



Make plans to attend!

TML District Meetings

Dec. 7	District 6	Brentwood Municipal Building Light brunch served	10 to 12 noon
Dec. 8	District 4	McMinnville City Hall Lunch served following the meeting	10 to 12 noon
Dec. 9	District 5	Springfield, Tricia's Restaurant Lunch served following the meeting	10 to 12 noon

The remaining district meetings will be held in January. Schedule to be announced.

Clerks say kinks need ironing out with new business tax collections

TML and COAT to meet with Department of Revenue

BY CAROLE GRAVES
TML Communications Director

As the one year mark approaches since implementation of a new way in which business taxes are collected, members of the Joint Select Committee on Business Taxes heard from county clerks as to how the new system is working – or according to them – how it is not working.

Last year, the Tennessee General Assembly approved Public Chapter No.530, which primarily shifted the responsibility of administration and collection of the busi-

ness tax from municipalities and counties to the state Department of Revenue. The reasons cited for the change were increased revenues through increased compliance, improved efficiency, simplification of tax forms and tax filing, and a uniform and fair means for administering tax collections throughout the state.

The committee, chaired by Sen. Douglas Henry, heard from three of the urban county clerks (Davidson, Knox, and Shelby). Among their top complaints of the new system are that the projected increase in revenues have not been realized – in fact, in some cases revenues have dropped; it has placed a burden on businesses; and there is a communication gap between the Department of Revenue, the clerks, and the businesses.

“Moving from local to state, we were told that we would see \$21 million in increased tax collections and that has not happened,” said John Arriola, Davidson County

clerk. “In Davidson County, we have seen at least \$1 million in losses.”

“It’s frustrating for our offices because we don’t have any information,” said Shelby County Clerk Wayne Mashburn. “We are trying to do a job on the local level without the backup information.”

Among some of the issues that the Tennessee Municipal League and city clerks have discussed with the Department of Revenue include the timing of when licenses are issued, the timing of payments to municipalities, and the lack of information provided to municipalities.

The increased revenue was expected to come from the department’s ability to match gross sales reported for the business tax against sales tax collections and Franchise and Excise reports. Through this process the Department of Revenue could identify new businesses that were not registered to pay the tax; bring those under

See **TAX** on Page 7

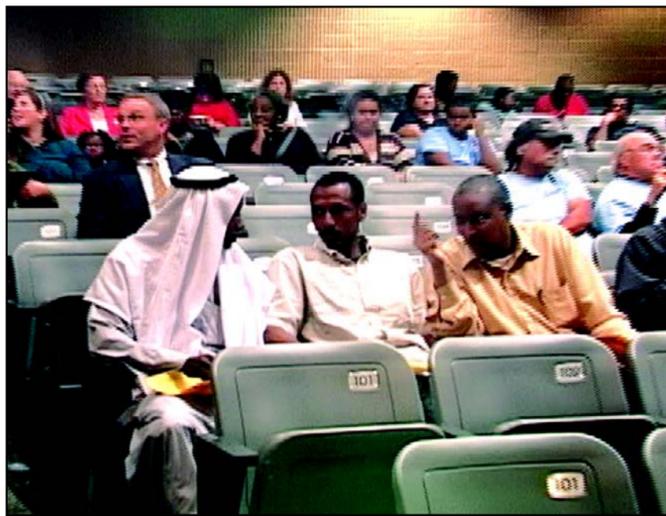
Anytown USA: Welcome to Shelbyville documentary depicts sign of the times

BY VICTORIA SOUTH
TML Communications Coordinator

On Sunday afternoon, an unlikely panel from all walks of life is seated before a sparse audience at the Shelbyville High School auditorium. The group includes a filmmaker, a reporter, a teacher, a factory worker, a pastor, and a Somali woman, Hawo Siyad, who had been a nurse and teacher in her former country. Regardless of the small turnout, they are there to answer questions following a public screening of *Welcome to Shelbyville*, a documentary following the first tentative steps of residents to reach beyond fears and cultural differences to forge a community relationship with their Somali neighbors.

Directed and produced by award winning filmmaker Kim Snyder in conjunction with Active Voice and part of a series of socially conscious documentaries through the BeCause Foundation, *Welcome to Shelbyville* takes an intimate look at the southern town as its residents – whites and African Americans, Latinos and Somalis – grapple with their beliefs, histories and evolving ways of life.

“I came down here two years ago because I wanted to do something to show how immigration was affecting small towns like Shelbyville,” said Snyder, who directed the film at the height of the Obama transition of 2008-09. “It represents what a lot of small towns across America are going through.”



Citizens view a public screening of *Welcome to Shelbyville*. Seated to the front left is the imam of a local mosque, Mohamed Ali.

The “newcomers” began arriving about three to five years ago, when 500 legal Somali Muslim refugees migrated to Shelbyville, a town of about 19,000, to live and work at the local chicken plant. Angry words and tensions ran high among residents amid what *Shelbyville-Times-Gazette* reporter Brian Mosely describes on film as “a serious, serious culture clash.”

“This isn’t just an American story, it’s a global story,” Snyder said. “The world’s economy is what it is and people migrate. This is the story of how people figure out how to live together.”

The region had experienced a similar influx of Hispanic residents in the 1980s and 90s, but according to Bedford County Mayor Eugene Ray, perceptions were different. “There was a perception that the Somalis were not easy or nice to get along with like the Hispanics were,” said Ray on film. “They were seen as demanding and aggressive; but hey, maybe a year ago they were fighting for food. They had to be aggressive.”

The situation is clarified by Luci Taylor, a local citizen hoping to make a difference on her own by teaching English and Civics classes. See **SHELBYVILLE** on Page 9

Street sign changes are a gradual process

BY LESLIE WOLLACK
Nation’s Cities Weekly

Recent news reports from New York City highlighted some recent and not-so-recent changes in federal rules impacting street signs to improve readability.

Federal guidelines for governing street signs, pavement markings and all other standards for streets and roads open to public traffic are published in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). Updates in 2000, 2003 and 2009 made significant changes in standards for street name signs impacting cities. <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/>.

The latest standards reflect updates on safety and are intended to enhance the ability of drivers to read signs more quickly, especially at night. The quicker a driver can read information from a sign, the less time they take from the road, according to safety research.

According to new standards issued by the Federal Highway Administration of the U.S. Department of Transportation, the lettering and materials for street name signs, must be changed to reflect current research on safety.

The change garnering news headlines was a required change from street name signs with all capital letters to mixed case letters that has no deadline, according to the Federal Highway Administration, and can be done by cities whenever



Agencies have until January 2012 to establish and implement a sign assessment or management method to maintain minimum levels of sign retroreflectivity.

they would replace their street name signs due to normal wear and tear.

However, there is a 2018 deadline for changing street name signs to minimum letter heights, which was included in the update to the MUTCD in 2000 and updated in 2003. Cities need to have a replacement plan in place by 2012. Many cities have been updating these new standards as part of another change included in the latest update of the MUTCD in January 2009.

A newer ruling on “retroreflectivity” for easier night viewing of street signs was adopted in late 2007 and went into effect in January 2008. Many cities are changing the lettering on their street signs as they comply with the newer ruling and when signs need to be replaced.

Agencies have until January 2012 to establish and implement a

sign assessment or management method to maintain minimum levels of sign retroreflectivity. The compliance date for regulatory, warning, and ground-mounted guide signs is January 2015. For overhead guide signs and street name signs, the compliance date is January 2018.

The retroreflectivity rule was requested by Congress in 1993 to make street and highway signs more visible at night.

The American Public Works Association has been working with its members for several years on the implementation of these rules and has the following resources available online:

- Sign Retroreflectivity: What is it and Why Should I Care (Retroreflectivity Part 1) - <http://www.apwa.net/events/>
See **SIGNS** on Page 5

Employers get reprieve on healthcare reporting

The Internal Revenue Service just announced that employers won’t have to begin reporting the cost of healthcare coverage under an employer-sponsored group plan until 2012 (i.e., W-2s issued in 2013). Reporting in 2011 will be optional, with no penalties issued for those who choose to wait until reporting becomes mandatory.

The U.S. Treasury Department and the IRS approved the delay to provide employers the time they need to make changes to their payroll systems or procedures in preparation for compliance with the new reporting requirement. The IRS will be publishing guidance on the new requirement later this year.

IRS also just released a draft

2011 Form W-2 that shows employers will report the healthcare amounts in Box 12, using the new Code DD. The back of Copy B reminds employers that the amounts reported aren’t taxable – the information is just there to help employees better understand the value of their benefits.

Although reporting the cost of coverage will be optional with respect to 2011, the IRS continues to stress that the amounts reportable are not taxable. Included in the Affordable Care Act passed by Congress in March, the new reporting requirement is intended to be informational only, and to provide employees with greater transparency into overall health care costs.

Nashville Cities of Service plan pairs volunteers with education, flood relief

BY VICTORIA SOUTH

When Mayor Karl Dean became one of 17 founding mayors of the Cities of Service Coalition last year in New York City, he was unaware of the unprecedented volunteerism that would become Nashville’s trademark and its port in the storm throughout the historic flood in May. Now, with the city’s first comprehensive service plan—Impact Nashville—intact, Dean is hoping to harness this ‘can do’ spirit to help alleviate some of Nashville’s most pressing needs, primarily flood relief and public education.

“When I joined Mayor Bloomberg in the creation of Cities of Service, I was excited about the possibilities for Nashville,” Dean said. “What I did not realize at that time, was that volunteerism would become Nashville’s biggest asset and biggest source of community pride as we faced a historic natural disaster.”

The mayor recently held a kickoff event for Impact Nashville at Glendale Elementary School, which suffered heavy damage during the flood. Students and parent volunteers helped construct a rain garden to absorb and divert water during future rainfalls.

Other service projects in the plan include: recruiting reading tutors to work in the city’s most high-need schools for kindergarten through second grade and recruiting volunteers to incorporate energy efficient upgrades and other environmental best practices into the rebuilding of homes damaged by the flood.

Improving public education is Mayor Dean’s top priority. In recent years, Metro Nashville Public



In 2009, Mayor Karl Dean pledged that Nashville would help the country achieve the goals of the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act by joining the launch of the Cities of Service coalition.

Schools (MNPS) has seen a decline in third grade reading scores, a pivotal year for children to move from “learning to read” to “reading to learn,” according to the Impact Nashville plan. In addition, residential and business damages due to the May 2010 flood left debris in and along the city’s natural infrastructure. Nashville’s city officials are working on ways to mitigate potential damage from future floods by identifying ways water can be better dispersed and absorbed naturally. In May, volunteers will plant trees and rain gardens in flood-affected areas to help absorb and manage stormwater.

Research shows that in America today, citizen service is often an underutilized or inefficiently utilized strategy by municipal governments. Cities of Service supports mayors to leverage citizen service strategies, addressing local needs and making government more effective.

