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## Emerald Academy



Emerald Charter Schools' board member Janene Nordin, right, greets scholars as they arrive for the first day of school in July 2024.

## Pinehurst church rezoning for homes on city agenda

By Mike Steely  
Senior Writer  
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When the Knoxville City Council meets Tuesday it will take up a first reading of a zoning proposal involving the almost four acres and former First Friends Quaker Church at 4325 Pinehurst Drive. The zoning change request, from Knoxville Habitat for Humanity, was postponed from last month with the idea of getting the applicant and neighborhood together.

The former church and parking lot could become a 12-unit housing development for 24 total residences. Habitat said a local minister is interested in acquiring the abandoned church. Some nearby homeowners have questioned the increase in traffic on the narrow city street.

On the agenda for second and final readings are rezoning 100 East Inskip Drive from neighborhood commercial to general commercial, and changing 7057 Pine Grove Road from C-H-1 highway commercial to C-H-2 highway commercial. A similar zoning change is before the council for 901 Kermit Drive. The commission will also consider changing 6521 Vance Road from single-family residential to RN-2, single-family residential neighborhood.

A portion of Patton Street, between Willow and East Summit Hill Drive, may be renamed Willow Avenue.

Vice Mayor Tommy Smith wants to create a task force to study the Rules of Procedure and to consider the creation of a charter review process by naming the members of that group.

Rogers Group Inc. may get a \$130,760 increase in its agreement with the city, bringing the Resurfacing Phase II Project to \$3.7 million. Southern Contractors may also get an increase, of \$47,823, bringing the total for the Augusta Quarry Amenities Phase II Project to \$3.6 million.

Cornerstone Government Affairs Inc. may get a contract agreement with the city, at \$180,000 for the year, to provide lobbying relations with the state government.

Volunteer Landing could get additional funding in a request for federal funding of \$500,000 and the Lonsdale Neighborhood Revitalization Project may get approval for a similar request to the federal government.

The council may also vote to give \$75,000 in Historic Preservation Program funds to SRJ Investments LLC for improvements to the historic property at

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## Positively Impacting City Scholars for Ten Years

By Focus Staff

Eriana Spencer moved to Knoxville at five years old to live with her grandparents. She started her schooling at a traditional public school, but by 2016, as sixth grade approached, her grandmother Norma felt it was time to find an education option that would truly set Eriana up for success in high school and beyond.

When they discovered Emerald Academy, at the time a brand-new public charter school located in the Mechanicsville neighborhood, they decided to take a leap of faith. Eriana became part of the school's inaugural sixth-grade class, and though the decision was a leap of faith, Norma reflects, "It was the best choice we ever made."

Eriana, now a student at the University of Virginia (UVA), is a great example of her own assertion that Emerald Academy empowers its scholars to see their options, make good choices for their futures and then pursue those plans with all the resources available. As she puts it, Emerald Academy



Kindergarten teacher Laura Williamson works with scholars in the Harvard classroom.

teaches scholars that "yes, you are capable." She believes that the greatest advantage of coming to Emerald Academy was how her eyes were opened to the diversity of educational possibilities available to her.

Emerald Academy offers a tuition-free, college-preparatory education for kindergarten through eighth-grade students.

Its mission is ambitious yet simple: To prepare scholars for the college of their choice and community leadership.

The school's latest outcomes reveal progress and dedication, including: The schoolwide academic growth of Emerald Academy's scholars earned a Level 4 rating, a reflection of sustained academic progress across

multiple subject areas. Over the past four years, the schoolwide proficiency rate increased by 40%, which fueled the school to have a higher percentage of minority and economically disadvantaged students performing on or above grade level than any of Tennessee's four largest metropolitan school districts

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## Major rail to trail project announced

Gulf and Ohio Railways announced that it has applied for abandonment of its 3.8-mile rail line in South Knoxville with the intent of offering the rail line property to the City of Knoxville and Legacy Parks Foundation for a unique greenway project that will run from Chapman Highway to Ijams Nature Center. This rail-to-trail conversion will also feature a 1.5-mile Art Walk created by Legacy Parks Foundation.

"As the area has changed, rail traffic has declined, we saw this unique opportunity for a rail-to-trail project within sight of the City-County Building extending all the way to Meade's Quarry at the Ijams Nature Center. Gulf & Ohio is

contributing the property to help Knoxville continue to be one of best places to live in America," said Pete Claussen, Gulf and Ohio Railways chairman.

Legacy Parks has been coordinating with Gulf & Ohio Railways for the past nine years on a trail that would parallel the tracks, a "rail with trail." This "rail to trail" option now offered by Gulf & Ohio will allow the tracks to be removed and a hard surface trail to be constructed. The trail will be uniquely urban and wilderness - bordering the restaurants and breweries along Sevier Avenue, traveling through a captivating tunnel and gorgeous canyon and over two elevated bridges.

Gulf & Ohio filed for abandonment of the rail line in mid-December. Following approval by the Surface Transportation Board, they will remove the track and railroad ties and donate the property to the City of Knoxville to construct the trail. The STB allows a year for the development of a rail-to-trail plan.

"We are so excited to be able to take this project to the next level. Creating this trail and making this a part of our expansive greenway system will help increase connectivity in our City and truly make this another must-see destination in South Knoxville. The trail's proximity to restaurants, businesses and Ijams Nature Center will also help increase foot traffic and boost business in the area. This unique trail is a great complement to all the City's investments in South Knoxville and is a win-win for residents and visitors, alike."

- Mayor Indya Kincannon

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# Sports World Has Gone Berserk On Salaries

From a distance



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

The sports world started going crazy several years ago in the salaries it was paying to coaches and players. Now it has gone berserk or has become unhinged.

In the baseball winter meetings a few days ago, the Washington Nationals signed a pitcher that even most big fans of the sport had never heard of, Michael Soroka, to a \$9,000,000, one-year contract. His record last season was 0 and 10 – that's no wins and 10 losses.

This is nine million dollars for a man who pitched

a total of only 111 innings in the last two seasons and whose earned run average was a very mediocre 4.74 last year, and a terrible 6.40 in 2023. On top of all that, he was out for two full seasons – 2021 and 2022 – I suppose due to arm problems.

A few days earlier, the New York Mets signed Juan Soto, admittedly a great player, to a 15-year, \$765 million contract. That's \$51,000,000 a year for playing baseball.

At least this was quite a bit less than what the Los Angeles Dodgers signed Shohei Ohtani to before last season – \$700 million for 10 years.

I suppose the reason I have gotten so upset about these very exorbitant salaries is that I grew up as a very big sports fan and still am, although now reluctantly so.

My late wife told me it was just because I was jealous, although I don't

believe anyone can really earn that kind of money.

Also, because so much of these ridiculous salaries comes from advertising, it means that this is driving up prices for almost everything.

You can't really boycott sports unless you start living like the Unabomber in a one-room cabin in the Montana mountains, because almost every product is advertised on sports.

Regular readers of my column know that I wrote one entitled "\$77 Million To Not Coach Is Crazy" about Texas A&M buying out the contract of its head football coach.

When LSU paid \$17 million to Coach Ed Orgeron to buy out his contract, he said he told the athletics director: "What time do you want me to leave and what door do you want me to go out of, brother?"

Earlier, Auburn University had paid \$21 million to get one coach to leave

and then ended up paying his successor \$15 million to quit.

Almost two years ago, I wrote that I thought paying the head football coach at U.T. nine million dollars a year was way too much. I wrote, "I believe down deep inside, even he would admit he is not worth \$24,000 a day."

At the end of that column, I added: "Every major university could get great football coaches for far less than these people are being paid today. Any university whose athletic department is taking in so many millions of dollars should not have the gall to keep asking state legislators to also give them millions from low and middle income taxpayers."

Many years ago when I owned part of the Knoxville Smokies, we sponsored a "Diamond Dinner" with Pete Rose as the main speaker.

During a question and

answer session during the evening, one fan asked Rose, "Pete, is any player worth a million dollars a year?" Rose replied, "Hell, no. Not me or anybody else. But you put yourself in my shoes. If they are crazy enough to pay it, I'm crazy enough to take it." He added that he loved the game so much, he probably would have played for free if he had to.

Some have said it is free market capitalism. Not really. It is government-protected and government-sponsored capitalism.

First, the 1922 U.S. Supreme Court case of Federal Baseball Club vs. The National League saying baseball was a sport and not interstate commerce and thus not subject to the Sherman Antitrust Act is now a joke and should be revisited.

Second, local and state governments that build billion-dollar stadiums for billionaire owners should

be given far less federal money.

Third, universities with mega-million athletic departments should not be subsidized with so much federal and state tax and student loan money.

Fourth, I am proud that I never voted for any tax increase, because the least economical, least efficient way to spend money is to turn it over to government, and especially the federal government. But I now believe that there should be a special tax applied to income over, say, \$2,000,000 a year to go directly to the insolvent Social Security Fund.

And while I am on a kick about ridiculous salaries, the \$10,000,000 plus a year paid to the top man at TVA is also at the top of my list. Many people still have a hard time paying their utility bills.

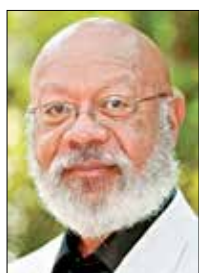
## Jimmy Carter: An Appreciation

A right-wing daily had the headline "20th Century's Worst President Dead at 100." Worst president? Not even close. I guess the author has forgotten about Woodrow Wilson (my number 1), Her-

bert Hoover, Warren Harding, Calvin Coolidge and possibly George W. Bush.

Carter had the ill fate of being president during tumultuous times. His years were filled with crisis after crisis. He inherited a lousy economy, one with double-digit inflation and double-digit unemployment. The economic woes were due to the OPEC-induced oil crisis which precipitated the fall of the Shah of Iran and led to the Ayatollahs.

Fed chairman Paul Volcker



By Dr. Harold A. Black  
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told Carter that to get out of the economic situation – called stagflation – that he would have to induce a recession. The Fed raised the Fed Funds rate to 17.5% (it is now 4.25%).

The economy went into a recession but came out of it rather quickly – but too late to save Carter's presidency.

Carter's main foreign policy focus was on the Middle East where his greatest achievement was the Camp David Accords. It established peace between Israel and Egypt. But Carter was no friend of Israel. He advocated for a Palestinian state. He never wavered in that belief although roundly criticized

by Israeli supporters.

The fall of the Shah led to the Iranian hostage crisis. The hostages were freed after Carter lost his reelection bid to Ronald Reagan. Carter approved a rescue effort by the US military that ended in a helicopter crash costing eight lives. This further damaged Carter politically.

Carter also gave the Panama Canal to Panama. Although built by America in 1914 and administered by it through the years, Carter saw fit to give it to Panama to lessen criticisms about American imperialism in the hemisphere. Trump now of course wants it back. Carter also faced the Mariel Boatlift in 1980 where Castro released 125,000 criminals and psychiatric patients and sent them by boat to the US.

Then there was the

Russian invasion of Afghanistan. Carter levied trade embargoes and sanctions on the Russians. He then canceled the participation of the US team in the Moscow 1980 Olympics.

The Russians played tit for tat and canceled their participation in the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics. Eventually Carter and Soviet leader Brezhnev signed the SALT II treaty setting limits on nuclear weapons which was later scuttled by Reagan.

Carter was also the father of craft beer. Though a teetotaler, Carter signed into law the legalization of home brewing which had been banned since Prohibition. In 1978 Carter signed a law legalizing home brewing sparking the microbrewing industry. He is hailed as a hero by that industry.

Carter saved NASA's space station program by giving NASA the resources needed to see the project through to its inaugural launch in 1981 and provided \$200 million in

additional funds in 1979 and an extra \$300 million the following fiscal year.

Carter was also the first diversity and inclusion president. Note that the "E" is missing. The Georgian was a staunch civil rights advocate. Unlike Lyndon Johnson, Carter meant it. He instructed the recruiters in White House personnel that he wanted a qualified black on every appointed regulatory board in Washington. Note the use of the word "qualified." That led to my being contacted by the White House to come to Washington to interview for an appointment to the first National Credit Union Administration Board.

Carter was perhaps the most market oriented president. He was a champion of deregulation. Unlike most Democrats, Carter led efforts to deregulate the airlines, trucking, railroads, energy, communications and financial institutions. The cost of flying a mile declined by half and air travel became a mainstay

of American life. The logistical cost of moving goods shrank as a share of gross domestic product by 50 percent.

Carter also signed the most sweeping banking deregulatory act in history, the Depository Institutions Deregulation and Monetary Control Act of 1980. That act enabled institutions other than banks to issue interest bearing checking accounts, deregulated interest rate ceilings and allowed certificates of deposits. What Carter did was to make Reagan's first term easier than it otherwise would have been. Deregulation made businesses more flexible.

Carter probably faced more adversity than any peacetime president since Herbert Hoover. He was the most pro-deregulation president in history. To call him the worst president of the 20th century just shows blind prejudice and is clearly false.

Rest in peace, Mr. President.



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## Pinehurst church rezoning

**Cont. from page 1**

310 13th Street. The police department's Records Management System could get \$27,582,300 in an agreement with Avon Enterprises Inc.

Several appointments and reappointments are on the agenda: Megan Brown to the Animal Control Board, Jay Price to the Solid Waste Board, Cynthia Manning-Dirl to the Civil Service Merit Board, Kevin Parks to the Tree Board and Dusty Brock to the City Audit Committee.



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# Publisher's Position

## 2024's Biggest Losers: The Mainstream Media and the Far Left



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

As we welcome the New Year, we can also reflect on a stormy 2024 and select the biggest winners and losers. The biggest winner of 2024 has to be Donald Trump who stunned the political hierarchy of the news media by winning both the popular vote and the Electoral College. The Republicans kept control of the House of Representatives and took control of the U.S. Senate.

No candidate for public office in my lifetime has ever been so demeaned, dehumanized and just plain lied on as has been Donald Trump who survived and surpassed all of the negativity of a mainstream news media with its own narrative to push. Trump had to endure all of that, survived

two assassination attempts, to become only the second person in American history to be returned to the White House after having lost four years earlier.

Americans looked to the future and not some dystopian future when voting for Donald Trump. The very idea from the Left that the phrase "Make America Great Again" is somehow obnoxious is pathetic. Pride in one's country is patriotic and patriotism is a wonderful attribute to have. No country is perfect and if it were the terrible place the Left would have us believe that it is, people from all over the globe wouldn't be trying to sneak in through an open southern border. Too many of the people who consider everyone who doesn't agree with them politically as "garbage," "deplorables," and "weird" hate this country and most Americans know it. Donald Trump's victory sprang from many sources but that had a lot to do with it.

