for his proposed war referendum amendment to the Constitution, but he introduced a similar amendment to provide equal rights to women five times in the House of Representatives. The Indiana congressman was never daunted by the failure of his colleagues to pass his proposals; he simply renewed his efforts over and over again.

Congressman Ludlow followed the proceedings of the special committee formed by the United

States Senate to probe the influence of the munitions interests in the country and how that supposed influence affected the United States in entering the First World War. Louis Ludlow was distressed about the Nye Committee's findings (named for North Dakota Senator Gerald P. Nye, the chairman of the committee). Ludlow stated his belief America had gone to war on the side of the Allies in World War I due to "a mere dozen - half a dozen international financiers and half a dozen munitions kings, with a complaisant President in the White House at Washington - - - could maneuver this country into war at any time, so great are their resources and so far reaching is their power. . ." It was a stunning indictment, especially for a Democrat in Congress to refer to Woodrow Wilson as a "complaisant President." Ludlow continued, saying, "I pray to God we may never have a President who will lend himself to such activities, but, after all, Presidents are human and many Presidents have been devoted to the material aggrandizement of our country to the exclusion of spiritual values. . ."

Although largely a supporter of President Franklin Roosevelt, Congressman Louis Ludlow considered powers extended to FDR in the hands of other men. Ludlow's proposed amendment to the Constitution was designed to forestall the possibility the legislative and executive branches of the American government might be lured into war because of financial pressures. Ludlow phrased his legislation plainly and simply. The Indiana congressman said, "First. To give the people who have to pay the awful costs of war the right to decide whether there shall be war. Second. To remove the profit incentive to war." The voice of a nation, Ludlow believed,

would protect the flower of young manhood of the United States from being used as cannon fodder by the "selfish interests."

Like many tens of thousands of Americans during the 1930s, Congressman Ludlow grew increasingly uneasy as Adolf Hitler began his climb to power and began rearming Germany. Equally upsetting was the aggressiveness of the Japanese Empire in the East. Few members of Congress were under the delusion that war clouds were gathering over Asia and Europe. The conquest of Ethiopia by Italian dictator Benito Mussolini and the invasion of China by Japan helped reinforce the determination of many congressmen and senators to distance American foreign policy from potential conflict and wars.

For the most part, the congressional leaders, at the behest of the Roosevelt administration, kept Ludlow's bill locked away in committee without bringing it to a vote. As Roosevelt sought to pack the U.S. Supreme Court, the persistent Hoosier managed to obtain the necessary number of signatures from his colleagues, which allowed Ludlow to discharge the bill from committee where it was held hostage. The Roosevelt administration was not alone in opposing Ludlow's proposed amendment to the Constitution; so, too, did the American Legion and other veterans' organizations. Critics of the bill argued it would seriously diminish the president's authority as Commander-in-Chief, as well as diminish the presidency in the eyes of foreign powers. Others complained it would impede the State Department's functions. Some argued it would be perceived as an act of weakness by those countries who were not friendly to the United States. Ludlow had his own supporters, including no less than 1,000 nationally known Americans who fervently backed his proposal. The final vote in the House of Representatives on the Ludlow amendment was 209 against 188 in favor.

Following the attack by the Japanese Empire on Pearl Harbor, Congressman Louis Ludlow voted to declare war on the Axis powers. Ludlow voluntarily retired from the House when he chose not to seek reelection in 1948. The following year, he returned to a seat in the Press Gallery of the House Chamber. Ludlow was seriously ailing. The former congressman died November 28, 1950, at age 77.

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# Three vie for District 2 school board seat

By Mike Steely  
Senior Writer  
steelym@knoxfocus.com

Knox County School Board District 2's race is drawing some interest as the incumbent is running as an Independent, one candidate is a Democrat newcomer, and the third candidate is a local veterans leader also running as an Independent.

The district stretches from just north of downtown up to Fountain City and takes in the surrounding neighborhoods. Jennifer Owen is the incumbent and has been one of the most outspoken members of the school board. She was originally elected when the school board races were non-partisan.

Anne Templeton is a Democrat. Owen and Pat Polis are running as Independents.

Early voting starts July 12 and ends July 27. The general election is August 1.

The Focus asked the three candidates several questions and here are their replies, some edited for brevity:

## What is your opinion on charter schools?

**Templeton:** I am skeptical of charter schools. Each application needs to be studied carefully to ensure transparency, fairness and measurable outcomes.

Charter schools often drain critical resources from public schools by targeting specific demographics, leading to significant funding losses for public schools, such as Title 1 funds. This exacerbates the challenges faced by already underfunding.

Although charter schools must be approved by the school board, they are not held to the same accountability standards as public schools. This discrepancy leads to significant disparities in educational outcomes. Furthermore, there is often no clear exit strategy for underperforming charter schools, allowing them to continue operating despite failures.

This lack of accountability and overall transparency make me wary of the charter school model.

**Owen:** Public charter schools are "public" only in their use of public funds and some basic open records requirements. Communities are falsely led to believe that charter schools have the same oversight as traditional public schools - and this is simply not true.

The boards of charter schools are not elected and do not have to answer to families or to the public. Charter schools can build wherever they want, without concern for where schools are actually needed, leading to an unfair distribution of funds and reducing the overall amounts available for students in the district, as a whole. Charter schools have no local disciplinary oversight and can refuse to admit students or "encourage" certain students to return to their traditional school, rather than serving their needs.

**Polis:** Like most other issues, charter schools evoke both positive and negative reactions. Charter schools are more selective than public schools and operate similar to private schools. Charter schools



Owen



Polis



Templeton

tend to be more racially segregated than traditional public schools. On the other hand, charter schools offer an aggressive curriculum that more readily engages student innovation. Charter schools also offer innovative approaches to learning. We live in a world of options. Education, and the schools that provide it, have become an option.