“Small acts of everyday heroes bring communities together and help individuals through difficult times,” said Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, a Cities of Service coalition member. “If See **SERVICE** on Page 7

NEWS ACROSS TENNESSEE



BY TML STAFF REPORTS

BRENTWOOD

The city is spending \$10 million to buy 320 acres, including a home built in 1825, to create the largest park in Brentwood. The land is just southwest of Ravenwood High School on the west side of Wilson Pike, and there's an option to add 80 more connected acres for another \$3 million. Taxes will not have to be raised to make the purchase. The city plans to have hiking and biking trails on the land, as well as athletic fields for youth sports. "There's already six miles of hiking trails, and then there will be some areas where we'll want to put in some multi-purpose fields for the children to play," said Mike Walker, Brentwood city manager. "From 10 to 50 years from now, when all of northern Williamson County is built out, this may be some of the only remaining open space for people to go to."

HENDERSONVILLE

Hendersonville has recently received the 2010 Outstanding Planning Award for the "Plan in the Large Communities" division from the Tennessee Chapter of the American Planning Association. The award is in recognition of the city's Land Use and Transportation Plan. The plan was a collaborative effort between Hendersonville Planning staff and Urban Resource Group and involved an extensive public outreach program to ensure participation from business leaders, residents, elected officials and other interested parties. By combining the planning processes, the plan was able to more comprehensively address the future needs of the city in terms of growth and development. The award was presented during the recent 2010 Fall Conference of the Tennessee Chapter of the American Planning Association held in Knoxville.

JOHNSON CITY

Heartland Payment Systems, a credit and debit card payment processing center located on Med-Tech Parkway, will close its Johnson City center in phases beginning in January, according to a company spokesperson. The company is integrating center's functions into another service center in Jeffersonville, Ind. Overall, 140 of the center's 160 employees will be laid off by May 2011.

JOHNSON CITY

Johnson City commissioners adopted a resolution to vigorously oppose a Census Bureau proposal to consolidate the urban areas of

Johnson City and Kingsport into a single, large urban area that will render the city ineligible for \$1.2 million in federal funding for public transportation. City Manager Pete Peterson told the city commission that if adopted, as proposed in a Department of Commerce report in August, the consolidation of the two urban areas will have a "devastating" impact on the city's public transportation system. City Transit Planner Donna Bridwell said the federal dollars for transit operations, including salaries, fuel, utilities, offices supplies and other day-to-day costs, amount to about 50 percent of the department's annual operating funds. Bridwell said while the proposal will not impact the transit department's eligibility for federal funds for the purchase of assets such as buses, there are other federal grantees in the two urban areas that also may be impacted.

KNOXVILLE

Knox County school officials are working on plans to open a new magnet school in the historic L&N Station near downtown Knoxville. Funding would come from the county's share of federal Race to the Top money. The proposed school would take up to 800 students and would concentrate on science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Officials hope to open it next fall. The terminal for the old Louisville and Nashville Railroad is next to the site of the 1982 World's Fair.

KNOXVILLE

Scripps Networks Interactive is moving its corporate headquarters from Cincinnati to Knoxville. Most of the company's operations are located in Knoxville, where Scripps Networks dedicated a new expansion earlier this year. The media company's lifestyle brands include HGTV and Food Network. Other offerings include DIY Network, Travel Channel, Great American Country and Cooking Channel. Kenneth W. Lowe, chairman and CEO of Scripps Networks Interactive, said that the move signals a shift in the "center of gravity" for the company. "Making Knoxville and Tennessee the focal point of our global operations is a logical step in the company's ongoing evolution," Lowe said. He and other executives will relocate to Knoxville. The company will keep its financial, accounting and some other support services in the Cincinnati office, which employs about 50 people.

LENOIR CITY

It's been several years since Crete Carrier Corp. announced that it

would build a new \$10 million trucking terminal in East Tennessee, but drivers feel it was worth the wait. The recently opened 26-acre campus, located on West Buttermilk Road in Lenoir City includes parking for hundreds of trucks, offices, a driver center, training rooms, and fueling and maintenance facilities. Before construction could begin, Crete had to contend with zoning issues, wastewater treatment and even some angry racing fans who were upset that the new facility would occupy the former site of Atomic Speedway. A state grant was awarded which helped in dealing with the site's wastewater treatment issues. The new facility is expected to bring in as many as 60 new jobs and \$100,000 a year in property tax revenue.

MEMPHIS

Bill and Melinda Gates got the philanthropists' tour of public schools recently starting at Hamilton High, the South Memphis institution that is nearly an emblem of problems in education. The Seattle-based Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation announced a year ago that it was giving \$90 million to improve teacher quality in a city where graduation rates hover at 65 percent. Hamilton is the lowest-performing high school in the state and one of eight city schools with a longer school day this year. Students use the extra time, to get more help and a better understanding of their studies. Last year, Memphis City Schools spent \$5.2 million out of \$7 million from Gates to recruit new principals, improve school culture and turn teacher hiring over to an outside nonprofit organization.

MEMPHIS

Twenty-two Memphis employees have lost their jobs as part of a work force reduction by BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee to save costs on its subsidiary that contracts with TennCare. The Memphis personnel worked for the Volunteer State Health Plan. The insurance company also laid off three employees in Washington County and 33 in Hamilton County. The workforce reduction is one of several initiatives to cut costs, according to a company spokesperson. The Volunteer State Health Plan was the first managed care company to sign on when TennCare began. The company manages BlueCare and TennCareSelect.

MILLERSVILLE

In conjunction with Building Safety Month held each May, Millersville is preparing for the fifth annual



Millington Fire Chief, Gary Graves, receives a Certificate of Appreciation presented to the Millington Fire Department by Captain Douglas McGowen for outstanding support to the United States Navy during the May 1st flooding disaster.

ReNew Crew Project to help elderly, disabled and low-income families with much needed home repairs. Applications are being accepted for home repairs and may be picked up at city hall located at 1246 Louisville Highway in Millersville or online at www.cityofmillersville.com. Application deadline is Dec. 31.

MILLINGTON

The Millington Fire Department received a Certificate of Appreciation for outstanding support to the United States Navy during the May 1st flooding disaster in Millington. The department assisted in executing installation-wide water rescues of more than 350 base employees and housing residents with zero fatalities or significant injuries, according to Captain Douglas McGowen, D.A. USN Commanding Officer Naval Support Activity Mid-South.

MILLINGTON

Millington Public Library has been ranked in the top 25 percent of libraries nationwide in the \$250,000 to \$1 million budget category. The rankings are based upon federal statistics compiled from state reports. The areas of study include material circulation, budget to community services per capita, and public computer access / services.

TRI-CITIES

With two consecutive quarters of employment growth, the Tri-Cities are leading the national recovery

from the recession, according to a quarterly labor market report distributed by economist Steb Hipple for the East Tennessee State University Bureau of Business and Economic Research. In 2010's third quarter, Tri-Cities metro area employment expanded by more than 5,900 jobs as compared to the same period in 2009, a 2.7 percent increase. In the second quarter, the area saw a gain of more than 800 jobs in year-over-year figures, a 0.5 percent increase. According to Hipple, the Tri-Cities has bounced back "dramatically," restoring more than half of the almost 14,400 jobs lost in 2009. At the end of 2008, regional employment neared its highest levels at 232,851 jobs. By the first quarter of 2010, 218,531 jobs remained. The most recent third quarter numbers show a recovery to 228,407 jobs.

TULLAHOMA

The city, in cooperation with the Department of Tourism Development and the Tullahoma Confederate Association, dedicated a historical Civil War Trails marker at Maplewood Cemetery at 920 Maplewood Avenue. The marker denotes the "hallowed ground" at the mass grave area where more than 500 Confederate soldiers in the area were killed or died. Tullahoma was the headquarters and logistics center of the Army of Tennessee for the first six months of 1863 following the Battle of Murfreesboro.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

BY TML STAFF REPORTS

Morrow is finance commissioner

Mike Morrow has been named Commissioner of the Department of Finance and Administration. He replaces former commissioner **Dave Goetz**, who announced his resignation recently. Morrow is in his 34th year of public service with the state having served as fiscal director, Assistant Commissioner of the Division of Administration and Deputy Commissioner. Most recently, he assumed responsibility for the Tennessee Recovery Management office that provides oversight of the federal funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. In



Morrow



Goetz

2009, he was named Administrator of the Year by the Tennessee Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA). Goetz was appointed by Gov. Bredesen in January 2003, and has been the only person to serve as Commissioner of Finance and Administration under Bredesen.

McMillan city's 1st female mayor

Kim McMillan is the first woman to be elected mayor of Clarksville. She also made news as the first woman in Tennessee history to be elected Majority Leader of the State House of Representatives. "Of the five largest cities in the state, there has never been a female mayor of those cities," McMillan said. She credits her victory to the public's familiarity with



McMillan

her work, including her 12 years representing the area in the Legislature and her time serving on Gov. Phil Bredesen's cabinet.

Former Rep. A.C. Frensdley dies

Former State Rep. **A.C. "Cliff" Frensdley** has died at the age of 77 following a lengthy illness. He was a former clothier with Dad and Lad and Frensdley Fashions and state representative from 1978-1988.

State Solicitor General dies

Tennessee Solicitor General **Michael E. Moore**, who oversaw state appeals cases and supervised legal opinion issued by the state attorney general, has died following a lengthy illness. He was 60. Moore served as solicitor general for 17 years, representing the state in numerous appeals to the state Supreme Court and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit.



Jones

State mourns the death of Rep. Ulysses Jones

State Rep. Ulysses Jones Jr. has died Nov. 9 in Memphis of complications from pneumonia. He was 59.

Jones has represented District 98 in Shelby County for 22 years, serving in the 95th through the 106th General Assemblies. He just recently won his 11th term to the legislature, running unopposed.

Jones has been a municipal employee for 37 years, joining the Memphis Fire Department in 1973 as a firefighter and later climbing to the ranks as a battalion chief. He was one of the first emergency responders on the scene when Elvis Presley died in 1977.

Jones served for a dozen years as chairman of the powerful State and Local Government Committee (S&LG), through which all legislation affecting city and county governments.

Besides becoming chairman of S&LG in 1997, Jones has served on Education since 1985. He was a member of the K-12; Calendar and Rules, Elections, and State Government, and Local Government subcommittees. He served on the Joint Lottery Oversight Committee and the Joint Se-

lect Oversight Committee on Education, the Open Records and Open Meetings Committee, and chair of the House Ethics Committee.

The Tennessee Education Lottery, education, economic development and equal pay were among some of the issues Jones supported. In 2008, Jones was instrumental in negotiating a compromise on the Cable Franchising bill.

A father of two and a graduate of Northside High School who attended the University of Memphis and Tennessee State University, Jones also was first vice president of the National Black Caucus of State Legislators.

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The 107th General Assembly: Meet the Freshman Class

Tennessee Senate

TN Senate District 25

Jim Summerville (R)
Republican Jim Summerville beat 10-term incumbent Sen. Doug Jackson, a Democrat, for the 25th District state Senate seat. Summerville, a Dickson native and currently an adjunct English literature teacher at Austin Peay State University, campaigned for smaller and "smarter" state government. He calls himself a "strict fiscal conservative." He has published various books, including a book on the history of Nashville and another about the history of Meharry Medical College. He also chairs the Tennessee chapter of the National Association of Scholars, a national conservative group that opposes affirmative action.



lic education. He presently works as consultant for Edvantia in Nashville, a nonprofit corporation that helps schools, districts, and state education agencies meet federal and state mandates. He served in the military in the Tennessee Army National Guard for 20 years prior to his retirement in 2006. He lives



Forgety

TN House District 25

Cameron Sexton (R)
Cameron Sexton beat incumbent Rep. Eric Swafford in the primary and went on to win the seat in the general election. He has a degree in public administration from the University of Tennessee. He moved to Cumberland County in 1999 to work for former U.S. Congressman Van Hilleary. He cited quality education, job creation, enhancing the state's farming community, and conservation as some of his top priorities.



