

State leaders to address TML during Legislative Conference

Gov. Bill Haslam will address members of the Tennessee Municipal League during the upcoming Legislative Conference, slated for March 7 – 8 at the DoubleTree Hotel Downtown Nashville.

At the forefront of everyone's mind is the state's financial situation and how to balance the budget amid a slow economic recovery. The Governor will highlight some of his plans for balancing next year's budget, as well as discuss his legislative priorities that focus on education and workforce development.

Also scheduled to speak are Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey, newly-elected House Speaker Beth Harwell and several chairs of key committees that affect local governments.

In addition, the two-day conference provides an excellent forum for city officials to interact with their legislators and to be updated on the many legislative issues currently being addressed by the General Assembly.

To register on line, go to TML's website at www.TML1.org. Contact the TML offices at 615-255-6416 for more information. To reserve a hotel room, contact the DoubleTree at 615-244-8200.

Agenda

Monday, March 7

11 am Registration
12 pm Buffet Lunch
1:15 pm Sen. Randy McNally, Senate Finance
1:45 pm Sen. Ken Yager, Senate State & Local
2:00 pm Rep. Charles Sargent, House Finance
2:20 pm Rep. Curry Todd, House State & Local
2:45 pm Legislative update - TML Staff
3:15 pm MTAS update
3:45 pm Gov. Bill Haslam
4:15 pm Adjourn
5:00 pm Attend House or Senate Floor Sessions
Dinner on your own

Tuesday March 8

7:30 am Breakfast
8:15 am Dr. Richard Rhoda,
TN Higher Education Commission
8:30 am Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey
9:30 am House Speaker Beth Harwell



Gov. Bill Haslam



Ron Ramsey
Lt. Gov.



Beth Harwell
House Speaker

Community Block Grants in jeopardy

By NLC Staff

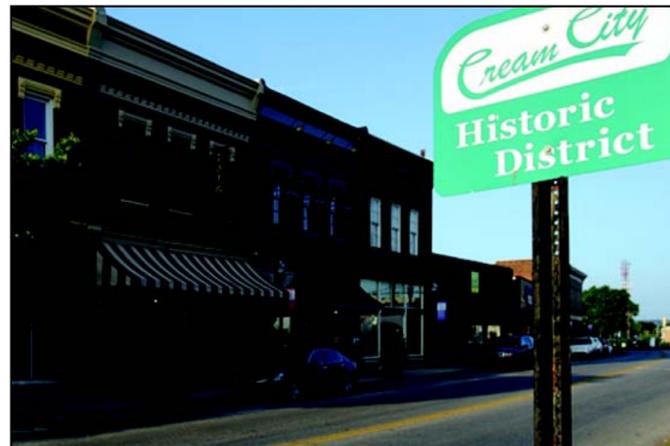
Earlier this month, President Obama officially released his FY 2012 Budget proposal that recommends cutting funding for many domestic discretionary programs, including a \$300 million cut to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

In addition to the President introducing his FY 2012 budget, House leaders introduced Continuing Resolution legislation to fund federal government programs for the remaining seven months of FY 2011 that calls for an unthinkable 62.5 percent or \$2.5 billion cut to CDBG.

Senate leadership has indicated it will not pass the House bill in its current form, and the White House strongly opposes it because it "would sharply undermine core government functions and investments key to economic growth and job creation..."

"While reducing the federal budget deficit over the next several years is imperative to the country's and our communities' fiscal well-being, cuts to the CDGB program and others will have little real impact on that goal. Unfortunately, the converse is true for the quality of life in and local economies of cities and towns," said Don Borut, executive director, National League of Cities (NLC). "And, as the effects of the recession continue to play out in our cities and towns, the impact of these cuts on thousands of projects and programs at the neighborhood level, and the jobs supported by those projects, will be very real."

For nearly four decades, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program has served as a catalyst for financing housing, infrastructure, and economic development in America's cities and



By statute, state and local governments use CDBG to fund projects that have direct economic development benefits such as downtown revitalization. The Obama Administration is proposing a \$300 million cut to the program.

towns. Any cut to this essential program will severely hamper local efforts to put people to work and spur local, regional, and national recovery.

The importance of CDBG grants to local economic recovery cannot be overstated, especially in fiscally challenging times. When fully funded at \$4 billion, 7,000 local governments—large and small, urban and rural—use these funds annually to address their own unique employment, housing, and neighborhood revitalization needs. Though cuts to the CDBG program will have little real impact on reduc-

ing the federal budget deficit, they will slow and eliminate thousands of projects that leverage public and private funds into new jobs and developments of lasting worth to the community.

CDBG funding does not stay in city hall. In fact, it goes to local businesses, builders and contractors, and service providers who transform the neighborhoods they do business in. Every dollar of CDBG funding a city or town receives leverages an additional \$1.62 on non-CDBG funding. Full funding for CDBG connects private sector CDGB continued on Page 5

Tennessee averts federal debt, UI trust fund solvent

Some states face hefty interest payments

BY CAROLE GRAVES
TML Communications Director

With unemployment numbers remaining stubbornly high for the past four consecutive years, several states, including Tennessee, faced solvency challenges with their Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund (UI). Tennessee, however, managed its way through it and finds itself in a much better situation than many states in the Southeast and across the nation.

"We saved millions of dollars of interest to businesses because the Tennessee General Assembly acted quickly to address solvency issues," reported Don Ingram, administrator for Employment Security, Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development. "Many states owe the federal government more than \$1 billion. There are only two states in the Southeast – Tennessee and Mississippi – that don't have any debt."