## What qualifies you to be on the Knox County Board of Education?

**Templeton:** I am running for the Knox County School Board with a proven commitment to public education. As the former PTA president at Beaumont Magnet School, I advocated for sustained magnet funding and later supported families and teachers through the pandemic. With two school-aged children, I understand firsthand the importance of a safe, equitable education that fosters critical thinking and social awareness.

By nature, I am a listener and, by trade, a community advocate. I believe it is our duty to be actively involved in bettering our society. Acknowledging the pivotal role of public schools in community success, my goal is to be a connecting voice between the engaged community, teachers, and administrations. Together, we can support and strengthen public schools.

**Owen:** I have experience serving on the Knox County Board of Education for two terms as well as:

- Extensive training in policy-making, school law, district finance, and legislation impacting school policies, procedures, and curriculum.

- Seven years of service as the Knox County Board of Education's Legislative Liaison and Legislative Representative.

- Tennessee licensure to teach English and instrumental music.

- 23 years of teaching experience in public schools.

- Historical knowledge of decisions impacting Knox County Schools.

- Extensive experience writing and editing school board policies, resolutions, and legislative priorities.

- A strong record of listening to concerns and addressing them with the Board and the KCS administration.

- A clear understanding that the duty of a school board member is to serve the interests of ALL students in ALL of our public schools in Knox County.

**Polis:** I am a former Army officer with both command and staff experience, as well as three combat tours. I am a former plant manager and corporate CEO and a retired senior pastor. I bring a wealth of education and experience to the table in many disciplines and have

always made a difference in whatever arena I have served. I love Knoxville and have been an active part of the community since 1993.

## What are your thoughts on state law mandating that school board candidates be affiliated with a political party?

**Templeton:** The current law does not mandate that school board candidates be affiliated with a political party, but it does allow for partisanship in the elections. Ensuring that decisions are made in the best interest of students should always guide decisions when on the board.

**Owen:** State law does not mandate that any candidate be associated with a party.

State law gives parties the ABILITY to hold a primary election for school board, but does not require any party to participate and it does not require candidates to be affiliated with a party.

From Tennessee Code Annotated: 49-2-201 Election or Appointment 49-2-210(a)(1) Elections for school board members may be conducted on a partisan or nonpartisan basis. If at least one (1) county primary board of a political party elects to conduct school board elections on a partisan basis, then a person seeking a position on any board in that county may campaign as the nominee or representative of a political party, and political parties may nominate candidates for membership on the board by any method authorized under the rules of the party or by primary election under title 2.

**Polis:** It is public information that I am a registered Republican. However, I declared as an Independent for this school board seat. I do not believe that children should be part of the political process. A politically oriented

school board may tend to lean toward a political bias which may then take precedence over what is best for the children. And what's best for the children should always have precedence.

## Should students be permitted to have cell phones in classrooms?

**Templeton:** Research consistently highlights the negative impacts of cell phones with social media on children's mental health and academic performance. It is linked to increased anxiety, depression and sleep interference. Many schools across the country that have implemented phone bans have reported improvements in behavior, attention and academic outcomes.

Despite current rules against phone use in classrooms, teachers still struggle to maintain attention due to constant disruptions. KCS should implement measures to enforce stricter phone usage policies and research options to shut them down during the school day. I'm confident we can significantly reduce instances of bullying and distracted behavior, and foster an environment that promotes undistracted learning.

**Owen:** Use of cell phones in classrooms is best determined by the individual school, based on the needs of their own students and with consideration for their courses and ages.

Since KCS now has devices available for every student, the necessity to have a phone or tablet is nullified. However, there may be situations in which the use of a cell phone may be useful, such as for yearbook staff.

Good policies both allow and require that principals create phone procedures that do not allow cell phones or any other devices to distract from classroom learning.

**Polis:** If cell phones are being used in teaching and

are part of the curriculum, then yes; otherwise, only in the case of emergency situations.

## Does West Knox County get more attention than other school areas?

**Templeton:** Knoxville has experienced consistent growth, historically in West Knoxville. However, this trend is changing, and it's essential to allocate additional resources to address aging structures in other parts of the district. Ensuring equitable attention and support for all schools across the district is crucial to accommodate growth and improve educational facilities everywhere.

**Owen:** Significant housing and population growth in West Knox County creates a need for more classroom space in that area, leading to the appearance of the area getting more attention than other areas. However, when we step back from construction that has happened due to growth, we can see that general building upgrades and renovations are spread more equally across the district.

School projects like a new roof or replacing all of the doors and windows don't get much fanfare, but they are happening continually. The board approved a comprehensive building assessment, which is near completion. This assessment will give district administration a clear picture of the conditions of all parts of all of our buildings, ranked by need. That ranking should make significant progress toward ensuring that our funds are targeted toward the greatest needs in the district, rather than going toward the loudest political voices.

**Polis:** Generally speaking, everyone who lives in Knoxville knows that those who live in West Knoxville "seem" to be more affluent. Knoxville is very "turf conscious" and has long been divided by N-S-E-W perspectives. In relation to the schools, I do not have access to information with which to properly answer this question.

## Please comment on the actions of the current school board.

**Templeton:** The Knox County School Board faces

numerous challenges, including funding, growth planning, and accountability. To effectively address these issues, board members must work toward consensus with the best interests of all students in mind.

**Owen:** The current school board has become entrenched in party politics and drama, rather than focusing on the needs of the public school students in our classrooms. Our board has to return to working for students, rather than pushing politicized rhetoric about schools. As a non-partisan member of the board, I continually work to pull them back to looking at what students really need.

The current school board is failing to adequately manage the district, by voting for agenda items without having full information regarding the impacts of the decisions being made. Certain board members pushed for big changes when hiring the superintendent. This has resulted in "churn" and continual change and reorganization within departments and a lack of stability for the district and for individual schools that negatively impacts staff morale. The Board and each individual member must accept their role in managing the district and listen to the needs of our staff and students. I will always lift up those voices and make sure they are heard by the Board and by the administration.