Sexton

TN House District 32

Julia C. Hurley (R)
Julia Hurley, a political new comer from Lenoir City, defeated nine-term incumbent Democrat Dennis Ferguson to capture the 32nd House District seat. She is self-employed by The JaCy Company, which offers collegiately licensed sports merchandise via a website called SECGrillToppers.com. She is a graduate of Maryville College with a degree in business and organizational management and economics.



Hurley

TN House District 33

John D. Ragan (R)
John Ragan, is a business consultant and retired Air Force fighter pilot. His military career spanned 24 years of service. His post military retirement experience includes management duties for strategic planning at a Fortune-20 company, as well as a business consultant to dozens of other national companies. He describes himself as "a solid conservative" who believes in limited government. He defeated Democratic incumbent Jim Hackworth.



Ragan

TN House District 34

Richard B. Womick (R)
Richard Womick of Rockvale, won the seat of retiring Republican Rep. Donna Rowland. He is a Boeing 777 international pilot, served in the U.S. Air Force as an officer and an F-15 Fighter Pilot through the 1st Gulf War, and is former teacher and high school football coach. He currently serves as chairman of the Rutherford County Republican Party. He cites as the most immediate issues as the local economy and job creation.



Womick

TN House District 36

Dennis Powers (R)
Dennis Powers, a graduate of UT Knoxville, is a owner of an Allstate Insurance Agency. During his campaign he said his top issues were making Tennessee more business friendly by working to keep taxes low, and addressing generational welfare and its relationship to the growing drug problem in his district.



Powers

TN House District 38

Kelly Keisling (R)
Kelly Keisling, owner of Keisling Insurance, beat 13-term incumbent Les Winningham. He is a former mayor of Pickett County. He wants to use his experience as a mayor and small businessman to enact policies that promote economic growth in District 38 and across the state. As state representative, Keisling said he will work hard to bring good-paying jobs to the district and improve local school systems.



Keisling

TN House District 39

David Alexander (R)
David Alexander of Winchester is a small business owner, Reliable Rental. He currently serves as secretary of the Franklin County Republican Party. He is a graduate of Mississippi College with a bachelor's degree in English literature, a paratrooper for the 82nd Airborne and reservist for special forces. He beat six-term incumbent George Fraley to represent Franklin, Lincoln and Moore Counties.



Alexander

TN House District 42

Ryan Williams (R)
Ryan Williams is director of business development for J&S Construction Company in Cookeville. As a former member of the Cookeville City Council, he cited economic development, education, public safety, quality of life, and balancing the budget as some of his top priorities.



Williams

TN House District 46

Mark Pody (R)
Mark Pody, a Wilson County resident for more than 25 years, beat Democrat incumbent Stratton Bone for the 46th house district seat. Pody is a financial planner and insurance business owner. Jobs, education, the budget crisis, illegal aliens and social entitlements are all issues he cited during his campaign that need to be addressed.



Pody

TN House District 49

Mike Sparks (R)
Mike Sparks, a life-long resident of Smyrna, was elected to the 49th district, beating three-term Democratic incumbent Rep. Kent Coleman. Sparks has served on the Rutherford County Commissioner for the past eight years and is a member of the Smyrna Municipal Planning Commission. Sparks said he wants to focus on job creation, education and social issues.



Sparks

TN House District 57

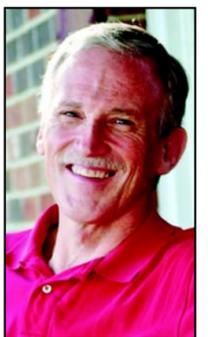
Linda Elam (R)
Linda Elam was elected to former Rep. Susan Lynn's seat. Elam has served as the mayor of Mt. Juliet for the past six years. She was first appointed to the Mt. Juliet Regional Planning Commission in December 2000, was elected vice chair in 2000, and chair of the Planning Commission in 2002 - a post she held until she ran for mayor in 2004. In 2008, she was re-elected to her second term. As state representative, Elam says she will root out the inefficiencies and work to save taxpayers' dollars.



Elam

TN House District 60

Jim Gotto (R)
Jim Gotto grew up in Nashville and earned his degree in electrical engineering from Vanderbilt University. He spent 32 years with South Central Bell and Bellsouth. He has spent the last seven years serving on the Metro Council and the last three on the Metro Planning Commission. He currently operates a small, family-owned businesses. He won the seat left vacant by retiring House member Ben West.



Gotto

TN House District 64

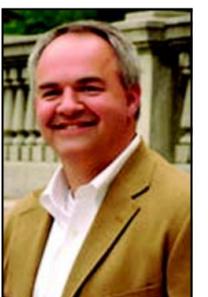
Sheila Butt (R)
Sheila Butt, co-founder and managing editor of S&S Bovine Images and Tennessee Cattle Business, is also a Christian author and motivational speaker. She is a graduate of East Tennessee State University with a bachelor's degree in English and history. A resident of Columbia, she ran against incumbent Ty Cobb to represent House District 64 which includes most of Maury County.



Butt

TN House District 75

Tim Wirgau (R)
Tim Wirgau won the seat from four-term incumbent Willie "Butch" Borchert to represent Benton, Henry and Stewart counties. A business owner, Wirgau has owned and operated Abbotts Print Shop in Paris, Tenn. for the past 18 years. He has served on the Henry County Commission and is a member of the Paris-Henry County Chamber of Commerce. Jobs, roads, education, eliminating wasteful spending, and keeping taxes low are among the issues he wants to focus on.



Wirgau

TN House District 76

Andrew H. Holt (R)
upset seven-term incumbent Mark L. Maddox for the West Tennessee seat in Weakley and Carroll Counties. Holt, a farmer, holds a bachelor's of science in agricultural economics & business with a minor in animal science from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville and master's of business administration from UT Martin. He and his wife own and operate a diversified agricultural operation outside Dresden. He was recently elected to the County Commission of Weakley County. He supports common sense fiscal responsibility, traditional family values, uninhibited second amendment rights, and tax rate reductions for Tennessee families and small businesses.



Holt

TN House District 77

Bill Sanderson (R)
Bill Sanderson has spent the past 29 years as owner and operator of a regional furniture and appliance store, C.W. Sanderson. He currently serves on the Kenton Planning and Zoning Commission, is a member of the Kenton School Board, and is an advisory board member of the First State Bank. He also served as chairman of the Kenton Merchants Association. Sanderson and his family have shown and trained Tennessee Walking Horses for the past 35 years winning many awards at the Walking Horse Celebration in Shelbyville.



Sanderson

Tennessee House

TN House District 3

Scotty Campbell (R)
Scotty Campbell, former aide to House Speaker Kent Williams, was elected to the seat held by retiring House member Rep. Jason Mumpower. Campbell served as an intern with two members of the United States Congress in Washington, D.C.; has previously worked for the Republican Caucus Chairman of the Tennessee State Senate (2007) and for members of the Tennessee House of Representatives in Nashville (2008, 2009, and 2010). He is a former volunteer firefighter, ambulance crew member, and 911 emergency dispatcher. He graduated from Cumberland University with a bachelor's degree in American studies and has completed some graduate work at Tennessee State University in public administration. Campbell said that quality education, creating a pro-business environment, and placing restrictions on illegal immigration are some of his top concerns.



Campbell

TN House District 8

Art Swann (R)
Art Swann, former state representative from 1985 to 1989, will return to the state House to fill the seat vacated by Rep. Joe McCord. Swann said dealing with the budget crisis and an expected \$1.5 billion shortfall will be his first responsibility, but that he also shares the concerns of the electorate and pledges to reduce the size of government and create more jobs. He works in the lumber industry for Cherokee Lumber Co., and has previously served four years as a Blount County Commissioner. He is the brother of Joe Swann, Maryville councilman.



Swann

TN House District 10

Don Miller (R)
Don Miller, a long-time resident of Hamblen County, is the business administrator for Manley Baptist Church in Morristown. He pledged to reduce the size of state government, fight illegal immigration, and bring more high-quality jobs to Hamblen County.



Miller

TN House District 11

Jeremy Faison (R)
Jeremy Faison defeated incumbent Rep. Eddie Yokley. Being a small business owner for more than 14 years, Faison said he will work to grow the economy by attracting new industries and higher paying jobs to state. He is also focused on improving education.



Faison

TN House District 18

Steve Hall (R)
Steve Hall was elected to the seat previously held by Stacey Campfield. The former two-term Knoxville city councilman owns an interior construction company. Hall said he wants to help the business community by assisting rather than putting obstacles up when owners want to expand or start a new business.



Hall

TN House District 23

John W. Forgety

John Forgety, former superintendent of McMinn County Schools for 16 years, was elected to the House seat previously held by Republican Mike Bell. Bell ran and won the Senate seat relinquished by former Sen. DeWayne Bunch. Forgety, a former high school teacher, coach, high school principal and assistant principal, spent 40 years in pub-

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STATE BRIEFS

BY TML STAFF REPORTS

College dropouts cost to taxpayers

Taxpayers in Tennessee and Georgia are spending more than \$100 million a year supporting college students who drop out in their freshman year, according to a new study of state and federal funding of four-year colleges. The American Institutes for Research found that more than \$550 million of taxpayer funds were spent between 2003 and 2008 on freshmen in Tennessee and Georgia who didn't return in their sophomore year. Nationwide, nearly \$9 billion was spent on the 30 percent of freshmen at four-year colleges who didn't make it past their first year. "When students enroll in a college or university and drop out before the second year, they have invested time and money only to see their hopes and dreams of a college degree dashed," said Mark Schneider, a former commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics who wrote the study. "These costs can be heartbreaking for students and their families, but the financial costs to states are enormous.... Tennessee is among a handful of states trying to boost college retention and graduation by paying public colleges not just for enrollment but also for the number of graduations."

Prescription for common cold?

Tennesseans may one day need a prescription before getting some popular over-the-counter cold medicines due to the state's mushrooming methamphetamine trade. Law enforcement agencies want the state legislature to make pseudoephedrine a prescription-only drug. The decongestant is the key ingredient in meth. Pharmacists oppose the change, arguing it would be a costly burden to law-abiding consumers with legitimate health needs. Two other states, Oregon and Mississippi, already have made pseudoephedrine a prescription-only drug. Tennessee Bureau of Investigation Director Mark Gwyn said lawmakers in this state will be asked to do the same during next year's session. He noted that Tennessee had the second-most meth lab sei-

zures in the country last year. "I don't think we can wait until we're number one," Gwyn said. He said the states that have had the greatest success in fighting meth have done it by limiting access to pseudoephedrine. The request will come just six years after passage of the Meth Free Tennessee Act of 2005, which led to an immediate and encouraging decline in the meth trade.