The biggest loser of 2024 was not, in my opinion, either Joe Biden or Kamala Harris, but rather the corporate news media. It has been increasingly apparent to everyone but the mainstream media that they have been hemorrhaging

viewers and readers who have seen through their attempts to manage their own preferred narrative, which just happens to be holding hands with the Left in this country. The legacy media in this country long ago abandoned journalism to take a partisan view of not only Trump, but with the woke agenda of the Left. The 2024 election shattered much of that and revealed that more people see through the deception and lies repeated by NBC, CBS, ABC, MSNBC, and CNN and other outlets of their ilk. The mainstream media was not murdered; it died by suicide. According to the last poll I saw, some 65% tune out the news on a daily basis. One of the biggest reasons why is because most Americans don't want a healthy dose of left-wing politics with their news broadcasts or newspapers. The news is less about news than peddling a narrative, all too often that just isn't true. Trump's labeling the mainstream media as "fake news" stuck for good reason - - - most Americans believed it and the number grew as they fell all over themselves to follow their chosen narrative. One of those narratives was telling us for the past four years

that Joe Biden was "sharp as a tack," an old man at the very top of his game. That insistence was contrary to everything Americans saw and heard with their own eyes and ears and the corporate media literally attacked reportage of Biden's gaffes, frailties and slips. The fiction of Joe Biden being all there persisted and was pressed on the American people right up until it all came crashing down the night of the debate with Donald Trump. It was too much and the cat was out of the bag. The Democrats hurriedly disposed of Joe Biden, but they remained the victim of their own hubris and lies. The American people did not forget nor have they forgotten the legacy media lied their heads off. The failure of the corporate media to report of Biden's mental decline while serving as president of the United States is one of the biggest failures in the history of this country. It literally showed how much the mainstream media cared about truth and democracy. Trust is earned over years but can be obliterated in the blink of an eye.

The mainstream media's attempt, along with the Left and tech giants, to censor

the free speech of anyone who did not agree with whatever narrative they were pushing reveals they don't believe in democracy no matter what they say. The biggest threat to democracy in this country was not Donald Trump but rather the same folks who were chipping away at free speech and expression. Americans inherently knew something was wrong with society when churches were not allowed to meet while Antifa and leftwing protests were sanctioned and considered no threat to anyone's health. It was absurd on the face of it and everybody knew it.

Nor was the failure to report Biden's mental decline the only lie pushed by the corporate media. They went along with the lie that there was no crisis at our southern border for three and a half years. They did back flips to reverse themselves after having reported Kamala Harris was our country's border czar.

The corporate media also protected Joe Biden from himself and his son's blatant influence peddling schemes which earned the Biden family tens of millions of dollars. That same media long ago ceased to be reporters and have been

political activists for quite some time.

The second biggest loser in the election was the Left in America for whom everything comes down to race, gender, and the substitution of religion for ideology. Biden's crack about decency should have stuck in his throat. His lie about pardoning Hunter, the millions of dollars poured into the family coffers by foreign governments and interests, prove Joe Biden hasn't a shred of decency left in his soul. Biden's pardon of most of those vile criminals on death row showed little or no interest in the families and even less respect for the victims of their unspeakable crimes. Nor has Joe Biden ever shown the slightest remorse or regret for the loss of the lives of those brave Americans serving our country who were killed in his disastrous and amateurish withdrawal from Afghanistan, one of whom was one of our own. A decent man can say he is sorry for having failed; a decent man can acknowledge any hurt he has inflicted, whether or not it was unintentional. Former President Jimmy Carter was a decent man, but unfortunately, there is very little about Joe Biden that is decent at all.

## Emerald Academy: Positively Impacting City Scholars for Ten Years

**Continued from page 1**

— Memphis, Nashville, Chattanooga and Knoxville — for the third year in a row.

Emerald Academy School Director Carlissa Weeks attributes this success to the school's culture of excellence. "One of our school's core values is excellence. We keep pushing ourselves to be the best," said Weeks. "Our high expectations for faculty, scholars and families are paying off, and I believe this dedication will lead to even greater achievements. I've seen so much growth in the years I have been here, first as a teacher, and now school director, and I can't wait to see how far we go."

Emerald Academy isn't only about academic results, it's about creating a thriving community. Chronic absenteeism has dropped by over 50% in the last three years, and the scholar attrition rate hit an all-time low during the 2023-2024 school year.

"Every day we strive to create an environment where scholars and families feel supported," said Steve Diggs, president of Emerald Charter Schools. "These milestones confirm that we're on the right track, but our mission remains clear: to prepare

scholars for college and leadership roles in their communities."

What makes Emerald Academy special? It's the people: teachers, staff and families who pour their hearts into making the school a place of learning and growth — a place where the teacher retention rate hit an all-time high during 2023-2024. Parent feedback consistently emphasizes the school's academic rigor, personalized support, deep relational connections and holistic care.

"The academics are what drove us here and made us stay," parent Christal Bourne said. She and her husband, John, agree the faculty and staff make them feel important — and heard — as parents when challenges arise, and they know their children are cared for daily.

Emerald Academy faculty go above and beyond to ensure scholars' success, including connecting scholars with unique learning opportunities. One example: last school year, eighth-grade scholar Amara-Asa Nwachukwu submitted an entry to the national essay contest, "Do the Write Thing." Amara won the contest locally, which was sponsored by Knox County District Attorney

General Charme Allen, and travelled to Washington, D.C., in July where she presented her essay to the Library of Congress, toured the U.S. Capitol and dined with the Ambassador of Kuwait.

Life at Emerald Academy is intentionally designed to inspire its scholars to dream big and achieve even bigger. From the moment they step into the school, scholars are met with a culture that prioritizes excellence, respect and the belief that higher education is within their reach.

One of the unique features of Emerald Academy is that each classroom is named after schools from the Southeastern Conference, the Ivy League and Historically Black Colleges and Universities. This intentional choice surrounds scholars with reminders of academic achievement and the legacy of educational institutions that have shaped so many leaders. Walking through the halls, you'll see names like Fisk University, Howard University, the University of Tennessee, MIT and Harvard, reinforcing the message that attending college is not just a far-off dream, it's real and available to achieve.

Mornings often begin with

affirmations and goal setting, helping scholars start their day with purpose and positivity. Inside the classrooms, learning comes to life through diligent academic instruction combined with engaging, hands-on activities. Scholars are constantly encouraged to think critically and aim high.

"I enjoy watching my kindergarteners grow from beginning to end of the year. Seeing them transition from pre-K students to model Emerald Academy scholars is so fun and rewarding as a teacher," said kindergarten teacher Laura Williamson.

Beyond academics, classrooms are also spaces for character and leadership development. Teachers weave lessons on resilience, kindness and accountability into daily discussions, shaping scholars into well-rounded individuals ready to lead in their communities.

Afternoons bring opportunities for even more enrichment, with scholars having the chance to participate in extracurricular activities that range from sports to arts and leadership programs. These extracurriculars aren't just for fun, they're essential for

enhancing teamwork, building confidence and creating meaningful connections in the community.

At the end of each day, scholars leave not just with new knowledge but also with the encouragement to continue striving for greatness in everything they do.

Emerald Academy faculty and staff look forward to educating young people not only for the remainder of the current school year, but for the decade to come. Charter schools are approved to operate for ten years at a time, and in January, Emerald Academy is up for renewal before the Knox County Board of Education.

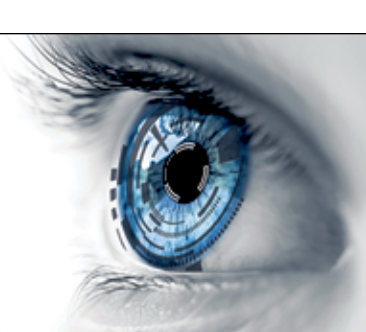
Additionally, with the 2025-2026 school year approaching, enrollment is open now. Any Knox County resident with a rising kindergarten through eighth grade student is eligible to apply. There are no additional criteria for admittance, and if interest outnumbers available seats, a blind lottery will be conducted to determine admission. Applications are accepted online at [www.emeraldacademy.org/enroll](http://www.emeraldacademy.org/enroll) or you can call the school at (865) 249-7223 for more information.

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1. RxSight P160055: FDA Summary of Safety and Effectiveness Data.

# 2024 — The year that was Part 2

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The second half of 2024 saw voters decide how future city elections would be held, new housing and businesses in the city and county, community events and five new Knox County Commissioners. The six months of events echoed the quick growth of our region, the struggles for new road improvements, and the expansion westward as farmland became subdivisions.

All through 2024 The Knoxville Focus brought you the local news, opinion, and local sports coverage. We're proud to be your best source for information each Monday. Here's a look back at a few of the stories and events The Focus covered in the latter half of 2024.

## July

Knox County Trustee Justin Biggs announced the June 2024 tax sale was the biggest in county history and generated over \$17 million for county coffers. Commissioner Kim Frazier questioned the design of the new Farragut school.

Early voting began in Knox County and three new precincts were opened for voters to choose their federal and state primary candidates along with a county-wide general election and the Farragut general election.

A cost increase was announced for tickets to Knox County Schools games. The Knoxville City Council declared Vols Baseball Day in honor of the team's national championship victory.

Ground was broken for South Knoxville's first Splash Park and the city saw calls for more housing.

The city council approved purchasing the former Rosenwald Wing of the Knoxville General Hospital, once the only African American hospital in the city. No plans for future use were announced.

The city continued to discuss updating its voting procedures and adding the 5th District to the rotation with the other district elections. The city council approved multi-unit housing to be permitted in the business and commercial zones. The request to rezone a multiunit complex off Lyon's Bend was rejected.

Various communities, including Powell, celebrated Independence Day with parades and celebrations.

The Forks of the River Wildlife Management hosted a Sunflower Celebration and the Halls High School Class of 1954 held a reunion.

Knox Property Assessor John Whitehead was given a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Tennessee Association of Assessing Officers. The Central High School Bobcat Band received a \$ 5,000 donation from the Alumni Association.

Central High School graduate and professional pitcher Todd Helton was inducted into the Major League Baseball Hall of Fame. Retired coach Eddie Courtney was honored with a street named for him in Farragut.

Concord Christian School announced it would field a varsity football team after a six-year hiatus. Former Tennessee, Memphis State and NFL quarterback Steve Matthews was named head coach.

Emerald Academy celebrated 10 years of operation and Minnesota Timberwolves Defensive Coordinator Elston Turner taught at his annual basketball camp at his alma mater, Austin-East, with about 100 youngsters attending.

## August

Knox County Republicans celebrated primary election victories at the Crowne Plaza downtown on August 1 and the city council continued to debate how future city elections would be held, responding to a state legislature vote to



The Knoxville Focus front page from August 5, 2024.

change the district and at-large voting procedures.

County Democrats saw additional victories in the commission races, electing Shane Jackson to replace Republican Kyle Ward. Newly elected commissioners included Jackson, Damon Rawls, Andy Fox, Adam Thompson and Angela Russell.

Public Service Director Brent Seymour announced that "found money" from state and federal recovery funding would mean extra support for first responder organizations. A Youth Sports Advisory Board was founded by Knox County Parks and Recreation and announced by Parks Director Joseph Mack at a commission agenda meeting.

The Knoxville Area Transit announced new bus schedules and two free fare weeks during the transition and the Police Advisory and Review Committee updated diversity recruitment programs.

The S.O.U.L.S. choir sang its first concert at the West Lonsdale Baptist Church and the annual Suffrage Banquet was held at The Foundry. The late PFC Glenn Paul Wood, a custodian at Ritta Elementary, was honored with a Memorial Mile on August 14.

The Farragut Rotary Club announced the creation of the "Hidden Hero Award" which will honor people in the community for "service above self." Angora Frog Farm opened in Powell, a new child-focused park and dog park funded by Legacy Parks.

The Tennessee Smokies baseball team hosted a reunion of their 1978 Championship Team and the Greater Knoxville Hall of Fame honored Mike Capps, sports director of the Boys & Girls Club.

Local high school football kicked off with the annual KOC Kickoff Classic and The Focus began printing the next week's game schedule along with the previous week's scores.

David Winger, Central High School's ball boy and equipment handler, was honored for his long career.

## September

The Knox County Commission met with five new members to reorganize and make committee appointments, choosing District 3 Commissioner Gina Oster as chair and At-Large Commissioner Kim Frazier as vice chair.

The county trustee announced an increased tax freeze eligibility for senior citizens 65 years of age or older, upping the income to \$60,000 for property taxes. A large turnout was forecast for the November election and people were urged to vote early. Sheriff Tom Spangler asked the merit group to update some job descriptions and add new positions.

The Commission's Rules Committee asked the full commission to drop annual reports by committees and change the language used in Beer Permits. Commissioner Andy Fox's motion to undo zoning changes in South Knox County found no footing. Ethics

Chairman Michael Covington resigned from the group to take a position with the property assessor's office.

The board of education discussed improving emergency plans, including a defibrillator policy.

Knoxville observed the 23rd anniversary of the 9-11 attacks on the World Trade Centers. The 9-11 Stair Climb was canceled and rescheduled for October 6 at the First Horizon Bank downtown.

The city council approved \$4.2 million in funding for the Western Heights Phase III project and considered an \$8.9 million contract with Whaley Construction for the Sevier Avenue Streetscapes Project.

The Community Action Committee's Director, Barbara Kelly, was honored with a new honorary street name in her name at the corner of Western Avenue at the CAC center.

The 104th Tennessee Valley Fair kicked off with speakers noting Ed Shouse's efforts to promote the fair. The Seniors for Creative Learning prepared for the fall semester, offering informal education and new experiences.

Four former Halls High School student-athletes were chosen to the Road to Fame: Jeff Lockwood, Jan O'Conner, Brad Rose and John Vandergriff.

First Baptist Academy's boys team won the Division II District 1-A golf championship. Emerald Youth hosted the Rick Barnes Golf Classic at Holston Hills.

The new sports stadium in the Old City was named "Covenant Health Park" by Boyd Sports, LLC. The Tennessee Smokies scheduled its final game in Kodak.

The Tennessee School for the Deaf dedicated their football season to teammate Joseph Oatsvall, who died in June.

Fourteen girls flag football teams were approved for Knox County Schools.



The Knoxville Focus front page from September 23, 2024.

## October

The school board talked about threats of violence and the problems of the Knox County Schools Clothing Center since its move.

Early voting began and ended with a large turnout ahead of the November election.

Three people put their names in for appointment to the merit board. The Knox commissioners voted down a proposal to downzone the Bower Field area. The late Officer Tucker Blakely was memorialized at a commission meeting with a permanent memorial at Emory and Brickyard Road and the naming of a bridge in that area.

