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It's that time again



PHOTO BY MIKE STEELY

A sign points to the basement door at the Fountain City United Methodist Church as it serves as an overnight warming center for those in need, and is one of five Emergency Warming Centers inside the City of Knoxville.

Knoxville Warming Centers help save lives

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
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The basement door on the side of the Fountain City United Methodist Church may not seem very inviting but for some people, it is the entrance to a warm night. There are five Warming Centers around Knoxville that aid the homeless and other cold people.

Keeping folks warm overnight is a coordinated service of the Knoxville-Knox County Office of Housing Stability. Erin Reed is its executive director and The Focus asked her about the service.

"This is the second winter we've had a centrally coordinated effort at warming centers in Knoxville and Knox County. Last winter it was lucky we had a plan in place because we had a fifty-year snow event, with dangerously cold temperatures and icy, impassable roads for a full week," she said.

"This year there are four church-based warming centers and one overflow site: North: Fountain City United Methodist Church, 212 Hotel Road; South: Vestal United Methodist Church, 115 Ogle Avenue; East: Magnolia Ave United Methodist Church, 2700 E Magnolia Avenue; West: Cokesbury Church, 9919 Kingston Pike; and the Center City overflow site at The Salvation Army, 409 North Broadway," Reed said.

Reed said the capacity of all the sites together is 167, "although we are seeking ways to increase that number. The sites are all open overnight any night when temperatures are forecast to drop to 25 or below."

"Thus far we're seeing the greatest need in the city center, and we have seen more demand than capacity on some nights, especially if it's been below 25 for multiple nights in a row," Reed said.

The emergency warming centers opened on December 1 and will be open through February 28.

The Office of Housing Stability is assisted by coordinating volunteer services. Volunteers are needed to deliver meals, set up cots, check people in, or stay overnight. If you would like to volunteer for this community-wide effort, please go to KnoxTNHousing.org and click "Give Help."

During last year's warming center effort, more than 1,000 blankets were donated by the community, and the majority of those blankets have been cleaned for reuse this year. If you would like to donate supplies, please call Knox Area Rescue Ministries at (865) 673-6540 or email Info@Karm.org.



PHOTO BY KEN LEINART

Fountain City Auction's Greg Lawson double checks some of the computer codes of items to be sold during the company's Advertiser Auction on Saturday, Jan. 4. With the massive number of items to be auctioned during this annual event, Lawson said computers are a valuable tool in keeping track of all the items.

Fountain City Auction's 20th Annual Advertising Auction is Saturday, January 4

By Ken Leinart

There is the sound, ever so slight in the 10,000-square foot Fountain City Auction building, and then another sound of an object being moved.

"I'm going to get you," FCA staffer Kristal Ray said. Her voice is low, almost a whisper, but in these spacious surroundings it travels well and it carries its intended mock menace with it.

"You're in trouble," she said.

Fountain City Auction's annual Advertising Auction is nine days away and Ray and FCA owner Greg Lawson are double and triple-checking catalog numbers on items

that will be on the block during the Jan. 4, 2025, auction.

"What did I do ..." Lawson begins to say, but stops short as he continues looking over a selection of vintage signs, reviewing catalog numbers again. The building is about a third full of items for the Advertising Auction. In the next nine days, it will fill up.

This is the lull before the Jan. 4 storm and it's a storm that has been building since the January 2024 Advertising Auction.

Fountain City Auction holds weekly online auctions throughout the year

— every Friday and an occasional Saturday — but this Saturday's Advertising Auction is the Big Daddy.

Think of a word that means "Huge," and "Massive," and "Eclectic," and "Popular," and "Fun," and if you come up with that word, you've summed up the Advertising Auction.

Items have been selected, salted away, stored, put aside by vendors and by FCA staffers for the last 12 months just waiting for the annual Advertising Auction.

"We'll have 'specialty' item auctions ... Jewelry, estate auctions, furniture. But the

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Tennessee State Bank can fund American Dreams

By Jamie Schnell
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"We're a local hometown community bank that can fund American dreams," Rebekah "Becka" Hurst told The Focus in describing Tennessee State Bank. "We focus on the community, not a number."

Hurst should know as she has worked with TSB for 21 years now, almost half of the institution's age.

Tennessee State Bank is in its 52nd year with over 200 dedicated staff members — including staff that have been employed there for over 40 years — across its 15 branches in Sevier, Cocke, Knox and Jefferson counties.

Hurst, born and raised in Sevier County, is passionate about helping to fund the livelihoods of her neighbors. She serves as the executive vice president and chief credit officer at Tennessee State Bank, where she also holds the position of community reinvestment act officer.

"Some of the challenges in home loans include high interest rates, making them unaffordable for families and forcing them to consider alternative housing solutions. Tennessee State Bank affords people the opportunity they may

not otherwise have," says Hurst.

Hurst stated that Tennessee State Bank prides itself on its deep-rooted community engagement through charitable donations for non-profit organizations and scholarship programs. Their 4-H Scholarship awards a scholarship to a local student. The Dolly Parton Scholarship is a \$15,000 scholarship for a Sevier County High School student who can successfully communicate their plan and commitment to achieving their dream. The Frances Childress Special Friends Scholarship is a scholarship given in memory of Mrs. Frances Childress, who worked in Sevier County Schools as a special education professional for 17 years. The Frances Childress Special Friends Scholarship recognizes high school seniors who show compassion to fellow students with special needs.

TSB educates children on entrepreneurship and they are also committed to supporting veterans, reflecting their dedication to serving those who have served our country, partnering with organizations such as Smoky Mountain Service Dogs. TSB also collaborates

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Operational Branch Manager Leslea Taggart (second from left) and her team at the Tennessee State Bank South Knoxville branch, 3314 Chapman Highway, are excited to assist you with your financial needs in the new year. Photo by Jamie Schnell.

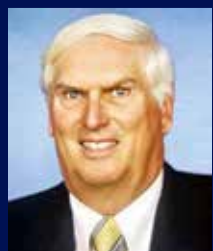
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Still Living In Andy Of Mayberry Days

From a distance



By John J. Duncan Jr.
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My late wife, Lynn, sometimes told people that I didn't like change and that I still lived in Andy Griffith of Mayberry days.

Then, one day about 15 or 20 years ago, I read in the newspaper that I had the same birthday as Don Knotts - me and Barney Fife. I laughed when I saw that and thought that maybe Lynn was right.

I have gotten my haircut since my very first one at Barnes Barber Shop in Burlington. I have been a member at Holston Hills Country Club since I was

nine years old. I have been a member of Eastminster Presbyterian Church since 1959, more than 65 years.

Now, how in the world could anybody say I don't like change? I guess I would have to admit that maybe I am a stuck-in-the-mud type.

I know that I keep clothes and cars far longer than most people. Our kids and some of their friends used to get in my closet to find clothes to wear on "Nerd Day" at school.

My wife, Vickie, has been trying to get me to give up some of my old clothes, and I have taken some to the Goodwill store. But one day she made the mistake of complimenting a blue and white seersucker shirt I was wearing.

I then got a kick out of showing her a photograph of me wearing that same shirt 25 years earlier when my son Zane, who was 13 at the time, and I were

riding a ferry boat to go to and from a tour of the Alcatraz Prison.

I drove a Mercury Grand Marquis so long that I had to put a little duct tape on the front passenger seat. This car sort of embarrassed Lynn and our daughter, Whitney, so I ended up taking it with me to Washington where I didn't need to drive as much.

Once I picked up Jimmy Haslam at the airport and was taking him to his hotel. When he got out of the car, a little bit of the tape tried to go with him. I guess he was not very impressed.

At Governor Don Sundquist's second inauguration in January of 1999, they sent us a police car and a nice young Nashville policeman to drive us to some event.

He said the night before he had stopped a car on a license tag violation, but when he radioed in the plate number, there was

an outstanding first-degree murder warrant out for the driver.

He described the murder suspect as a big guy driving a "drug dealer's car," a 1985 Mercury Grand Marquis. Much to the policeman's surprise, Lynn busted out laughing, and from then on, my Mercury was referred to in the family as my drug dealer car.

My friend, Joe Bailey, the former Knoxville City Councilman, got to go on the last ride of my old Mercury. We went out to eat in a fancy restaurant in Washington, D.C., with a couple of other members of Congress. Joe and I had ridden to the dinner just a couple of miles from Capitol Hill, and the car had overheated. At the end of the meal, I asked the waiter if he could give me a cup of water for my car.

He brought out a very large glass bottle of expensive water, and when I told

him I didn't need that, he said in a very thick accent, "Nothing but the finest for your automobile."

The car was not used to water that expensive. We made it about five miles to the Glebe Road exit off of I-395, and limped barely off of the interstate to a small African-American church.