As state unemployment numbers reached historic highs and unemployment claims skyrocketed to unprecedented levels, Tennessee officials were projecting that the state's unemployment trust fund would be broke by the end of 2009 if something wasn't done to shore up the fund. In the spring of 2009, the Tennessee General Assembly passed legislation that increased the amount employers are taxed on wages from \$7,000 to \$9,000 and raised the tax rate by point-six percent. The measure also included a retroactive provision that made implementation of the new rate effective Jan. 1, 2009, taking the new tax rate from the third-lowest of six rate tables to the highest.

By state statute, as the trust fund decreases, a higher tax rate is triggered in order to keep pace with the increase in claims.

States pay for unemployment benefits through payroll taxes levied on employers. These taxes are deposited into the federal Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund, which maintains a separate account for each state. Should the state's UI drop to a negative balance, the federal government requires that benefit payments continue, and will loan money to states. The only way states can repay the loan is through their general fund or by levying an additional surtax on businesses.

According to Stateline.org, this fall, some 30 states will be on the hook for paying \$1.3 billion to the federal government for loans they took out in order to keep sending unemployment checks to out of work employees. And that's just the interest. In total, states owe the feds more than \$42 billion. California, Michigan and New York have borrowed the most from the federal government, and therefore face the heaviest interest payments of more than \$100 million each.

The federal economic stimulus law had provided states interest-free loans, but that provision expired at the end of 2010. In January, borrowing states began accruing interest on the loans. They are required to start paying back the interest by Sept. 30. President Obama responded with a budget proposal that would put off the states' interest payments for another two years.

"We faced a cash flow problem last year – we were short about \$2.9 million," Ingram explained to the House, Finance and Ways Committee. "We took out a short-term, non-interest loan from the federal government, and have already paid it back."

Unemployment numbers in Tennessee are still a concern, however. Tennessee's current unemployment rate of 9.4 percent is above the national average of 9 percent and is the 19th highest in the nation.

"The amount of job losses during the Great Recession was deeper than any recession since the post World War II era," said Jim White, director of Fiscal Review."

He reported that Tennessee lost 212,000 jobs – 6.5 percent of its entire workforce.

"We're seeing some signs of improvement. But it's taking far longer than any recession to recover from," said White. "People are unemployed for more than 22 weeks. And once a person is out of the workforce for more than six months, it becomes difficult for that person to get back into the workforce at the same level."

Yet, claims are declining – down 12 percent from last year and 30 percent down from 2009 and 2008, Ingram reported.

Ingram projected that if the trust fund continues to grow, that by 2014 the state might be able to move to a lower tax table. But even with the higher tax rate, Tennessee ranks below the national average of \$11,570, and is inline with the Southeast average of \$9,000.

Weather freezes city, state budgets

BY VICTORIA SOUTH

TML Communications Coordinator

The early arrival of harsh winter weather cast a blistering chill on already strapped state and local budgets, inspiring hometown heroes and creative strategies to help rid the state's roadways of snow and ice.

In the wake of December's storms, the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) had already exceeded its \$14 million fiscal snow and ice removal budget by January, as workers scattered 161,185 tons of salt across the state, 32,000 tons alone, across 26 Middle Tennessee counties.

"Having those two snows in December, we've certainly used more salt than in a normal year by this time," TDOT, Community Relations Officer BJ Doughty told local news stations. Two bins in Davidson County, which together hold 9,000 tons of salt, had grown dangerously low, 1,665 tons, as the state along with cities and counties across Tennessee, many which use the same vendors as TDOT, waited anxiously for additional shipments of salt.

"We have been fortunate, in that we had budgeted enough to fill our salt bin, which we did last summer," said Greg Brown, Cookeville Public Works Director. "After

several snows, we did have to reduce the amount of streets we salted to ensure we had enough to make it through the winter. The main impact on our budget this year is the overtime paid to the salt truck drivers. And since we have used the majority of our salt, next year's budget will have to include enough money to refill it."

The city of La Vergne ran completely out of salt following a wintry blast in February, and finally resorted to spreading sand to keep roads passable. TDOT was also able to pretreat Murfreesboro Road with brine, as it is a state highway.

"Some states use sand, but that comes with several environmental issues (runoff into streams/streams, and clogging storm drains), and gravel," said Doughty. "Since early



Photo by Quinn Hall

The Millington Public Works Dept. worked around the clock maintaining services and keeping the streets safe for drivers during this year's exceptionally harsh winter. Pictured: Millington Public Works employees Greg Johnson and Herbert Beard.

January, all four TDOT regions (West, Middle, Chattanooga/Pla-

and ice removal, according to Doughty, including de-icing supplies such as salt, salt brine, and calcium chloride.

It also includes

equipment costs and manpower. To make up for these expenditures, TDOT may delay other maintenance activities such as mowing, litter pick-up, ditch cleaning or small paving projects, Doughty notes, letting contracts lie until the start of the new fiscal year in July, rather than spring.

"Keep in mind that this is just one piece of the maintenance budget," said Doughty. "It's very typical that we go over or under depending on the severity of the winter. This last storm was more difficult because the temperatures fell very low and the snow was dry. We had to use more salt because of those factors."

According to The National Weather Service, a changing climate throughout the country is making it

teau, and Knoxville/Tri-Cities) have been trying to conserve salt. To do this, we have been relying on our salt-brine mixture, which is basically water and salt mixed together. This is typically what folks see us use to pre-treat the roads ahead of a storm. But if temperatures are not too low, the brine has enough salt in it to melt snow on surfaces."

The technique, along with snow plows, was especially effective, according to Doughty, because temperatures were in the upper 20's/low 30's and the heavy wet snow was easy to plow. "We have also used calcium chloride mixed in the brine and with our regular salt to lower the freezing threshold," Doughty adds.