When the Special Education Task Force coined the term "Culture of Resistance," it fit the culture of the board and administration better than any I have heard. It isn't that information is difficult to obtain or that it takes significantly more work to provide information to the board prior to a vote. It is just that too many people don't want to provide information, or accommodations, or whatever it is that others need to be able to succeed... And that should be completely unacceptable to all of us. It is unacceptable to me - and I want to continue working to bring public information to the public and to be sure that I am asking for complete information on every decision we make.

**Polis:** Hard working, conscientious and doing their best for our schools.



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They pitched in a little baseball at last week's July 4th eve game at Smokies Stadium.

## Don't be late for your KFOA Media Day date

By Steve Williams

The countdown is on for the 17th annual Knoxville Football Officials Association's Media Day. It will be Friday at Three Ridges Golf Course Pavilion.

"We hope you'll join us there," said TSSAA supervisor and KFOA Media Day Chair Harold Denton.

First interviews will start at 8:10 a.m.

"We ask that you arrive at least 10 to 15 minutes earlier to get set up," said Denton. "We have 34 teams coming from the Greater Knoxville area with 71 top student-athletes. This is an excellent opportunity to get interviews from your favorite teams as well as some of their opponents. Plus, saving you an immense amount of time if you have to drive all over East Tennessee."

The event is hosted by the KFOA, whose purpose is to support high school football, noted Denton. Primary sponsors are the Knoxville Orthopedic Center and Bacon Sports.

If you have any questions, Denton's contact information is TNRef4e@icloud.com and 865-256-1948.

"Coaches have until Monday to change player names," added Denton. "However, I expect 99 percent to be as noted."

**EXTRA POINTS:** Stone Memorial High may be coming from the furthest away ... Talented WR Shavar Young is back with Webb School and Coach Don Mahoney has to be happy about that ... Heritage will be represented by two defensive ends - Cole McCampbell and Carson Webber. Call them "The Bookends" ... Coaches' sons Maddox Mazingo of CAK and Drew Parrott of Bearden will be on the scene ... West will start its run for a state 3-peat with linebacker Jack Keith and WR/DB Antwain Burdine leading the way ... New GCA coach Justin Price is on the list. Where's Matt? ... Union County's Carter Nicely could be doing a lot of talking at the table. He's listed at four positions (WR, RB, CB and Safety) ... Don't be surprised if Farragut fullback Bryce Thompson shows up with a 12-pound ball. He's the state's top shot putter.

## Smokies win on Red, White and Blue day

By Steve Williams

There were winners on the field and in the stands as the Tennessee Smokies moved past the Chattanooga Lookouts 8-6 on the eve of July 4th - America's 248th birthday - Wednesday night at Smokies Stadium in Kodak.

A crowd of 6,976 fans had a lot of Red, White and Blue on and so did the Smokies.

Big Felix Stevens kept any plain ole blue feelings away when he belted a three-run homer over the right-centerfield fence in the bottom of the seventh inning to give Tennessee a 7-6 lead in the see-saw battle.

The Smokies took a 1-0 lead in the bottom of the first, but Chattanooga scored three runs in the top of the third. Tennessee matched that three with a three of its own in the fifth inning to slip ahead 4-3. The Lookouts answered with two runs in the sixth and one in the seventh to move back ahead 6-4.

That set the stage for Stevens, the Smokies' 6-4, 225-pound outfielder from Havana, Cuba, to put Tennessee on top to stay, 7-6. The Smokies added an insurance run in the eighth for the final score.

The two teams were scheduled to play a three-game series in Chattanooga, starting Thursday.

Tennessee will continue on the road with a six-game series at the Montgomery Biscuits, followed by a four-day All-Star Game break.

The Smokies' next home



PHOTOS BY STEVE WILLIAMS

Fans show their respect during the playing of "God Bless America" in the top of the seventh inning of the Tennessee Smokies' game versus the Chattanooga Lookouts on the eve of July 4th. Right: Uncle Sam, aka Joe Rokus, a production assistant with the Tennessee Smokies. He was on the go out in the stadium, but took time to stop and smile and say hello.



Morgan is decked out in Chicago Cubs attire, and the red, white and blue colors are perfect for the July 4th eve occasion plus the Cubs are the Tennessee Smokies' parent club. Mom Dani is holding her girl, who turned 6 months old on Friday, July 5th. Dad Andrew is close by, too. Dani is originally from Chicago and Morgan's great aunt Cathy works at Wrigley Field. Morgan and her family now live in Kingston.

appearance will be against the Rocket City Trash Pandas on July 19.

**FIRST HALF CHAMPS:** The Tennessee Smokies won the Northern Division first half championship of the Southern League with a 45-31 record, finishing 1½ games ahead of the Birmingham Barons.

The second half is just in its

second week and Tennessee had a 6-3 record after Wednesday's win.

**TRIANOTOS HONORED:** Tennessee Smokies second baseman James Triantos is the Southern League Player of the Month for June. He led the league in average (.393), hits (35), runs (22) and stolen bases (16).

# Rico Silvera is no longer lacrosse coach at Webb

By Steve Williams

Rico Silvera, who guided Webb School to the Tennessee Scholastic Lacrosse Association (TSLA) state championship on May 17, is no longer the Spartans' head coach after 21 years.

"Effective July 1st, I am no longer the head boys lacrosse coach at Webb School of Knoxville," Coach Silvera told The Focus last week in a statement. "I did not retire nor was I terminated for any wrong doing that was expressed to me in any way. This was the execution of a written compensation agreement I signed and entered into with Webb on March 1st 2024 during this past lacrosse season.

"This compensation agreement was the result of a difficult negotiation with the Webb School. I was an 'off campus coach' at Webb for my 21 seasons there. My compensation package at Webb included both an annual stipend and a prorated share of the lacrosse camps I developed and ran for Webb. In the fall of 2023 decisions were made by new the athletic director (Dan Gill) to restrict the eligible age of campers at one of my camps.