The oldest vehicle I have now is a Chevrolet Impala I bought from Steve West in 2005. It still runs great with 173,800 miles on it - although the passenger side mirror was torn off when my granddaughter, Emma, backed up too close to a concrete pillar.

Her Dad got the mirror fixed, but the door still opens with sort of a loud creaking sound. And a small piece on the lower part of that door still sticks away, so we use duct tape on that car, too.

The oldest things I have kept are most of the files from my law practice which

began in October of 1973, fifty-one years ago. In the 1970s, there were a lot fewer lawyers in Knoxville, and almost all of us had very general practices.

Most of those files have very interesting stories behind them. When I retired from Congress, I brought home almost 200 boxes of papers associated with the work I did in my 30+ years there.

I am not a hoarder, and most of these files and papers are fairly neat.

But Vickie is trying so hard to get me better organized. When she saw on the news all the boxes that Joe Biden and Donald Trump had that the FBI carried away, she jokingly told me she was going to call them to see if she could get them to carry some of my files away, too.

She was a little disappointed when I told her that none of my old files had any top secret information.

Knoxville's Briscoe Darling hanging up his jug

By Mike Steely
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Knoxville's Bo Pierce says he's backing off appearing as Mayberry's Briscoe Darling. The Knoxville Focus asked him for a comment.

"As John Ward said, 'It's Time!' I will be 75 soon, lower back and knees make 8-10 hour days tough, especially walking in parades," Pierce said.

"Night driving to and from some events is concerning. I've been very blessed to make a bunch of friends and bring smiles to a lot of folks and might still do select area events, he added.

"The Granville event has something planned for me in April," Pierce said of the Granville, Tennessee, event when the town turns into Tennessee's Mayberry.

Pierce, as Briscoe, is one of the many Knox County residents who



Bo Pierce as Briscoe Darling

portray Mayberry characters at various events including "Mayberry Day" in Andy Griffith's hometown of Mount Airy, North Carolina.

Democrats and the politics of envy

Kamala Harris ran ads as the "candidate of change" promising a "new way forward." She apparently forgot that she was Joe Biden's vice president. Did this mean she was going to change Biden's policies?

Apparently not since her policies were to the left of Biden's. So she was lying. Since the majority of voters said the country was heading in the wrong direction, she thought the electorate must have amnesia. That the voters rejected Harris confirmed that you cannot fool all the people all the time. However, 74 million people voted for her and confirmed that you can fool some of the people some of the time.

Harris did not resonate with the voters. She neither came through as genuine or authentic. Her inability to directly answer questions. Her not having a single press conference and her word salads did not inspire confidence that she could handle the job of being president.

She is Jamaican-Indian-American. After listening to her ads a friend of mine said that Harris "speaks with a forked tongue."

Although Harris was a child of privilege, she tried to play the envy card. My father used to tell us that envy was a wasted emotion. He would say "Never be envious of others. Make others envious of you." Obviously, Dad was not a Democrat because at every election Democrats play the envy card. The ad



By Dr. Harold A. Black
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I saw most often said that Trump was for billionaires while Harris was "for you." It said that she will make billionaires "pay their fair share" - whatever that is. Obviously, the Democrats think that voters are fools. Didn't

they think that voters would notice that Mark Cuban who served as Harris' translator was a billionaire? Didn't they realize that voters saw that Bill Gates gave the Harris campaign \$50 million? What about all the celebrity endorsements from billionaires in the entertainment industry and the sports world? Notice to the Democrats: the politics of envy is not working. It always amazes me that the billionaire Democrats continue to let their party play the envy card.

But what is the rich's fair share? Let us suppose that their fair share is the max tax bracket of 37%. One problem is that some billionaires have very little income. Jeff Bezos and Warren Buffet have a salary of about \$100,000 a year which puts them in the 22% tax bracket. This is where Biden's proposed tax on unrealized capital gains comes in. Most billionaires including the Democrat ones oppose such a tax. Even Mark Cuban was against the tax. Also how do you treat unrealized capital losses? Last year Elon Musk "lost" \$24 billion when Tesla stock fell 9%. Does this mean that Musk who now is "only" worth \$232 billion would get a tax refund?

What about Elizabeth Warren's wealth tax? She wants a 2% tax on every dollar of net worth over \$50 million and an additional 1% on every dollar of net worth over \$1 billion. Instead of impacting just the 500 or so billionaires in the country, it would affect over 75,000 households. Some European countries instituted such a tax and it has been a flop. In France, before Macron killed it, 42,000 millionaires left the country. As a result, wealth taxes raise less revenue than anticipated. Warren's proposal would tax people regardless of where they lived. If they were to change citizenship it would levy an exit tax of 40 percent of wealth over \$50 million. The government would have to estimate yearly the market value of all of a person's assets. The high administrative costs of such a task caused Austria to end their tax.

I have a modest suggestion. Let the Democrat billionaires lead by example. Let them donate 2% of every dollar of their net worth over \$50 million and 1% of every dollar of net worth over \$1 billion. So, Bill Gates, Cuban, Zuckerberg, Bloomberg, Soros, Steyer, Jobs, Benioff, Pritzker, Schultz (Starbucks), Gray (Blackstone), Hoffman (LinkedIn) and the rest should, in addition to buying influence, have the democrats change their spiel from "make billionaires pay their fair share" to "make republican billionaires pay their fair share, too!"

Actually we already have a wealth tax. It's called the property tax.



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The Knoxville Focus

Serving Knox and Surrounding Counties.

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Published by Fountain Printing and Publishing, Inc.
Deadline for ad design is Monday at 5 p.m.
Deadline for Classified ads is Thursday at noon.
Deadline for submissions is Thursday at noon.

Articles, announcements, photo attachments and outlines may be submitted by e-mail to staff@knoxfocus.com.

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Publisher's Position

2024: The Year Of Whoppers



By Steve Hunley,
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America who believed it, but it sure was fun watching how shocked and surprised the minions in the media who had told us, day and night, day after day, that Joe Biden would never, ever pardon his son. Anyone who was not a regular viewer of DNCNBC and CNN could see it coming. It ranked right up there with Joe Biden never, ever talked to his son about Hunter's business dealings. Photos with Chinese clients and Hunter Biden and his daddy continue to come out this week, one after the other. Yet mainstream media outlets haven't learned anything from the people having rejected their chosen narratives. To hear them tell it, the biggest whopper of the year involves Trump saying illegal aliens were eating people's pets. They were horrified by that, but then again they also insisted there was no crisis at the southern border for 3 1/2 years along with Biden. That was "Politifact's" Lie of the Year. Really? Politifact was one of those outlets which tried to hide Joe Biden's all-too-obvious mental decline from the American people. No one who insists he or

she is a journalist and never reported on that fact has no claim to the title. Don't you think Biden's mental acuity is a little bit more important than saying illegals are eating pets? And frankly, shouldn't every honest media outlet be pointing out those media entities that utterly failed as journalists and reporters. In fact, CNN and DNCNBC were complicit in lying to the American people on a scale never seen before.

The second lie vying for the "Biggest Whopper of the Year" is a collective one, told by the White House and their puppets in the media that Joe Biden was as sharp as a tack. We were told, over and over again, that Joe Biden, a guy who could not hardly walk up a staircase, ran circles around his aides in the White House. We were told Biden was issuing that order and asking about this policy and they maintained that fiction right up until the first debate with Donald Trump when he couldn't finish a cogent sentence. Who can forget the imbecilic Joe Scarborough squalling Joe Biden was the best he had ever been. That very might be true, but if it was, then

the poor old thing was in a sorry state indeed.

Virtually every talking head on CNN and MSNBC swore up and down Joe Biden was sharp as a tack. It was not only the idiotic Joe Scarborough. Nancy Pelosi swore Biden was "very sharp." That was before the debate and she helped to murder Biden politically along with Barack Obama. Kamala Harris said, "Our president is in good shape, in good health, and is ready to lead in our second term." Yep, she really said that. It is any wonder that Kamala didn't want to be asked any question that went beyond her name and what office she held? The crime is the corporate media never pursued her for an explanation for that statement, or ask had something changed? Did Joe's dementia occur overnight?

Virtually every Democrat in Congress agreed Joe Biden was a wonder of the world, a living miracle after Americans had heard him tell weird tales, like his Uncle "Bosie" having been eaten by cannibals, things that never happened except perhaps inside his pudding-filled head.

Those few journalists

who did raise the question about Biden's fitness for office were, as the Left always does, were personally attacked. Pelosi threw a hissy fit when the Wall Street Journal questioned Biden's mental acuity, pointing to how many Democrats had attested to Biden's mental competence. Did the press ask each of them, including Pelosi, to explain what had changed so quickly? It was evident then and it's evident now, they were just bold faced lying to the American people and the majority of the people knew it.