So far, statewide expenditures have topped \$28 million for snow

After several snows, we did have to reduce the amount of streets we salted to ensure we had enough to make it through the winter.
— Greg Brown, Public Works Director, City of Cookeville

WEATHER continued on Page 3

NEWS ACROSS TENNESSEE



BY TML STAFF REPORTS

ALTAMONT

Crews began clearing 23,000 tons of rock that crashed onto state Route 108 between Viola and Altamont in Grundy County. The rock slide is expected to take about three weeks to clear. Detour signs will be posted along the curvy two-lane mountain road. It's going to cost those who use the now entirely blocked road — mostly locals going to and from work — "a little bit of time," according to Tennessee Department of Transportation spokeswoman Jennifer Flynn. "The whole face of the bluff just tipped forward. It fell into the road and broke into several pieces," Flynn said. A Nashville geologist at the site estimated a single rock to weigh about 2,000 tons, and Flynn said crews are going to have to drill and blast some rocks multiple times before they're moveable. Geologists don't predict another rock slide soon, but like predicting earthquakes, it's not an exact science.

CLEVELAND

The city is in the process of planning what will take Whirlpool's place in Cleveland when the company moves to its new plant. Cleveland City Councilman Richard Banks said he will introduce a resolution when the council meets to create a Southside Redevelopment Committee, including city and Bradley County representation, to help with the decision. Whirlpool's current location on King Edward Avenue has been an industrial site for nearly a century, its 90 acres dominating much of the area. But the company is constructing a new plant at Benton Pike and Michigan Avenue for its 1,600 employees. Council members said they already are hearing ideas from the community about what to do with the old site. Doug Berry, Cleveland/Bradley Chamber of Commerce's vice president for economic development, said the local Industrial Development Board plans to study redevelopment for the area.

CLEVELAND

A new center for environmentally related business start-ups got its own start with a groundbreaking ceremony at Cleveland State Community College. The Energy Center, located on the north side of Cleveland State's campus, will house eight "green" businesses and be the home for the college's alternative fuels program. The center will be part of the existing program of the Cleveland/Bradley Business Incubator, which is on the south side of the campus. The incubator recently celebrated its 10th anniversary. The

Energy Center has been planned since 2003.

DANDRIDGE

Dandridge has been named one of the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Dozen Distinctive Destinations of 2011. Each year since 2000, the National Trust for Historic Preservation has selected 12 destinations from across the country that offer authentic visitor experiences by combining dynamic downtowns, diverse cultural activities, attractive architecture, and a strong commitment to historic preservation, sustainability and revitalization. The designation recognizes the city for offering cultural and recreational experiences different from the typical vacation destination. Dandridge features dynamic neighborhoods, a rich architectural heritage, cultural diversity and a strong commitment to historic preservation, sustainability and revitalization — all of which yield an abundance of character and exude an authentic sense of place.

FRANKLIN

The Borders superstore on Cool Springs Boulevard is a casualty of the parent company's Chapter 11 bankruptcy filing. But three other Borders locations in Middle Tennessee will remain open and continue "business as usual" as the company reorganizes its finances, said a spokesman for the Ann Arbor, Mich.-based bookseller. Some analysts have criticized Borders for not reacting quickly enough to new technologies that are changing the way people read. The company does not have its own e-reader devices. The Cool Springs Borders store is the only outlet the chain plans to close in the entire state. Other locations that Borders owns are on West End Ave. near Vanderbilt University, in Brentwood and in Clarksville.

JACKSON

A \$489,000 grant awarded to Jackson State Community College will use technology to bring college-level classes to small-town high schools. The Rural Utilities Services Grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture will fund distance-education equipment and installation in seven West Tennessee high schools. The equipment will allow teachers from Jackson State to meet with classes in other counties through video conferencing. "One of the biggest challenges for people who want to get an education is accessibility," said Jackson State President Bruce Blanding. Blanding said the grant money will help the college reach out to rural areas through distance edu-

cation.

JOHNSON CITY

Johnson City has broken ground on a new central plant that will provide heating and air conditioning to the entire Science Hill campus and Freedom Hall. Funded in part by a Department of Energy (DOE) grant, the project includes new underground piping and a new building housing an 800 ton centrifugal chiller, with capacity for two additional chillers. The campus is expected to see an energy savings of 125,000 kilowatt hours per year as well as \$39,000 in reduced operations and maintenance costs annually. The \$661,800 DOE grant is part of the \$5.2 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds that the city has received. The plant project is budgeted at \$2.4 million.

MEMPHIS

Mitsubishi Electric Power Products has formally announced its decision to invest \$200 million to build a production facility for electric transformers in the Rivergate Industrial Park creating up to 275 new jobs. The new facility will produce extra-high voltage shell type power transformers and will be Mitsubishi's national headquarters for the production of heavy electrical equipment. Memphis was selected following a nationwide search. Mitsubishi Electric Power Products, Inc. is part of a business group owned by Mitsubishi Electric Corporation of Tokyo, Japan.

MEMPHIS

U.S. Foodservice is staying and expanding in Memphis. The company announced it has agreed to purchase the building it occupies at 5900 Holmes Road from Belz Enterprises. The operation of about 220 employees also will hire another 60 people, invest \$30.8 million and more than double in size by year's end to encompass the building's 385,000 square feet. Memphis Division president Joe Campbell said the expansion is a response to the company's increasing business.

MOSHEIM

An Ohio-based industrial explosives maker is looking to make a \$110 million capital investment in Greene County near the town of Mosheim. Austin Powder Co. will build a plant on a 400-acre site in an unincorporated section of the county. The plant will produce ammonium nitrate in liquid form. Commonly known as ANSOL or ANS, ammonium nitrate solution is widely used for manufacturing liquid fertilizers. It is also used as a raw material in the production of blasting agents employed in the mining and construction industries. Austin Powder also makes blasting agents and accessories, and provides blasting services to customers worldwide. Pending approvals, the first phase of construction is expected to employ 120 full time workers.