Conservancy proposes artificial cave to fight white-nose syndrome

The Tennessee chapter of The Nature Conservancy would like to build an artificial cave to safeguard hibernating bats from white-nose syndrome, a fungal disease that has experts predicting regional extinction for at least one common bat species - the little brown bat - within the next two decades. To fund the cave, The Nature Conservancy has entered its proposal in the Pepsi Refresh online



grant competition, a monthly contest for ideas that positively affect communities. If the idea garners enough public votes, Pepsi will award The Nature Conservancy \$250,000 to build and outfit the artificial cave. Built of metal, the artificial cave would resemble an elongated dome. The main room would measure 40-by-52 feet, with a 33-foot-tall air shaft and a 6-foot-long entry tunnel. To achieve optimum benefit, the artificial cave would be buried near a natural cave where federally endangered gray bats are known to hibernate. Public voting continues through Nov. 30 at <http://www.refresheverything.com>.



The search is on for new fair locale

The Tennessee State Fair Association has been formed and is currently looking for a new location to

hold the 2011 State Fair. An economic impact analysis on the redevelopment of the fairgrounds, released by the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, concluded that a mixed-use development with one million square feet of Class A office space would create opportunity for 6,500 jobs and \$200 million in capital investment. The total economic impact of such a development, including direct and indirect spending, would be \$2.5 billion. The operations at the fairgrounds have been losing money since 2002, and the Fair Board's reserve fund is nearly depleted. If the current operations at the fairgrounds continue, the Fair Board will require a subsidy from Metro taxpayers in the near future to cover operating expenses.

TDOT reviews cable barriers

Transportation officials looking to prevent head-ons and other lane departure crashes in Tennessee are taking a close look at cable barriers. After installing more than 1.4 million linear feet of the multiple strands of thick wire in recent years, the department will evaluate how well the barriers are working. Lane departure crashes in recent years have been a major cause of highway fatalities and the "cable barrier rail is one main strategy" to prevent them, according to TDOT. "What is so good about these barriers versus a concrete barrier or guardrail is that the cable is much more forgiving," said Steve Hall, the department's assistant chief engineer. "Concrete



doesn't give too much. The guardrail has a deflection of approximately three feet. These cables amount to about eight feet and can deflect to about 10 or 12 feet. It stops the vehicle from crossing but doesn't impact the occupant as with concrete."

Sales tax on upswing

Tennessee's latest revenue figures show monthly sales tax collections grew at their highest rate since April 2007 and the state's general fund exceeded projections by \$46 million through the first quarter of the budget year. Former Finance Commissioner Dave Goetz, said the improved economic performance could mean the cancellation of a call for agencies to cut spending by up to



3 percent. "That doesn't mean the new administration might not want to take some of those reductions and deal with that," Goetz said. "But the good news is that we might be able to leave them with the prospect of reasonable revenue growth." David Smith, the spokesman for Gov.-elect Bill Haslam, who takes office on Jan. 15, called the quarter's growth "encouraging" but noted that they compare with a year-ago period that was poor. General fund collections in the same quarter of last year were \$88 million below expectations, and they were \$200 million short in the first quarter of 2008.

TN jumps 5 spots in Kids Count

Tennessee has jumped five spots in the national Kids Count rankings, but is still well below the national average. The state is currently ranked 41st among all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Tennessee was ranked 46th last year and 42nd in 2008. The Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth recently released the Kids Count: *The State of the Child in Tennessee 2009* report. Most of the data is from 2007. Tennessee has made considerable gains since 1999, said Pam Brown, the state's Kids Count director. "We're moving in the right direction, but we still have a while to go." Brown is concerned about the state's infant mortality rate, which was 8.3 per 1,000 people.

Dry spell hurts TN Burley crop

This autumn has not been kind to burley tobacco farmers in Tennessee, one of the top two burley-producing states in the U.S. alongside



Kentucky. With some buyers beginning to make their purchases, the season could turn out to be disappointing financially as a dry spell has hurt the quality of some leaf stored for curing before going to market. Rain fall has offered some help for tobacco producers, but "it's

probably going to be too little, too late for a lot of the crop, unfortunately," said Bob Pearce, a University of Kentucky extension tobacco specialist. Ideally, the post-harvest curing process gradually changes long green burley tobacco leaves to a dark reddish brown tint amid cycles of dry and moist conditions. This year, little rain and warmer temperatures for much of the fall left some tobacco with an undesired light tan color as the burley dried too fast in barns. That pigmentation problem, plus average yields, could result in lost income when growers take their crop to market. "A lot of them could be facing at best a break-even and at worst they could be losing on this crop," Pearce said.

TDOT Smart Fix wins awards

The Tennessee Department of Transportation's SmartFIX40 project is being recognized with two national community outreach and communications awards. The National Partnership for Highway Quality recently selected SmartFIX40 for their national Gold Award for "Making a Difference - Public Communications." In addition, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials Subcommittee on Public Affairs recently selected SmartFIX40 as one of four Excel Award winners for best public outreach and communications work by a state department of transportation. In selecting SmartFIX40 for the Gold Award in Public Communications, the NHPQ noted, "from 2005 to 2009, TDOT focused on public outreach through community meetings, media reports, public service announcements and involvement with community leaders. SmartFIX40 was a multi-year road construction project with a total price tag of more than \$190 million. The project began in 2005 and was completed 18 days early in June 2009."

IRS search to return \$2.48 M

The Internal Revenue Service is trying to return \$2.48 million in undelivered checks to 2,091 Tennessee taxpayers. The agency said the taxpayers are due one or more refund checks that could not be delivered because of mailing address errors. The undelivered refund checks average \$1,188. Information is at the "Where's My Refund?" tool on IRS.gov or by calling 800-829-1954. IRS officials urged taxpayers to use e-filing, which reduces filing errors and speeds up refund processing.



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Breakingdown revenues, expenditures of State Street Aid



BY RON DARDEN

MTAS Management Consultant

The Tennessee Legislature authorized the state to distribute a portion of the proceeds from the state gasoline fuel taxes to incorporated cities and towns for use on municipal streets.

Of the approximate \$243.8 million (TDOT 2010-2011 tax data) in petroleum and alternative fuel taxes allocated for cities and counties, cities receive approximately \$97,686,000 (TDOT 2010-2011 tax data) based on per capita distributions. The current allocation to cities is based on \$26.08 (2010-2011 State Shared Taxes and Appropriations by Dick Phebus, MTAS finance and accounting consultant) per capita.

State Gasoline Tax Revenue

The state petroleum and alternative fuel taxes are:

- Gasoline tax—21.4 cents per gallon;
- Diesel tax—18.4 cents per gallon;
- Liquefied gas tax—0.14 cents per gallon; and
- Natural gas tax—0.13 cents per gallon.

These tax amounts include a special privilege tax of 1 cent per gallon on petroleum products and a 0.4 cent petroleum tax for the underground storage tank fund.

The proceeds from these taxes are paid monthly to local governments on a per capita basis. The law permits motor vehicle fuel tax monies to be used for street-related purposes. The law further requires that these funds be accounted for separately in a special revenue fund, commonly titled the state street aid fund or gas tax fund. Cities may request permission from the state comptroller's office to account for these funds in the general fund. T.C.A. § 54-4-204. See T.C.A. § 54-4-203 for distribution of funds for premier tourist resort cities.

Definitions

- "Municipal Street Aid Fund" means the funds provided for municipalities from state gasoline fuel taxes;
- "Municipality" means any incorporated city or incorporated town charged with the duty of constructing and maintaining streets within its corporate boundaries;
- "Street" includes streets, highways, avenues, boulevards, publicly owned rights-of-way, bridges, tunnels, public parking areas, and other public ways dedicated to public use and maintained for general public travel lying within a municipality's corporate boundaries; and
- "Street improvements" means construction, reconstruction, improvement, and maintenance of streets, including paving, repaving, grading and drainage, repairs, cleaning, acquisition and maintenance of rights-of-way, extension and widening of existing streets, elimination of railroad grade crossings, acquisition or lease or lease/purchase of trucks or other equipment necessary in the construction and maintenance of streets, includ-

ing the purchase, construction or leasing of facilities to store equipment, street lighting, signage, and other traffic control devices, and administrative and other necessary expenses, including labor and employee benefits in connection with such street improvements. T.C.A. § 54-4-201.

Administration

Each municipality is required to keep records of receipts into and expenditures for its state street aid fund in accordance with sound municipal accounting practices. At the end of each fiscal year the municipality must provide an audit of the accounts of the fund by a certified public accountant and submit one certified copy of the audit to the comptroller of the treasury to be reviewed for compliance with the provisions of the statute. Minimum standards for municipal audits prescribed by the comptroller of the treasury must be met (see T.C.A. § 54-4-204 (c)).

All purchases made by a municipality with state street aid funds are required to be in conformity with public advertisement and competitive bidding laws applicable to the particular municipality. Generally, municipalities must follow the provisions of the 1983 Municipal Purchasing Law.

Municipalities are not required to employ a licensed engineer to prepare bid specifications and estimates. T.C.A. § 54-4-204 (d)(2). Upon written request of a municipality, the comptroller of the treasury may authorize that funds received from municipal state street aid fund may be kept and accounted for in the general fund of the municipality. Fund revenue and expenditures related to funds received for the municipal street aid fund are required to be accounted for separately in the general fund in such a manner as to allow identification of the source of revenue and the expenditures related to such revenue.

Funds in the municipal street aid fund may be used by municipalities receiving such funds for funding mass transit systems. No more than 22.22 percent of such funds may be used for funding mass transit. T.C.A. § 54-4-204 (e).

Cities may be eligible for 15-year loans from funds accumulated and set apart from petroleum funds to fund costs incurred in relocating, moving or reinstalling utility facilities, without any additions thereto. Such loans are allowable only for relocating utility lines located within rights-of-way of highways on the system of state highways if relocation is required because of highway construction projects administered by the department of transportation. Applications for assistance should be directed to the State Utility Management Review Board (see T.C.A. § 67-3-901). Cities are advised that utility relocation expenses for state highway projects may be paid for with state highway project funds.

It is a Class C misdemeanor for any municipal official or employee to authorize, direct, or permit the expenditure of such funds for any purpose, except those authorized by the state law. Any municipal official

or employee who violates this provision shall be personally liable for any unauthorized expenditures of such fund. T.C.A. § 54-4-205.

Expenditures

General

- State street aid funds can pay:
- Street improvements, including work by TDOT or by a county highway department or another municipality, performed under an agreement;
 - Valid administration expenses connected with issuing street improvement bonds;
 - Principal and interest on street improvement bonds or other indebtedness incurred to pay for street improvements issued after February 19, 1953;
 - Street work supervision fees;
 - Workers' compensation insurance for employees engaged in street improvement activities;
 - General and automotive liability insurance coverage of street improvement activities;
 - Property insurance coverage for portions of buildings used to store and maintain street improvement equipment; and
 - Mass transit systems, provided that such funding shall not exceed 22.22 percent.