"In the case of the second camp, Webb Camp Director



PHOTO BY DAN DUNLAP

**Webb lacrosse coach Rico Silvera addresses his players during their march to a TSLA state championship in May. The 69-year-old coach and a fairly new administration at the school couldn't agree to contract terms, so his 21-year run as the Spartans' coach has ended. "I believe the Lord closes doors and opens others," said Silvera last week.**

Allison Hodges stated that I must use a 'younger assistant' that I would hire at my expense for the day-to-day functions of the camp. She also decided that camp would have a low hard cap on attendance. The net effect would be to reduce my overall compensation level over 30 percent from 2022 levels.

"I then requested a salary review. Webb declined my salary requests until I offered to also volunteer to step away after the season. It is not how I wanted to leave or when I wanted to leave.

"In retrospect, I am grateful to David Meske

who was my athletic director and mentor for 20 seasons. Dave took a chance on a coach he didn't know and to start a sport nobody wanted at Webb (except 27 Webb students).

"I leave the program confident in its health and position as the premier lacrosse program in the Knoxville area. In the end, I believe the publicly stated preference of the new Webb administration to the 'Teacher/Coach' model may have contributed significantly to their decisions.

"My faith is important to me. And I believe the Lord closes doors and opens others. In the end,

this February I prayed for only two things - to get to coach this team this year and for them to have the best season possible. By any metric, my prayers were richly answered. In that context I could have no regrets."

This reporter also requested a comment from Gill, Webb School's Athletic Director, last week. He sent an attached copy of a message he had sent to families of Webb lacrosse players on May 21 - four days after the Spartans won the state title - regarding Silvera's departure:

"As you may already know, Rico Silvera, by

mutual agreement, will be stepping down as head coach of Webb's varsity boys' lacrosse program following a stellar 21-year coaching career with the Spartans."

There were many other complimentary comments about Coach Silvera throughout the message to the parents.

On Friday, Gill was asked: With Silvera having been a longtime non-faculty coach at Webb School, is the plan for the new lacrosse head coach to be on the faculty and a teacher? And do you expect Webb to name a new head coach soon?

"Relative to your inquiry,

the position is currently posted and will remain open until filled," replied Gill. "It is not a prerequisite for the candidate to be a full-time faculty/staff member, however there is a MS (Middle School) PE/Wellness position available should there be a need and the appropriate credentials are fulfilled."

Silvera, 69, pointed out a lot of changes had been made at Webb School the past couple of years, particularly in the Athletics Administration.

Silvera's Spartans defeated Christ Presbyterian Academy of Nashville 14-5 for the TSLA Small Private Division title at Nolensville as sophomore players scored 13 of the team's 14 goals.

How did the Webb players react when they heard the news that Silvera would no longer be coaching at Webb? They had just won the state title for their coach.

"Three days after the state championship, I told the players in a private meeting," recalled Rico. "There were a lot of tears on both sides. It was the first time they had any indication of what was going to happen."

Silvera said Friday he has not coached his last lacrosse game.

"I have already entered into an agreement with a program, but until it gets through human resources I don't want to make it public."

Lacrosse will become a TSSAA sanctioned sport in the 2024-25 school year.

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## Silvera guides Spartans to 176 wins in 21 years

Rico Silvera will not be returning as Webb School's boys lacrosse head coach next season, but Athletic Director Dan Gill pointed out a few of Silvera's many accomplishments over the past 21 years.

Beginning with a fledgling varsity team of 27 players in 2004 - many of whom had not even picked up a lacrosse stick - Coach Silvera has elevated lacrosse at Webb to now include boys' Middle and Upper School lacrosse teams. To date, over 300 Spartan student-athletes have passed through the Webb program.

The 69-year-old Silvera has recorded 176 career wins at Webb and guided his Spartans to 19 consecutive state playoff appearances, including seven state Final Four contests and two (2011, 2024) trips to the state championship. Along the way, Webb also collected seven region titles. Under Rico's tutelage, 34 Spartans have been named All-State. Webb's lacrosse program has also produced one USA Lacrosse All-American and two Academic All-Americans.

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# 'A mind-numbing array of numbers'

There are times the game-by-game scores listed in the 2023 Tennessee Football Record Book, pp. 322-339, are a mind-numbing array of numbers, assembled neatly through seasons stretching from that first game in 1891, Sewanee 24, Tennessee 0, through to more recent years.

The Football Record Book, formerly known as a media guide or brochure, is short on the elements of plot, but you can find the answers to almost any questions you might have about most every game and the resulting score.

No one has had the patience or inclination to count how many different scores there have been, but there are certain scores that stand out, that bring clarity to the memory banks.

Witness 35-34... 37-34... 15-13... 23-16... 16-14... 20-14... 24-13... 31-11... 35-28... 52-49.

Here are the stories and opponents behind those scores.

**35-34, Nov. 9, 1991.** Tennessee defeated Notre

Dame at South Bend, but it was no ordinary game. The Vols trailed 31-7, 31-14 at the half, but rallied to win. Freshman placekicker John Becksvoort dreamed of winning the game with a field goal, but an extra point proved plenty.

**37-34, Dec. 4, 1965.** Tennessee and UCLA squared off in the famed "Rosebonnet Bowl" game at the new stadium in Memphis. The Vols and Bruins combined for 71 points in an unprecedented offensive display. Dewey Warren scored the game-winner at left end on one of the longest 1-yard runs ever.

**15-13, Oct. 20, 1928.** On Denny Field in Tuscaloosa, Ala., Tennessee defeated Alabama in a game highlighted by Gene McEver's 98-yard TD run with the opening kickoff. This is the game that brought the Vol program and Bob Neyland into the bright sunlight of big-time college football.