The same set of elitists did an about face to get rid of Joe Biden when the cat not only jumped out of the bag but pooped right there on the debate stage in front of everybody. If everybody who had lied to our faces was taken off the air or lost their careers as "journalists" and "reporters" CNN, NBC, ABC, CBS, and MSNBC would have a heck of a lot more air time to sell.

The very same people who lied to our faces now want to tell us a comment about illegals eating pets in Ohio was the biggest lie of the year. Joe Biden has his trembling old finger on

the nuclear button, that seems a bit more concerning to most intelligent Americans. Clearly, the smartest people in this country aren't the elitists. They thought they had the rest of us fooled. They thought that we would just follow along and do what they told us, that we would believe whatever they told us. Yet they were the ones who were surprised in the end. They still haven't learned to be honest with the American people. They are the stupidest supposed smart people I've ever seen.

Thank You For Reading And Happy New Year

The folks here at The Knoxville Focus truly appreciate your reading our newspaper. We are grateful to you, our readers. We thank you for your kindness and your loyalty. We try to bring you a good newspaper each and every week. As we end 2024 we thank you for reading. For the New Year of 2025, we wish you and your family all of God's Blessings, good health and happiness! HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Tennessee State Bank

Continued from page 1

with senior centers to protect savings, help combat scams, and educate seniors on financial planning.

Leslea Taggart, the operational branch manager of the South Knoxville TSB, captured the essence of the bank's culture: "We're like a family here." This sentiment underscores the collaborative and supportive environment fostered throughout the organization, where both employees and customers feel valued and connected.

Tennessee State Bank provides a comprehensive range of personal and business banking services, catering to the diverse financial needs of its customers. The new year's goals include optimizing processes, implementing technology to expedite loan closings, and enhancing educational tools and service hours.

For additional information about the products and services offered by Tennessee State Bank or to access financial tools, please visit www.tnstatebank.com or call (877) 908-9872 or (865) 453-0873.

Fountain City Auction's 20th Annual Advertising Auction is Saturday, January 4

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Advertising Auction is a sort of crossover because there can be anything," Lawson said. "This year we're combining it with a country store and primitive auction."

The success of any auction depends on the number of bidders and Lawson said during a weekly auction event there can be as many as 500 bidders. Jan. 4 will make that seem like the warm-up band before a Taylor Swift concert.

"And it depends on the items and the buyers," Lawson said. The Jan. 4 auction will be the 20th edition of the Advertising Auction and, since the first one in 2004, this event has exploded in popularity.

"It's just grown and grown and grown over the years," Lawson said. It really took off, however, during a very scary time - the COVID lockdown.

Lawson said pre-COVID, there would be 300 chairs in the building and the crowds were still standing-room-only affairs.

But when COVID hit ... "When COVID hit we went over 6,000

bidders," he said of the first pandemic Advertising Auction that was online only.

There is another factor at play in the success of FCA and the Advertising Auction. Staying online only is certainly a big factor, but there is Lawson, himself, and that is the one factor that defies description.

Despite the reliance on computers and the modern-day technology needed to hold an online auction, there is a sense of old school work ethic and a code of honor where a person is only as good as their word, a goal of doing the job right.

FCA is a business, make no mistake about that, but Lawson doesn't see it as an enterprise to just enrich himself.

Consider this: Parents or grandparents find themselves, by necessity, moving to an assisted living facility; a spouse dies.

"What are they going to do?" Lawson asked. "I'll visit three to five homes a week sometimes. And I'm talking with a heartbroken spouse or to someone who is putting their parents in

assisted living. 'What am I going to do?' they ask. It's a hand-holding session. Yes, I'm sorry for your loss, for these circumstances, but I believe your spouse (or loved ones) would want you to get some money from these items they have. To help you, to help your children."

And that's the heart of Lawson. His first thoughts aren't about what his profit will be, it's about how he can help this person during an uncertain and trying time in their lives

"I work for the seller. To help them," Lawson said. "It's my job to bring the buyers in."

And he delivers. Lawson said it's common for people to contact him and say something like, "You helped when my parents died," or "You helped when someone else's parents died," or "You did my grandparents' house."

Treat people fairly and honestly and work hard for them and things will take care of themselves.

"It's a people business," he said. "That's how you network and develop. Word of mouth is

the best thing you have and we have full confidence in that."

Lawson was an only child raised on a farm. He said his parents taught him early the value of hard work, the value of keeping his word.

"I probably thought at the time it was child slavery," Lawson said with a laugh. "But those were some of the best years of my life. My parents were molding me and you can't buy that kind of education."

The Annual Advertising Auction will begin at 2 p.m. online at www.fountaincityauction.com and will last approximately five hours. The online catalog will be updated daily leading up to the official auction.

You can also visit www.fountaincityauction.com or www.auctionzip.com to email a list of items to advertise or sell.

For additional auction needs or questions, you can call Greg at (865)604-3468 or the Fountain City Auction office at (865)474-9931.

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2024 – The year that was

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
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Throughout the year, The Knoxville Focus has kept you informed with news, sports and commentary. As the free community-minded newspaper, The Focus continues to serve you in print and online. Our staff and contributors bring you the best in weekly updates each and every Monday morning. We hope you had a great year and we wish you and yours all the best in 2025. Here's a look back at a few of the stories and events The Focus covered in 2024.

January

The year began with Knox County Schools and Tennessee College of Applied Technology of Knoxville partnering to kick off the Skilled Trades Academy and Regional Training (START) Center to encourage students to enter the construction industry.

The Knox County Commission heard a request for mental health officers at the jail, and Advance Knox (the Knox County plan for future growth) passed the county commission in a split vote with some disagreements over farm land versus residential development.

The board of education sent its harassment policy back to committee for review. The Knox County Election Commission approved the state, local and federal ballot and discussed opening a polling place on the campus at the University of Tennessee.

The Knoxville City Council discussed plans for additional funding of the Kingston Pike Connections Project. A public meeting was set to discuss the creation of an alternative response effort in combating crime and domestic disputes. The council also voted to create a "Missing Middle" policy for future creation of homes.

The city council debated penalties for builders who encroach on city property.

Focus staff writers and area coaches recalled winter snow storms of yore as a mid-January storm blanketed Knox County with more than eight inches of snow and caused many cancellations and closings.

Longtime Knox County Board of Education member and community leader Mike McMillan passed away January 26 and was remembered by his friends, Eighth District residents and other county officials. He left behind a rich legacy of service.

Focus sportswriter Steve Williams began a series on Knoxville's Todd Helton prior to his July 21 induction into the Major League Baseball Hall of Fame.

The Carter Lady Hornets went on to the TSSAA State Bowling Tournament where they would lose to Dickson County 21-6. Malyiah Smith of Gibbs led local girls in the state individual tournament.

Gibbs High School coach Tyler Kitts was honored 15 years of service and selected as the TnFCA Assistant Coach of the Year in the state for Class 4A.

February

Knox County Commission's Junior Commission program got underway for the second year in February and a Knox County Sheriff's Office Satellite office was opened in Corryton.

The Knox County Commission looked at selecting a new KCSO Employees' Merit System Board of Directors member and set a special meeting for March to fill the seat of the late Mike McMillan on the school board. The board of education split on a voucher resolution and the idea failed to pass.

The county commission discussed school security and new school construction. The Knox County Fire and Technical Rescue Committee discussed funding and non-subscriber tax breaks.

U.S. Senator Marsha Blackburn was announced as the speaker for the Knox GOP Lincoln Day Dinner in March although she would be unable to attend and sent a video address instead. Twenty-four Knox County schools were chosen as "Reward Schools" by the Tennessee Department of Education.

The Knoxville City Council moved closer to adopting a policy to permit more middle-income housing inside the city to counter the housing shortage caused by the growing population. A \$6 million improvement project was announced for Washington Pike by the City Council.

Housing and zoning took up much of the city council agendas in February leading to a vote to allow property owners to build an accessory dwelling behind their homes.

Jackie Raley was named East Tennessee Deputy Assessor for the year and would go on to face fellow Republican and former Property Assessor Phil Ballard in the primary election in March. Angie Goethert



The Knoxville Focus front pages from February 26, March 25 and June 17, 2024.

announced her candidacy for District 3 school board and Barry Neal began his campaign for the District 9 county commission seat. Knox County Law Director David Buuck announced he was seeking re-election.

J. D. Lambert was named the 2023 Fountain City Man of the Year by the Fountain City Business and Professionals Association.

Coaches Boone Brockwell and Tyler Kitts were honored at Gibbs High School and the Halls High School Wrestling Team advanced in state standings and captured second place in the contest.

Sydney Mains of Knoxville Catholic High Schools was named by The Focus as the All-Knox County Girls Basketball Player of the Year and Coach Greg Hernandez was selected as Coach of the Year for his leadership of the Webb Lady Spartans.