NASHVILLE

Mayor Karl Dean announced that a team of government experts will soon begin work on developing a unified flood preparedness plan. Representatives from Metro Water Services, the Office of Emergency Management and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and other state and federal agencies will develop a comprehensive plan including flood risk reduction alternatives, flood mitigation measures and building elevation levels and flood forecasting and warning systems. Dean said he



A rockslide has blocked a section of SR-108 in Grundy between Viola and Altamont and is expected to take about three weeks to clear. Detour signs will be posted along the curvy two-lane mountain road.



The Town of Dandridge has received the prestigious honor of being named one of the Dozen Distinctive Destinations of 2011 by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The community received a plaque at the recent award ceremony attended by more than 100 guests, including Commissioner Susan Whitaker, Tennessee Dept. of Tourist Development, who served as speaker. Pictured: Town of Dandridge aldermen and employees.



In the aftermath of last spring's historic flood, Mayor Karl Dean announced that a team of government experts will soon begin work on developing a unified flood preparedness plan. He expects the development of the plan to take about 10 months.

expects the development of the plan to take about 10 months. Implementing the plan could take up to four years.

NASHVILLE

The Home Depot plans to hire 400 seasonal workers in Middle Tennessee in preparation for the busy spring season. The Atlanta-based home improvement company plans to hire a total of 60,000 seasonal associates at 2,200 stores. Workers will be trained during February and March to ensure they are ready to assist with Home Depot's second annual spring Black Friday event, which will kick off the building season. The event, which will be held on different dates in different markets based on geography, is modeled after the November shopping holiday and features sales on live goods, eco-friendly gardening products, grills, patio equipment and lawn care products.

SMYRNA

Plans for a new Smyrna area high school are moving right along as the County Commission approved \$50 million in funding for the Stewarts Creek High School project. The commission will seek a bond to pay for the school that will open in August 2013. Stewarts Creek High School will be located in southwest

Smyrna and will share a campus with Stewarts Creek Elementary and Stewarts Creek Middle School.

SPRING HILL

Hollywood has been transforming Spring Hill's historic Rippavilla Plantation into a home figuring prominently into Nashville filmmaker Curt Hahn's upcoming courtroom thriller "Deadline." The movie tells the story of a fictional Nashville journalist who investigates the unsolved slaying of a black boy in rural Alabama. Rippavilla was transformed into the home of a wealthy Alabama family where the young murder victim's mother worked as hired help. The 514 acres surrounding the 19th century Rippavilla contain ancient oaks, hand-stacked rock and a portion of a Civil War battlefield. The entire film will be shot within the state.

UNION CITY

Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.'s plan to close its Union City plant, idling 1,900 workers, has struck a blow to rural northwestern Tennessee and western Kentucky. The Akron, Ohio-based company announced it will shut down production at the end of 2011. Among the region's largest employers, the plant's jobs are being shifted to Fayetteville, N.C., and Gadsden, Ala.

PEOPLE

BY TML STAFF REPORTS

Dwayne Stanford of Henderson County has been named 2010 trooper of the year by the Tennessee Highway Patrol. He was honored for locating a juvenile who was kidnapped in Maryland last February. Stanford received an Amber Alert notification, began an immediate search for the suspect's vehicle and located the suspect within 20 minutes while preserving potential evidence. He joined the Department of Safety and Homeland Security in 2002 as a communications dispatcher and was commissioned as a state trooper in 2007. His initial assignment was in Fayette County. Stanford also was recognized for drunken driving enforcement by making 30 arrests.

David Orr, a former banker, Marshall County High School substitute teacher and athletic program advocate, has been selected as Lewisburg's next city manager. He succeeds Eddie Fuller who retired as city manager after more than 16 years in the position and three decades working for the city.

Col. Donald L. Johnson, a native of Knox County, has been selected to head the Tennessee Air National Guard. Johnson serves as deputy director of Manpower, Personnel and Services for the Air National Guard in Washington D.C. Johnson deployed in Operation Desert Shield/Storm, twice to Iraq during the current war and in multiple other overseas missions.

Tennessee Town & City

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Oak Ridge 'Not in Our Town' campaign targets neighborhood crime

BY VICTORIA SOUTH
Communications Coordinator

The city that once played an integral role in ending World War II is now declaring war on neighborhood crime. In an aggressive campaign aimed at turning Oak Ridge's high-risk neighborhoods around for the next generation, City Manager Mark Watson proposed the "Not in Our Town," campaign, to help rid the community of illegal activities such as gunfire, theft and drugs. "Many of our problems all tie back to housing," Watson explains, defining the basis of the program. "You have rental homes that have been divided into bi-plexes, tri-plexes or quads and we just see pocket problems."

As the original backdrop for "The Manhattan Project," a top secret federal government wartime initiative, much of the city's homes were constructed as temporary housing to accommodate more than 75,000 workers who were brought in from across the country. A number of these houses still stand today, as dilapidated rental units.

"We had a house that half burned the other day. Whose problem is it?" asked Watson. "If it sits there for a month, it becomes a place to hang out and a criminal element gets in. The police department has done a good job. We just seem to be on a merry go round and need to do some actual problem solving."

One solution, according to

Watson, is to develop strong neighborhood watch programs that work hand in hand in with the police, fire and utility departments. "We'll have to find certain jobs for volunteer citizens to do," Watson continues. "If it involves a house, police may need evidence. Who drove by at 2 am? What was the license plate number? I think off in the future we will be looking at an Oakridge Police Department seal of approval program that will reward security and increase stability in the neighborhoods."