23-16, Jan. 4, 1999. In a game no one has forgotten, Tennessee knocked off Florida State, in the inaugural BCS Championship Game. Tee Martin had a 79-yard touchdown pass to Peerless Price. Dwayne Goodrich had an interception return for a touchdown and won Defensive

MVP honors, despite being injured and missing the second half.

**16-14, Oct. 19, 1985.** Dale Jones had a point-blank interception off Mike Shula on Legion Field, saving the game and highlighting a season in which the Vols won the SEC title and a berth in the Sugar Bowl. The Vols lost starting quarterback Tony Robinson to a knee injury, but found a capable replacement in Daryl Dickey. That led to a memorable Sugar Bowl win over Miami on New Year's Day 1986.

**20-14...** Take your pick of the triumph over Texas in the Cotton Bowl Jan. 1, 1951, or a similar score over Ohio State in the Florida Citrus Bowl Jan. 1, 1996. In 1951, Hank Lauricella, Andy Kozar, and Cowboy Hill led the way. Kozar scored twice, while Hill had an interception and fumble recovery. Lauricella had a memorable 75-yard run, leading to a first quarter tally. In 1996, Jay Graham had a long TD run, Joey Kent caught a TD pass, and Bill Duff had a key stop on Heisman Trophy winner Eddie George in the shadow of the Vol goal.

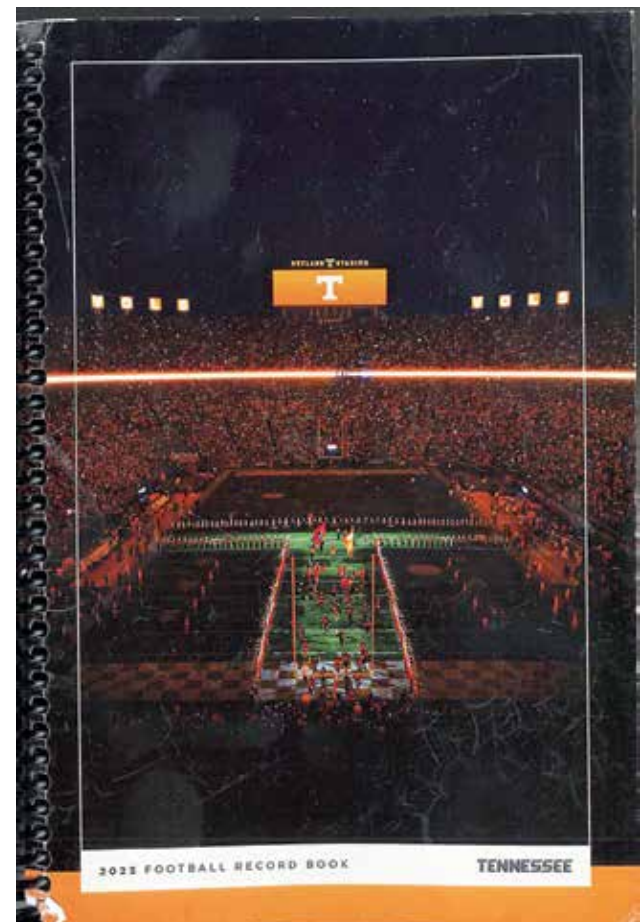
**24-13, Oct 21, 1967.** In the late afternoon of the Third Saturday in October, Vol fans knew the Vols were

back, after third-string quarterback Bubba Wyche led the offensive side of a 24-13 victory. It was the first over the Tide since 1960. Albert Dorsey had three interceptions off Snake Stabler in the fourth quarter to fend off an Alabama comeback. Sophomore safety Mike Jones made the cover of Sports Illustrated. Doug Dickey called it the most significant triumph of his Tennessee career.

**31-11, Dec. 4, 1971.** Penn State was 10-0 coming to Knoxville for the season finale and celebration of "Majors Family Day." Bobby Majors had two long kickoff returns and 44-yard punt return for a score. Conrad Graham had a 76-yard TD run off a fumbled pitchout by State quarterback John Hufnagel. He outlegged the more heralded Franco Harris and Lydell Mitchell down the east sideline to the north end.

**35-28, Oct. 16, 1982.** The Vols defeated Alabama, 35-28, breaking a losing streak that dated to 1971. Vol quarterback Alan Cockrell threw the ball all over the field, and Mike Terry had the game-clinching interception in the final seconds. The game marked Bear Bryant's final appearance at Neyland Stadium.

**52-49, Oct. 16, 2022.** In



The University of Tennessee Football Record Book brings clarity to the history of the Vol football program.

the highest scoring game in series history, Chase McGrath kicked a 40-yard field goal at the final horn to give the Vols a narrow victory. It was the first triumph over the Crimson Tide since a 16-13 victory Oct. 15, 2006. Hendon Hooker threw an unprecedented five TD passes to wide

receiver Jalin Hyatt. Fans swarmed the field in celebration mere seconds after the scoreboard showed Tennessee in the lead.

Scores... numbers... opponents... nothing more? If you look closely, there are some great stories behind those numbers.

## ALL-COUNTY BASEBALL

# Meet The Knoxville Focus All-County Baseball Team

By Ken Lay

The 2024 high school baseball season packed plenty of excitement as Farragut High School won a third consecutive Class 4A State Championship and Gibbs had a long run at the Class 3A State Tournament in Murfreesboro.

The Admirals went 40-5 and didn't lose a game to an in-state team, while the Eagles won 36 games and reached the semifinals at the Spring Fling.

The campaign had plenty of superstars on the diamond and some teams that had some successful runs and The Knoxville Focus recognizes some of the area's top players on its All-County Baseball Team.

**Coach of the Year: Matt Buckner, Farragut High School:** Buckner guided the Admirals to a third consecutive state championship. Under his guidance, Farragut won 40 games and breezed through District 4-4A, going undefeated and capturing both the regular-season crown and tournament championship. The Admirals also cruised to the region title, swept a state sectional series and went undefeated in the state tournament. Buckner went out on top as the retired just one day after guiding his team to another state championship in its program's rich tradition.