State street aid funds can not pay for:

- Auto expenses for the city recorder;
- Salary supplements to the street superintendent;
- Loans temporarily borrowed from the municipal state street aid fund;
- Audit fees;
- Recorder's commission;
- Personal damages;
- Property damages;
- Office assistance; or
- General administrative expenses.

Be careful:

- If a city makes curb and gutter improvements and pays the total cost from state street aid funds but has assessed the abutting property owners for two-thirds of the cost, the funds derived from the assessments must remain available for other qualified street projects;
- Interest received by a municipality from the investment of state street aid funds is subject to the same restrictions as the state street aid fund money; and
- A city must keep records in accordance with sound municipal accounting practices and include the state street aid funds in the year-end audit.

Construction

- State street aid funds can pay for:
- Engineering fees for street improvements. Cities are not required to employ licensed engineers to prepare bid specifications and estimates;
 - Constructing sidewalks along city streets;
 - Acquiring rights-of-way for city streets, including approaches to bridges and tunnels;
 - Widening and/or draining a creek to prevent city street flooding, where the primary purpose is to stop street flooding. Protecting other property may be an incidental benefit;
 - Up to one-third of the city's rights-of-way acquisition costs for a state

- highway through the city; and
- The city's part of the cost of grade eliminations on streets and highways, including state and federal highways.

State street aid funds can **not** pay for:

- Extending municipal sewer lines even if tunneling under city streets is necessary; or
- Drainage improvements not associated with protecting a street.

Be careful:

- Funds may not exceed one-third of the total costs of rights-of-way for state and federal highways within the municipality; and
- All purchases must be made in conformity with public advertisement and competitive bidding laws applicable to the city.

Repair and Maintenance

- State street aid funds can pay for:
- Purchasing machinery to repair and maintain municipal streets;
 - Purchasing and maintaining equipment for mowing areas within street rights-of-way;
 - Removing dead trees, tree limbs, leaves, and similar objects;
 - Purchasing boiler for asphalt plant if used to heat asphalt for street improvements; and
 - Purchasing street cleaning equipment.

State street aid funds cannot pay for:

- Maintaining county roads; or
- Purchasing refuse pick-up equipment.

Be careful:

If purchasing a piece of equipment is questionable, spend the money on equipment, supplies, or paving that is not questionable.

Street Signs and Street Lights

- State street aid funds can pay for:
- Erecting street signs;
 - Installing and maintaining traffic lights; and
 - Street light installation and electric bills for street lights.

State street aid funds can **not** pay for:

- Welcome-to-the-city signs; or
- Community event and general informational signs.

Other Facilities

- State street aid funds can pay for:
- Purchasing, constructing, repairing, or leasing a facility to store street equipment, street lighting, signs, and other traffic control devices.

Cities are advised to use municipal street aid funds for known eligible expenditures and fund questionable expenditures from the general fund.

Nov. 30: Sustainable Tourism / Green Certification Workshop hosted by The Tennessee Department of Tourist Development and Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation in Memphis at the Memphis Marriott Downtown. Seating is limited. To reserve a seat, email VionneWilliams, vionne.williams@tn.gov or call Patricia Gray or Lee Curtis, Tennessee Department of Tourist Development at 615-741-2159.

Nov. 30: Franklin Regional Transportation Planning meeting. Mayor John Schroer invites the community to join him in a discussion and in-depth presentation regarding regional transportation planning efforts. Held at 5:30 p.m. in the Community Room at the Franklin Police Headquarters at 900 Columbia Avenue. An open house will be held at 5 p.m. The public may submit questions and comments on the proposed plans. For more information, visit www.nashvillempo.org.

Street sign changes

SIGNS from Page 1
[eventdetail.asp?ID=5217](http://www.apwa.net/events/eventdetail.asp?ID=5217)

- Sign Retroreflectivity: Best Management Practices for How to Implement (Retroreflectivity Part 2) - <http://www.apwa.net/events/eventdetail.asp?ID=5220>
- MUTCD Revisions: Changes Every Local Community Needs to Know - <http://www.apwa.net/events/eventdetail.asp?ID=5233>
- Information available on the Federal Highway Administration website includes: http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/roadway_dept/night_visib/policy_guide/fhwasa07020/ <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/research/safety/09030/>

Finally, the Federal Highway Administration has prepared a sign retroreflective toolkit at www.fhwa.dot.gov/retro. Copies can be ordered online. The toolkit provides information to assist smaller and medium sized agencies to meet the new requirements and consists of a compact disc and guidebook that helps agencies establish a maintenance program and set a budget for updating their traffic signs.

For further information, contact your state department of transportation.

You can test your knowledge about street signs at <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/Signs/index.htm>.

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Tommy Green (2007) Mayor, Alamo
Tommy Bragg (2006) Mayor, Murfreesboro
Bob Kirk (2004) Alderman, Dyersburg
Tom Rowland (2002) Mayor, Cleveland
Sam Tharpe (2001) Mayor, Paris
Dan Speer (1997) Mayor, Pulaski

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Emerging Issues: Are we ready for government by the people?

BY BILL BARNES
Nation's Cities Weekly

Many city officials feel they and their community have been hurt by well-intended participatory processes gone badly awry. Once burned, twice shy. You can imagine that citizens feel the same way.

It is, however, not unusual that residents and city halls first meet each other in special deliberative sessions when there is a particularly troublesome issue that severely divides the local polity. Like the current budget crises. Strong emotions, forceful words and bad feelings frequently follow.

Taking a longer view, Matt Leighninger, executive director of the Deliberative Democracy Consortium and long-time NLC collaborator, observes that the foundation for dealing with really wicked issues must be laid way before an issue escalates. And, he adds wryly, why not build that foundation by doing excellent citizen involvement when the topic is more positive and less divisive — planning a park or envisioning a strategy for green jobs?

New NLC Report

A new NLC report, "Making Local Democracy Work," adds information about the views of municipal officials to the on-going discourse about democracy. The government side of the citizen/government relationship is too often neglected, to the detriment of the whole discussion.

The NLC study surveyed elected and managerial municipal officials about public engagement. It defined public engagement as "proactive efforts to involve people in deliberating public issues and in helping to solve problems."

Heavy Burdens

Heavy burdens have accumulated around the topic of government/citizen relationships. For ex-

ample, a quick count of portentous vocabulary in a publication from a major democracy organization yields 13 weighty terms like democracy, community and self-government on just the first page. It's enough to weigh a person down.

City officials agree that great things are at stake. The NLC survey asked about the rewards and benefits that they think accrue from effective public engagement. Two items were selected most frequently as being "most important": "build a stronger sense of community" and "build trust between citizens and government."

Leighninger clearly believes that all these big issues are at stake, but he is pragmatic about how to proceed. He urges that we see all this as part of a "transition" to "The Next Form of Democracy," the title of his excellent 2006 book. The book's subtitle tells us his thesis about what this "transition" is — "How Expert Rule is Giving Way to Shared Governance...and Why Politics Will Never Be the Same."

That "expert rule" bit will present difficulties for city officials because it turns out that they are the ones who are often perceived as the overbearing experts. And "shared governance" may sound fine until officials' preference for making sure everyone has the right information (a preference that is strongly expressed in responses to the NLC survey) confronts people's inclination to just speak their minds and hearts or a neighborhood's desire to take over decision-making about a proposed facility. How can those tensions be managed constructively?

There's no easy way out of this. We know that the relationship 'twixt government and citizens is changing, Leighninger says, but we don't know where we are in this journey. So we should do what we can to improve that relationship and keep searching for what works the way it

should.

The Road Ahead

So, what to do? There are lots of oracles who have "shoulds" and "oughts" to offer. Not much help there.

Happily, there are also lots of "how to" materials and resource people who have experience and techniques to offer. Mostly helpful. NLC's recent guidebook on "Civic Engagement and Recent Immigrant Communities" is a good example.

Mainly, officials and citizens continue to learn, to experiment, and to take interesting ideas from elsewhere because they are seeking ways to make local situations better. That is the key driver of all this change: people who care about their community are looking for ways to solve problems and seize opportunities; and the shared power of the citizen/government relationship is crucial to their ability to do that.

Public engagement is not a separate thing; it is not a one-time event. It is ways of thinking and ways of doing the governance you need to do to make your community better. Big successes will likely be outnumbered by "sort of okay's" and even duds, so a commitment to keeping learning and keep trying will be crucial.

An appreciation of the purposes to be served and the historic transition we are muddling through may thus be more helpful to local officials who are trying to decide what to do than knowing the next new thing or carrying out the latest "engagement" methods or using the glitziest technology.

Details: "Making Local Democracy Work: Municipal Officials' Views About Public Engagement" by William Barnes and Bonnie Mann, an NLC Research Report, is available on the NLC website, www.nlc.org, on the "Governance" topic page. The "Recent Immigrant" guidebook is on the same page.



NATIONAL BRIEFS

Sex offenders evading authorities

Thousands of convicted sex offenders are evading state and federal authorities, congregating in regions thought to have lax enforcement, slipping back and forth to Mexico, or disregarding laws on reporting their whereabouts. As state and federal authorities stitch together a national system for overseeing America's 700,000 convicted sex offenders, they face a sobering challenge: locating the estimated 100,000 sex offenders who aren't saying where they are. State and local authorities, working with the U.S. Marshals Service, are conducting sex offender sweeps, checking old addresses and hunting down the absconds. Oftentimes, officials say, the offenders are where they have been all along - they've just fallen behind on paperwork. But sometimes not. "They could be up to no good, stalking another child," said Tom Henman, supervisory deputy U.S. marshal of the Child Predator Apprehension Team in the Arizona District.

Job market on the upswing

The American job machine appears to have finally slipped into a higher gear. Employers boosted hiring in October, offering hope that the recovery may be picking up steam. The government's broadest snapshot of the labor market showed the U.S. created 151,000 jobs last month, mainly on a surge of hiring by service businesses. The private sector notched its largest gain since April, adding 159,000 jobs. The government also revised up job figures for August and September, indicating the economy shed 110,000 fewer jobs than previously thought. Even so, the jobless rate, based on a separate survey of households, remained at 9.6 percent for the third straight month as more workers gave up looking for work and left the official jobless rolls. The upbeat job report came just two days after the Federal Reserve announced a plan to buy up government debt in an effort to boost growth, and it follows other indications that the economy may be

growing faster than the roughly 2% rate that many analysts project for the fourth quarter.

Middle class jobs disappearing

The well-paying, predominantly white-collar jobs that once sustained many American communities are disappearing at an alarming pace, keeping the unemployment rate stubbornly high despite the end of the Great Recession. Jobs in accounting, financial analysis, commercial printing and a broad array of other mostly white-collar occupations are unlikely to come back, experts predict. Some of it is explained by changing technology, some, the result of automation. Sending well-paying jobs to low-cost centers abroad is another big part, as is global competition from emerging economies such as China and India. Jobs that paid well, required skills and produced vital communities are going away and aren't being replaced by anything comparable.