Another plan is to address outdated ordinances and hit negligent landlords square in the pocketbook. According to Watson, the identified problem areas had 175 to 275 bad debts, at a staggering cost to the city. "We have to stem the wound where we've been having this tremendous loss," Watson said, "a million dollars in the last five years. Anytime there is a turn over in one of these homes, there will be an inspection required and we will determine whether a certificate of occupancy continues to be issued for that property or not."

John Huotari reports in *Oak Ridger.com* that city officials have calculated a loss of \$877,674 in the last five years on utility bills. The current deposit is \$80 for water, sewer and electric services, but beginning March 17, residential customers with bad credit (receiving cut off notices) could begin paying as much as \$300 security deposits for the city's electrical system, while those with good credit may have the deposit waived.

The city of Oak Ridge's "Not in Our Town" initiative is impressive in its holistic approach to addressing problems," said MTAS Consultant Margaret Norris. "No one working independently will have success; but all city departments functioning collectively with citizens will achieve the goal of a safer and healthier community."

Neighborhood crime issues are an international problem in 2011. According to the group's website, The International Crime Free Association, in Mesa, Az., claims to have reduced community crime by 70 percent through its tough landlord certification programs. "The Neighborhood Watch or Block Watch programs that work so well in established housing neighborhoods was not working in rental properties (in Mesa) because of the lack of ownership and pride on the part of some apartment renters and, in some cases, the apartment owners," the website says.

This observation could hold true to some extent in Oak Ridge, as Watson cites a lack of long-term occupancy as part of the housing problem. "We find that many of our houses are rentals of one year or less," he said. "There's one that's changed hands nine times in five years. When you go out to a public meeting and somebody says 'I want more neighborhood community policing,' you can't do that if your neighborhood's changing nine times in five years."

Crime Free Association programs partner property owners,

and law enforcement in a three-prong approach including eight-hour seminars presented by police and fire department personnel and crime prevention meetings for property managers. Phase III of the Association's Rental Housing program includes a crime free lease addendum, which landlords commit to having tenants sign and abide by.

The addendum requires renters to forego drug related or other criminal activity near or on the premises of the property or be held in violation of their lease agreement and subject to immediate termination of tenancy.

"I have heard complaints about rental properties across the state and this program may play a part in the solution," observes Josh Jones, MTAS legal consultant. But, Jones also urges caution for landlords who adapt crime free lease addendums in Tennessee. "A public entity should always have concerns when evicting a person from his or her domicile," he maintains. "The drafter (of

the lease agreement) should take great care to preserve the rights of both landlord and tenant."

"We have adopted a climate action plan to encourage people to get out and walk," said Watson. "Our folks want more retail and shops. But you can't develop your community without a very stable economy. There will be numerous



Many rental homes in Oak Ridge were constructed as temporary housing for "The Manhattan Project".

city ordinances that we'll change to run a tighter operation, but we will also be sympathetic to needs. There are good renters who live in our town working with good local landlords who will work in conjunction with the police and neighborhood crime watches as we begin to develop a holistic program."

Early snow storms freeze Tennessee's budgets

WEATHER from Page 1

increasingly difficult to predict the severity of Tennessee's winters, making it difficult for municipalities as well as the state to prepare snow and ice removal budgets.

In the interim, many public works employees have become hometown heroes, as they toil day and night to keep communities safe during the storm.

"We are always ready," said Jack Huffman, Millington Public Works director. "We know when winter weather is predicted and we make sure our equipment is in good shape and ready to go." At 4 am, the city's public works employees are out treating the streets before the morning rush hour.

"We more or less piggyback off of Shelby County," Huffman continues. "We've worked together for years." That statement is not unusual for Millington's workforce. The community prides itself on old fashioned values, that of neighbor helping neighbor, especially when trouble strikes.

"A lot of counties are broke and don't have it to give to cities but with us, it's mutual that we help each other," said Millington Mayor Richard Hodges. "During the devastating flood, people came over here to help and we did likewise."

"During the tornados, we went to Jackson and Adamsville and stayed two months," adds Huffman. "The employees that we had here in Millington doubled up to take care of Millington. That's how dedicated our employees are."

This winter, the city has used around 20 tons of salt, which they mix with cinder to stretch the



Cleveland City Manager Janice Casteel holds up her index finger during congratulatory remarks to Department of Public Works employees. The employees were recognized for keeping the city's streets clear during this winter's recent snow storms.

amount. "There's \$10,000 in the budget for salt, but in the last 15 or 20 years, we haven't had to use any of it," said Huffman. "It was close but we never ran out," added Hodges. "We had to pay overtime for people to put down cinder, which the city writes into its Public Works budget. We've got Billy Ragghianti, Millington's Streets Supervisor, who's an expert on that process," Hodges said. "He'll come in around 2-3 o'clock in the morning."

"We rotate shifts and work together to support one another until it is safe for the citizens to return to the streets," said Ragghianti. "Sometimes we come in early, work late, skip lunch, but we work together to get the job done."

As a result of this year's storms, Johnson City has doubled next year's snow and ice removal

budget to 3,000 tons of salt from its former 1,500 tons. "When we began to get really low, we had to actually go get the salt from the vendor rather than waiting on the delivery," said Public Works Manager Phil Pindzola.

"Also we didn't spread the salt on flat stretches of roadways, particularly in neighborhoods," Pindzola said.

"We use a mixture of magnesium chloride, which is a spray treatment, and we spray that on each load of salt. We have found that it actually increases production by about 30 percent. Salt itself can only work at about 20-25 degrees, but magnesium chloride allows us to get down to five degrees type of weather."