**Player of the Year: Eli Evans, Farragut High School:** Evans was the District 4-4A Offensive Player of the Year and a Mr. Baseball finalist. He batted a robust .484 and clubbed 13 home runs and drove in 67 runs. He had 16 doubles, one triple and five stolen bases. He finished the season with 60 hits, 49 runs and 43 walks.

The other team members: **Wes Alig, Christian Academy of Knoxville:** Alig,

the Warriors' leadoff hitter, batted .471 and hit nine home runs. He scored 33 runs and had 40 RBIs, 19 doubles and won the Division II-A Mr. Baseball Award.

**Andrew Hill, Central High School:** A two-way player for the Bobcats, Hill led his team to the District 3-4A regular-season championship and a spot in the Region 2-4A Tournament. He won the Class 4A Mr. Baseball Award as he batted .468 and collected 18 extra-base hits, including 11 doubles, two triples and five home runs.

**Lukas Buckner, Farragut High School:** A four-year starter in the middle infield for the Admirals, Buckner appeared in all 45 of his team's games and was its leadoff hitter. He hit .442 and recorded 68 hits, including four home runs and 14 doubles. He drove in 50 runs and was 17-for-18 in stolen base attempts.

**Landis Davila, Farragut High School:** Davila, who played 42 games, was the District 4-4A Player of the Year. He batted .441 and had 17 extra-base hits, including 11 doubles, three triples and three home runs. He stole 19 bases, scored 51 runs and totaled 39 RBIs.

**Brennon Seigler, Farragut High School:** The Tennessee signee and center fielder batted .347 and scored 38 runs, while driving in 30 more. He also stole 18 bases.

**Michael Delph, Farragut High School:** Delph, a two-way player, hit .372 and clubbed five home runs. On the mound, he went 5-3 and had three saves as the Admirals won 40 games on their way to capturing a third consecutive state championship.

**Will Price, Gibbs High School:** Price was the District 4-3A Newcomer of the Year

for the Eagles, who won both the district regular-season and tournament titles. Gibbs also won Region 2-3A and claimed a sectional series before advancing to the state quarterfinals. The 2024 campaign has earned him all-state honors from two outlets, including the Tennessee Baseball Coaches Association and the Tennessee Sports Writers Association.

**Mason Melton, Gibbs High School:** Melton was the District 4-3A Defensive Player of the Year, playing catcher for the Eagles, who made it to the Class 3A state semifinals.

**Will Sharp, Gibbs High School:** Sharp was the District 4-3A Offensive Player of the Year for the Eagles and also a member of the league's all-academic team.

**Brooks Wright, Bearden High School:** The senior and four-year starter for the Bulldogs was the District 4-4A Defensive Player of the Year.

**Matt Schroeffel, Bearden High School:** Schroeffel was the District 4-4A Rookie of the Year.

**Parker Blankenship, Powell High School:** Blankenship was all-District 3-4A stand-out for the Panthers who finished second in the league's regular-season standings. He was also named Super Sophomore of the Year by Tennessee Baseball Report.

**Colton Denton, Hardin Valley Academy:** Denton, the University of Tennessee commitment, was named to the all-District 4-4A team as the Hawks won 20-plus games in 2024.

**Hudson Lutterman, Catholic High School:** Lutterman was a key contributor for the Irish as they returned to the Division II-AA State Tournament, reaching the quarterfinals.

## 43rd Greater Knoxville Sports Hall of Fame event is Aug. 22

By Steve Williams

The 43rd annual Greater Knoxville Sports Hall of Fame Dinner & Induction Ceremony, presented by First Horizon, will be held Thursday, Aug. 22, at the Knoxville Convention Center Ballroom.

Hospitality begins at 5:30, followed by dinner at 6:30 and the induction ceremony at 7:30.

Featured speakers this year are Rick Neuheisel, Houston Nutt and Adam Zucker.

The GKSHOF Class of 2024 includes: Dan Brooks (Coaching), Connie Calloway (Archery), Eddie Courtney (Coaching), Dan Fleser (Media), Victoria Gillenwater (Equestrian), Russ Johnson (Track), Michelle Marciniak (Basketball), David Martin (Football), Heath Shuler (Football) and John Wright (Official).

Limited seating is available. Visit www.gkshof.org for tickets, which are \$200 each or a table of 10 for \$2,000 (\$160 of each \$200 ticket and \$1,600 of each \$2,000 table is tax deductible).

All ticket and auction proceeds benefit the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Tennessee Valley, which serves over 7,500 youth and teens at 25 club locations in Knox, Blount, Loudon, Anderson, and Claiborne Counties.


**SPECIAL AWARDS:** Gwen Jackson will



Eddie Courtney, retired Farragut High School football coach, is one of the 10 inductees into the Greater Knoxville Sports Hall of Fame this year. He closed his career after the 2023 season with 204 victories -- fifth among active coaches in the state -- and 28 playoff wins, including the Admirals' first state championship in 2016 against Independence High.

receive the Pat Summitt Ignite Greatness Award; Jauan Jennings is the Chad Pennington Professional Athlete of the Year honoree; the Buck Vaughn Legacy Award will be presented to Mike Capps; the Will McKamey Spirit Award has yet to be named; Special Recognition also goes to Roger Frazier.

**HIGH SCHOOL Athletes of the Year:** Nyla Blue, Bearden; Sydney Mains, Knoxville Catholic; Alivia Stott, Bearden; Jahvin Carter, Alcoa; Eli Evans, Farragut; Tyler Lee, Fulton.



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# Is this Texas A&M's Decade of Dysfunction?

By Mark Nagi

I hope that Tennessee fans realize that they are smack dab in the middle of the good 'ol days.