March

The Knox County Election Coordinator Chris Davis announced eight new voting places for the March 5 primary election and the amended Growth Policy was approved by the Knox County Commission. The City Council also reviewed its own growth policy plan in March.

Michael Crichton was selected as the new member of the merit board and the board of education welcomed Travis Wright as its new member.

Knox County Sheriff Tom Spangler announced that he was seeking treatment for pancreatic cancer.

The removal of broken or abandoned power and utility poles in the county was discussed by the Knox County Commission, which also postponed a decision on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan until April.

The commission heard a report from the Tennessee Mental Health Department suggesting a 50-bed mental health facility in Knoxville.

The city council approved new regulations opening the city for more accessory dwellings and the Sanitary Laundry Building was transferred to the Knoxville Community Development Corporation for affordable housing.

Knoxville Republicans celebrated primary election victories at the Crowne Plaza. David Buuck sailed to victory in his primary for Knox County Law Director and Phil Ballard captured the Republican nomination for property assessor by only 12 votes.

Peggy Myers, a Mechanicsville leader, was chosen as Good Neighbor of the Year by the Knoxville Office of Neighborhood Empowerment Department. Songwriter Steve Dean was scheduled to appear at the Fountain City Library. A new emergency room opened at Tennesse North Hospital.

The Focus named Austin-East's Shane Cherry as its All-Knox County Boys Basketball Player of the Year and Webb's Ricky Norris was selected as Basketball Coach of the Year.

Catholic's girls basketball team wrapped up their second state title and Fulton captured its fifth TSSAA state basketball championship.

Farragut's longtime football coach Eddie Courtney announced his retirement and his son, Geoff, was promoted to replace him.

April

The Knoxville Growth Plan got a

setback when the Farragut Board of Mayor and Aldermen voted 3-2 not to support the plan. A week later, one alderman announced he was switching his vote in favor of the plan, sending the plan back to the Knox County Commission for approval.

The Knox County Commission continued to approve more and more housing developments in what was agricultural land. The new Growth Plan called for 17.5 square miles of agricultural land to be rezoned for residential housing. This was reduced to 14.5 square miles after community input.

The Knox County Board of Education voted 8-0 to increase teacher starting salary from \$47,000 to \$50,000 by the 2026-2027 school year.

Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs opposed suggested amendments to his Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan and the commission set a May 27 deadline to vote on the plan.

In April Knoxville City Council action, protestors began to attend council meetings to speak off-topic on the Israel-Gaza war.

The city prepared to transfer the McClung Warehouse site to the KCDC for future development.

The city council approved \$20 million for the South Waterfront Pedestrian and Bicycle Bridge Project, a proposed pedestrian bridge to link South Knoxville to the UT Campus.

Knoxville Mayor Kincannon announced a \$461.6M budget for the new fiscal year and the city council voted to ban robot delivery in the downtown area.

The passing of longtime Focus columnist Ralphine Major's brother, Wayne Allen, was recalled in a memorial in the Focus.

The Knoxville Dogwood Trails opened with a kick-off celebration of its 90 miles of trails. The Focus featured maps of the West, North, East and South Knoxville trails throughout the month.

Hardy Otto Johnson Jr., a well-known shoe cobbler and Honorary Mayor of Fountain City, passed away. Legacy Parks began fundraising for a veterans park overlooking the East Tennessee State Veterans Cemetery.

The Halls High School Alumni Association announced its annual banquet and the Central High School Bobcat Bash was planned.

Soon-to-be Baseball Hall of Famer Todd Helton, a Central High School graduate, got a "Welcome Home" event at Lindsey Nelson Stadium.

May

The Knox County Commission Rules Committee moved to streamline the monthly meeting schedule by doing away with the monthly work sessions and moving the zoning meetings to 5 p.m. the second Monday of each month. A brief, optional agenda review meeting would be held at 3 p.m. that same Monday.

Mayor Jacobs introduced the county budget and pledged no new property tax increase. The Knox County Commission reviewed the county's Emergency Medical Services response time and noted the booming growth within Hardin Valley.

The county commission approved a historic \$1.1 billion county budget and raised the salaries of KCSO employees. Sheriff Spangler had appeared before the commission and begged for the salary boost.

Israel-Gaza War protestors continued to disrupt council meetings and the council discussed changing its Public Forum rules

in an attempt to stop the number of speakers who appear to speak off-topic and to limit a speaker's time to three minutes.

WVLT's Casey Wheelless spoke at a fundraiser for the Isaiah 115 House, a program for children who have been removed from their homes and awaiting foster care.

Emerald Youth held its Annual Prayer Breakfast. The Knoxville Museum of Education announced its 8th Annual Sock Hop for June 6.

The Focus listed the Careacter Star Athletes Basketball Athletes for 2023-2024. This marked Coach Dave' Moore's 23rd year of heading up the Careacter Star Athlete program.

The Carter Lady Hornets softball team defeated Crockett for its first trip to the state TSSAA tournament. Carter would lose to Farragut for the state title. Gibbs Lady Eagles celebrated the school's 11th TSSAA softball state championship.

Farragut senior Julian Gorfido excelled in pole vaulting during the 31st annual Spring Fling. The South-Doyle Cherokees defeated Greeneville to win the state AA soccer title.

The Farragut baseball team won its state Class 4A title for the 13th time defeating Nolensville. The Bearden Bulldogs were led by Logan Nelson to win the state Class AAA soccer championship. Catholic High School defeated Baylor for its fourth Division II-AA state girls tennis championship.

June

The Knox County Emergency Communications District, or Knox 911, adopted a \$16.9 million budget and set aside \$2 million in reserve for possible future needs. New equipment was coming for the backup center at the Knoxville City Safety Building and new employees were coming to the call center including AMR dispatchers.

The Knox County School Board failed to pass a book review process to determine what is and is not appropriate for books in school libraries.

Splash Pads and swimming pools opened around the city and county and the commission began its new meeting schedule, eliminating the longer agenda workshop for a more casual agenda session.

The commission saw some confusion in discussing old and new zoning regulations.

Phase Two of the Western Heights housing complex got underway with a \$4.2 million investment from the city and the council allocated \$90,000 to the Beck Cultural Center within its new budget. The city council passed a \$461.6 million budget with no property tax increase.

Additional rezoning continued to be a main feature on the council agenda.

The city council considered adding an Historic Overlay District to the Sunsphere and finalized self-service beer regulations. PetPalooza returned with pet care supplies for Knoxville Community Development District residents.

After a four-year break, Honor Fountain City Day was held and Dr. Ken Page was honored by Fountain City Town hall as Man of the Year. Central High School's cross country coach Rich Weinhandl began a hike of 72 miles to celebrate his 72nd birthday on trails through the Great Smoky Mountain National Park. Pratt's Country Store celebrated 100 years in Fountain City.

The Focus began its annual recognition of high school student-athlete leaders.

To be continued next week.



The Doctor is in

a weekly column by
Dr. Jim Ferguson

The New Order

The news media did not lose its credibility. It threw it away.

Don Surber

I begin this last column of the year on a high note of optimism. The year 2024 was the proverbial Alexander's "Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad [year]." I'm done with Biden and Democrats as well as the credulous voters, celebs and media sycophants who enabled Democrats to damn near destroy the economy, the military, women's sports, national security, the border and the country. We are blessed to be given a chance to make things right.

Psychological manipulation by Democrats and their media toadies promulgated a psyops campaign which induced delusional hatred in the minds of John Q Public. As a result,

in 2020 America elected a corrupt and incompetent president. Then elites lied about Biden's dementia to keep him in the White House as a figurehead, rubber stamping the destructive, progressive-socialist and anti-American policies of open borders, crime and the loss of American national security. This was the greatest scandal in our nation's history. Perhaps I will someday be able to forgive those who were duped, but I will never forget or forgive those who perpetrated this fraud.

Meanwhile, the feckless Biden continues to pardon and release criminals, while flushing our money down the toilet. What a decrepit and evil person he is. I blame his wife, the Democrat leadership, the utterly worthless legacy media and voters who supported this farce because of dysfunctional hatred.

Thankfully, President Trump was historically re-elected November 5, 2024, in a landslide and will become the actual president on January 20, although he is the de facto president now. And while we tried to celebrate the victory and Christmas, another Groundhog Day-like budget "food" fight in Congress occurred. Instead of passing a real budget these so-called legislators passed another dysfunctional CR (continuing resolution) to fund the government till March. It took three tries, but the government was not shut down, so the new Congress can be seated, the certification of the election on January 6, 2025, can occur and allowing Trump to be sworn in on January 20. "What a world, what a world," said the Wicked Witch of the West. (Maybe she was referring to the melting Democrat party.)