The Sevier Avenue Project was approved by city council and included route improvements, street lights, sidewalk upgrades, roundabouts and underground utilities. \$6.6 million was proposed by city council for the Fort Sanders Connection Project. Turn Up Knoxville's two years of success in helping prevent violence was awarded a \$450,000 grant by the city council.

Former Tennessee Governor

Winfield Dunn passed away and was remembered and honored by Focus columnist Ray Hill. Also in October, Hill announced his book about Senator Kenneth McKellar, "A Feudin' Son of Tennessee," would be published.

Retired Tennessee Supreme Court Justice Sharon G. Lee was honored by the Girl Scouts of Southern Appalachia. Clingmans Dome atop the Smokies was renamed Kuwohi, the Cherokee name for the peak. Two Revolutionary War veterans were honored by the Tennessee Society of the American Revolution at Lynnhurst Cemetery.

Local songwriters performed a free concert at the Fountain City Library and Elmarie Hall Carter celebrated her 95th Birthday at Litton's Restaurant.

Marbledale Baptist pitched in to help Grace Baptist of Newport following the devastation caused by the flooding of the Little Pigeon River by Hurricane Helene.

Rev. Dr. Rocky Ramsey celebrated 40 years at Corryton church and the 16th Annual Emerald Youth Dinner honored Mary Slack. Visit Knoxville opened the new Sunsphere Welcome Center.

The Farragut Lady Admirals won in the district soccer quarterfinals. The Bearden boys and Hardin Valley girls won their regional golf tournaments.

CAK's Bryson White won the TSSAA Golf Championship. The Christian Academy's girls golf team won their state title and Hardin Valley freshman Addisyn Newman finished in a three-way tie for the Class AA girls state tournament.

The Farragut and Gibbs girls volleyball teams moved on to the state tournament.

## November

More than 163,300 people voted early in the huge ballot and the November 5 general election saw some surprises. City voters rejected the proposed election of council members by all voters and chose district-only elections in primaries and general elections.

Congressman Tim Burchett and Knox County Republicans celebrated a large victory in local, state and national elections.

In a 5-4 vote the Board of Education turned over the operation of the Clothing Center to the KCS Culture Department.

The commission authorized nondiscrimination language required by the federal government in all agreements for incoming federal and state funding. Knox County employees got an additional 2% raise, upping their 2025 salaries by 4%.

Dan Johnson was selected from three applicants to serve on the merit board, replacing John Valiant. Input was requested for the East Tennessee Mobility Study.

The commission rejected a resolution to "protect the innocence of children." The Knox County Ethics Committee chose Deborah Stafford to replace long-serving chairman Michael Covington.

Repairs to the Cecil Webb Recreation Center were approved by the Knoxville City Council. The city council voted to hike the hotel-motel tax to 4%.

Big Orange Pickleball courts opened in Strawberry Plains. The Farragut Rotary Club selected Farrell Levy as the recipient of the Hidden Hero Award.

Knoxville Community Media kicked off a new internet radio station and Floyd's Antique and Estate Sales hosted a Christmas Open House.

Knox County girls dominated the II-AA state cross country meet. Keegan Smith captured the TSSA state cross country championship. The Catholic High School senior won his last victory in his last race for the school.

Farragut Senior Evan Beeler won the Regional 2 Class AA Cross Country Meet. Alexandra Vesser led the Hardin Valley girls to win the Class AA Cross Country

Race. Central runners Barrett Lemons and Parson Campen qualified for the Regional 2-AA Championships.

Quarterback Weston Edmondson of Grace Christian Academy was selected at The Focus / Coaches 2024 All-Knox County Team Player of the Year.



The Knoxville Focus front page from November 18, 2024.

## December

The commission voted to approve a \$3.15 million grant from the state and federal government for use in hiring and training school resource officers.

Applications were requested from high school students wanting to serve as Knox County Junior Commissioners. The trustee's plea to the state to permit funding of local tax relief for disabled veterans got Knox Commission support.

The commission overturned a planning decision involving the historic Ben Bower home in South Knoxville to permit general business and corridor mixed-use. The Knox Commission approved the use of \$1 million in federal and state funding to build four low-income units within an upscale Hardin Valley development in a split 9-3 vote.

The merit board backed the sheriff's request to permit the hiring of veterans with other-than-honorable discharges.

The city council approved a 10-year tax break for a new \$135 million housing complex planned for West Hill Avenue and Locust Street downtown. The council also upped parking meter violation fines and authorized the Public Building Authority to enforce and tow violators. The council voted to give a tax break to developers of the historic Sanitary Laundry Building to be used as the owner's offices.

Local Knoxville television stations held fundraising events for the Honor Guards and Second Harvest. Knoxville warming centers opened to help the homeless and others during nights that get colder than 25 degrees. The Tennessee State Bank was featured as a supporter of the community.

The historic Gibbs Home on Emory Road received some needed repairs to the old log cabin.

Pearl Harbor Day was remembered at Wallace Memorial Baptist Church and Medal of Honor winner Joe Marm Jr. was honored and spoke on his history. Hundreds of volunteers placed wreaths on the graves of veterans at Knoxville's three veteran cemeteries during the annual Wreaths Across America event. Bearden softball Holiday Helpers were among those who remembered fallen veterans at the wreath laying.

Bearden High's Bulldogs maintained a perfect basketball season with a home win against the Greene Devils.

Zack Turner scored a record-high 48 points for the Gibbs High School basketball team despite a loss to Hardin Valley.



## The Doctor is in

a weekly column by  
Dr. Jim Ferguson

### Coach

If we allow terrorists to stop us from living, they have already won.  
Jim Ferguson

I'm writing this essay on New Year's Eve, a traditional time for change or at least resolutions for diet, exercise, etc. America voted for change in November, 2024. Some make personal resolutions like Elon Musk who slimmed down with diet and "help." And a new survey of Americans found that the legacy media, if they are to survive, must resolve to report the story rather than a story. But even in these contentious times, most will be glad to see the end of 2024; it's time to move on.

At year's end, Becky and I are watching a lot of playoff football. And there's certainly no shortage of bowl games, the college championship series and NFL teams struggling to get a

postseason playoff spot. I actually prefer watching professional football because I don't have a favorite. It's less stressful than watching the Tennessee Vols.

I'm not a big guy so I never played football. Baseball and ice hockey were the sports where I learned the valuable lessons of teamwork and loyalty. Although I am not a football expert, I am a fan of the game and I am what you might call an armchair quarterback.

I never know where my stories will come from, but surprisingly this week's essay began with the Pop-Tarts Bowl between Iowa State and the Miami Hurricanes. Many wanted to see if Miami quarterback Cam Ward would break the Division I passing record for career touchdowns. He did so by throwing three touchdowns in the first half. He then decided not to play

the second half for fear he might be injured and risk his NFL draft status. His team lost by one point.

Football is a rough sport and there are risks. But where is the notion of loyalty to your team or teammates, let alone your school? Cam Ward was already receiving several million dollars through the NIL (Name, Image, Likeness) arrangement and reportedly had an injury insurance policy. When he was a no-show after halftime, this armchair quarterback got to thinking about loyalty, student-athletes, NIL arrangements and the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association). I have even been wondering whether I can still "cheer" for a Volunteer team whose ranks may shuffle like deck chairs because of the Transfer Portal.

I am out on a limb with this essay because I'm ill equipped to write about the politics and nuances of professional and semi-professional collegiate sports. And make no mistake, college football and basketball have been the minor leagues for the NFL and NBA for decades.

When I practiced medicine, I often asked the opinion of experts as I managed my patient's medical care. And I frequently served as a consultant to doctors in

other specialties. So I concluded that I needed a sports consultant for this column.

The author Phillip Yancey observed that "writing is a solitary enterprise," and he's right. But for this essay, I am writing in collaboration with "Coach," my friend, a former Division I basketball coach, athletic director, and sports writer.

I'm sure there are some good people in the NCAA, but I've never heard a kind word about this organization which threatens boosters, coaches and schools if an athlete receives even a home cooked meal, let alone a Big Mac. But now in the era of NIL and the Transfer Portal, is criticism of a gifted Big Mac relevant?

The NIL concept originated in California with the "Fair Pay to Play Act (SB 306) and was expanded by Gavin Newsom (what could go wrong?). The NCAA has incorporated the NIL and the Transfer Portal in its bylaws. Both have produced drastic changes in college sports and arguably significant harm.

The NIL was developed as a way to monetarily reward an athlete whose picture or number appeared on a jersey. I'm a capitalist and people should be rewarded for their accomplishments. But the NIL genie is now

out of the bottle and, along with the Transfer Portal that enables athletes to change teams seemingly at will, is now endangering college sports. There may be extenuating circumstances, but as an example, West Virginia's Marshall College had to cancel a bowl bid when so many players entered the portal in December that they couldn't field a team.

There may be NCAA policies that I don't understand. However, it's a new year and perhaps it is time to change things that aren't working. I am a consumer of college sports which, along with ad revenue, make athletics financially feasible. Ergo, the opinions of fans for issues like the Portal, NIL and Title IX women's sports should be heeded by the NCAA. Ignoring John Q. Public recently cost the Democrats dearly. Policies that make "teams" meaningless (Portal) or those that make "some animals more equal than others" (NIL) may be the death knell for college sports. Perhaps both the NCAA and Kamala Harris need to follow the path of the dodo.

There are college students and there are college athletes, but these days there are fewer student-athletes because many are actually semi-professional athletes. Of course, there

are exceptional people who can pursue both relevant degrees and excel at sports. UT's Josh Dobbs earned a degree in aeronautical engineering and Pat Head Summitt's Lady Vols were both focused students and athletes.

Unfortunately, the veneer of "student athlete" has been profoundly changed by the NIL and the Portal. Again, there are exceptions. The University of Texas quarterback Arch Manning quelled rumors that he will be entering the portal despite the fact he was second string all this year.

Bob Dylan once sang that "the times they are a changin'." I'm not sure how the mess can be fixed, but I suspect that the next step will be contracts between student-athletes and colleges mediated by lawyers. What could possibly go wrong?

I am a product of and believe in higher education, but many younglings are now questioning the expense and the benefit of college. I've read that college enrollment is declining, even though it doesn't seem so at UT Knoxville.

I can't predict the future, but the NFL and NBA better hope that their talent pipeline doesn't dry up.

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

## Visiting presidential sites

### More Than A Day Away



By Mike Steely

We have another presidential inauguration coming and it reminded me of the many times my wife and I have encountered presidents or their homes. I was stationed in Washington, D.C., in the 1960s and represented the Coast Guard in many events including

taking part in the second inaugural parade of Richard Nixon.

I am very fortunate that my military service and profession have allowed me to visit presidential places and even see some of the chief executives in person.

Before those experiences, I remember when my wife and I were leaving a movie at a downtown theater and were halted by D.C. police in the middle of the street. Several cars went by and one of them, a long black limousine, had a face peering out. It was President Lyndon Johnson.

Also, while in D.C., I was assigned to the National Cathedral for the funeral of Dwight Eisenhower. I was

**Continue on page 2**

## Knoxville Flea Market returns to EXPO Center



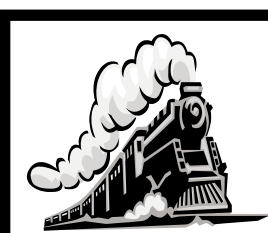
The Knoxville Flea Market has a variety of vendors but none like Duane Divelbliss. He and his wife, Cara, create rock pictures and are known as the "Pebble People." The Sevier County couple travels to different events to sell their Smoky Mountain Treasures of Pebble Art and recently they appeared at the Knoxville Flea Market's grand reopening at the EXPO Center where they drew a lot of attention. Photo by Mike Steely.

By Mike Steely  
Senior Writer  
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The Knoxville Flea Market returned to the EXPO Center on Clinton Highway for a grand re-opening on Friday, December 20. The three-day event featured more than 250 booths, free parking and admission, and Santa Claus visited on Saturday and Sunday for free photographs.

Owned and operated by Stewart Promotions of Louisville, Kentucky, the flea market is one of many the company organizes including markets in Louisville and Owensboro, Kentucky, and Knoxville and Franklin, Tennessee.

The Knoxville Flea Market will return to the EXPO Center in March, May, August, November and December 2025. Booth information is available by calling (502)465-2244.



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# Living in the Blessing of the Barley Field

It's a New Year! This beautiful Earth that we live on has revolved in orbit around the sun over the last 365 days. In that time, we have all experienced various life changes, both positive and negative. Over



By Justin Pratt, Clear Springs Baptist Church Senior Pastor

We know Ruth was a Moabite who forsook her pagan heritage to cling to the God of Israel. Her reward was a new husband (Boaz) and a son (Obed), and the eventual privileged position as great-grand-

mother to a king (David.) I love when the Bible gives us moments to see the big significance in little details. These are moments where seemingly small, insignificant particulars have a large impact or influence on situations or outcomes. It happened at the close of Ruth chapter 1. The Bible says that Naomi and Ruth "came to Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest." Not the middle or the end, but the beginning. These poor widows would have found it very difficult to survive in that culture but we see in the small details that God has their back.

It's an incredible story that is filled with the message of grace. Behind the scenes, however, is tragedy.

The story doesn't begin with hope and mercy, it starts with hurt and misfortune. A famine has struck the land and a father named Elimelech and his wife, Naomi, have left Bethlehem and landed in Moab. I will digress to name the specifics for now, but it was a bad decision and after 10 years of lingering where they only meant to go temporarily, calamity struck. Naomi will be forced to do what no person should ever have to do; in a short manner of time she will say goodbye to her beloved husband and no sooner than he is buried, the scripture tells us that both of her sons die. The causes of death are unknown, but what we do know is that this poor wife and mother has endured more than any human should have to experience.

Word eventually comes to Moab that God has visited Bethlehem and the crops are growing again. Over a series of conversations, Naomi is going to return home and Ruth has made the choice to go back

God has directed their steps and His attention to meticulous details has landed them in the perfect place at the perfect time! This small fact at the end of the chapter may be clear to us, but in the moment, it wasn't as easily recognizable for Naomi. She stands before people she once knew, perhaps rightfully so, complaining of the hardships she's been forced to endure. And she does so standing in a field full of barley that is ripe and ready to be harvested. Isn't that like God to provide for us, when we don't deserve it? And isn't that like us to be complaining when we have so many blessings around us?

Naomi, like many of us, had failed at the moment to see the faithfulness of God. She had endured 10 long years of what felt like an empty life, full of hardship. She had found it easier to file complaints blaming God for the things that had happened than to look

around and see the incredible blessings that He had given her! She had left hungry and came home at the beginning of the barley harvest. If we are not careful we can be guilty of overlooking the little ways that God has proved his goodness and faithfulness. We miss the blessings when we let the burdens overshadow them. We often forfeit praise because we are focused on the pain.