The football team has won 20 games in the last two seasons, including two bowl games. The men's basketball team got to the Elite 8 for only the second time in program history. The softball team won the SEC two years in a row.

And to top it all off, the baseball team just pulled off the treble. SEC regular season title. SEC tournament title. National championship.

All 20 Tennessee sports made it to the postseason, with 11 ending the year ranked in the top 10 nationally, and six of those sports in the top 5. Tennessee finished third in the 2023-2024 LEARFIELD Directors' Cup standings.

If you were to tell

someone during the Greg Schiano Fiasco of 2017 that Tennessee would be near the top of the heap in collegiate athletics less than 7 years later, you would have been laughed out of the building.

But that's where we stand.

And it looks like another SEC program is taking the mantle of dysfunction. Have you paid attention to what's been happening at Texas A&M lately?

Let's start with baseball. Texas A&M fell to the Vols 2 games to 1 in the finals, and 6-5 in the deciding game 3. Nothing at all to be ashamed of. They were the second-best team in the country.

But immediately after the game, the cracks in that foundation showed themselves. Aggies head coach Jim Schlossnagle was asked by a reporter about a job opening that had just been made public. Texas A&M's most

hated rival and now SEC teammate, Texas was on the market for a new head coach.

"I took the job at Texas A&M to never take another job again," Schlossnagle said.

Less than 24 hours later, Schlossnagle accepted the head coaching job at the University of Texas.

The reaction from College Station was filled with vitriol and brought back memories of the Lane Kiffin defection in 2010.

"I knew this would be a controversial move, leaving Texas A&M for Texas," Schlossnagle told the Fort Worth-Star Telegram. "But I didn't anticipate the venom that my family, our staff, and their families have received. Death threats, endless text messages, and other things. I do believe that most Aggies are really good people, and I have heard

many positive things from many of them, but the vocal minority certainly has been aggressive, to say the least."

Texas A&M has a lot of money. And they aren't afraid to spend it. So, they reportedly offered Tennessee head coach Tony Vitello big money to leave the Vols.

He declined, and that should not be a surprise. Tennessee baseball is obviously rolling, the stadium continues to get upgrades, and he will soon get an extension that makes him one of the highest-paid coaches in the sport.

Texas A&M named Aggies assistant coach Michael Earley to replace him, but the damage was done.

With football season just around the corner, let's remember the problems facing the Aggies.

In mid-November, Texas A&M fired Jimbo Fisher.

His buyout was \$77.6 million. Yes, the Aggies are paying Fisher what is the equivalent of the GDP of Peru not to coach their team.

Making things worse, they tried to hire Kentucky's Mark Stoops, but depending on who you listen to either he turned them down or the Aggies never offered him the job. Either way, if you can't get the Kentucky coach, your coaching search isn't going well.

They settle on Duke's Mike Elko, but who knows

how it'll work out.

Texas A&M has been in the SEC since 2012. They made an immediate impact in football thanks to Johnny Manziel, but is there any reason to believe they'll make noise in the conference this year?

Trev Alberts took over as AD, replacing Ross Bjork who left for Ohio State. Can Albert turn things around at Texas A&M? He better. Otherwise, their decade of dysfunction is going to pick up steam.

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# Notice of Early Voting

## Federal/State Primary, County General, Town of Farragut Municipal Election

### July 12<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024

### EARLY VOTING

July 12<sup>th</sup>  
through  
July 27<sup>th</sup>

#### LOCATIONS AND HOURS OF OPERATION

10 am – 6 pm weekdays  
10 am – 3 pm Saturdays  
Closed Sundays  
Open until 7 pm on Fridays  
(July 12, 19, 26)

Special hours at City County Building,  
Meridian Baptist Church, and  
Karns Senior Center

**NEW - NORTHEAST KNOX COUNTY**  
Gibbs Ruritan Club  
7827 Tazewell Pike, Corryton

**NEW - FARRAGUT**  
Knox County Election Commission  
109 Lovell Heights Road

**NEW - EAST KNOX COUNTY**  
Carter Elementary School  
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**NORTHEAST KNOXVILLE**  
New Harvest Park  
4775 New Harvest Lane

**NORTH KNOX COUNTY**  
Halls Recreation Center  
6933 Recreation Lane

**DOWNTOWN**  
City-County Building, Small  
Assembly Room  
400 Main Street  
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8 am to 4 pm on Saturday,  
July 13

**SOUTH KNOXVILLE**  
Meridian Baptist Church  
6513 Chapman Highway  
**SPECIAL HOURS:**  
Closes at 5 pm the week of  
July 14 – 18  
**SPECIAL HOURS:**  
Closes at 5 pm on  
Wednesdays  
**SPECIAL HOURS:**  
Closes at 4 pm on Friday,  
July 19

**NORTHWEST KNOX COUNTY**  
Karns Senior Center  
8042 Oak Ridge Highway  
**SPECIAL HOURS:**  
9 am to 6 pm weekdays  
**SPECIAL HOURS:**  
Closed on first two Saturdays  
**SPECIAL HOURS:**  
**OPEN** on last Saturday, July 27

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Julie Gautreau, Secretary  
Bob Bowman  
Eddie Smith  
Adronicus Thomas  
Christopher S. Davis, Administrator

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#### Office Hours:

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Saturday, July 13: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Saturday, July 20: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
Saturday, July 27: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

(Office is open during all hours of early Voting)

[www.knoxvotes.org](http://www.knoxvotes.org)

A federal or State of Tennessee issued photo ID is required to vote, unless an exception applies. College student IDs will not be accepted. To learn more about the law and its exceptions, please call 865-215-2480 or visit [www.GoVoteTN.com](http://www.GoVoteTN.com)

#### Republican Primary

United States Senate  
Vote for One (1)  
 Marsha Blackburn  
 Tres Wittum  
 Write-In