There is again hope as Sheriff Trump and his posse come to town. I don't expect the damage to be magically repaired. The Democrats, Washington, D.C., deep state bureaucrats and what's left of the legacy media will resist anything that takes away their power, the will of the people be damned. Americans voted overwhelmingly for an about-face to Democrat

progressive-socialist policies and the destructive Washington status quo. RINOs be forewarned: Get with the reform movement or you will be primaried and gone.

Some years ago, I learned about the concept of the "the first follower." I highly recommend you watch this intriguing leadership video by Derek Sivers on YouTube. The concept is that a leader obviously needs followers to produce a movement. The first follower of the leader is critical because he metaphorically breaks the ice. The first follower enables others to overcome their inhibitions or the gaslighting (shaming) of others, and join him and the leader of the nascent movement.

I thought about this concept when I saw Elon Musk dancing on the stage at a Trump rally this summer. Trump was already the leader of the MAGA movement, but when Musk joined the "Trump dance" the dam broke, enabling others to overcome their fear of rejection and join the movement.

You could say the same thing of the Joe Rogan interview of Trump. To those who watched the conversational "dance," it was obvious that the media and Democrat portrayal of

Trump was a lie. The opposite might also apply to Biden after the presidential debate which revealed his dementia and caused the Democrat presidential campaign to collapse when their leader was shown to be a sick fraud.

Although the media told us not to believe our eyes, we did not accept their delusional lie. As a result, Pelosi and Schumer had to take Biden off the dance floor to preserve their movement. But it's too late. "The sleeping giant has been awakened." The old dinosaurs and their broken party will thankfully not soon recover. Furthermore, the legacy media is dead; even the odious Leslie Stahl of CBS proclaims it.

Although I'm aware of national and world events as well as politics, I refused to let Washington miscreants spoil my enthusiasm for the new order or my Christmas spirit. However, the latter was tested as Becky and I fought the crowds and took a car full of grandkids and their friends to the Market Square to ice skate just before Christmas. School was out and working parents needed our help with kids. It is how a grandfather maintains his purpose and credibility among children who don't read The

Focus!

Relax. Although I played ice hockey in college, Becky and I no longer skate. Furthermore, as I enter my seventy-fourth circuit of the sun, I've sworn off cleaning gutters on a ladder. Becky assured me it was relatively safe to transport, provision and chaperone kids, as well as repeatedly lace and unlace skates. Becky also maintains that, "It's a good activity."

And then on Christmas Eve in the midst of a roomful of family, friends and most importantly children, I reflected on why I oppose those who call themselves Democrats. I fight for my kids more than for me. I have often reassured myself that even the terrible Biden and his handlers couldn't completely destroy America in the time I have left.

Fortunately I won't have to face that possibility. Biden is done. Kamala is going the way of the dodo. And President Trump and his MAGA movement is coming to town, ushering in such a wave of optimism and reform that my children and country will be safe. I can relax.

I'm actually looking forward to 2025, and the happier New Year that is coming!

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

Historic Nicholas Gibbs Home Has Some Work Done



With the help of the DAR the Nicholas Gibbs Historical Society hired a company to do the needed restoration of one wall of the historic Gibbs cabin on Emory Road. The Nicholas Gibbs Historical Society can be found on the internet or for more information about the historic cabin you may contact Joe Longmire at (865)898-9097. Photo Courtesy of Canjoeco Restorations.

By Mike Steely
Senior Writer
steelym@knoxfocus.com

If you have traveled Emory Road in North Knox County you may have noticed an old cabin with a historic marker in front. That old log structure predates the state and was the home of one of Knox County's most noted families. If you are a native of the county you may know the community there as Gibbs or Harbison Crossroads.

Nicholas Gibbs obtained a 450-acre homestead in 1792 and built the cabin about a year later. The home stayed in family hands until 1971 and in 1986 it was bought by the Nicholas Gibbs Historical Society.

Any structure that old requires constant upkeep and care and the historic home recently saw some maintenance.

"The west end of the cabin receives the most weather and we temporarily covered it with

poplar siding a few years ago until we could afford to have it refurbished," Joe Longmire, president of the historic group, told The Focus.

"The chinking was missing in places and four logs had significant damage from weather and squirrels," he said, adding, "The Canjoeco Restorations team of Blountville, Tennessee, spent weeks expertly bringing the west wall back to its original condition."

Canjoeco Restorations specializes in the authentic restoration of historic structures.

Longmire said the project was funded by a 50-50 grant from the Emory Road chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

"It was a \$16,800 effort which the Nicholas Gibbs Historical Society could not have undertaken without their help," he said, adding, "This is not the first time the chapter has assisted us and

we are very appreciative."

The home is one of the oldest historic homes in the state still standing on the original site.

Gibbs was born in Germany and served in the French and Indian War. Nicholas Gibbs was a volunteer in the Battle of King's Mountain and served as a justice of the peace. He had seven daughters and six sons and several sons served in the War of 1812. He was a member of the first Knox County Court and died in 1817. Gibbs was killed in the battle in Alabama and a relative found his shot bag which contained coffee tree seeds which were planted at the Gibbs home.

He is buried at the Gibbs cemetery just west of the historic house at 7633 East Emory Road and descendants of the Gibbs family are found in Tennessee, Washington, California, Oregon, Kentucky, Illinois and across the nation.

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It's Resolution Time

Thousands of folks, perhaps even millions of them, will begin the year 2025 with pledges to change things in their lives. We have a way of trying to start each year with resolutions to



By Joe Rector
joerector@comcast.net

better ourselves. Some people feel the stress of not having a resolution for the coming year and worry for the next 365 days that they've somehow failed themselves and the world. I, too, in the past have made those resolutions. I promised as a young man

to give up the foul habit of smoking. I swore that I would begin to exercise more. One year, I even promised to give up swearing. I did give up cigarettes, but not as a New Year's Resolution. My

parents and older brother died from cancer caused by smoking. Daddy was 53 when he passed; my brother had turned 54 only a couple of weeks before he died. I was 50 when he died and realized that I might only have a couple of years left unless I gave up the habit.

That was over 20 years ago, and I have no doubt that I would be dead and gone if I hadn't quit smoking.

Over the years, I have tried to exercise more. I could work all day and perform heavy labor, but the fact was that I didn't want to complete an exercise program after working outside all day. I did build a chin-up bar, and little by little, I improved from doing a half a pull-up to doing three sets of them that totaled 30 reps.

Most of our resolutions for a new year are forgotten or discarded within weeks, if not days. I am a creature of habit, and I don't adapt

easily. A new activity must become a part of my daily routine if I am to succeed with it. I figure most other people are like me. They grow comfortable with their lives and try not to upset the balance they've formulated. Nothing makes a person more hateful than to have his life interrupted with something that is meant to improve himself.

I discovered that quitting smoking couldn't be done on my own. I searched for a psychologist and, with her help, I was able to give up the habit. Yes, she used hypnosis, but that was used as a relaxation technique to use in times of cravings. My plan was to quit on the first day of a new school year; hers was to have me quit during the summer. She told me that I would not give up cigarettes if I waited for the stress of a new year to begin. I'm sure she was right. Over

20 years ago, I quit smoking and I thank her and the good lord for allowing me to follow through with this resolution.

Not until I'd reached my 40s did I run a mile. Then I began doing "the fat man jog" everyday, and I put in the work. I reached two miles a day, and the jog became an obsession. I'd run in the rain and even the snow. When my back problems reached critical mass, I had to quit the running. These days, just walking too long is enough to set my back, hips, and legs afire.

When a gym membership came with my old age insurance, I took advantage of it. I hate to lift weights but, because of my age, doing so is necessary to keep from going downhill too soon. A routine of three sets of 12 exercises usually takes about an hour, and after I finish, my body is filled with energy to do

other things around the house. Of course, one of those things is napping on the couch with the dogs.

Yes, I resolved to stop cursing. People often say those who use such words have limited intelligence or vocabularies. I suppose they are right in their assessment, but sometimes, a curse word best fits the emotions that arise in situations. I try to confine most of my sailor language to home or among friends whose mouths are as dirty as mine.

Beginning the year with resolutions most often seems to be a waste of time. Luckily, I have carried through on the most important ones. As for the others, I'll resolve to see them succeed some other time. This coming year, I'm going to simply live each day as it comes and hope that no more aches, pains, or sorrows come knocking at my door. All we can do is the best we know how to do. Enjoy the coming year without regrets. That will make life more wonderful than any resolution.