This coming year we will all, to some degree or another, experience let-down, hurt, hardship, pain and trials. Life can be hard. My challenge is not allowing the garden variety of inevitable difficulties to eclipse the simple everyday blessings that God has laid before us. The joy of raising children, the blessing of marriage, the delight of having a church family, and the privilege to live in America. More health than sickness, and though maybe not rich, more money than poverty. Running water, electricity, heat in the winter, food to eat, a car to drive, and a family to love, just to name a few.

Chances are, you are living in the blessing of your own barley fields, sometimes we just have to intentionally open our eyes and see it all around us. When we do, I think we will come to this conclusion: the good is still greater than the bad, the blessings more than the burdens, and that God is good and God is faithful! Have a blessed New Year!

# Visiting presidential sites

**Cont. from page 1** Woodrow Wilson's home in Staunton.

We were very privileged to talk with Jimmy Carter at a convention in Louisville, Kentucky, prior to his campaign for the presidency. He was open and friendly. After he left office we visited his childhood home in Plains, Georgia. Carter's Library in Atlanta has a duplicate of his Presidential Oval Office and lots of things from his four years in office and as that state's governor. Also, while in Georgia, we visited Warm Springs, the site of President Franklin Roosevelt's "Little White House" near Columbus.

We had a chance to see, in person, Presidents Ronald Reagan, at the opening of the Knoxville World's Fair, and Barack Obama at an event at Pellissippi College. Almost-presidents we've seen in person include Hubert Humphrey and Walter Mondale.

We've been to the Hermitage, home of President Andrew Jackson, and the home of President James K. Polk in Columbia, Tennessee.

If you're interested in presidential history, you might want to think of going to the Andrew Johnson National Historic Site in nearby Greeneville, Tennessee. There you can visit his homestead and museum or you might even like to drive up the hill overlooking the community and visit Johnson's grave.

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# 'Sunny Jim'

## James E. Watson of Indiana

Pages from the Past



By Ray Hill  
rayhill865@gmail.com

For half a century, James Eli Watson was an important factor in Indiana politics. For most of that time, Watson occupied a seat in either the U.S. House of Representatives or the United States Senate. A jovial fellow who was a prototype for the stereotype of a politician, Watson excelled in the statecraft of backslapping, handshaking, and kissing babies. Jim Watson's affable and genial nature made him good company and his cheerfulness won him the sobriquet of "Sunny Jim." A highly partisan and loud Republican, Watson was generally well-liked by his colleagues, including many Democrats. Watson could be blunt and was known for telling jokes to amuse both colleagues and constituents. "The best thing that could happen to this country would be to have Congress not meet for three years and have no State Legislature meet for four years," Watson told a reporter.

Watson was an Old Guard Republican, profoundly loyal to the Grand Old Party. When asked by a reporter if he was in agreement that the Republican Party was all but over, Watson snapped, "No, sir I am not. What we need now is some old-fashioned party loyalty!" TIME magazine quipped, "Senator Watson's optimism is not as sweet as the President's (Warren G. Harding). But it is more specific."

Once, returning to Washington, D.C., after having been in Indiana, Senator Watson informed his colleagues, "All would be well if we had dollar and a half wheat and ten dollar hogs."

Throughout his time in politics, "Sunny Jim" Watson was one of those fellows who seemed almost impossible to dislike. TIME magazine once noted "if one were asked to pick a man in Washington who best typifies the popular idea of an old-style politician the choice would almost inevitably fall upon" Watson. The popular news magazine noted the senator's handshake was "magnificent." While once rivals, "Sunny Jim" became the Hoover spokesman for the Hoover Administration. Yet Watson could be tart. When Democrat Wendell Willkie, a native Hoosier, became a Republican and captured the GOP president nomination, Watson archly said, "Back home in Indiana, we think it's all right for the town whore to join the church, but we don't let her lead the choir on the first night."

"Sunny Jim" Watson had critics aplenty. National columnist Frank Kent once wrote of Senator Watson, "In Indiana you hear far more scathing denunciation

of the Honorable Jim from prominent Republicans than you do from any Democrat. By outstanding men of his own party he is privately pictured as a blithering blatherskite, the most blatant bluff any State has sent to Washington in years --- a disgrace to Indiana, a fraud and a faker."

James E. Watson spent almost the entirety of his life in politics. Born in 1864, Watson was already campaigning for GOP candidates in Indiana during the 1880s. In 1894 Watson was the Republican nominee for Indiana's Fourth Congressional District against Congressman William S. Holman, the Democrat incumbent. Watson won that election but lost reelection to Holman two years later. Watson made his own comeback in the 1898 election by running for and winning in Indiana's Sixth District next door. Watson quickly became a close friend and aide to powerful House Speaker "Uncle Joe" Cannon. That friendship earned him a spot on the most desirable committee assignment in the House, the influential Ways and Means Committee. Determined to move up the political ladder, Watson opted not to seek reelection to the House of Representatives in 1908 but rather sought to be elected governor of Indiana. Jim Watson won the GOP nomination but was upset in the general election by Democrat Thomas R. Marshall, who would be elected vice president with Woodrow Wilson in 1912.

Following his defeat for the governorship, Jim Watson opened a law practice in his hometown of Rushville, but he remained a fixture on Capitol Hill where he lobbied on behalf of the American Manufacturer's Association. Watson also remained a power in Indiana's Republican Party and his support was much sought after by aspiring officeholders and applicants for federal and state jobs.

James E. Watson announced as a candidate for the United States Senate in 1916 in the hope of a political comeback. Watson and Harry New contested for the Republican nomination in a campaign that became increasingly bitter. Fate intervened when U.S. Senator Benjamin Shiveley died suddenly in March. With both of Indiana's seats in the U.S. Senate up for election, both New and Watson were nominated to run in the general election. Both were victorious in the fall and Watson served the remaining four years of the late Senator Shiveley's term.

Watson faced Thomas



INTERNATIONAL NEWS PHOTO FROM THE AUTHOR'S PERSONAL COLLECTION.  
*Movie Morals Czar Will Hayes (left) and former U. S. Senator James E. Watson (right), both of Indiana at the 1940 GOP National Convention.*

Taggart in the 1920 general election. Taggart was the boss of Indiana's Democratic Party and it was a grudge match as the two had tangled before in the 1916 election. Watson won the 1920 contest and became one of the senators who were considered by the media of the day to be administration spokesmen for the occupant of the White House.

While many think the political strength during its revival in the decade of the 1920s was confined to the South, the truth is the Ku Klux Klan exhibited great influence in other states, including Indiana. The leading Klan figure in Indiana was D. C. Stephenson. When the fearless Senator James A. Reed of Missouri was investigating corruption in other states, his attention drifted to Stephenson and Indiana. The former Klan leader was already in jail for murder and when called to testify, suddenly had little to say. D. C. Stephenson invoked his constitutional right not to incriminate himself.

"Sunny Jim" Watson was less than happy. Watson complained to a reporter, "Last week my name was tossed about in newspaper headlines because of two events. Neither one of them pleased me. I was linked with the sensational K.K.K. investigation in Indiana, a fact which my opponents say will damage my chances for re-election to the Senate. Then I was injured in an automobile accident near Indianapolis. My car went into a ditch to save crashing into another machine. I received a scalp wound which it took ten stitches to close, a sprained wrist and ankle, many bruises. I will be in the hospital for a week."

Senator Jim Watson was still confined to a hospital when Reed came a-calling to Indiana and summoned his colleague to his sick bed. Watson told Reed he had never been a member of the KKK. "As to Stephenson," Watson said, "I knew him. All politicians in Indiana knew Stephenson ... I was always afraid to give him any confidence, and never did, because there was something about the

man that always warned me not to do it. I was afraid he might push out, because he was, in a way a human dynamo and, at the time of his supremacy, might have controlled 150,000 votes in Indiana ..."

Senator Reed, clearly disappointed, hopped on a train bound for Missouri and growled, "I have more important things to do ..."

Watson's entire political career had been aimed at a single target: the presidency of the United States of America. Having been reelected to the Senate in 1926, Watson thought 1928 might be his year as President Calvin Coolidge had said he "chose not to run" that year. Herbert Hoover, secretary of commerce during the administrations of Warren G. Harding and Coolidge, was well ahead in his pursuit of the GOP nomination. Watson and others tried to stop Hoover's momentum, but they were unsuccessful. For his running mate, Hoover picked another presidential aspirant, Senator Charles Curtis of Kansas, the Senate's majority leader. The Hoover-Curtis ticket won an overwhelming victory. With Charles Curtis assuming the vice presidency, Senate Republicans met to choose a new majority leader; they chose Jim Watson.

The popularity of Herbert Hoover came crashing down with the collapse of the stock market and the onset of the Great Depression. As the Depression deepened, the American people became more restive and worried.

Watson recalled he well understood the position he was in when he sought reelection in 1932. Few people thought Herbert Hoover could win a second term in the White House and privately, Senator Watson believed Hoover would be defeated and take the entire Republican ticket down with him. Indiana Democrats had nominated a strong statewide ticket to ride Franklin Roosevelt's coattails. As he fully expected, Jim Watson lost the election to Frederick Van Nuys, who had little experience in elective office.

Resilient, James E.

Watson affiliated himself with an insurance company in Indiana and resumed his career as a lawyer-lobbyist in Washington, D.C. It quickly became quite clear the former senator never considered himself done with politics, or more importantly, that politics was done with him. Watson retained considerable clout back home in Indiana in GOP circles. The former senator watched as his one-time colleague, Arthur R. Robinson, went down to defeat in 1934. Both of Indiana's U.S. senators were Democrats after March 3, 1935.

Nobody was surprised when the 73-year-old former senator announced in February of 1938 that he was running to reclaim his seat in the United States Senate. Watson naturally pointed to his long service in Washington as a good reason to make him a candidate to return to the Capitol as a lawmaker. At the time, Indiana Republicans selected their senatorial nominees not by primaries but through statewide conventions. Several other Republicans were off and running for the GOP senatorial nomination, but the opposition to Watson coalesced around the candidacy of Raymond E. Willis, a popular small-town newspaper owner and publisher. Moreover, Willis also had the powerful backing of Governor Ralph Gates, who held all state patronage in his hands. Gates was deeply opposed to renominating James E. Watson, believing the former senator could not win the general election contest.

At the time, incumbent Frederick Van Nuys looked like a particularly inviting target, especially as there had been an effort by the leadership of Indiana's Democratic Party bosses to remove the senator from the ticket. Van Nuys rattled fellow Democrats when the diminutive senator boldly announced if he were denied the Democratic nomination, he would run in the general election as an Independent, virtually assuring the election of a Republican. Van Nuys had opposed President Roosevelt's plan to pack

the Supreme Court, which caused some powerful Indiana Democrats to urge denying him their party's nomination. Some Republicans, including the Fort Wayne News Sentinel, a GOP newspaper, had urged that Senator Van Nuys be given their own party's nomination.

Watson and his wife returned to Rushville where they checked into the Lollis Hotel where friends and supporters could call on them before the state convention. Some of Watson's support became wobbly as Republicans prepared to meet in convention due to the profound opposition of Governor Gates. Increasing the pressure on those delegates supportive of the former senator was the almost unanimous support by Indiana's editorial association of newspapers for their colleague, Raymond Willis. Still, Watson had done many things for many Republicans and his support was deeply rooted in many Indiana counties.

"Sunny Jim" Watson was the acknowledged front-runner for the Republican senatorial nomination when Republicans gathered in Indianapolis for their state convention on June 29. Virtually every political observer believed Watson would lead the first ballot. The strength of Raymond Willis at the convention surprised the former senator and just about everybody else. Willis led on every ballot before clinching the GOP nomination on the third ballot. At 62, Willis was more than a decade younger than Jim Watson. Willis had only barely nosed out Watson, receiving 444 votes as to Watson's 442 on the first ballot. "Sunny Jim" Watson knew at that moment, his electoral career was behind him.

Watson assumed his role as an elder statesman of his party and returned to his law practice in Washington, D.C. The former senator remained interested and active for the next decade when he died unexpectedly at the age of 83 on July 29, 1948.

# LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

## COURT NOTICES

### NON-RESIDENT NOTICE

**TO: ALL PERSONS UNKNOWN CLAIMING ANY LEGAL OR EQUITABLE RIGHT, TITLE, ESTATE, LIEN, OR INTEREST IN THE PROPERTY DESCRIBED IN THE COMPLAINT AS 1337 BEAUMONT AVENUE, KNOXVILLE, TN 37921**

**IN RE: WILSON BENDIGITO, REGINOLD JONES, AND EDWARD HAKIZIMANA vs ALL PERSONS UNKNOWN CLAIMING ANY LEGAL OR EQUITABLE RIGHT, TITLE, ESTATE, LIEN, OR INTEREST IN THE PROPERTY DESCRIBED IN THE COMPLAINT AS 1337 BEAUMONT AVENUE, KNOXVILLE, TN 37921 NO. 209990-1**

IN THE CHANCERY COURT FOR KNOX COUNTY, TENNESSEE

In this Cause, it appearing from the Complaint filed, which is sworn to, that the defendant ALL PERSONS UNKNOWN CLAIMING ANY LEGAL OR EQUITABLE RIGHT, TITLE, ESTATE, LIEN, OR INTEREST IN THE PROPERTY DESCRIBED IN THE COMPLAINT, a non-resident of the State of Tennessee, or whose whereabouts cannot be ascertained upon diligent search and inquiry, so that the ordinary process of law cannot be served upon ALL PERSONS UNKNOWN CLAIMING ANY LEGAL OR EQUITABLE RIGHT, TITLE, ESTATE, LIEN, OR INTEREST IN THE PROPERTY DESCRIBED IN THE COMPLAINT, it is ordered that said defendant, ALL PERSONS UNKNOWN CLAIMING ANY LEGAL OR EQUITABLE RIGHT, TITLE, ESTATE, LIEN, OR INTEREST IN THE PROPERTY DESCRIBED IN THE COMPLAINT AS 1337 BEAUMONT AVENUE, KNOXVILLE, TN 37921, file an answer with the Clerk and Master of the Chancery Court at Knoxville, Tennessee and with DAVID J. OTTEN, an Attorney whose address is PO BOX 32211, KNOXVILLE, TN 37930 within thirty (30) days of the last date of publication or a judgment by default will be taken against you and the cause will be set for hearing Ex-Parte as to you before Chancellor John F. Weaver at the Knox County Chancery Court, Division I, 400 Main Street, Knoxville, Tennessee 37902.