TENNESSEE FESTIVALS

Dec. 4: Sevierville

48th Annual Christmas Parade
A traditional hometown parade with baton twirlers, pageant winners, marching bands and floats leading up to the appearance of the Grand Marshal - Santa Claus. Parade begins at 11am and can best be viewed on Forks of the River Parkway and Court Avenue in historic downtown Sevierville. For information, call 1-888-738-4378 or visit the website, www.visitsevierville.com

Dec. 4: Cumberland Gap

Annual Victorian Christmas
from 10 am - 3 pm at the Victorian House, 511 Colwyn Ave. Kids will visit with Father and Mother Christmas, enjoy the reading of the Christmas Story and The Legend of Santa. There will be hot cider and cookies. For more information, call 423-869-3860 or visit the website www.townofcumberlandgap.com

Dec. 4: Clarksville

Downtown for the Holidays
Jingle Bell Jog, Caroling and family activities, Christmas cookie bake off, topped off by the 51st annual Christmas parade at 5 pm. For more information, visit the city website at www.cityofclarksville.com

Dec. 14: Tullahoma

Old Towne Christmas Stroll
From 5 - 8:30 pm, enjoy refreshments and the sights and musical sounds of an old-fashioned Christmas presented free in Tullahoma's historic district at sites delineated by luminaries. The route has been divided into two areas, the "Holly" and "Mistletoe" strolls in the downtown area. The Tullahoma Fine Arts Center will host the opening of the stroll, and will have programs available for strollers that evening.

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TENNESSEE TOWN & CITY

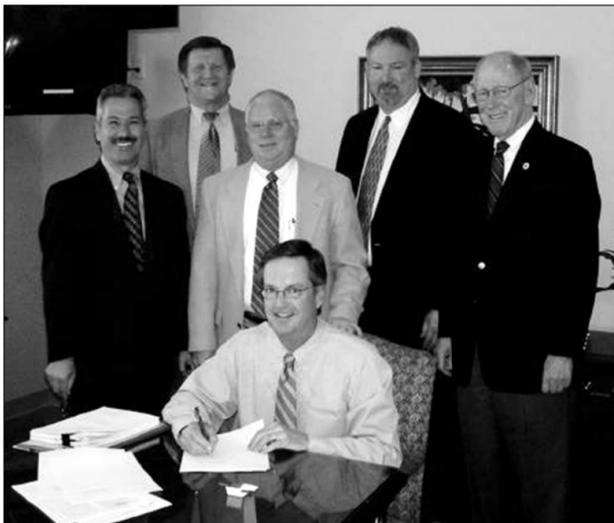
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The town of Nolensville closes a \$21,000 loan.


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ANIMAL SHELTER DIRECTOR
MT. JULIET. The city is seeking applicants for the position of Animal Shelter Director. This position will require someone with a strong background in running an operation and facility in excess of \$1 million dollars, and with familiarity of animal control requirements, standards and animal care practices. Responsible for overseeing and planning all aspects of a first class, state of the art animal shelter and adoption program. Position provides opportunities to directly influence decisions related to operations, future development, and more. A bachelor's degree is strongly preferred with recommended studies in business management, finance or animal science. Preference will be given to candidates with experience. Candidates will be required to complete a pre-employment physical, drug screen and background check and hold a valid TN drivers license. Compensation includes the city's insurance programs, retirement, uniform allowance, and longevity pay when appropriate, etc. Must be able to perform executive functions while working alongside team members. Salary will be DOQ but will not exceed the mid \$40's. Applications must be filed electronically and are available online at the city's website, www.cityofmtjuliet.org. We will accept electronic applications until such time when a qualified candidate is chosen with the first cut-off date being December 1, 2010. The city of Mt. Juliet reserves the right to stop accepting applications at any time. For questions, regarding the electronic application process, call 615-754-2552. The city of Mt. Juliet does not discriminate based on race, color or national origin in federal or state sponsored programs, pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d).EOE/Drug-free Workplace.

**CHIEF BUILDING/CODES
OFFICIAL**

MT JULIET. The city is seeking applicants for the position of Chief Building and Codes Official. The person selected will be responsible for developing, overseeing and planning all aspects of fast paced, multi-faceted building and property codes inspection and compliance programs. The position provides opportunities to directly influence decisions related to operations, building and codes inspection and enforcement activities, building and property code updates, employee development, and more. Experience in building construction, inspection, codes inspection and enforcement, administration, budgeting/finance, and team management strongly desired with clear demonstration of experience in a comparable or larger municipality. Required academic credentials (High school diploma with a minimum of twelve (12) years experience in a supervisory role in the building construction industry or a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with major coursework in construction management, public administration, engineering, architecture or other related field. Must be able to perform executive functions while working alongside team members. Candidates will be required to complete a pre-employment physical, drug screen and background check and hold a valid TN drivers license. Salary DOQ. Applications must be filed electronically and are available online at the city's website, www.cityofmtjuliet.org. Electronic applications accepted until a qualified candidate is chosen with the first cut-off date being Nov. 29, 2010. The city of Mt. Juliet reserves the right to stop accepting applications at any time. For questions regarding the electronic application process, call 615-754-2552. The city of Mt. Juliet does not discriminate based on race, color or national origin in federal or state sponsored programs, pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d).EOE/ADA/Drug-free Workplace.

**PUBLIC WORKS
SUPERINTENDENT**

PORTLAND. The city is now accepting applications for Public Works Superintendent. The full time position includes oversight of the Natural Gas, Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant, Streets, and Sanitation departments. A Bachelor's degree in engineering, management or other appropriate field is required along with substantial experience in financial management for public works and utility departments. Salary will be based on education and experience. Application and job description may be obtained from the receptionist at Portland City Hall, Mon. through Fri., 8 am to 4:30 pm, or by email ferrett@cityofportlandtn.gov. Completed application and resume must be returned no later than 4:30 pm on Nov. 30, 2010, to: Office of the Mayor, Portland City Hall, 100 South Russell Street, Portland, Tennessee 37148. EOE.

Troops to Teachers program honors national heroes

The Tennessee Department of Education plans to honor our national heroes for their service to the country and the classroom. Tennessee military personnel have the opportunity to start a second career as the great teachers and leaders needed in education through the Tennessee Troops to Teachers program.

"Tennessee is looking to fill our classrooms with highly qualified talent and positive role models," said Education Commissioner Bruce Opie. "The men and women that have served our country are not only respected leaders, but the dedicated professionals that have the diversity, experience, and the skills to make a difference in classrooms."

Troops to Teachers works to improve education by providing motivated, experienced, and dedicated personnel for the nation's high-poverty classrooms. The program helps relieve teacher shortages, especially in math, science, special education and other critical subject areas, and assists military personnel in making successful transitions to second careers in

teaching. State offices provide counseling and assistance regarding certification requirements, routes to state certification, and employment leads.

Successful program candidates obtain certification or licensing as elementary, secondary, or vocational teachers. To date, 411 former military service and veterans in Tennessee have successfully started their second career through the program.

"Teaching is a rewarding career. Tennessee's *Troops to Teachers* office has counseled hundreds of interested military personnel, advising them on routes and programs to achieve full teacher certification in Tennessee, and referring them to school districts for employment," said Cliff Yager, director of the Tennessee *Troops to Teachers* program.

The *Troops to Teachers* program is funded by the U.S. Department of Education and administered by the state Department of Education in collaboration with the U.S. Department of



Through the Troops to Teachers program, the Tennessee Department of Education is looking to improve education by providing motivated, experienced, and dedicated personnel for the nation's high-poverty classrooms.

Defense.

For more information on this program, visit the *Troops to*

Teachers website at www.tennessee.gov/education/lic/troop.shtml.

Nashville pairs volunteers/education, flood relief

SERVICE from Page 1
Americans, and especially our young people, do their part and answer the call to service, cities across the country will support their efforts and help them contribute to the common good."

Michelle Nunn, co-founder of HandsOn Network, the nation's largest volunteer network, recognizes the idea of plugging volunteers directly into local city government problems as a new approach to volunteerism. "A lot of times, volunteering is seen as building capacity for nonprofits," Nunn said, "but this is a movement to say, 'This is how we can help solve problems around education, the environment and specific challenges our community is facing.'"

As part of a "Declaration of Service," all coalition members commit to developing a comprehensive service plan and a coordinated strategy focused on matching volunteers and established community partners to the areas of greatest local need.

Nashville was one of 10 cities selected to receive a \$200,000 Leadership grant through Cities of Service and the Rockefeller Foundation toward hiring a Chief Service Officer that will develop and implement the Impact Nashville plan. The position is held by Laurel Creech, whose background includes initiatives in sales and marketing, environmental advocacy and radio broadcasting.

"We have launched and mobilized seven initiatives and volunteer agencies are providing training for volunteers in addition to the micro-initiatives," said Creech. "We're learning

how to transition the energy of Nashville's volunteers to the needs of the city, utilizing the power."

The city will submit a year-end report on Impact Nashville in Dec. 2011, and has launched a website that allows volunteers a venue to scout for service opportunities as well as service organizations a place to recruit citizen engagement. For more information or to view the Impact Nashville plan, visit www.impactnashville.net or the Mayor's website at <http://www.nashville.gov/mayor/volunteer/>.

Cities of Service, founded Sept. 10, 2009, is a bi-partisan coalition of the mayors of large and small cities from across the country who will work together to engage citizens to address the great challenges of our time. Other founding mayors in-

clude: Mayor Shirley Franklin - Atlanta, GA; Mayor Sheila Dixon - Baltimore, MD; Mayor Richard Daley, Chicago, IL; Mayor Marilee Chinnici-Zuercher - Dublin, OH; Mayor John Peyton - Jacksonville, FL; Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa - Los Angeles, CA; Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg - New York, NY; Mayor Cory Booker - Newark, NJ; Mayor Phil Gordon - Phoenix, AZ; Mayor Luke Ravenstahl - Pittsburgh, PA; Mayor David N. Cicilline - Providence, RI; Mayor Kevin Johnson - Sacramento, CA; Mayor Douglas H. Palmer - Trenton, NJ; Mayor Paul E. Winfield - Vicksburg, MS; Mayor Adrian Fenty - Washington, D.C.; Mayor Lois J. Frankel - West Palm Beach, FL.



Problems with new tax system

TAX from Page 1
reporting businesses into compliance; and in some cases, reach back and collect for delinquent years.

"We looked at what we thought we could gain from bringing businesses into compliance," said Deputy Revenue Commissioner Glen Page. "We could still get there (reach the estimated \$21 million in additional revenue). But we haven't been able to devote an entire year to just focus on matching all of the data."

Page reported that the department has taken in an additional \$5 million through a voluntary disclosure program that allowed businesses that had previously not been paying the tax to register and not be penalized for past years.

He acknowledged that the transition has been an arduous task and that just identifying the various businesses and getting them registered on the state level took more time and effort than originally planned.

"It was a lot harder to get the businesses registered than we ever would have dreamed," said Page. "We thought that a business that has a sales tax account would have the same name and address for the state, city and county. And that was not the case. We had to do an extreme amount of manual intervention."

"It's been a struggle," continued Page. "But we're making significant progress at it. Now that we have everyone registered we can start matching our information against all data that is available to us."

Page said that they have registered some 400,000 businesses and their total business tax collections are about the same, if not more, than last year. He suggested that perhaps the discrepancies with the larger counties were due to the down turn in the economy. Those reporting from the smaller counties said their collections were about the same as last year.