According to Pindzola, one of the primary challenges of harsh winter weather is the toll it takes on municipal equipment. "It takes a real pounding when you run it 24 hours a day," he said. "We lost 30 percent of plowing capacity last year because of mechanical failure. But the city commission has been good about replacing equipment. We adjust our priorities and try not to dip into our fund balance. We just cover as much as we can by making adjustments in our operations, but it does affect some services."

In Cleveland, street crews munch on hot breakfast biscuits in a warm office in appreciation for a job well done. "We wanted to do something to show how genuine we feel about the job you do," said the city's Mayor Tom Rowland, who along with Councilman David May, City Manager Janice Casteel and Assistant City Manager Melinda Carroll, provided breakfast for the group. "You don't realize how it affects lives when you clear a street," Rowland continues. "How you did it with only four pieces of equipment is unbelievable."

The cost of this winter's snow storms in Cleveland was not cheap. The city logged 593 total man hours with double-time (overtime) paid on 382 hours, according to Rowland. "The total cost for man hours was approximately \$35,000 for two snow storms," he said. "Which

includes six to eight trucks equipped with salt spreaders and plows."

"When public works employees came in to the garage for lunch or a break, another crew was ready to leave to continuously keep trucks and crews on the road," Rowland said. "It was very important to them to have the roads cleared as soon and as quickly as possible."

The mayor reminded the men of their heroism; the elderly woman they helped get home from a nursing home, medical staff transported to surgeries on time, the gentleman the crew assisted that couldn't drive out of his driveway.

"That man has told people in other places they are not as fortunate as Cleveland to have a team of guys who did the job and smiled while they did it," Rowland said. "I appreciate good employees. And I want to say thank you."

Winter Weather Fact Sheet

Data provided by TDOT

- Statewide snow & ice removal budget — \$14 million
- Statewide expenditures through February 18 — \$28 million

Salt Used by Region as of January 2011

Region 1 (East TN, including Knoxville & Tri-Cities)—68,762 tons
Region 2 (Chattanooga & Cumberland Plateau)—52,670 tons
Region 3 (Middle TN)—34,742 tons
Region 4 (West TN including Jackson & Memphis)—10,597 tons

Snow & Ice Removal Techniques

Salt Brine— salt and water mixture keeps snow and ice slushy until plowing can take place.

Calcium Chloride— can be combined with brine mixture and road salt to enhance their ability to melt snow and ice, especially during very cold temperatures of 20 degrees or lower.

Snow Plows— 828 available across the state.

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Cities and municipal agencies have joined together to create in the TML Pool what has grown to be the largest municipal insurer in Tennessee. The extent of the coverage provided for municipal exposures is staggering.

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- 18,960 municipal vehicles with total insurable values of some \$350 million for liability coverage; and provides
- general liability coverage for 16,407 miles of streets.



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BY TML STAFF REPORTS

TN, Kentucky form new alliance

Officials say a new economic development partnership in northwest Tennessee and southwest Kentucky is very timely. The Ken-Tenn Regional Alliance has been formed as the shutdown of the Goodyear plant in Union City late in 2011 has been announced, affecting 1,900 workers. The alliance is described as a "sustainable community project" representing Obion, Weakley and Lake counties in Tennessee and Fulton and Hickman counties in Kentucky. All the counties have made funding commitments to the group, whose goal is to attract, keep and grow small businesses in the region.

Memphis part of EV project

Tennesseans who buy a Nissan Leaf, the all-electric vehicle coming to the market in 2012, will get a free home charging station as part of federal government incentives in six states and Washington as well as state government incentives in Tennessee. The city of Memphis was recently added in the EV Project, a federally backed effort to build charging stations for electric vehicles. Memphis Light, Gas and Water Division should have 10 locations up and running by September for public charging stations.

TN high in heart disease, strokes

The Tennessee Department of Health says heart disease and strokes combined for more than 17,000 deaths in the state in 2009. Heart disease was the No. 1 cause of death and stroke No. 5. The department released the figures as part of the observance of American Heart Month this February. On an optimistic note, Tennessee's death rate for heart disease decreased by almost 9 percent from 2005 to 2009. In a news release, health officials reminded Tennesseans that uncontrolled high blood pressure and high cholesterol are risk factors for heart attack and stroke. Health Commissioner Susan R. Cooper suggested that Tennesseans lower their sodium, fat and cholesterol intake and do a healthy amount of physical activity.

TN loses meth lab funding

Sheriffs around Tennessee learned they can't count on further federal funding for removal of methamphetamine labs. The federal program that funds cleanups of hazardous meth labs has cut off the money. Tennessee alone is losing about \$5 million and there could be other cuts related to meth enforcement ahead. The news comes after a record year for seizures of suspected labs - nearly 2,100 statewide last year. Authorities expect this year's total to top that figure. Federal law treats each lab as hazardous waste that must be removed and destroyed by a certified clean up crew. An average meth lab cleanup cost is estimated to be \$2,500 — and the total is projected to increase this year. Law enforcement agencies for more than a decade have used grant money from the federal community oriented policing services to pay for disposal of the toxic, potentially explosive materials.

Holiday shopping upswing

Tennessee experienced its best Christmas sales tax season since 2007, the state's finance commissioner said, indicating that holiday shoppers were spending more than any point since the recession began. Sales taxes posted a growth rate of nearly 4.5 percent in January, which reflects economic activity in the previous month. Sales taxes make up two out of every three tax dollars collected in Tennessee, which has no state income tax. Sales taxes are collected on nearly everything people buy — meaning the more they buy, the more taxes are collected.