This notice will be published in a The Knoxville Focus Newspaper for four (4) consecutive weeks.

This 12th day of December, 2024.

J. SCOTT GRISWOLD  
Clerk and Master

### NON-RESIDENT NOTICE

**TO: GERSON LEVY HERNANDEZ**

**IN RE: SELMA PENA- PEREZ, Plaintiff, vs. GERSON LEVY HERNANDEZ, Defendant**

**NO. CE-32334**  
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR BLOUNT COUNTY, TN

In this cause, it appearing from the Motion of the Plaintiff, which is sworn to, that the defendant, Gerson Levy Hernandez is a non-resident of the State of Tennessee or whose whereabouts are unknown so that ordinary process cannot be served upon him. Said defendant must file an Answer in the Circuit Court for Blount County, at Maryville, Tennessee, and with plaintiff's attorney, William L. Gribble II, whose address is 550 E. Broadway Ave., Maryville, TN 37804., within 30 days of the last date of publication or a Judgment by Default may be entered and the cause set for hearing ex-parte as to defendant.

This Notice will be published in The Knoxville Focus for four consecutive weeks.

This 12th day of December, 2024.

STEPHEN S. OGLE  
Clerk and Master  
Blount County, Tennessee

### NON-RESIDENT NOTICE

**TO: CALEB TAYLOR SPEARS**

**IN RE: JOSH DUTTON, PLAINTIFF V. CALEB TAYLOR SPEARS, INDIVIDUALLY, AND SPEARS EXTERIORS AND CONTRACTING, LLC., AND SPEEDY D/BA SPEARS GUTTERING, DEFENDANTS**

**NO. 209781-2**  
IN THE CHANCERY COURT FOR KNOX COUNTY, TENNESSEE

In this Cause, it appearing from the Complaint filed, which is sworn to, that the defendant CALEB TAYLOR SPEARS, a non-resident of the State of Tennessee, or whose whereabouts cannot be ascertained upon diligent search and inquiry, so that the ordinary process of law cannot be served upon CALEB TAYLOR SPEARS, it is ordered that said defendant, CALEB TAYLOR SPEARS, file an answer with the Clerk and Master of the Chancery Court at Knoxville, Tennessee and with GREGORY H. HARRISON, an Attorney whose address is 800 S. GAY STREET, SUITE 1650, Knoxville, Tennessee 37929 within thirty (30) days of the last date of publication or a judgment by default will be taken against you and the cause will be set for hearing Ex-Parte as to you before Chancellor RICHARD B. ARMSTRONG JR. at the Knox County Chancery Court, Division II, 400 Main Street, Knoxville, Tennessee 37902.

This notice will be published in The Knoxville Focus Newspaper for four (4) consecutive weeks.

This 10th day of December, 2024.

J. SCOTT GRISWOLD  
Clerk and Master

### ORDER OF PUBLICATION

**NOTICE TO UNKNOWN BENEFICIARIES TO: UNKNOWN BENEFICIARIES OF THE ESTATE OF SWAN T. SMITH**

**IN RE: THE ESTATE OF SWAN T. SMITH**

**DOCKET NO. 031922**

IN THE PROBATE DIVISION OF THE CHANCERY COURT FOR KNOX COUNTY, TENNESSEE

The Administrator CTA N. Craig Strand of the Estate of Swan T. Smith gives notice that he intends to move to close the Estate of Swan T. Smith and do a final distribution to any beneficiaries that he has submitted to the Probate Division of the Chancery Court for Knox County, Tennessee.

The Administrator CTA N. Craig Strand has conducted a diligent search to locate all known beneficiaries of the Estate of Swan T. Smith and submits that he has done so. There remains the possibility that additional unknown beneficiaries exist.

A hearing for the Motion to Close the Estate and to approve final distribution of the residuary estate is set for February 6, 2025 in the Probate Division of the Chancery Court for Knox County,

Tennessee at 9:30 am. The address for this hearing is Room 352 of the Knox City-County Building located at 400 Main Street, Knoxville, Tennessee 37902.

Such Notice provides that upon failure to appear at the February 6, 2025 at 9:30 am. or otherwise object to the closure of the Estate of Swan T. Smith and/or the final distribution of funds will constitute a waiver of the same.

Notice of service by publication that shall be published in The Knoxville Focus for a period of four (4) consecutive weeks.

This 17 day of DECEMBER, 2024.

J. SCOTT GRISWOLD  
Clerk & Master

### NON-RESIDENT NOTICE

**TO: SEAN NANCE**

**IN RE: MA'LAYAH AMIRRAH NANCE BY: BRANDIE RYESSHA NICOLE JACKSON Vs. CIERRA AUDREANA TRAMMELL and SEAN TRAE NANCE NO. 209848-3**

IN THE CHANCERY COURT FOR KNOX COUNTY, TENNESSEE

In this Cause, it appearing from the Complaint filed, which is sworn to, that the defendant SEAN NANCE, a non-resident of the State of Tennessee, or whose whereabouts cannot be ascertained upon diligent search and inquiry, so that the ordinary process of law cannot be served upon SEAN NANCE, it is ordered that said defendant, SEAN NANCE, file an answer with the Clerk and Master of the Chancery Court at Knoxville, Tennessee, and with ALEX D. BRINSON, an Attorney whose address is 2018 CLINCH AVE., Knoxville, Tennessee 37916, within thirty (30) days of the last date of publication or a judgment by default will be taken against you and the cause will be set for hearing Ex-Parte as to you before Chancellor Christopher D. Heagerty at the Knox County Chancery Court, Division III, 400 Main Street, Knoxville, Tennessee 37902.

This notice will be published in a The Knoxville Focus Newspaper for four (4) consecutive weeks.

This 30th day of December, 2024.

J. SCOTT GRISWOLD  
Clerk and Master

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

**ESTATE OF PEDRO JULIO ALVAREZ DOCKET NUMBER 89820-2**

Notice is hereby given that on the 23 day of DECEMBER, 2024, Letters of Administration in respect of the Estate of PEDRO JULIO ALVAREZ, who died on June 25, 2024, were issued to the undersigned by the Chancery Court, Probate Division, of Knox County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured, against the Estate are required to file the same with the clerk of the above named court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2), otherwise their claims will be forever barred:

(1)(A) Four (4) months from the date of the first publication of this notice if the creditor received an actual copy of this notice to creditors at least sixty (60) days before the date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication; or  
(B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the notice to creditors if the creditor received the copy of the notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of first publication as described in (1)(A); or  
(2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.

This the 23 day of DECEMBER, 2024.

ESTATE OF PEDRO JULIO ALVAREZ  
PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE(S)  
JOHN EDWIN BAUGH, ATTORNEY  
4617 CHAMBLISS AVE.  
KNOXVILLE, TN 37919

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

**ESTATE OF ROBERT H. COFER DOCKET NUMBER 90355-3**

Notice is hereby given that on the 17 day of DECEMBER, 2024, letters testamentary in respect of the Estate of ROBERT H. COFER, who died Nov. 7, 2024, were issued to the undersigned by the Clerk and Master of the Chancery Court of Knox County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured, against his or her estate are required to file the same with the Clerk and Master of the above named Court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2), otherwise their claims will be forever barred:

(1)(A) Four (4) months from the date of the first publication of this notice if the creditor received an actual copy of this notice to creditors at least sixty (60) days before the date that is four (4) months from the date of this first publication; or  
(B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the notice to creditors if the creditor received the copy of the notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of first publication as described in (1)(A); or  
(2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.

This the 17 day of DECEMBER, 2024.

ESTATE OF ROBERT H. COFER  
PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE(S)  
MARY ANNE COFER, EXECUTOR  
4371 LIFESPINGS LANE  
KNOXVILLE, TN 37918

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

**ESTATE OF JOSEPH P. FLYNN, JR. DOCKET NUMBER 90370-3**

Notice is hereby given that on the 17 day of DECEMBER, 2024, letters testamentary in respect of the Estate of JOSEPH P. FLYNN, JR., who died December 10, 2023, were issued to the undersigned by the Chancery Court, Probate Division, of Knox County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured, against the estate are required to file the same with the clerk of the above-named court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2), otherwise their claims will be forever barred:

(1)(A) Four (4) months from the date of the first publication of this notice if the creditor received an actual copy of this notice to creditors at least sixty (60) days before the date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication; or  
(B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the notice to creditors if the creditor received the copy of the notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of first publication as described in (1)(A); or  
(2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.

This the 17 day of DECEMBER, 2024.

ESTATE OF JOSEPH P. FLYNN, JR.  
PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE(S)

SHERMAN ANDREW SEXTON  
4132 MISER STATION RD.  
LOUISVILLE, TN 37777

FARRELL A. LEVY, ATTORNEY  
10805 KINGSTON PIKE, SUITE 200  
KNOXVILLE, TN 37934

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

**ESTATE OF MICHAEL SCOTT FUNDERLIC DOCKET NUMBER 90346-3**

Notice is hereby given that on the 16 day of DECEMBER, 2024, letters testamentary in respect of the Estate of MICHAEL SCOTT FUNDERLIC, who died November 16, 2024, were issued to the undersigned by the Chancery Court, Probate Division, of Knox County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured, against the estate are required to file the same with the clerk of the above-named court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2), otherwise their claims will be forever barred:

(1)(A) Four (4) months from the date of the first publication of this notice if the creditor received an actual copy of this notice to creditors at least sixty (60) days before the date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication; or  
(B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the notice to creditors if the creditor received the copy of the notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of first publication as described in (1)(A); or  
(2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.

This the 16 day of DECEMBER, 2024.

ESTATE OF MICHAEL SCOTT FUNDERLIC  
PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE(S)  
CHRISTINA A. ACHILLES  
423 E. OAK HILL AVE.  
KNOXVILLE, TN 37917

MATTHEW C. HARALSON, ATTORNEY  
217 EAST BROADWAY AVENUE  
MARYVILLE, TN 37804

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

**ESTATE OF JOYCE WILLIAMS HOLMAN DOCKET NUMBER 89256-2**

Notice is hereby given that on the 17 day of DECEMBER, 2024, letters administration in respect of the Estate of JOYCE WILLIAMS HOLMAN, who died Jan. 2, 2024, were issued to the undersigned by the Clerk and Master of the Chancery Court of Knox County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured, against his or her estate are required to file the same with the Clerk and Master of the above named court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2), otherwise their claims will be forever barred:

(1)(A) Four (4) months from the date of the first publication of this notice if the creditor received an actual copy of this notice to creditors at least sixty (60) days before the date that is four (4) months from the date of this first publication; or  
(B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the notice to creditors if the creditor received the copy of the notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of first publication as described in (1)(A); or  
(2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.

This the 17 day of DECEMBER, 2024.

ESTATE OF JOYCE WILLIAMS HOLMAN  
PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE(S)  
KEITH SHARP, ADMINISTRATOR  
4109 SULLIVAN ROAD  
KNOXVILLE, TN 37921

M CATHERINE WARBROD, ATTORNEY  
10805 KINGSTON PIKE, SUITE 200  
KNOXVILLE, TN 37934

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

**ESTATE OF RONALD T. KELLY DOCKET NUMBER 90358-3**

Notice is hereby given that on the 17 day of DECEMBER, 2024, letters testamentary in respect of the Estate of RONALD T. KELLY, who died Oct. 28, 2024, were issued to the undersigned by the Clerk and Master of the Chancery Court of Knox County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured, against the estate are required to file the same with the Clerk and Master of the above named court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2), otherwise their claims will be forever barred:

(1)(A) Four (4) months from the date of the first date of the publication of this notice if the creditor received an actual copy of this notice to creditors at least sixty (60) days before the date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication; or  
(B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the notice to creditors if the creditor received the copy of the notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of first publication as described in (1)(A); or  
(2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.

This the 17 day of DECEMBER, 2024.

ESTATE OF RONALD T. KELLY  
PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE(S)  
BERYL A. KELLY, EXECUTOR  
8310 PRATT ROAD  
KNOXVILLE, TN 37920

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

**ESTATE OF MATTHEW SHANE KERR DOCKET NUMBER 90364-3**

Notice is hereby given that on the 17 day of DECEMBER, 2024, letters testamentary (or letters of administration as the case may be) in respect of the Estate of MATTHEW SHANE KERR, who died October 28, 2024, were issued to the undersigned by the Chancery Court, Probate Division, of Knox County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured, against the estate are required to file the same with the clerk of the above-named court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2), otherwise their claims will be forever barred:

(1)(A) Four (4) months from the date of the first publication of this notice if the creditor received an actual copy of this notice to creditors at least sixty (60) days before the date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication; or  
(B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the notice to creditors if the creditor received the copy of the notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of first publication as described in (1)(A); or  
(2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.

This the 17 day of DECEMBER, 2024.

ESTATE OF MATTHEW SHANE KERR  
PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE(S)

TAMARA LYNN KERR  
8717 FOX LONAS RD.  
KNOXVILLE, TN 37923

T. SCOTT JONES, ATTORNEY  
K. ABIGAIL JONES, ATTORNEY  
2125 MIDDLEBROOK PIKE  
KNOXVILLE, TN 37921

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

**ESTATE OF MARCOS ALBERTO LIMA DOCKET NUMBER 90354-2**

Notice is hereby given that on the 17 day of DECEMBER, 2024, letters testamentary in respect of the Estate of MARCOS ALBERTO LIMA, who died Aug. 30, 2024, were issued to the undersigned by the Clerk and Master of the Chancery Court of Knox County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured, against his or her estate are required to file the same with the Clerk and Master of the above named Court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2), otherwise their claims will be forever barred:

(1)(A) Four (4) months from the date of the first publication of this notice if the creditor received an actual copy of this notice to creditors at least sixty (60) days before the date that is four (4) months from the date of this first publication; or  
(B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the notice to creditors if the creditor received the copy of the notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of first publication as described in (1)(A); or  
(2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.

This the 17 day of DECEMBER, 2024.

ESTATE OF MARCOS ALBERTO LIMA  
PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE(S)  
FRANK TAYLOR YOKLEAK  
9412 CONTINENTAL DRIVE  
KNOXVILLE, TN 37922

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

**ESTATE OF ANITA C. PENDERGRASS DOCKET NUMBER 90331-3**

Notice is hereby given that on the 23 day of DECEMBER, 2024, Letters of Administration in respect of the Estate of ANITA C. PENDERGRASS, who died August 30, 2024, were issued to the undersigned by the Chancery Court, Probate Division, of Knox County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured, against the estate are required to file the same with the clerk of the above-named court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2), otherwise their claims will be forever barred:

(1)(A) Four (4) months from the date of the first date of the publication of this notice if the creditor received an actual copy of this notice to creditors at least sixty (60) days before the date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication; or  
(B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the notice to creditors if the creditor received the copy of the notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of first publication as described in (1)(A); or  
(2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.