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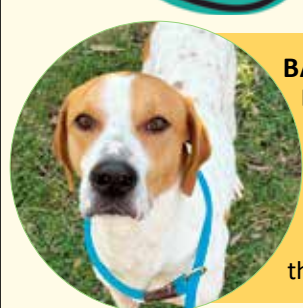
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The Gentleman From Oregon

Rufus Holman

Pages from the Past



By Ray Hill
rayhill865@gmail.com

Often times the success of a candidate for public office has as much to do with the particular times, the mood of the public at a given moment. One of the advantages of being a United States senator is the length of a single term, six years. Yet in the passage of that time, the mood of the electorate may well have changed. The ebb and flow of thought explain many political careers, their beginnings and especially their ends. It also explains the election of Rufus Cecil Holman to the United States Senate, as well as his departure.

In 1938, the threat of war hung over the United States like a malignant black cloud. War clouds gathered across the world with the ferocious and bloody conquest of China by the Japanese Empire while war threatened to break out at any moment in Europe due to the territorial ambitions of German dictator Adolf Hitler, as well as the pretensions of Hitler's ally, Italian dictator Benito Mussolini who had visions of recreating the Roman Empire. The First World War was still fresh in the minds of millions of Americans who objected to the idea of American involvement in another foreign war. One of the most powerful blocs in Congress was that of non-interventionists, labeled isolationists by the media.

The most widely read news magazine of its day, TIME, was published by Henry Luce, a strong supporter of an international outlook for American foreign policy. TIME employed some of the best news writers anywhere and they excelled in the use of adjectives hurled with special glee and venom toward any politician who was not an avowed internationalist. When Rufus Holman lost in 1944, TIME described the senator as "an isolationist, a party hack, a reactionary, a labor baiter." TIME also noted Holman was "big of girth, white of hair, loose of lip" whose most stellar achievement while in office, at least according to TIME, was having missed 148 out of 239 roll call votes during seven months of 1942. The writer for TIME gleefully described the senator's voice as a "gravelly falsetto" which the Oregon Journal enjoyed calling Holman's "high tenor of protest." It was certainly true that Senator Holman was woefully uneducated about geography and some aspects of English. When accused of being antisemitic, Holman cried, "Now why would I be antisemitic? My own father was an Englishman. I have relatives in England."

Holman was oftentimes described as "flamboyant"

and one of the more "colorful" of Oregon's politicians. Despite his occasional ill-phrasing, Holman was usually an eloquent and capable speaker.

Rufus C. Holman had been the son of parents who traveled across the plains to settle in Portland. Holman was raised on a farm and, following graduation from high school, he became a successful businessman. Holman worked as a clerk, accountant, and auditor before becoming a partner in a book-binding business and the owner of the Portland Paper Box Company, which manufactured cardboard boxes. Like many successful businessmen, Holman took time to volunteer for civic service to his own community. Holman occupied various posts in both municipal and county governments.

When he was appointed state treasurer for Oregon, Holman was chairman of the Multnomah County Commission. Holman won the election in his own right and made a bid for the GOP nomination for governor in 1934 and while he made a respectable showing, he lost the election. Rufus Holman ran for reelection as state treasurer in 1936 and won. Holman's 1938 campaign was his fourth statewide effort in four years, giving him good name recognition in Oregon. Holman won the 1938 GOP primary, handily turning back a bid by former Senator Robert Stanfield, who was involved in a drunken bar fight in the midst of prohibition and never again elected to public office despite several attempts to return to Congress. Once nominated, Holman easily defeated Democratic candidate Willis Mahoney, who had quite nearly topped Oregon's most popular elected official, Senator Charles McNary, two years earlier. Rufus Holman carried every county in Oregon to win election to the U.S. Senate.

Once in the U.S. Senate, Holman venerated the institution. Deeply proud of his membership in the most exclusive lawmaking body in the world, Rufus Holman was respectful of the Senate and its customs and traditions. On those days he knew he would rise on the floor and speak, he donned a formal, swallow-tailed coat. Holman was assigned to the Military Affairs Committee, which boasted several prominent noninterventionists among its members. While many considered Rufus Holman to be profoundly conservative, he was also a strong supporter of public power projects. Holman's original appointment as Oregon's State Treasurer came at



ACME NEWS PHOTO FROM THE AUTHOR'S PERSONAL COLLECTION.

Senator Rufus Holman of Oregon, 1943.

the hands of Governor Julius Meier, who was quite liberal.

In February of 1944, President Franklin D. Roosevelt kicked off his third reelection campaign by sending a message to Congress battering the Soldiers' Voting Bill, which had been passed by the Senate the previous December. The bill left it up to the individual states as to the matter of voting. The president accused the House and Senate of having attempted to perpetrate a "fraud on the soldiers and sailors and marines" as well as "on the American people." Roosevelt insisted the solution was a ballot provided by the federal government. Two Senate Democrats, Theodore Francis Green of Rhode Island and Scott Lucas of Illinois, had just such a bill, which was co-sponsored by Congressman Eugene Worley, a 29-year-old then serving as a lieutenant commander in the U.S. Navy. The members of the United States Senate heard the president's message in icy silence. Roosevelt believed the matter deserved a roll call vote and slyly suggested in his message every congressman should be glad to "stand up and be counted." FDR disingenuously said he was well within his rights in making his suggestion "as an interested citizen." That sentence brought "mocking laughter" from a seething House.

Senator Rufus Holman, after listening to Roosevelt's message, blurted, "It seems to me that the difficulty centers around the fact that the Commander in Chief of the Army is himself a candidate for the presidency. If he would eliminate himself from that advantageous or unfair position, I think debate on the pending bill would cease."

That brought a quick reply from Senator Abe Murdock of Utah, a Democrat. "I know it is the

prayer in his heart, and it is the prayer in the heart of every other good, old, stand-pat Republican in the United States today," Murdock said, "that Franklin D. Roosevelt would eliminate himself from politics and give them at least the shadow of a chance to bring in the Grand Old Party again. But I say to them ... the American people still want Roosevelt."

Holman was challenged inside the Republican primary by Wayne Morse, a 43-year-old former dean of the University of Oregon's law school. Morse had been appointed to the National War Labor Board in 1942 and served until his resignation in 1944. Remembered by historians for his liberalism, Morse campaigned in 1944 as a solid conservative, denouncing the New Deal in acidulous terms. It was only after his election Morse revealed he had voted for Franklin Roosevelt over GOP presidential nominee Thomas E. Dewey in the 1944 election.

Holman, an Old Guard Republican, made no pretense about his own views and campaigned on the record he had made in the United States Senate. Holman flatly stated Wayne Morse had been prompted by the Roosevelt Administration to challenge him inside the GOP primary. As to his view of Roosevelt's foreign policy, Senator Holman told the audience at one chamber of commerce dinner, "The fact is that I have never denied being an isolationist; nor have I ever denied being a Christian, or a patriot---nor have I ever denied that I put the welfare of the American people above that of any other people." Holman reviewed his own record and blamed FDR personally for the failure to protect the American fleet at Pearl Harbor. Senator Holman said the president "was so busy with his international friends in Europe" that Roosevelt did not see

the exposure of the fleet in Hawaii. "Franklin D. Roosevelt was the most responsible person in America for the disaster at Pearl Harbor," Senator Holman insisted.

Wayne Morse's defeat of Rufus Holman was considered a major upset of an incumbent senator. Walter Winchell, a gossip columnist with a regular newspaper column in hundreds of daily newspapers as well as a national radio program with an audience in the millions, declared the election win of Wayne Morse a "Roosevelt victory" and accused the candidate of being a New Dealer. That nettled Morse who said it was a Republican victory. Morse promptly fired off a telegram to Winchell saying he "strenuously objected" to the columnist's description of his primary win. Morse said his own win as an opponent of the New Deal was the "forerunner to a nationwide republican victory over the New Deal administration next November." A curious thing for one to say who later admitted to voting for FDR. Morse was one of the very few Republican senators who strongly opposed the Taft-Hartley Act. Later Wayne Morse would leave the Republican Party to become an Independent and then a Democrat.

Not surprisingly, Rufus Holman was both hurt and bitter at his primary loss. The senator told friends his defeat was the result of "money and a smear campaign against me."

There was perhaps some salve for Senator Rufus Holman following

his defeat in the 1944 Republican primary. That summer Holman, a widower, wed Mrs. Norma Lundeen, the "comely widow" of the late senator from Minnesota who had been killed in a mysterious plane crash in 1941. If anything, Lundeen had been more rabidly non-interventionist than Holman, so much so that some claimed the Minnesota senator was a Nazi sympathizer. Apparently, it was a happy match, as the couple remained married until the former senator's death.

Rufus Holman and Norma lived a comfortable life in Portland, Oregon. Holman tended to his business interests and would occasionally send a note to Senator Richard Neuberger written in his own hand, offering the Democrat advice on issues of importance to Oregon and her people. Holman's notes were written on Senate stationery, which was provided to the former senator by Neuberger annually.