State tax revenue positive

Tennessee tax revenue in January was positive, reflecting strong consumer spending during the month of December. January revenue was \$997.3 million, \$38 million more than the state budgeted, according to the Department of Finance and Administration. Year-to-date, collections for the six months of the fiscal year were \$137 million more than the budget estimate.

New EPA rules spark jobs

New anti-pollution rules aimed at electric power plants could create more than 100,000 jobs in Tennessee over the next five years, according to a new report. As local power plants look to implement two rules expected to be finalized this year by the Environmental Protection Agency, more than 114,500 new jobs could be created, according to a study from Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts. The study suggests 869 jobs would be lost in the same period due to the projected closures of older, less-efficient coal plants. The study reviewed the impacts of two Clean Air Act rules expected to be finalized this year — the Clean Air Transport Rule, focused on sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions, and the Toxics rule, which will limit the emission of pollutants like mercury, arsenic, lead and hydrochloric acid.

State debt lowest in country

Comptroller Justin Wilson says the state's debt burden of about \$300 for every Tennessean is one of the lowest in the country. Wilson told the Senate Finance Committee that there are a number of debt rankings that use different measurements, but none places Tennessee higher than 46th. The comptroller told the panel that when the general obligation debt is combined with the state's unfunded pension liability, the per capita debt rises to about \$750. Wilson called Tennessee's debt level "manageable" and said the state has substantial capacity to borrow more money if it needs it. But he argued that such a move would be a departure from Tennessee's traditional financing model.

State awards free smoke alarms

The state fire marshal's office is giving away thousands of smoke alarms. The office launched a three-day sweep of West Tennessee, giving away 2,000 alarms to fire departments across the region. The goal is to get fire departments and other

organizations to install the free smoke alarms in households for the needy. Thousands more giveaways are planned for different areas of the state. The office will pass out smoke alarms in Middle Tennessee the first week of March. East Tennessee fire departments will gather in Nashville and receive alarms on March 8, Fire Safety Day at the State Capitol. The state passes out as many as 8,000 free smoke alarms a year. The alarms are paid for with a grant.

Ramsey, Harwell target special committees

House Speaker Beth Harwell and Senate Speaker Ron Ramsey have jointly proposed abolishing a dozen special committees, some decades old, that oversee state functions ranging from prisons and TennCare to children's issues and the lottery. In the preamble to a 22-page bill sponsored by the two speakers, the current "select" committees are declared to be usurping the authority of regular committees and in conflict with House and Senate rules. "Such duplication and fragmentation of committee responsibilities and staff resources promote legislative inefficiencies and wasteful practices," the bill (HB1097, SB725) states.

State's GDP hits reverse

All of Tennessee's major cities, along with 80 percent of the nation's metropolitan areas, hit reverse in 2009, as the Great Recession tightened its hold. According to statistics by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, gross domestic product (GDP) by metropolitan area declined 2.4 percent in 2009 after declining 0.4 percent in 2008. The economic decline was widespread, with 292 of 366 metropolitan areas recording GDP declines in 2009, the BEA said. Tennessee's biggest metro areas all saw sharp declines in 2009, led by Chattanooga, which fell 5.5 percent. Nashville saw GDP fall 4.7 percent. Knoxville was down 4.0 percent, and Memphis fell 3.8 percent. Chattanooga and Memphis also recorded declines in 2008.

Legislative proceedings broadcast statewide

Televised proceedings of the Senate and House of Representatives will be broadcast statewide on Public Television's "Tennessee Channel."

The gavel-to-gavel broadcast will feature comprehensive live and taped-delayed proceedings, including committee meetings, floor sessions, and other joint conventions for the first time in state history.

The project is funded under an agreement with the Tennessee General Assembly, with additional corporate support from AT&T. The General Assembly will be responsible for feeding the broadcast of the sessions to the Tennessee Channel. It will then run through the state's six public television stations, which provides coverage to all Tennessee viewers.

The Tennessee General Assembly offers extensive information through their Internet website, winning the state the national "Online Democracy Award" for providing it in a user-friendly format. The legislature was also awarded the Digital Governance Award for Leadership in Digital Access for "strong government transparency and public access improvements."

Tennessee Public Television Stations include: WCTE/Cookeville, WTCI/Chattanooga, East Tennessee PBS WKOP/Knoxville and WETP/Sneedville, WLJT/Martin, WKNO/Memphis and WNPT/Nashville.

Citizens can check with their local public television station for the weekly schedule of legislative coverage.

TDOT announces Aeronautics Grants

The Tennessee Department of Transportation announced that federal and state aeronautics grants totaling \$309,249 have been approved for eight Tennessee airports. The grants are made available through the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Aeronautics Division.

The division administers federal and state funding to assist in the location, design, construction and maintenance of Tennessee's diverse public aviation system.

Except for routine expenditures, grant applications are reviewed by the Tennessee Aeronautics Commission (TAC), which is a five member board charged with policy planning and with regulating changes in the state Airport System Plan. The board carefully reviews all applications for grants to ensure that the proper state and local matching

funds are in place and that the grants will be used for needed improvements. For more details on each of these grants visit <http://www.tn.gov/tdot/news/2011/aeronautics/GrantDetails.pdf>.

Municipal Airports receiving grants include:

- Dickson County Municipal Airport- \$27,000- For filling edge-drops along runway and taxiway.
- Lawrenceburg/Lawrence County Airport- \$51,789- For design and bidding for runway repairs. And overlay project.
- Lebanon Municipal Airport- \$89,010- Repair pavement cracks and sealing.
- Portland Municipal Airport- \$60,000- Purchase grounds maintenance equipment; and
- Tullahoma Regional Airport- \$27,000- For ramp expansion.

NATIONAL BRIEFS



BY TML STAFF REPORTS

Local governments across the U.S. are looking to offset deep cuts in the funding that flows to them from states by raising taxes and easing state mandates on how they spend.