This the 23 day of DECEMBER, 2024.

ESTATE OF ANITA C. PENDERGRASS  
PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE(S)  
JOSEPH S. PENDERGRASS  
1305 KENSINGTON DRIVE  
KNOXVILLE, TN 37922

JOEL D. ROETTGER, ATTORNEY  
P. O. BOX 1990  
KNOXVILLE, TN 37901

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

**ESTATE OF PAUL ERNEST PURYEAR DOCKET NUMBER 90327-2**

Notice is hereby given that on the 16 day of DECEMBER, 2024, Letters Testamentary in respect of the Estate of PAUL ERNEST PURYEAR, who died on April 17, 2024, were issued to the referenced Personal Representative by the Chancery Court, Probate Division, of Knox County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured, against the estate are required to file the same with the clerk of the above-named court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2), otherwise their claims will be forever barred:

(1)(A) Four (4) months from the date of the first publication of this notice if the creditors received an actual copy of this notice to creditors at least sixty (60) days before the date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication; or  
(B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the notice to creditors if the creditor received the copy of the notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of first publication as described in the (1)(A); or  
(2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.

This the 16 day of DECEMBER, 2024.

ESTATE OF PAUL ERNEST PURYEAR  
PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE(S)  
STEFAN PURYEAR  
211 EMERALD PARKWAY  
CHATSWORTH, GA 30705

DONALD J. FARINATO, ATTORNEY  
445 S. GAY STREET, SUITE 401  
KNOXVILLE, TN 37902

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

**ESTATE OF SUSAN PARKER RECTOR DOCKET NUMBER 90367-3**

Notice is hereby given that on the 17 day of DECEMBER, 2024, letters testamentary (or letters of administration as the case may be) in respect of the Estate of SUSAN PARKER RECTOR, who died November 6, 2024, were issued to the undersigned by the Chancery Court, Probate Division, of Knox County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured, against the estate are required to file the same with the clerk of the above-named court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2), otherwise their claims will be forever barred:

(1)(A) Four (4) months from the date of the first publication of this notice if the creditor received an actual copy of this notice to creditors at least sixty (60) days before the date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication; or  
(B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the notice to creditors if the creditor received the copy of the notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of first publication as described in (1)(A); or  
(2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.

This the 17 day of DECEMBER, 2024.

ESTATE OF SUSAN PARKER RECTOR  
PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE(S)

PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE(S)  
KATHRYN P. ROBERTS  
2021 NW 23rd TERRACE  
GAINESVILLE, FL 32605

KEITH H. BURROUGHS, ATTORNEY  
P. O. BOX 2047  
KNOXVILLE, TN 37901

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

**ESTATE OF GWENDOLYN PIRTLE RIVERS DOCKET NUMBER 90244-3**

Notice is hereby given that on the 15 day of NOVEMBER, 2024, letters testamentary in respect of the Estate of GWENDOLYN PIRTLE RIVERS, who died Sept. 30, 2024, were issued to the undersigned by the Clerk and Master of the Chancery Court of Knox County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured, against his or her estate are required to file the same with the Clerk and Master of the above named Court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2), otherwise their claims will be forever barred:

(1)(A) Four (4) months from the date of the first publication of this notice if the creditor received an actual copy of this notice to creditors at least sixty (60) days before the date that is four (4) months from the date of this first publication; or  
(B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the notice to creditors if the creditor received the copy of the notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of first publication as described in (1)(A); or  
(2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.

This the 15 day of NOVEMBER, 2024.

ESTATE OF GWENDOLYN PIRTLE RIVERS  
PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE(S)  
STEFFANIE V. RIVERS, EXECUTRIX  
3025 PRENTICE AVE  
KNOXVILLE, TN 37914

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

**ESTATE OF LOMA KAYE ROGERS DOCKET NUMBER 90361-3**

Notice is hereby given that on the 17 day of DECEMBER, 2024, letters administration in respect of the Estate of LOMA KAYE ROGERS, who died Nov. 17, 2024, were issued to the undersigned by the Clerk and Master of the Chancery Court of Knox County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured, against his or her estate are required to file the same with the Clerk and Master of the above named court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2), otherwise their claims will be forever barred:

(1)(A) Four (4) months from the date of the first publication of this notice if the creditor received an actual copy of this notice to creditors at least sixty (60) days before the date that is four (4) months from the date of this first publication; or  
(B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the notice to creditors if the creditor received the copy of the notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of first publication as described in (1)(A); or  
(2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.

This the 17 day of DECEMBER, 2024.

ESTATE OF LOMA KAYE ROGERS  
PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE(S)  
JOSEPH F. ROGERS, JR., ADMINISTRATOR  
408 BLACK OAK DRIVE  
KNOXVILLE, TN 37912



FROM THE MOUNTAINS BY JADON GIBSON

# More Honors for Sam Houston

By Jadon Gibson

Sam Houston's life had more twists and turns than the road to the Pinnacle Overlook high above Cumberland Gap at the tri-state of Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia.

At one time during a deep depression Houston nearly committed suicide but an eagle swooped down at him from the sky, distracting him from his ominous deed. His Cherokee nature accepted it as a reminder that he had more important tasks to accomplish.

Following his spat with Stanbery in Washington, D.C., and the guilty verdict in his much-publicized trial that followed, he probably breathed a sigh of relief. Stanbery had aimed his firearm at Houston's chest and pulled the trigger. A misfire saved Houston from death or serious injury.

Sam Houston left the country for Mexican Texas along with several friends. His wife, Tiana Rogers, remained behind and manage their other holdings in what is now Arkansas. His public service would lead him back into the regional and national spotlight.

Houston was elected a delegate for Nacogdoches at the Convention of 1833 and his political fortunes began to rise anew. He was appointed general of the military district east of the Trinity and was a member of the convention in 1836 that met to declare independence from Mexico. He was elected commander-in-chief of the armies of Texas.

Houston took leadership of the Texas forces after the fall of the Alamo. His army of 750 men defeated Santa Anna's force of 1,800 Mexican regulars on April 21, 1836, at the site of the Battle of San Jacinto in which his horse was shot from under him shattering his ankle. He took and lost a second horse in the battle before taking a third.

His brilliant tactical maneuvers in adapting his forces to the battlefield led to the death of over 600 of the opposing force and the capture of 730 including General Santa Anna. Houston later allowed him to return to Mexico. Winning the battle led to Texas gaining her freedom from Mexico in the fall of that year.

Houston was elected the first president of the

Republic of Texas, receiving 80% of the vote. He was held in high esteem. A congressional bill was in the works that would have made him the dictator of Texas but his desire was to help the common man so he vetoed it. That was followed by his service in the Congress of the Republic and, in 1841 he again won the presidency of the Republic by an overwhelming margin.

Texas was granted statehood in 1845 and Houston, considered to be the Founding Father of Texas was elected to the U. S. Senate. His attainments

and accolades continued and on three occasions his name was submitted as a candidate for the U.S. presidency. His interest was with the people of Texas where in 1859 he won the governorship of Texas. He is the only individual to serve as governor of two states.

Houston had been elected governor of Tennessee in 1827, resigning from the office on January 1, 1829, following the breakup with his wife.

The groundswell support for Texas to withdraw from the Union at the outbreak of the War Between the States found the apprehensive

Houston trying to hold Texas in the Union. He knew the war would bring much bloodshed and that the Union would be a formidable adversary. Houston couldn't change the mindset of Texans and wouldn't change his principles so he resigned his office as governor of Texas. This ended his colorful career.

Houston died from complications from pneumonia in his Huntsville, Texas, home in 1863, where he is buried. He still wore the ring his mother had given him years before, inscribed with the word "Honor" inside the band.

"Sam Houston was made by God Almighty and not by a tailor," President Andrew Jackson once said of his friend who had served his fellow man so dutifully.

He was truly one of a kind. Sam Houston was. Sam Houston was!

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Jadon Gibson is a widely read Appalachian writer from Harrogate, Tennessee. His stories are both historic and nostalgic in nature. Thanks to Lincoln Memorial University, Alice Lloyd College and the Museum of Appalachia for their assistance.

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# LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

**ESTATE OF GEORGE MAXEY MASSEY  
DOCKET NUMBER 90362-1**  
Notice is hereby given that on the 20 day of DECEMBER, 2024, letters testamentary in respect of the Estate of GEORGE MAXEY MASSEY, who died Nov. 5, 2024, were issued to the undersigned by the Clerk and Master of the Chancery Court of Knox County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured, against his or her estate are required to file the same with the Clerk and Master of the above named Court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2), otherwise their claims will be forever barred:  
(1)A) Four (4) months from the date of the first publication of this notice if the creditor received an actual copy of this notice to creditors at least sixty (60) days before the date that is four (4) months from the date of this first publication; or  
(B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the notice to creditors if the creditor received the copy of the notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of first publication as described in (1)A); or  
(2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.  
This the 20 day of DECEMBER, 2024.

(4) months from the date of first publication as described in (1)A); or  
(2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.  
This the 20 day of DECEMBER, 2024.

**ESTATE OF GEORGE MAXEY MASSEY  
PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE(S)  
ELLEN MARIA MASSEY, EXECUTRIX  
1018 KENYON STREET  
KNOXVILLE, TN 37917**

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

**ESTATE OF JOHN WILLIAM MOORE  
DOCKET NUMBER 90227-1**  
Notice is hereby given that on the 2 day of JANUARY, 2025, letters testamentary (or letters of administration as the case may be) in respect of the Estate of JOHN WILLIAM MOORE, who died May 16, 2024, were issued to the undersigned by the Chancery Court, Probate Division, of Knox County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured,

against the estate are required to file the same with the clerk of the above-named court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2), otherwise their claims will be forever barred:  
(1)A) Four (4) months from the date of the first publication of this notice if the creditor received an actual copy of this notice to creditors at least sixty (60) days before the date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication; or  
(B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the notice to creditors if the creditor received the copy of the notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of first publication as described in (1)A); or  
(2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.  
This the 2 day of JANUARY, 2025.

**ESTATE OF JOHN WILLIAM MOORE  
PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE(S)  
SUSAN LINDESEY  
124 WRIGHT ROAD SE  
TENINO, WASHINGTON 98589**

**KAITLYN A. SELL, ATTORNEY  
P. NEWMAN BANKSTON, ATTORNEY**

P.O. BOX 2047  
KNOXVILLE, TN 37901

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

**ESTATE OF DOUGLAS W. PRICE  
DOCKET NUMBER 90215-1**  
Notice is hereby given that on the 20 day of DECEMBER, 2024, letters testamentary in respect of the Estate of DOUGLAS W. PRICE, who died Oct. 12, 2024, were issued to the undersigned by the Clerk and Master of the Chancery Court of Knox County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured, against his or her estate are required to file the same with the Clerk and Master of the above named Court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2), otherwise their claims will be forever barred:  
(1)A) Four (4) months from the date of the first publication of this notice if the creditor received an actual copy of this notice to creditors at least sixty (60) days before the date that is four (4) months from the date of this first publication; or  
(B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the notice to creditors if the creditor received the copy of the notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of first publication as described in (1)A); or  
(2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.  
This the 20 day of DECEMBER, 2024.

(B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the notice to creditors if the creditor received the copy of the notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of first publication as described in (1)A); or  
(2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.  
This the 20 day of DECEMBER, 2024.

**ESTATE OF DOUGLAS W. PRICE  
PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE(S)  
TAMMY COMBS PRICE, EXECUTRIX  
1713 RIVERSHORE DRIVE  
KNOXVILLE, TN 37914**

### MISC. NOTICES

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

**Requesting Intent to Bid - Electrical**  
Knox Housing Partnership, Inc., dba HomeSource east tennessee, 109 Winona Street, Knoxville, TN 37917 is soliciting bids for electrical

work for new construction of three (3) buildings, containing thirty (30) residential dwelling units located at 6010 Clayberry Drive in Knoxville Tennessee.

Qualified firms interested should submit their "Intent to Bid" in email format to bharris@homesourcetn.org with "Willow Place 3 - Electrical, New Construction" in the subject line of the email, by January 20, 2025.  
The "Intent to Bid" response should include a succinct narrative describing:  
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2. List of projects completed  
3. Relevant References  
Firms having WBE, MBE, DBE or 8a Business Certification are encouraged.

# We are made for kindness

Amy and I made plans for travel to a special destination for our 50th anniversary. Those plans melted in tears with the unexpected passing of our son Dallas in September. Since that time, we've



By Joe Rector  
joerector@comcast.net

become the owner of a second mid-sized canine. Harvey, whose name came from the hurricane that struck Texas, has been lost without Dallas, but he's slowly coming around to become our dog. He is settled and has learned the routines.

As for us, our lives have been a fog; so many loose ends need to be tied up, and we are still missing Dallas. The service for our son was a help in finding an end to all the pain. What moved me was the kindness of so many people.

Most of the speakers on that day were folks with whom Dallas went to school. Each spoke of my

son's kindness. They said he put others before himself and was always ready to come to their aide should the situations arise.

Our former church family also were in attendance.

Friends and adults who were mere children the last time we saw them were there for us. They remembered Dallas as a child and found his death hard to believe.

The members of Beaver Ridge United Methodist Church filled the sanctuary. I attended this church as a child and returned to it when First Christian Church closed its doors. Some of the members at BRUMC I've known for years; others are new to me. What I do know is that the love and kindness that they poured out to Dallas was touching. The love and kindness they gave to Amy and me was overwhelming.

These people made our grief easier to bear. Some had lost children of their own and knew exactly how much we suffered. Gage Sharp sang and Paula Helton played the piano, and their music helped those in attendance to release the tears, pain, and loss they had held in. One man dedicated a poem to Dallas, and with tears in his eyes, he said that he'd met Dallas as he worked the dish room on Wednesday evenings. He added that Dallas made everyone feel like a friend.

My extended family was present. Jim's clan sat close to us, and my late brother's wife and friend sat close by. Most surprising, my nephew Steve and his partner Charlotte made the trip from Atlanta for the service. He and Dallas had met not long ago and had discovered they shared a unique sense of humor. Steve is a professional singer with numerous awards to recognize his talent; Dallas couldn't carry

a tune in a bucket. Yet, they stayed in close touch.

Dallas' high school friends and one of my two best friends (Billy Hayes) were present to remember him. Amy and I learned that he'd reconnected with some of them. Their stories surprised us and left us smiling with the thoughts of how our son had lived his life and loved the people who were in it.