One of the great pleasures of Rufus Holman's later life was his recognition by Governor Robert Holmes, a Democrat. Holmes presented Holman with the state's highest military award, the National Guard Distinguished Service Medal, at Camp Clatsop. The 81-year-old former senator was delighted.

The 82-year-old former senator had been suffering from a heart ailment, which had caused him to be treated at a local hospital. Yet the coroner was not certain as to the cause of death for Holman. Lane County Coroner Fred Buell said the former senator died from either a heart attack or from a fall down ten steps to the basement. Evidently, Holman had mistaken the door for that leading to a closet. Holman had died in the house of his stepson, Ernest Lundeen Jr., where he and his wife had gone to visit for the Thanksgiving holiday. Lundeen and his wife were out when the former senator fell. Eventually, Mrs. Holman heard a groan and she descended into the basement where she found her husband. Mrs. Holman rushed upstairs and called the doctor, who found the former senator dead when he arrived.

Following the former senator's death, one admirer, Frank K. Haskell, wrote a letter to the editor of the Eugene Guard, lamenting the passing of "our friend." Haskell wrote Holman had not been an isolationist "for there is just no such thing." Rather Rufus Holman, according to the writer, was a man "who loved his country and held to that idea, even though he was turned down by ignorant voters to serve in the United States Senate."

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HIGH SCHOOL BOYS BASKETBALL

Webb and Bearden lead way in victories

(Win-loss records in this story are based on games through Dec. 26)

By Steve Williams

Webb School has stood out as one of Knoxville's top teams in the first half of the 2024-25 boys basketball season.

Playing in The Classic at Tennessee High in Bristol, Coach Ricky Norris' Spartans upped their record to 14-1 with an 85-52 win over Virginia High Thursday at Viking Hall.

Webb (0-0 in DII-AA East) came into the holiday tourney ranked No. 2 in the state.

The Spartans' lone loss was 71-50 to Moravian Prep National, a sports school in North Carolina that provides training, education, and an arena for players to prepare for the NBA draft. Moravian Prep won a national title in 2020.

Webb's victories this season include 65-44 over Alcoa, 63-60 over Tyner Academy, 68-33 over Cookeville, 74-41 over Farragut and 67-49 at Maryville.

Next game: Jan. 7 at home against Tri-Cities Christian.

Bearden (14-1, 2-0 Dist. 4-4A)

Coach Jeremy Parrott guided Bearden to 12 straight wins before falling to Nashville Hillsboro 54-50 in a holiday matchup on Dec. 20. The Burros were ranked No. 7 in the state.

The Bulldogs bounced back with a 64-55 win over Independence and then after their Christmas break rolled past Sullivan East 88-32 in their opening game in The Classic.

Bearden notched two victories in one of the state's toughest districts (4-4A) earlier in the regular season, beating HVA 76-50 and



PHOTO BY LUTHER SIMMONS

Bearden Coach Jeremy Parrott reacts on the sideline during the Dec. 6 District 4-4A game against Hardin Valley at BHS. The Bulldogs won, 76-50.

prevailing on the road at West 64-56.

The Bulldogs also have road wins over perennial state powers Alcoa 65-63 and Fulton 79-56.

Next game: Jan. 7 at William Blount.

CAK (13-1, 5-0 in DII-A East)

Christian Academy of Knoxville was 13-0 when it lost to Bell County, KY, 48-43 in holiday action in Kentucky on Dec. 23.

Non-district wins for Coach J.D. Johnson's squad this season include 51-47 over Karns and 48-30 at Grainger. Two of CAK's district wins were 44-42 at Grace Christian and 47-43 over Lakeway Christian.

Next game: Friday at CCS.

Catholic (9-2, 0-0 DII-AA East)

In his first full season as head coach at Knoxville Catholic, JaJuan Smith has the Fighting Irish off to a 9-2 start.

Their home wins include 81-62 over Greeneville and 66-61 over Bradley Central. They won on the road at Hardin Valley 76-70. Their two losses were on the road at West 76-65 and Alcoa 87-71 on Dec. 20.

Cade Murphy, a junior, has led the way for the Green and Gold with a 25.2 scoring average and 9.9 rebounds per game.

Next game: Friday at Walker Valley.

Circle on your calendar: Webb at Catholic on Jan. 25.

Carter (8-4, 3-0 in Dist. 3-3A)

Could this be a season that Carter unseats Fulton in the district?

Coach Tyler Cate's Hornets lost three of their first four games, but have turned things around.

Their wins include 73-49 at Powell, 79-76 in double overtime over visiting Cocke County and an 82-50 district win at Seymour.

Next game: Friday vs. Central.

Circle: Jan. 14 at Fulton.

HVA (8-5, 0-1 in Dist. 4-4A)

For you statistic junkies, Hardin Valley has scored 743 points, while its opponents have scored 744.

Coach Andy Arendt's Hawks opened eyes across the local

scene with a 63-58 win over Fulton in their season opener. They also logged a 59-57 victory over Bradley Central on Dec. 20.

Two of their losses came against tough opposition - 76-50 at Bearden and 66-43 at Webb.

Next game: Friday vs. Mo. East.

West (7-2, 0-1 in Dist. 4-4A)

The Rebels under new head coach Tommy Eggleston own victories over Catholic 76-52 and Fulton 61-49.

West came up short against Sevier County 69-68 and Bearden 64-56.

Next game: Jan. 6 vs. Mo. West.

Farragut (7-5, 0-0 Dist. 4-4A)

The Admirals opened the season sizzling with five straight wins.

Their victories include a 63-45 decision against Science Hill and a 58-47 win at Lenoir City.

They've lost to Catholic 83-74 and Stone Memorial 73-65.

Next game: Host winless Karns Friday.

GCA (7-6, 1-2 in DII-A East)

Grace Christian is just above the .500 mark overall.

Wins include 61-56 over South-Doyle and 67-25 over Concord Christian.

The Rams lost a close game (44-42) to CAK and bowed at The King's Academy 64-55.

Next game: Jan. 7 versus Providence Academy in Johnson City.

Fulton (6-6, 2-0 Dist. 3-3A)

Two-time defending state

Continue on page 2

MIDDLE SCHOOL BASKETBALL

Bruins run past Huntsville in Christmas Tournament

By Ken Lay

Clinton --- When Ben Zorio enters his team into a holiday tournament during the Christmas break, he uses it as a chance to give some of his younger players some valuable game experience.

Sometimes, it's out of necessity because his starters have family commitments outside the area, and on other occasions, it's because he just wants

to get a glimpse into the future.

On Friday however, the veteran Bearden Middle School boys basketball coach watched his team dismantle Huntsville, 75-10, in the opening round of the Anderson County Middle School Christmas Tournament at Anderson County High School.

"Everytime we step on the floor, we want to improve,"

said Zorio, who is now the dean of Knox County Middle School Basketball Conference coaches. "You always want to win the game, and we came here to win this tournament."

The Bruins clinched the KCMSBC Class AAA regular-season championship just before the Christmas Break, but that doesn't mean their job is anywhere near finished. They're looking to win

the tournament in Clinton, which concludes tonight at Anderson County High.

Bearden, which came into Friday's game with a 13-0 record, has two games remaining in January. And neither will be easy for the Bruins. They close out conference play against Farragut, which is peaking after a slow start. That contest will be on the road at the Bobby J. Henry

Gymnasium on Monday, Jan. 6 with tipoff slated for approximately 5:45 p.m.

Bearden will close out the regular season at home against KCMSBC Class AA champion Vine on Jan. 9 at 5:45 p.m.

"Farragut is playing as well as anybody right now and Vine is an immensely talented basketball team, so we have some tough games left after the break."

The Bruins had to shake off a little rust early Friday against the Bears. But Bearden, after missing its first few shots, quickly found its rhythm and its shooting touch, opening a 23-0 lead in the first quarter.

"We got off to a slow start, and that usually happens when you play an early game after a break,"

Zorio said. "But it didn't

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December Saturdays to Remember

Rarely have three consecutive December Saturdays been as significant as Dec. 4, Dec. 11, and Dec. 18 were in 1965, following a successful Tennessee football season. These were December Saturdays that forever changed the face of Tennessee football, on the field and on the recruiting trail.

It was Doug Dickey's second season as head coach, following a 4-5-1 campaign in 1964. At age 33, Dickey had compiled an 8-1-2 record following a fallow period between 1958 and 1964 (34-32-4), a time frame with no bowl games and precious few high moments.

What happened over those three Saturdays encouraged Tennessee partisans looking for signs that better days were ahead.

On Dec. 4, the Vols played that classic game with UCLA at the new Memorial Stadium in Memphis, a definitive step up from the antiquated Crump Stadium.