Another complaint that Arriola conveyed was the lack of input on the front end.

"We were told that we would be a part of determining the rules and regulations and that has not been the case," said Arriola. "We have basically been on the outside looking in."

Page agreed that it was time to sit down with the clerks again to fine tune the process. Prior to implementation of the new system, the Department of Revenue established a working group that included the Tennessee Municipal League, the County Officials Association of Tennessee, city clerks, and county clerks.

"We are at a place now, where we are better able to sit down with the group again, see what their needs are, and let them help us identify some businesses that we've missed," said Page.

Sen. Henry suggested that the groups get back together and try to work through some of the issues. "We have more money coming in," said Henry. "And I'd hate to turn loose of the money."

Revenue has invited TML and COAT to meet with them again to address the city and county clerks' concerns. TML will continue to keep cities updated on the issue.

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TML Board meet, discuss 2011 legislative issues



Huntingdon Mayor Dale Kelley and TML Executive Director Margaret Mahery



Murfreesboro Mayor Tommy Bragg and Bones Seivers, president and CEO of the TML Municipal Bond Fund



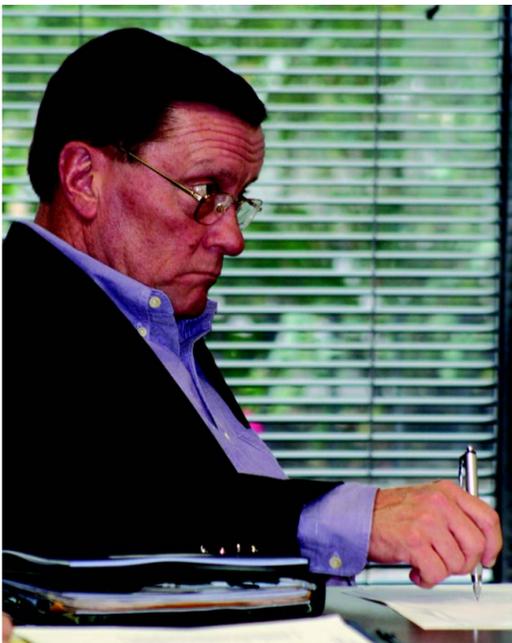
Kay Senter, Morristown councilmember



Crossville Mayor J.H. Graham III



Bob Kirk, Dyersburg alderman, and David Gordon, Covington mayor



Sevierville Mayor Brian Atchley



Bartlett Mayor Keith McDonald



Murfreesboro Mayor Tommy Bragg



Steve Thompson, MTAS executive director



Above, Randy Trivette, Erwin city recorder



Portland Mayor Ken Wilber and Farragut Vice Mayor Dorothy LaMarche



At left: Bartlett Mayor Keith McDonald, Alamo Mayor Tommy Green, Covington Mayor David Gordon, and Portland Mayor Ken Wilber

Welcome to Shelbyville depicts signs of the times

SHELBYVILLE from Page 1

to the immigrants. Hawo Siyad is a former student of hers. "I'm third generation Mexican; I'm not even from Bedford County. I'm from Kansas, where Dorothy's from," Taylor begins. "We came here 27 years ago within the time period the Hispanics started coming here, and my job was to work with young Hispanic children in English language where they could be mainstreamed into our school classrooms. I found that first we had to educate citizens about the Latino community. We shared what Mexicans were all about, we brought food and language, taught English to mothers and babies, so children could have dialogue with their teachers."

In the film, Taylor, along with another resident Beverly Hewitt, join others at Siyad's home for dinner. As the American and Somali women begin to swap recipes, chat and get to know one another, hugs, laughter and eventually dancing breaks forth in the tiny kitchen.



ESL teacher Luci Taylor and Somali immigrant, Hawo Siyad, in a panel discussion following a screening of *Welcome to Shelbyville*.

"These people came to town just to make some money, they just want to live," Hewitt said. "They're not trying to bother anybody. Until you get to know an individual, you have no idea what's going on. I'm begging people; love one another because you don't know who might be there to help you one day."

"There's a huge gap between resettlement and adjustment," notes Kasar Abdulla, director of Advocacy & Education with the Tennessee Immigrant & Refugee Rights Coalition (TIRRC). "In rural places like Shelbyville, there really isn't a good infrastructure in place to help immigrants integrate into society or go through the civic process of becoming a naturalized citizen."

According to the TIRRC website, "there are few programs and institutions designed to facilitate the process of immigrant integration, while rapid demographic change can trigger people's fear of cultural submersion often reinforcing the perception that new immigrants are somehow less willing, able, and entitled to become fully participating members of the

broader community."

"If the receiving community members don't believe the immigrants are part of the collective future, there will be little public effort to help them settle in more quickly," the website states.

"Integration is a two-way process," continues Abdulla. "You have immigrants coming here, learning the language to become U.S. citizens and learning how to physically participate in society, and the receiving community helping understand there are changes taking place in the city as well."

According to Mosely, who wrote a series of award winning articles chronicling the Somalis' arrival, even emergency officials had no way of communicating with the new residents. "They would Google 'Somali,' and reports of violence and extremism would pop up, he said. Today, through a TIRRC program called "Welcoming America," formerly the "Welcome Tennessee" initiative created in 2006, Shelbyville's auditoriums and

churches are the sites of a series of talks organized by a local committee where residents and immigrants alike are invited to exchange dialogue and ideas.

"There are no set of rules," said Abdulla. "We just sit down together creating the environment for having dialogue about issues whether it is about immigration or integration or immigrants learning the language – just providing that opportunity for both the receiving community and the newcomers, as they're called, to have a chance to interact with each other."

"Shelbyville is a very inspiring example of people trying to find ways to talk about issues," Snyder said, "People interested in sparking dialog that's constructive not flammable."

In December, as part of the Congress of Cities, the National League of Cities (NLC) will show a screening of *Welcome to Shelbyville*, which was viewed at the Brookings Institute in Washington and will air on PBS stations nationwide next spring. *Welcome to Shelbyville* has also been selected by the U.S. State



Photos by TML videographer, Mark Barrett

Kim Snyder, director/producer of *Welcome to Shelbyville*.

Department to be shown abroad as part of its Documentary Showcase.

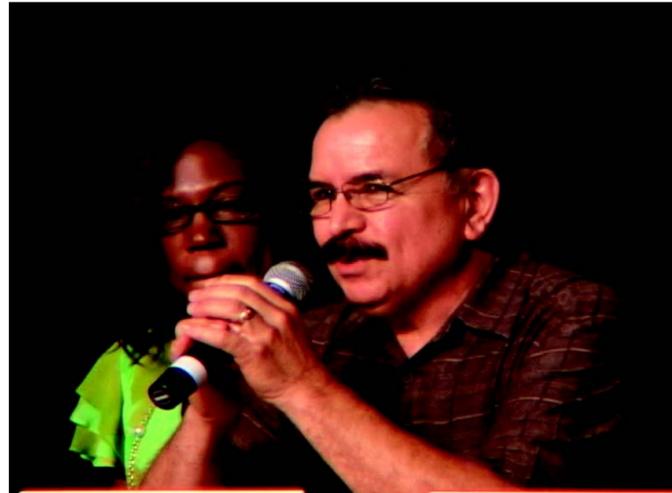
"I think they're going to see a caring community dealing with issues that are common throughout the country," said former Shelbyville city manager Ed Craig.

"We are understanding each other a lot better, I hope," agrees Mosely. "I think it's a slow process, but we learn as we go along."

A similar effort in Memphis, the Municipal Action for Immigration Integration (MAII) project, partners with NLC to help citizenship



Kasar Abdulla, director of Advocacy & Education with the Tennessee Immigrant & Refugee Rights Coalition.



Hispanic resident Miguel Gonzales, who also appears in the documentary, joins the panel discussion. Beverly Hewitt listens in the foreground.

and community integration work more fluidly.

Supported by the Knight Foundation, the MAII project acts as a resource for city officials and community-based organizations; addressing immigrant challenges in

which assists municipal officials and community leaders educate immigrant residents about local government and its functions. Participants will learn about local government finances, structure and city services.

Resources for Cities

The Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition (TIRRC) is currently forming Welcoming Committees throughout Tennessee. Members of the committees will receive training by the staff of TIRRC on relevant topics, including: cultural awareness, community issues, realities of the immigration system, and civil rights. In addition, the committee will also learn how to present "Welcome to Tennessee" to other community groups and organizations and will then become the local voice and coordinating body of the initiative. For more information, visit www.welcometn.org or contact David Morales at 615-833-0384 ext. 201 or e-mail david@tnimmigrant.org

NLC's MAII Project

The Municipal Action for Immigration Integration (MAII) project is a National League of Cities (NLC) project to assist NLC member cities build more inclusive and stronger communities. The MAII pilot program for cities will provide technical assistance in two areas:

- (1) Promoting naturalization, an official act by which a person is made a national of a country other than his or her native one by using the MAII NewCITYzen Naturalization Campaign tool kit. The kit includes public service announcements and a media guide, and;
- (2) helping city government make connections with community-based organizations to better address the needs of the local immigrant population through the New Americans Citizens Academy. The Academy.

For more information about the Municipal Action for Immigrant Integration program or to subscribe to the program's e-newsletter, contact Ricardo Gambetta, NLC's Program manager for Immigrant Integration, at 202-626-3153 or e-mail Ricardo.Gambetta@nlc.org or visit www.nlc.org/RESOURCES/FORCITIES/PROGRAMS/SERVICES/MAII/aboutmaii.aspx

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During Mayor Bryan Atchley's 25 years, Sevierville has soared

BY GAEL STAHL

Sevierville. You think you know the place – the first of three suburban pass-through gateway cities at the northern entrance to Smoky Mountains National Park. The stories of mountain village Gatlinburg and of Pigeon Forge's Dollywood are well known. Fewer may be aware of just how Sevierville has joined them as a major destination city in its own right. It is much more than host to millions of visitors passing through on their way to the most visited national park in the nation.

You can't really 'know' a double-edged community like Sevierville until you see it through the eyes of someone who lives there, best of all, someone who helped make it what it is today. That's Bryan Atchley. He's a longtime city official and currently a Tennessee Municipal League board member. His family has lived there since the 1700s when it was a frontier settlement; during the 200 years it was a community, and as visitors sped through to get to the mountains, and during the last quarter century when it became a major Tennessee city even outside of tourist season when its population doubles.

Born July 28, 1952, fourth oldest of six children, Atchley graduated from Sevier County High School in 1970 where he and his brothers played all the usual sports. He was a football quarterback, involved in student government, on the student council, class president his freshman, sophomore, and junior years, in the Beta Club, Pep Club, and very active in his church. He married his high school sweetheart, Cherie Jordan Atchley, in 1971, and graduated from Carson Newman College in 1973. His wife got her RN degree at Walters State Community College. They had a son and a daughter, became grandparents, and in the 33rd year of their marriage, in July 2005, Cherie lost a battle with brain cancer.