Even friends from his work were there. His bosses showed up, and

folks in California, Maine, and other far away states with whom he worked sent sympathies and watched the service on the church website.

Over the months since Dallas passed, Amy and I have rediscovered something. Most people in this world are good folks who are kind. They show their "true selves" in the middle of tragedies. The little piece of God in each human comes to the forefront when the situation

demands. Nothing else matters, whether it be political views, sexual orientation, or color of skin. We're made to be kind and loving. Somehow, life goes on and makes us forget what we were made to be. I'm thankful for the many people who have let the light of something big inside shine on Amy and me. The presence of it reminds us that we know where our son is and with whom he now and forever shall live.

## Rotary Club of Knoxville elects 2025-26 Board of Directors

At its December 10 meeting, the Rotary Club of Knoxville elected its 2025-26 board of directors, to be led by Shannon Holland, an attorney with Holland Law. The board begins its term on July 1, 2025.

Ken Knight, general manager of the Crowne Plaza Knoxville, will serve as vice president. Rachel Ford, chief executive officer of the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra, will be president-elect. Andrew Murr, vice president at Barge Design Solutions, will remain as club secretary and F. Whitfield Addicks, partner at Addicks CPA Firm LLP, will remain as treasurer and chair of the financial and audit committee. Outgoing president Christopher Lambert, a wealth advisor and partner with Clarity Wealth Partners of UBS Financial Services, will serve as representative of past presidents.

The other 2025-26 board members are Virginia Babb, a realtor with Keller Williams Signature; Susan Dakak, president of Smart Views, LLC; Dave Freeman, director of Capital Resource Partners, Inc.; Sharon Hudson, executive director of the American Red Cross, East Tennessee Chapter; Brent Midyett, vice president of DFA Solutions; and Todd Moody, an attorney with Hagood Moody Hodge PLC.

Founded in 1915, the Rotary Club of Knoxville is among the oldest and largest Rotary Clubs in Tennessee. Club members were instrumental in the formation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and currently sponsor several park projects. The club is also the steward of the Rotary Foundation of Knoxville, which



The Rotary Club of Knoxville board of directors for 2025-26 are, left to right, (front row) Chris Lambert and Shannon Holland, (second row) Whitfield Addicks and Ken Knight, (third row) Rachel Ford, Andrew Murr and Sharon Hudson, (fourth row) Virginia Babb, Brent Midyett, Todd Moody and Dave Freeman, and (back row) Susan Dakak.

funds college scholarships and special projects.

Rotary International, the world's first service club, was started in Chicago in 1905. More than 1.4 million members in more than 35,000 clubs in 200 countries volunteer their time and talent to further the Rotary motto "Service Above Self."

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# Glover, Bearden product, making comeback at OSU

By Steve Williams

Ques Glover is keeping his eye on the goal more ways than one.

In other words, scoring baskets could lead him to a professional career.

The Bearden High product is in his sixth and last season on the college level. Since leading Coach Jeremy Parrott's Bulldogs to the school's first TSSAA basketball championship in 2019, he's played at Florida, Samford, Kansas State and now Ohio State.

Technically, he briefly transferred to Brigham Young after leaving Samford, but wound up at Kansas State, where he missed the entire 2023-24 season due to a knee injury.

Now 24 years old, the 6-foot, 185-pound combo guard is a Buckeye in Columbus and reportedly doing very well.

"Ques has been awesome," said Gary Petit, Director of Athletics Communications at Ohio State, last week. "He had a great preseason and was playing well until an ankle injury caused him to miss a month of action. But he returned in a big way against Kentucky at Madison Square Garden (Dec. 21) and was impactful right away. Then yesterday (Dec. 29), he made some big shots in key moments (against Indiana State) to help spur us along."

Glover came off the bench in the 85-65 win over the Wildcats and scored nine points in 15 minutes of action, hitting three of three 3-pointers. His playing time increased to 27 minutes in the 103-83 win over ISU and he scored 15 points plus had five assists, three rebounds and one steal before fouling out.

Ohio State was scheduled to host No. 18 ranked Michigan State Friday night.

When asked what his goal is at his new basketball home, Ques certainly sounded like a young man with faith in God, thankful for his coaches and who knows what he wants in life.

"Being a part of a winning team and continue to grow my game and learn from a great coaching staff," he said. "Coach (Jake) Diebler has a big faith in God and it's continued to grow in my faith. Spending my last year

**Continue on page 4**

*Ohio State's Ques Glover goes up for a shot against Indiana State on Dec. 29. 'Resilience' and 'Stay Strong' are tattooed reminders for Glover, who is still pursuing a shot at pro ball.*



PHOTOS COURTESY OHIO STATE ATHLETICS

## HIGH SCHOOL BOYS BASKETBALL

### Warriors run past Concord Christian for road region win

By Ken Lay

Some hot early long-range shooting helped the Christian Academy of Knoxville boys basketball team keep its perfect region record intact Friday night.

The Warriors (14-1 overall, 8-0 in Division II-A East Region play) knocked down five 3-point shots in the first quarter of their 70-41 league victory over Concord Christian School before a packed house at CCS.

Still, CAK coach J.D. Johnson wasn't completely satisfied. He wasn't pleased with his team's defense.

"I think we came out and played well offensively in the first half, particularly in the first quarter," Johnson said after watching the Warriors keep their perfect league record intact and remain undefeated against teams from Tennessee this season. "But defensively, we didn't have our intensity, and they scored more points than I would've liked."

"We did a little better in the second quarter, and then we came out in the third quarter, and that was us."

Despite making five long-range jumpers and scoring 22 points in the opening frame, the Warriors were only ahead by eight points by first quarter's end.

But, CAK, which found its way back into the win column for the first time since falling to Bell County (Kentucky) on Monday, Dec. 23 in a Christmas tournament in Kentucky, turned up the defensive pressure and kept the Lions' young team in check for the remainder of the contest, not allowing more than 10 points in each

**Continue on page 4**

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# Smith runs 5th and 6th in Nationals



By Steve Williams

Keegan Smith ended his high school cross country career in impressive fashion.

The Knoxville Catholic senior, running on the South region team, placed fifth overall in the 45th Foot Locker Nationals in a time of 15:41.6 over the 5,000-meter course at Balboa Park in San Diego on Dec. 14.

The winning time was 15:23.9.

In the girls' race, Webb School had two of its runners to stand out as Carolina Areheart was clocked in 18:43.2 to place 27th and Jazzlyn Garmer in 18:53 to take 31st place. Both are juniors.

Senior Abby Faith Cheeseman of The Webb School in Bell Buckle finished 19th with a time of 18:25 to help lead the South region to the team title.

The winning time in the girls' race was 17:31.1.

In the NIKE Cross Country Nationals in Portland, OR on Dec. 7, Smith once again

finished close to the top, coming in sixth place with a time of 15:33.6. The winning time was 15:28.1.

In the NIKE girls' race, Cheeseman ran a 17:46.8 to place 22nd and Areheart finished 72nd in a field of 199 runners with a time of 18:43.8.

## Norris notches 600th career win

Webb School boys basketball coach Ricky Norris notched his 600th career victory when his Spartans defeated Bearden 71-61 Dec. 30 in The Classic at Tennessee High in Bristol.

Owen Lentz hit six of seven 3-pointers and led the Spartans with 27 points.

Webb took sixth place in the 41st annual tournament with a 52-51 win over Greeneville.

Calvary Christian, FL won The Classic championship game with a 72-60 win over Penix City Central, AL.

In girls' action, Marist, GA took first place in the 35th Andrew Johnson Bank Ladies Classic, defeating Webb School 42-39.

Bearden lost to Farmington, AR 74-65 in the battle for fifth place.

Knoxville Catholic lost to Cocke County 42-33 in the battle for sixth.



Webb alum Nicklin Hames is Webb School of Knoxville's new head varsity volleyball coach/program director.

## Hames returns to Webb as VB coach

Nicklin Hames is Webb School's new head volleyball coach.

A Class of 2018 alum, Hames helped lead her Lady Spartans to a historical five consecutive Division II-A state volleyball championship titles, capturing four state tournament MVP nods along the way.

Hames signed with volleyball powerhouse Nebraska where she collected numerous honors and awards while pursuing her bachelor's degree in child youth and family studies with a minor in psychology.



PHOTO BY BARRY HOUGHIN

Keegan Smith, Knoxville Catholic senior, crosses the finish line to win the NIKE Cross Country South Region meet. He went on to place sixth in the NIKE Nationals in Portland, OR.

*"It means the world to me, especially when I get to celebrate the victory with my guys. We have put in hours upon hours of hardwork for this moment. I can't imagine it any other way. I have run well and not so well at Sanders Ferry. I am sad to see State move next year, a lot of history was made during this short stint at Sanders Ferry with a lot of great runners taking to the course over the last 5 years. To close out my scholastic Cross Country prep career with 2 state championships is a blessing and I thank God for giving me the ability to compete at my highest level today and everyday!" - Keegan Smith*

She leveraged her deep understanding of the game

to further enhance her coaching abilities as assistant director of Volleyball Club Nebraska and later as associate director at K2

Volleyball Club in Louisville, TN.

"I am thrilled that Nicklin is returning to Webb School to lead our girls' volleyball program," said Athletics Director Dan Gill. "I truly

believe that we have hired the premier young coach in the area and that exciting times lie ahead for the program under her leadership."

**Cont. on page 4**

## MIDDLE SCHOOL BASKETBALL

# Gladiators close out 2024 with victory over Ft. Loudoun

By Ken Lay

When Gresham Middle School boys basketball coach Matthew Lay entered his team into the John Melnick Battle at the Bluff basketball Tournament, he had one simple goal.

He wanted to get his players away from the kitchen table and the video game consoles.

"This was good for us because our guys have been sitting around eating pancakes and playing video games," Lay said after the Gladiators dismantled Ft. Loudoun Middle School, 48-23, Tuesday in the final round of the third annual Cedar Bluff holiday tournament.

Gresham's victory over the Braves followed an easy victory over Burchfield Middle, which hails from Oneida, on Monday, Dec.

30.

"We won that game by 40 points (Monday)," Lay said. "The big thing for us was just to get a chance to play."

The Gladiators, upon returning from the Christmas holiday break, will wrap up their 2024-25 regular season today (Jan. 6) at home against Northwest. Following the season finale, Gresham will compete in the Knox County Middle School Class AAA Tournament, which opens Jan. 16.

Gresham won its first meeting against Northwest in November, toppling the Rangers on the road, 54-43.

"We have one game left when we come back and that's Monday against Northwest," Lay said. "We couldn't get anybody to

schedule us (for a non-league game) on Thursday."

Early Tuesday, the Gladiators were embroiled in a close contest against the Braves as they held a 12-8 lead on John Melnick Court after the first quarter. Gresham was able to blow things open in the second stanza as it outscored Ft. Loudoun, 11-0, and took a 23-8 advantage by halftime.

Following the Gladiators' second-quarter surge, the contest's outcome was never in doubt.

Gresham boasted a balanced scoring attack against the Braves. Jai'Shawn Dean scored 14 points, including 10 in the first quarter. Jack Roach added nine. Tarion Batson had eight and Zander Young finished with seven, all after halftime.

# Giants rout Burchfield in annual John Melnick holiday tournament

By Ken Lay

Long before area players and coaches went into their annual winter holiday break, the 2024-25 middle school basketball regular season had already entered its home stretch.

After the Christmas holidays, classes resumed today (Jan. 6) and most teams had only one or two games remaining on their regular-season slates. Many teams, including the Cedar Bluff boys, were scheduled to return to the hardwood today.

The Cedar Bluff Giants (14-4) conclude the Knox County Middle School Basketball Conference Class AA portion today against Carter at 5:45 p.m. in Strawberry Plains. The game between Cedar Bluff and the Hornets will begin the 2025 calendar year.

The Giants closed out 2024 with a 60-18 victory at home on New Year's Eve over Burchfield in the third annual John Melnick Battle of the Bluff at CBMS.

Melnick, the longtime Cedar Bluff teacher, coach and athletic administrator, sat on the Giants' bench to watch.

The Giants, who dominated the contest from the outset, led 39-9 at halftime and had three players with 10 points by the end of the second stanza.

Layton Lewis, Kymani Smith and Drew

Schoerner each had 10 points at the break. Smith finished the contest with a game-high 16 points despite resting during the fourth quarter. Lewis had 14 and Schoerner, a post player who dominated the glass for the Giants, finished with 12 points.

Cedar Bluff coach J.T. Hicks said he was pleased with his team's effort on the final day of 2024, saying that it was another good chapter in the Giants' successful season. Cedar Bluff has won 14 games despite battling the injury bug.

"It's been going well and we're finally starting to get everybody back and healthy," Hicks said. "It's nice to get a couple of wins in the tournament."

"We're 14-4 right now and we're on an eight-game winning streak and we're just trying to keep getting better."

Cedar Bluff opened tournament play with a win over Ft. Loudoun on Monday, Dec. 30, putting the game away early with a 20-3 lead.

After tonight's game against Carter, the Giants will host Paideia on Thursday to end the regular season.

Tipoff is slated for 5:45 p.m.

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# Quickly billed as an 'ESPN Classic'

There was a time in college basketball that even the biggest games were not on television. There were, for example, times that both games of the semifinals of the NCAA Tournament were played on Thursday night and, at least in Knoxville, only one was televised.

That stands in stark contrast to today, when nearly every game is on somebody's network, oftentimes at all hours of the day or night.

That brings us to the old Armory-Fieldhouse and Stokely Athletics Center on campus in Knoxville, home to Vol hoops from the late 1950s through to the mid-to-late 1980s.

The greatest game, by far, ever played within those majestic confines was not seen on live television in Knoxville, or anywhere else, for that matter.

It was the night of Feb. 15, 1975, Tennessee versus Kentucky, Ray Mears matching wits with Joe B. Hall.

Those among the 12,718 fans in attendance somehow survived to tell the tale at church the next morning or the following Monday at the office. More than twice that many fans today will attest to being there.

Had there been Twitter, there would have been tweets all over the Volunteer State and the Commonwealth, and beyond. The message



Stokely Center was never better hoops-wise than on the night of Feb. 15, 1975.

boards would have been jammed.

The Vols were coming off three consecutive SEC losses, but summoned a Herculean effort to win 103-98 over the No. 4-ranked Kentucky squad. It was a game that started at a fever pitch that never diminished until the final horn sounded.

Tennessee trailed only once at 2-0, led 56-44 at the half, and beat back repeated Kentucky rallies to eventually prevail, the first time the Vols had cracked the century mark against the Wildcats.