United States House of  
Representatives District 2  
Vote for One (1)  
 Tim Burchett  
 Write-In

Tennessee Senate District 6  
Vote for One (1)  
 Monica Irvine  
 Becky Duncan Massey  
 Write-In

Tennessee House of  
Representatives District 14  
Vote for One (1)  
 Jason Zachary  
 Write-In

Tennessee House of  
Representatives District 15  
Vote for One (1)  
 Justin Hirst  
 Write-In

Tennessee House of  
Representatives District 16  
Vote for One (1)  
 Michele Carringer  
 Write-In

Tennessee House of  
Representatives District 18  
Vote for One (1)  
 Elaine Davis  
 Write-In

Tennessee House of  
Representatives District 19  
Vote for One (1)  
 Dave Wright  
 Write-In

Tennessee House of  
Representatives District 89  
Vote for One (1)  
 Justin Lafferty  
 Write-In

Tennessee House of  
Representatives District 90  
Vote for One (1)  
No Candidate  
Qualified  
 Write-In

#### Democratic Primary

United States Senate  
Vote for One (1)  
 Marquita Bradshaw  
 Lola Denise Brown  
 Gloria Johnson  
 Civil Miller-Watkins  
 Write-In

United States House of  
Representatives District 2  
Vote for One (1)  
 Jane George  
 Write-In

Tennessee Senate District 6  
Vote for One (1)  
 Domanica Bryan  
 Write-In

Tennessee House of  
Representatives District 14  
Vote for One (1)  
 Amanda S Collins  
 Write-In

Tennessee House of  
Representatives District 15  
Vote for One (1)  
 Dasha Lundy  
 Sam McKenzie  
 Write-In

Tennessee House of  
Representatives District 16  
Vote for One (1)  
 Lauren Carver  
 Write-In

Tennessee House of  
Representatives District 18  
Vote for One (1)  
 Bryan Goldberg  
 Write-In

Tennessee House of  
Representatives District 19  
Vote for One (1)  
No Candidate Qualified  
 Write-In

Tennessee House of  
Representatives District 89  
Vote for One (1)  
 Cary Hammond  
 Write-In

Tennessee House of  
Representatives District 90  
Vote for One (1)  
 Gloria Johnson  
 Write-In

State Executive Committeeman  
District 5 (Unexpired Term)  
Vote for One (1)  
 D. Scott Hammond  
 Write-In

State Executive Committeewoman  
District 7 (Unexpired Term)  
Vote for One (1)  
 Dana E. Moran  
 Write-In

#### Knox County General Election

Criminal Court Judge Division II  
District 6 (Unexpired Term)  
Vote for One (1)  
 Hector I. Sanchez  
Republican Party Nominee  
 Write-in

County Commissioner District 1  
Vote for One (1)  
 Charles Frazier  
Republican Party Nominee  
 Damon L. Rawls  
Democratic Party Nominee  
 Write-in

County Commissioner District 2  
Vote for One (1)  
 Debbie Phillips  
Republican Party Nominee  
 Courtney Durrett  
Democratic Party Nominee  
 Ethan Grantham  
Independent Candidate  
 Write-in

County Commissioner District 4  
Vote for One (1)  
 Garrett Holt  
Republican Party Nominee  
 Shane Jackson  
Democratic Party Nominee  
 Write-in

County Commissioner District 5  
Vote for One (1)  
 Angela Russell  
Republican Party Nominee  
 S. Arthur Moore  
Democratic Party Nominee  
 Write-in

County Commissioner District 6  
Vote for One (1)  
 Terry Hill  
Republican Party Nominee  
 Daniel Edward Greene  
Democratic Party Nominee  
 Write-in

County Commissioner District 8  
Vote for One (1)  
 Adam Thompson  
Republican Party Nominee  
 Charles V Chandler  
Democratic Party Nominee  
 Write-in

County Commissioner District 9  
Vote for One (1)  
 Andy Fox  
Republican Party Nominee  
 Matthew Park  
Democratic Party Nominee  
 Stacey Bryan Smith  
Independent Candidate  
 Write-in

Assessor of Property  
Vote for One (1)  
 Phil Ballard  
Republican Party Nominee  
 Drew A. Harper  
Democratic Party Nominee  
 Write-in

County Law Director  
Vote for One (1)  
 David L. Buuck  
Republican Party Nominee  
 Jackson Fenner  
Democratic Party Nominee  
 Write-in

Board of Education District 2  
Vote for One (1)  
 Anne Templeton  
Democratic Party Nominee  
 Jennifer Owen  
Independent Candidate  
 Pat Polis  
Independent Candidate  
 Write-in

Board of Education District 3  
Vote for One (1)  
 Angie Goethert  
Republican Party Nominee  
 Patricia Fontenot-Ridley  
Democratic Party Nominee  
 Write-in

Board of Education District 5  
Vote for One (1)  
 Lauren Morgan  
Republican Party Nominee  
 Terrye Whitaker  
Democratic Party Nominee  
 Write-in

Board of Education District 8  
Vote for One (1)  
 Travis Wright  
Republican Party Nominee  
 Write-in

#### Town of Farragut

Alderman, Ward 1  
Vote for One (1)  
 Alexander J. Cain  
 Jeffrey Devlin  
 Write-in

Alderman, Ward 2  
Vote for One (1)  
 Drew Burnette  
 Randal Roberts  
 Write-in

#### State General

Supreme Court – At Large  
Dwight Tarwater  
Vote for One (1)  
Shall Dwight Tarwater be  
retained  
in office as a Judge of the  
Supreme  
Court, At Large, or be replaced?  
 Retain  
 Replace

Court of Criminal Appeals –  
Western Division  
Matthew J. Wilson  
Vote for One (1)  
Shall Matthew J. Wilson be  
retained  
in office as a Judge of the Court  
of  
Criminal Appeals, Western  
District,  
or be replaced?  
 Retain  
 Replace