Having a starter family to raise when he graduated from college in 1973, Atchley deferred career plans and went to work for Sevier County Hospital for five years before becoming a medical supply sales person for Nashville Surgical. Since 1991, he has been either the assistant administrator or the administrator of Sevier County Health Care Center. In January, he finished serving as president of the Tennessee Health Care Association (THCA), a professional association for long-term care facilities somewhat equivalent to what TML is for cities. Last June, Atchley finished an eight-year term on the Health Services Development Agency. Appointed by Gov. Sundquist and reappointed twice by Gov. Bredesen, it is the agency that grants certificates of needs for new hospitals, nursing homes, and clinics.

Atchley describes himself as being a brash young salesman of 26 when he was elected a Sevierville alderman in 1979. In 1989, he stepped down to better help the children through high school and college. His daughter, Ann Marie, 36, is now an administrative assistant at the Health Care Center Atchley heads. His son, Bryan Jr, 38, is a coach and teacher at Sevier County High School and has made his father a happy, eager grandfather to granddaughters Ansley, 8, and Jordan, 5.

In 1995, Atchley ran for mayor, was elected and re-elected every two years since. Now in his eighth term, he is the longest serving mayor in the history of Sevierville.

TT&C: Anything special about your family's early years?

BA: My Grandpa Atchley started a funeral home about 1920 and had three sons who were all in that business. In 1950, my father decided to get into mission work, left Sevierville with his wife and two kids in 1950, and went to a seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He returned in 1955 with six kids and became the director of missions. I was the fourth oldest, two years old that year.

I think my roots going far back in Sevierville and Sevier County is one of the reasons I ran for public office. My dad was active and served two terms in the legislature. My grandpa served one term. My uncle Harold Atchley was on the county court for years and years. Politics definitely runs in the blood.

I've always felt that although my family heritage might affect some of my decisions, most of the time I've operated on my own personal self convictions about how we could best help the most people. My dad, being a Southern Baptist missionary, did not agree with every stance I took on city council. I was the deciding vote in 1985 that put beer in grocery stores. Had I wanted to do the popular family thing, I would have voted no.

TT&C: Was your family's political tradition why you majored in political science?

BA: Actually, I intended to go on to law school. Even though I never did, my interest in history, constitutional law, law, and politics has helped in my political career. But political office has never been a major source of income. That's an advantage when it comes to making decisions. I don't think, "Gee whiz, if I don't make the right choice I could be out of a job." I'd just be losing \$600 a month – never an overwhelming factor.

My oldest brother became an attorney. None of us followed our father into the religious field. My sister, the oldest of the six, is a teacher, a brother is a CPA, another is in sales for time shares. Another is an environment services director. That's not to say we weren't religious.

TT&C: Who's been most influential on your life?

BA: That would be my mother. When I was recently named the nursing home administrator of the year I said in my acceptance speech, there were two things she taught me – to listen and to care. That's what I've seen her doing all her life. No matter who the person was or what walk of life they came from or how much money or influence they had, if a student had a problem or needed something she was there for them. She taught algebra and geometry in high school, including all of her kids. Now 90, she's been inducted into the Sevier County High School's Sports Hall of Fame. She qualified as a supporter and still goes to the football games. Her special parking place is beside the stadium simply marked: "Miss Emma." They both supplied me with a solid foundation that I credit for most of my success.

TT&C: What was it like having your mother for teacher, your father your minister?

BA: Every time the church doors opened we were there – Sunday morning, Sunday night, Wednesday night, and every revival meeting. You didn't miss. That was not a bad thing. My dad died two years ago at age 89, a resident in the nursing home where I'm administrator. Mom will be 91 December 3 and lives at home by herself.

TT&C: Did your high school classmates predict you'd be a minister, a football coach, or a lawyer?

BA: Ironically, I couldn't decide if I wanted to be an attorney or a football coach. That's the truth. I didn't end up either – out of necessity. Being married so young I had to work so I took a job at the local hospital and worked in housekeeping – in laundry – to put myself through college. My son came along and I just stayed in the medical field, enjoyed the local hospital until 1978 when I got a job in sales.

I'd wanted to be a football coach or lawyer, and now my son is a football coach and my daughter has a law degree from Tulane University. I couldn't be either but sort of live that through them. My daughter worked in the law field, didn't like it at all, and works at the nursing home. She still hasn't decided what she wants to be when she grows up (*chuckles*).

TT&C: Any particular reason you ran for alderman?

BA: I'd been involved in the Lions Club, Little League football and baseball, and all those things a young father does. In 1977, a very good family friend, Gary Wade, was elected mayor. He's now a Supreme Court justice. That same year, a city charter referendum changed city council terms from two years to four. In 1979, there were five open seats. The top three vote getters were elected for four years and the bottom two for two years. By 1989, all terms were four-year terms. With five chances to win a seat, I figured I'd try so I ran and was elected.

I had no agenda. I'd enjoyed



Photo by Victoria South

Bryan Atchley

growing up here and probably felt we could do better. That's not saying I or anybody else could have ever imagined that Sevierville would become what we are now. People think of Pigeon Forge and Gatlinburg as being huge sales tax collectors, but it's Sevierville that collects about 43 percent of all the sales taxes collected in Sevier County.

I wanted a better place for my kids and grandkids to enjoy and had benefited from people in the community, like teachers and baseball coaches, that had been positive influences on my life and so I felt like passing that on by getting involved in city hall. Did I think in 1979 that I would eventually be the longest serving mayor in the history of Sevierville? Absolutely not. When people ask after eight terms when am I going to quit being mayor, I say, when I get beat or it quits being fun. It's still fun.

TT&C: When or how did Sevierville start becoming the phenomenon it is now?

BA: When I became alderman, Sevierville didn't have a community center. I was 26. Gary Wade probably 32. An important thing we did was propose building a \$2 million community center. Our budget wasn't much more than that. We built a center with a first-rate gym, indoor swimming pool and bowling alley that's been successful to this day. At times, people would say we've done everything for tourism and not enough for our local people. I tried to keep in mind that people living here are more important even than the people that visit. So, in the early and mid-1980s we started building a good foundation based on sound budget decisions. We didn't overspend. I don't think we've had a property tax increase since 1979.

While we've done proper planning since I was elected mayor, you have to understand that virtually any city in the shape we're in right now has had to have some good luck along the way. Some of our good luck was that some good developers brought in first class development that's enabled Sevierville to be a place that's fun to visit. Our wide variety of venues include minor league baseball, theaters, a NASCAR speed park, and first class shopping. We've become such a shopping mecca that next Friday afternoon folks will be coming in for Alabama weekend. It will take me 30 minutes to get home, what's usually a six-minute trip.

TT&C: What were some of the new developments?

BA: I've been very supportive of our school system that is run by the whole county. We support it in every way we can. For example, we recently passed liquor by the drink and gave our portion of that sales tax to the school system. We didn't have to; we wanted to. In the past year we gave \$1 million to the new county hospital and \$2 million to the new county library. If your city doesn't think it's part of the county it's not making your city or your county a better place for all. I pay county taxes and am proud of what the city has been able to do for everyone so that when we win, we all win.

It pays off. There was a time when Pigeon Forge, Gatlinburg, and Sevierville hardly worked together. Over the past 10-15 years we've seen a spirit of cooperation that has paid off. During the last two years of

recruit new people because you're going to lose a certain number of the repeats.

TT&C: How much has Sevierville grown compared to when you took office in 1979, taking into account that tourists may double your population at times?

BA: I know that 16 years after 1979, in 1995 when I was elected mayor, the population was barely over 7,600 people. We're probably close to 18,000 now. Like you say, those can be misleading figures because we've got thousands of people here over the weekend. In summertime we're providing police, water, sewer, and electricity for thousands more people. It's a challenge but we've done a good job providing the infrastructure for that kind of growth.

TT&C: Do you have major industries not connected to tourism?

BA: We have a couple of industrial parks for soft industry. Neither the city nor county are looking for smokestack industry. The county does most of the industrial recruiting and has done a good job bringing in a hardwood floor manufacturing company, TRW, and other small industries.

We have also lost some industry. We had one of the biggest textile plants in Tennessee, but it shut its doors about four years ago. That, ironically, turned out in a positive way. I felt that 60-acre property was too valuable for anybody else to have, so the city bought it. When a prospect asked if we were willing to sell it, I said yes if you let us make a dollar. Now, Thompson Cancer Research Center out of Knoxville is located there, and LeCount Medical Center opened up there last February. That's a \$120 million state-of-the-art hospital with a beautiful campus. It's owned by Covenant Health that has the lease from our county. It grew out of our former county hospital when Covenant got the lease on it years ago. Covenant Health is a comprehensive health system established in 1997 by the consolidation of Fort Sanders Health System of Knoxville and MMC HealthCare System. They've done a great job with a long-term managing contract. After that opened in February, we cut the ribbon for a \$12 million library in June toward which we contributed the \$2 million.

If your city doesn't think it's part of the county it's not making your city or your county a better place for all. I pay county taxes and am proud of what the city has been able to do for everyone so that when we win, we all win. It pays off.

Mayor Bryan Atchley

week, you couldn't find a motel room in Sevierville. The Events Center is booked solid.

We're expanding our city golf course from 18 to 36 holes including a new clubhouse that we're going to move into next month. Soon after all this got started, the economy went south. Developers that held off for a bit now look around at what's happening and wish they hadn't. This summer, thousands and thousands of people came in for weekends as well as during the week. You're going to see more development coming into that tourism development zone in the coming year.

TT&C: How do you explain doing so well, comparably speaking?

BA: We're within a day's drive of three fourths of the population of the country. People from Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, and Pennsylvania that normally would go all the way to Myrtle Beach or Disney are shocked to see how affordable a vacation is in this area. In Florida they'd pay \$190 for a room that costs \$80 here. Sure, we've got some that charge more, rooms that are worth more, but it's affordable here.

One of the big hotels next to the Events Center is a 900-unit Wilderness Indoor and Outdoor Resort with a gigantic swimming pool – not just any indoor pool but one with the waves – one of the largest in the country. That hotel stays full just about year around. Their surveys show 30 percent of the people coming there are coming for their first visit to the area. It's vital during a down economy to

TT&C: Has Sevierville won any TML awards for municipal progress or innovation?

BA: We got an award for our Events Center and one for our greenway system. Not too many cities in Tennessee have won for that. We built walking trails along a lot of the river banks and were named as "walking trail friendly." We also got one for the new baseball stadium.

What happened is that the Knoxville Smokies used to be in Knoxville. When Knoxville and Knox County refused to build the team a new stadium in 1998, we contacted the Smokies' owners and told them that before they leave Tennessee, they should give us a call. They reminded me that a minor league baseball team is not a tourist attraction. I said I knew that but that we've got a location for them that would make them a regional team.

When Knoxville and Knox County found out that we were talking, they tried to step back in, but I had made the Smokies sign an exclusive deal for maybe 30 days to give us time to talk to them. Long story short, we started talking in August 1998 and threw out the first pitch in March of 2000 in a \$20 million stadium. It's located right at the interstate. Affiliated with the Chicago Cubs, it has been one of the most successful Southern franchises ever. The Haslam family owns it now. They bought it from Don Beavers who owned it for years. The Cubs, normally sign two-year deals only. Halfway through their first two-year contract, they asked for a four-year deal. That's how pleased they are.