Fans without tickets or even those hardy souls who also possessed exceptional patience were forced to wait for the 11:30 p.m. WTVK, Channel 26, delayed

telecast. Otherwise, John Ward had the call on the Vol Network and across the Vol Network. Cawood Ledford did likewise on the UK Network.

It all happened in the days before ESPN came on the scene, before the Internet, before the daily barrage of "talk radio," before the emergence of all the other technological marvels we take for granted these days.

Had the game been played and televised today, it would have been quickly billed as an "ESPN Classic," to be rebroadcast at all hours, day or night.

That season, Kentucky would make it to the Final Four, only to lose in John Wooden's last game as head coach at UCLA. The

whole setup was reminiscent of 1966, when the Wildcats came to Knoxville No. 1, lost the season finale to the Vols 69-62, and then lost to Texas Western in the finals.

The Vols shot 56.8 percent from the floor, Kentucky 54 percent. A look at the names from the box score will indicate the game's competitive nature.

For Tennessee, sophomore Ernie Grunfeld had 29 points and five rebounds and canned four pressure-packed free throws down the stretch, 11 of 12 overall, to help the Vols hold the lead. Grunfeld was a load for anybody coming off the wing or the high post, ball in hand.

Bernard King, a freshman who averaged a

league-leading 26.4 points per game, had 24 points and 20 rebounds. Mike Jackson, another soph, had 24 points. Doug Ashworth had 12 points and nine rebounds. Rodney Woods, a Kentuckian playing the point at Tennessee, had 14 points and 10 assists. Austin Clark played briefly, but no one else left the Vol bench.

There were heroes in blue and white, too. Senior Kevin Grevey had 24 points, with freshman Jack "Goose" Givens, the hero of the Wildcats' national championship run three years later, adding 20 points and seven rebounds. Senior guards Jimmy Dan Conner and Mike Flynn had 10 each, with nine assists between them. Freshman

Rick Robey muscled in 18 points.

The Vols were all over the Wildcats in the first half, knocking in shots from all across the north end of Stokely Center, the end where former U.T. president Andy Holt sat, resplendent in an orange blazer.

Tennessee led by 10 early in the second stanza when Givens led a charge that closed the margin to 74-70, and the chase was on. It was intense, the game in the balance possession by possession.

Jackson and King each had eight points down the stretch to hold off not only Givens, but also Grevey, Robey and the others.

The Vol victory started a five-game run for the Vols against the Wildcats, as Tennessee swept the Big Blue the next two years. Tennessee shared the SEC crown in 1976-77 with the Wildcats as the two teams finished the SEC Campaign at 16-2. The Vols won their final two contests at Memorial Coliseum and their first at a new venue known as Rupp Arena.

The passage of time has not dimmed in the least the memories of a "golden era" of Vol hoops, of "Bernie and Ernie," Mike Jackson and Rodney Woods, Doug Ashworth and a coach named Ray Mears.

When the games are replayed in the mind's eye or seen on aging videotape, the memories of a venue called the William B. Stokely Athletics Center are with us forever.

## A look ahead to 2025 in sports

By Mark Nagi

Regular readers of this column know that this is the week in which I get out the crystal ball and predict the next 12 months in sports. This is important for your planning purposes and in our increasingly busy lives, isn't it nice to not have to spend mental energy wondering about the world of sports?

Let's give you a sneak peek at 2025 in the world of local, national and international sports. (Note: Some of these are tongue in cheek so be sure not to wager the family mortgage on these predictions.)

In January, the College Football Playoff finished with Ohio State beating Texas 42-20 to win the national championship. The Buckeyes were the best team that money can buy, with a roster costing a reported \$21 million. Tennessee finished the season 10-3, ranked 10th in the nation. Despite going 9-4 with losses to 7-6 Vanderbilt, 6-7 Oklahoma and 8-5 Michigan, the Alabama Crimson Tide claimed the national championship.

In February, the Buffalo Bills and Minnesota Vikings played a Super Bowl for the ages in a matchup of two franchises which have each gone 0-4 in the big game. The Bills would win their first NFL championship, 34-33. Josh Allen is named MVP and will never have to pay for a drink in western NY again.

In March, Tennessee's men's basketball team repeats as SEC champions

before getting upset in the round of 32 by SUNY Albany. Vols fans watch as former coach Bruce Pearl leads Auburn to the national title. The Lady Vols advance to the Sweet 16 in Kim Caldwell's first season as head coach.

In April, this writer hates watches The Masters. I went to a practice round at Augusta National in 2019 and it was one of the greatest days of my life. Just like flying first class, it's better to not know what that experience is like because you'll have to go back to economy soon enough. Rory McIlroy wins by two strokes, completing the career grand slam, and capturing his first major since 2014. Tennessee edge rusher James Pearce Jr. is drafted late in the first round by the Kansas City Chiefs.

In May, the Lady Vols softball team wins a third straight SEC title but loses in the Super Regionals. Tennessee's baseball team sweeps both conference titles yet again, setting the stage for a June to remember. Real Madrid wins the UEFA Champions League because that's what happens in the UEFA Champions League.

In June, Tennessee's baseball team makes a return trip to the College World Series. Vols fans return to Omaha in droves. However, this time Tony Vitello's group falls short of a repeat, losing before the championship series. The Carolina Hurricanes win their second Stanley Cup while the Cleveland Cavaliers take home their

second NBA championship.

In July, we all go into hibernation, praying for the return of college football while it is 115 degrees outside. At SEC Media Days, league Commissioner Greg Sankey proposes a new playoff system that involves 16 teams. As luck would have it, all 16 teams play in the SEC. Alabama has already claimed a national title in his new format.

In August, Tennessee opens camp. QB Nico lamaleava sprains a finger on his non-throwing hand, prompting a midnight vigil outside Haslam Field. Head coach Josh Heupel announces that there will be an open practice

at Neyland Stadium on August 20. An estimated 100,000 fans attend. The Vols open the season with a 32-24 win over Syracuse in Atlanta because playing neutral site games is so much better than the college campus experience (massive amount of eye-rolling from your writer).

In September, Tennessee hosts a Georgia team they had lost to eight straight times. Unfortunately, the streak reaches nine when the Bulldogs kick a last-second field goal to win the game 20-17. Vols fans get their swagger back with wins over UAB and Mississippi State as they sit at 4-1 heading into the bye

week. Tennessee AD Dave Hart announces plans for a Tennessee-themed international space station to be launched from the soon-to-be-demolished top level of the G-10 parking garage.

In October, the Vols come off the bye week and promptly lose to Arkansas 4-2. After the game, Razorbacks coach Sam Pittman discloses that he has made a deal with the devil and in exchange for torturing Tennessee he must give up his eternal soul. In the SEC, it just means more. The following week the Vols lose at Alabama because the Vols simply don't play well on the road under Josh Heupel.

A week later, Tennessee beats Kentucky 56-2 in Lexington, because the Vols simply don't lose to Kentucky.

In November, Tennessee sweeps their remaining games to finish the season at 9-3. They miss the playoffs after they are ranked 13th by the committee, who also puts a 4-8 Alabama team in the 8th spot as a sincere apology for having the audacity of leaving a mediocre Alabama team out of the 2024 playoff.

In December, the Vols beat Iowa 3-0 in the Music City Bowl, giving Heupel his third 10-win season.



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## KNOX FOCUS ALL-COUNTY SOCCER TEAM

# Radcliffe, Roth and Blue lead Knoxville Focus All-County Soccer Team

By Ken Lay

The 2024 girls high school soccer season packed plenty of excitement for area fans as two local teams reached the state championship match in their respective classifications in Chattanooga.

Webb School of Knoxville (Division II-AA) and Bearden (Class 3A) played for state titles but both were runner-up. The Lady Spartans made the Division II-AA championship for the first time in program history, while the Lady Bulldogs were dethroned after winning three consecutive state crowns as they fell to Germantown-Houston in the finals.

Powell High also won the District 3-3A title this season under first-year head coach Jessica Cable.

The Knoxville Focus recognizes some of the area's top players and coaches on its 2024 All-County Team.

**Co-Coach of the Year, Ryan Radcliffe:** Bearden High School: Radcliffe, the Lady Bulldogs' veteran coach, guided his side to the Class 3A State Championship match for the fourth consecutive season. The Lady Bulldogs entered the 2024 campaign as the three-time defending state champions, but came up just short of winning a fourth straight crown. Bearden, however, swept its way to another regular-season district title and tournament championship. The Lady Bulldogs also won the Region 2-3A Tournament title and went 20-1-2 and lost to the Lady Mustangs in a penalty kicks shootout in the state title match.

**Co-Coach of the Year, Elaine Roth:** Webb School of Knoxville: In her first season at the helm for the Lady Spartans, Roth guided Webb to an appearance in the Division II-AA

State Championship match where it fell to region rival Baylor. The Lady Spartans defeated the Lady Raiders twice in 2024. They won the East Region championship and finished with a 16-2-1 overall record with one of the area's youngest rosters.

**Player of the Year, Jayla Blue:** Bearden High School: A junior forward for the Lady Bulldogs and University of Tennessee commitment, Blue shattered the school's single-season goal scoring record as she tallied 45 markers en route to leading Bearden to a fourth consecutive state championship match. She also dished out 15 assists for the Lady Bulldogs, who finished with a 20-1-2 in 2024 but came up just short of winning an unprecedented fourth straight state title.

Blue is joined on the all-county team by:

**Drew Tolley, Bearden High**

**School:** A senior goalkeeper for the Lady Bulldogs, Tolley appeared in 23 matches and recorded 16 clean sheets and held opponents to just 10 goals during the 2024 campaign.

**Brenley Snyder, South-Doyle High School:** A freshman for the Lady Cherokees, Snyder was one of the area's top offensive players. She was an All-District 5-2A standout in her first season of high school soccer.

**Gaby Hernandez, South-Doyle High School:** Hernandez was an all-district performer for the Lady Cherokees.

**Eva Baker, Bearden High School:** Baker shined as a defensive midfielder for the Lady Bulldogs and was a key contributor in another successful season for Bearden.

**McKalie Ball, Webb School of Knoxville:** A junior midfielder for the Lady

Spartans totaled 19 goals and nine assists as Webb won a region championship and made an appearance in the state championship match.

**Kennedy Dade, Farragut High School:** A junior for the Lady Admirals, Dade was named District 4-3A Co-Defender of the Year after anchoring a back line that accounted for four shutouts.

**Mary Mac Emery, Webb School of Knoxville:** Mac Emery anchored a back line for the Lady Spartans that allowed just 12 goals in 2024. She also scored eight goals, helping lead Webb to 16 victories.

**Pearce Groer, Webb School of Knoxville:** A senior forward for the Lady Spartans, Groer scored 14 goals and 15 assists.

**Jenna Clements, Catholic High School:** The senior midfielder for the Lady Irish scored eight goals and

dished out four assists in 2024.

**Anna Ogle, Hardin Valley Academy:** A sophomore defender for the Lady Hawks, Ogle was District's 4-3A Co-Defender of the Year.

**Maci Ritzman, Bearden High School:** A senior midfielder, Ritzman tallied a school record 28 assists for Bearden. She was an all-district standout and all-region performer.

**Delaney Jane Walker, Concord Christian School:** A junior midfielder for CCS, Walker helped the Lady Lions enjoy one of their best seasons in school history.

**Sifa Morgan, Powell High School:** Morgan, a senior forward for the Lady Panthers, scored 25 goals and seven assists, leading her team to the District 3-3A Championship.

## Glover, Bearden product, making comeback at OSU

Continued from page 1

as a Buckeye (I want to) continue to grow as a young man as well."

As for his plans after college, Glover said he wants "to continue to play basketball. Play professionally. Whatever happens (I will) just keep chasing my new dream."

Prior to coming to Ohio State, Glover had 1,022 career points, 201 assists and 63 three-pointers, including 20 games of 20 or more points. He helped lead Samford to back-to-back 20-win seasons and was a two-time All-Southern Conference honoree.

Ques felt battling through his first injury (meniscus) in his second season at Samford "proved his toughness."

"When I left Samford (a mid-major program), my goal was to play at the highest level possible," he said.

Coach Jerome Tang was high on Glover




Bearden product Ques Glover has gotten past his health issues and is getting more playing time at Ohio State.

at KSU. He was one of the two experienced guards Tang wanted out of the portal. But Ques was sidelined after hurting his knee in a November exhibition game and reagravated the injury in practice, ending his season.

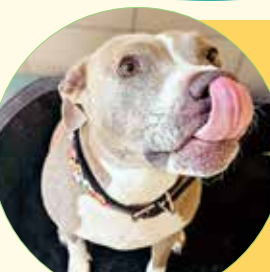
Ques is the son of Lennon and Nee Glover and has a younger sister, Cali.

He completed his bachelor's degree from Samford in May 2023. He is majoring in Human Development and Family Science at Ohio State.


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[www.young-williams.org](http://www.young-williams.org) Closed 1-2 p.m. for animal quiet time

## Smith runs 5th and 6th in Nationals

Continued from page 2

In accepting the position, Hames said that she is both excited and humbled to return to her alma mater as the new head volleyball coach.

### Region bowling around the corner

The Region 1 high school bowling tournament will be held Wednesday (Jan. 8) at the Holiday Lanes in Johnson City. Starting time is expected to be at 9 a.m.

Representing District 2 in the region will be the Carter and Gibbs girls and the Carter and South-Doyle boys.

Crest Lanes in Maryville will host the Region 2 tournament on Tuesday (Jan. 14), starting at 9 a.m. Representing District 3 will be the Maryville and Oak Ridge girls and the William Blount and Karns boys.

The Unified bowling tourney also will be held at Crest Lanes on Thursday (Jan. 16) beginning at 9.

## Warriors run past Concord

Cont. from page 1

White, who recently won a state championship in golf, added 11 points and three boards. He had eight points after halftime. Teeno Hutchinson scored 10 points and pulled down five rebounds.

Hunter Bennett finished with seven points and seven assists, while Foster Coleman had five points and five rebounds for CAK, which emerged with a victory in one of the toughest road venues in the county.

"This is a tough place to play," Johnson said. "We've had some big wins over here but this is a tough place to come and get a win."

Parker Cooley led the Lions with 10 points and was the only Lion to post double figures in the scoring column. Jace Gheen

scored eight points (all in the first half) for Concord, which has endured some growing pains in 2024-25 under first-year coach Mike Evers.

"We're very inexperienced. We have five seniors and they've shown great leadership and been good leaders, but we only have two players who played significant varsity minutes last year," Evers said. "We have another who played in spots. We had six freshmen and sophomores playing varsity this season. I look forward to them really being able to help us next year."

"(CAK) has a great team. They're well-coached and J.D. does a great job. They shoot well and they play a tough straight-up (man-to-man) defense."

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