Athletic Director Bob Woodruff termed the Bluff City stadium a "neutral site." UCLA head coach Tommy Prothro, a Memphis native, was skeptical. "Playing Tennessee

in Memphis is like playing Notre Dame in Rome," he said.

Woodruff always laughed heartily when he talked about Prothro's comments.

With a crowd of 44,495, smallish by today's standards in attendance but intense with their support of their beloved Vols, the final tally was 37-34, Tennessee. That was a score that had to have shocked Vol fans who learned their football, highlighted by defense and the kicking game, at Bob Neyland's knee. This was a new day, a beginning of a new era in Tennessee gridiron history.

Things were so hectic that afternoon that no one thought to check out conditions at Knoxville's National Cemetery, Neyland's final resting place, to make sure everything was in proper order. There were no 37-34 games in his day.

A quick glance at the history books revealed that the Vols had given up more than 30 points or more only 14 times in 475 games between the start of the 1915 season and the 1965 Vanderbilt game and had lost every one. Seven of Neyland's Tennessee teams gave up 34 points or fewer in an entire season.

The game had everything you could want, excitement, big plays, drama, and the requisite amount of controversy, all leading

to a memorable finish. Vol quarterback Dewey Warren, playing with two pulled groin muscles but never with a lack of confidence, scored on fourth down on a 1-yard run that seemed to take forever. Somehow Dewey found the end zone, enough so that the official on the spot immediately threw both hands skyward.

It was a game for the ages, a "made for TV game," in the days before there were such things. Woodruff and UCLA athletic director J. D. Morgan had scheduled what would become an intersectional classic.

Had the game had been played today, Warren's face and the game tape would have been all over Sports Center. The game and its aftermath would be an "ESPN Classic" the next night. It was that good. It's still one of the most requested Vol game tapes ever.

The next Saturday was signing day, with the Vols ending up with a class that would help lead the Vols back to gridiron glory.

The Vol performance that season had to have had a positive impact on prep prospects in Tampa, Cincinnati, Kingsport, Jackson, Johnson City, Nashville, and Oliver Springs. That's where many of the top prospects for the 1966 freshman class were located, and the Vols got



Steve Kiner (57, 1967-69) is a member of the College Football Hall of Fame.

them all: Steve Kiner, Jack Reynolds, Vic Dingus, Don McLeary, John Rippetoe, Mike Jones, and Gary Kreis.

There were others, such as Nashville's Manley Mixon, Wayne Smith, and Bobby Patterson, Chattanooga's Steve Carroll, Steve Wold of Port Orange, Fla., and Villa Rica, Georgia's, Herman ("Thunderfoot") Weaver, so named during his Detroit Lions career by ABC's Don Meredith. "Dandy Don" thought Weaver's punts were so high they could bring rain (and thunder).

The signing of a second generation Vol was headline news the next day. His name was Jim McEver, whose father, Gene, who

helped kick off all this excitement in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Jim left the squad after his freshman season.

The third weekend sent the Vols to Houston for the Bluebonnet Bowl, and Vol fans had to have been enthused by a 27-6 win over Tulsa, albeit in a game played in a driving rainstorm.

Warren ran for two scores and tossed a 4-yard TD pass to inspirational team captain Hal Wantland. Fullback Stan Mitchell scored on an 11-yard run.

"I remember it was wet as in real rain and mud and soup—a perfect fit for Dewey Warren's famous nickname, 'Swamp Rat,'" wrote Marvin West. "Tulsa

kept shooting itself in the foot. Tennessee had trouble with stopping the short passing game to Howard Twilley, but Tulsa would lose a fumble or interception, and the Vols would capitalize. It seems Tulsa won the stats comparison."

It was a bowl game. Vol fans considered it a beautiful day, regardless of the weather. The last bowl game had been in 1957. Vol fans had the feeling Tennessee was "back." Life in Big Orange Country was good. Neyland Stadium once again was the place to be for Vol fans on Saturday afternoons.

Not before or since have three Saturdays in December been so impactful on the Vol program.

Bearden and TKA eye state honors

Continued from page 2

Karns (2-4, 0-2 Dist. 3-4A)

The Lady Beavers lost district games to Powell 60-50 and Campbell County 67-46, but defeated Covington 53-38 in a holiday tourney.

Next: at Farragut Friday.

Gibbs (2-10, 0-2 Dist. 4-3A)

The Lady Eagles lost their first three games before notching a 46-36 win at home against West Greene. They lost 44-41 to Cumberland Gap before heading into holiday tourney action.

Next: Will host Halls Friday.

Carter (1-9, 0-3 Dist. 3-3A)

The Lady Hornets opened with a 73-62 loss to Scott. They defeated Berean Christian School for their only win this far. A loss to Northview Academy 78-38 was the first of three district defeats. Its closest loss was 44-42 to South-Doyle.

Next: will host Central Friday.

FBA (0-4, 0-2 DII-A East)

First Baptist Academy's losses include district games versus Clayton-Bradley 47-43 and Concord Christian 81-32.

Next: Home Friday vs. Lakeway.

West (0-5, 0-1 Dist. 4-4A)

The Lady Rebels are still looking for their first win. They came close in a 46-40 loss early in the season versus Sunbright. Other losses include 63-21 at A-E and 75-57 versus Ooltewah before holiday tourney games.

Next: Jan. 6 vs. Mo. West.

Berean (0-6, 0-3 DII-A East)

Coach Paul Baird's Lady Eagles' closest to winning thus far came in their last game at district foe Clayton-Bradley Academy, which won 61-45.

Next: At Providence Academy Friday.

Halls (0-6, 0-2 Dist. 3-4A)

The Lady Red Devils are on the skids. Maybe things will turn around in the New Year. Among their losses are a 67-35 decision to Grainger, a 61-39 decision to Concord Christian and an 86-15 district defeat at Oak Ridge.

Next: Friday at rival Gibbs.

The sky isn't falling for the Vols

By Mark Nagi

This season Tennessee's football team won 10 games. They beat rivals Florida and Alabama, each of them for the second time in three years. They finished the regular season tied for second place in the Southeastern Conference. They earned a spot in the expanded College Football Playoff.

And some Vols fans see the season as a disappointment.

I'm not a clinical psychiatrist... but that's certifiably insane.

Do they not remember just about the entire period of Tennessee football between 2008 and 2021? How Lane Kiffin left the Vols in the lurch after 13 ½ months? How Derek Dooley was a de facto death penalty? How Butch Jones was more concerned with catchphrases than winning ball games? How Jeremy Pruitt not only cheated in recruiting but had assistants that were awful at it?

Do they not remember losing a football game because they had 13 men on the field, and then losing a football game because their opponents had 16 men on the field? How Florida beat the Vols in back-to-back trips to Gainesville on not one, but two 63-yard TD passes in the closing moments? How the offenses of the Pruitt era looked like the time before the forward pass was allowed?

Do they not remember how quiet Neyland Stadium used to be? Do they not remember games against Alabama when Crimson Tide fans took over the Vols barn, with as many as 15,000 fans finding their way through the

ticket scanners?

Tennessee has won 37 games in four seasons under head coach Josh Heupel, 30 of those over the last three seasons. Nowhere is the Vols resurgence seen more than at Neyland Stadium. It has become a fortress for the Vols. They are 25-4 in Knoxville under Heupel, with only one loss in the last three years. Neyland is once again one of the great home field advantages in the sport.

The 42-17 loss at Ohio State, while embarrassing, should not overshadow all the progress that has been made under Heupel. But it is a major sign that Tennessee has a lot of work to do if they are going to be a serious contender for an SEC title and a deep run in the College Football Playoff.

NIL deals have helped Tennessee get players like QB Nico Iamaleava, but that has to expand. Ohio State's roster cost a reported \$21 million. Tennessee's is reportedly less than half that amount. It goes to follow that recruiting must improve. Heupel is bringing in classes around the top 10... and sometimes good isn't good enough.

The transfer portal can fill gaps, as it has with players like WR Bru McCoy from Southern Cal and CB Jermod McCoy from Oregon State, guys that made a difference immediately.

You'll notice that those two guys are at skill positions, and that's where Tennessee needs a lot of help this offseason. Iamaleava probably looked across the field at

Ohio Stadium and looked at the Buckeyes stable of future NFL wide receivers and felt at least a little jealousy. The Vols will graduate McCoy and Dont'e Thornton, with Chas Nimrod and Kaleb Webb jumping in the portal.

Squirrel White and Chris Brazzell II will be back, and big things are expected from 5-star freshman Mike Matthews, but that receiver room better get filled up with quality players for the Vols to move the football down the field in the years to come.

The Vols are relevant again, and I hope that fans realize that truth. They've taken a whole bunch of steps up the mountain. The final steps to the top will be the toughest.

But at least they are making the climb.

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