Nearly a third of local funding, on average, filters down from state budgets. But that cash often comes with strings attached—such as limits on how local governments raise taxes as well as mandates on which services local governments have to provide—that can limit how local governments respond to lower revenue. Some cities are considering putting income taxes on the ballot as a way to offset proposed cuts in K-12 education. While governors and legislatures are making big decisions about how to balance state budgets, it often falls to mayors, city councils and county executives to decide what actually gets cut. Less funding for local government will almost certainly mean a diminished level of basic services such as trash collection and schools, but it could ultimately pave the way for local governments to take greater control over how their tax dollars are raised and spent. While many local governments accept that their bud-

gets are likely to be cut this year, they say they should get greater control over how they raise and spend money. "The next decade will be the decade of local and regional government," says Robert O'Neill, executive director of the International City/County Management Association.

The federal government is requiring as many as 1,000 companies to turn over their employment records for inspection, part of an expanding crackdown on businesses suspected of hiring illegal immigrants. The audits, which the government is expected to make public in the next few days, represent the biggest such operation since 2009. At that time, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, a DHS unit, conducted an auditing sweep of businesses working in public safety and national security. ICE last month established an employment compliance inspection center to beef up coordination across states instead of having agents follow only local leads. The latest round of audits targets at least a few regional fast-food chains, according to people with knowledge of the operation. Federal agents are

expected to visit the companies in coming days to notify them of the requirement.

A federal agency warns that some employers are excluding jobless workers from consideration for openings.

The practice has surfaced in electronic and print postings with language such as "unemployed applicants will not be considered" or "must be currently employed." Some ads use time thresholds to exclude applicants who've been unemployed longer than six months or a year. Evidence of the practice has been mostly anecdotal, but with unemployment at 9 percent and millions of people struggling to find jobs, the practice has caught the attention of regulators, lawmakers and advocates for the unemployed. Members of Congress contacted the Department of Labor and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to see whether the practice violates federal employment laws against discrimination. While the unemployed aren't a protected class under civil rights laws, the practice could be legally problematic if it has a disparate or discriminatory effect on groups of job seekers who are subject to civil rights protections.

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Community Block Grants targeted for major cuts

CDGB from Page 1

growth to the revitalization of entire communities.

CDBG is a smart, long-term investment in our nation's communities. Strong federal accountability measures and reporting requirements, coupled with significant public input, ensure that only the most essential local priorities are funded.

At a time when many local governments struggle to keep budgets balanced, NLC and TML join with

cities and towns across America to implore Congress and the Administration not to slash CDBG, but to maintain level funding at \$4 billion for FY 2012.

The negotiation process on federal spending between the White House and House and Senate Leaders will play out over the next several months.

Contact your Congressmen, and urge them to maintain level funding at \$4 billion for FY 2012.

Jurisdiction	FY 2010 Allocation	FY 2011 Proposed House Cut 62.5%	FY 2012 Proposed Administration 7.5% Cut
Bristol	\$255,469	-\$159,668	-\$19,160
Johnson City	\$532,427	-\$332,767	-\$39,932
Kingsport	\$439,155	-\$274,472	-\$32,937
Morristown	\$318,081	-\$198,801	-\$23,856
Chattanooga	\$1,894,525	-\$1,184,078	-\$142,089
Cleveland	\$363,692	-\$227,308	-\$27,277
Oak Ridge	\$282,187	-\$176,367	-\$21,164
Nashville	\$5,393,336	-\$3,370,835	-\$404,500
Murfreesboro	\$700,162	-\$437,601	-\$52,512
Clarksville	\$877,477	-\$548,423	-\$65,811
Franklin	\$299,406	-\$187,129	-\$22,455
Jackson	\$633,416	-\$395,885	-\$47,506
Memphis	\$8,768,683	-\$5,480,427	-\$657,651

Eight Tennessee sites added to National Register

The Tennessee Historical Commission has announced eight Tennessee sites have been added to the National Register of Historic Places. The Register is the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. It is part of a nationwide program that coordinates and supports efforts to identify, evaluate and protect historic resources. The Tennessee Historical Commission administers the program.

Sites recently added include:

• **Daugherty Furniture Building** – Clinton's Daugherty Furniture Building was designed by Knoxville architect Clem H. Meyers and constructed between 1938-1942. The building is a skillful example of a multi-purpose commercial building and is architecturally important to the town of Clinton and to Anderson County. Frank Gilbreath and Sebastian Maire were the stonemasons for the building, which was constructed at a time when nearby Oak Ridge and Norris Dam also were being built. The influx of people in the region helped the store become a major commercial center. Everything from furniture and hardware to appliances and flooring was sold in the store, making Daugherty's historically important to the area's commercial history.

• **Doe Creek School** – Located in the vicinity of Sardis in rural Henderson County, the Doe Creek School was originally built in the 1870s and carefully reconstructed in 2007. The building was used as both a school and a church, with the last classes held there conducted in 1948. Historically, the Doe Creek School is important as an example of a rural, one-room school that would have been used by the surrounding communities.

• **First Presbyterian Church** – Cookeville's First Presbyterian Church was built in 1909-1910 by prominent local brick mason Joseph Francis Scott and remodeled in 1955 by Dero Darwin and his son. The Neo-classical style of the church is characterized by its pedimented gables and strong cornice lines. Its interior is Colonial Revival in style and reflects the 1955 remodeling.

• **Lebanon in the Forks Cemetery** – Located near Knoxville, Lebanon in the Forks Cemetery is a significant representation of early settlement history in eastern Knox County. Established in 1793, the cemetery con-

tains the burials of Knox County pioneers. Most of the 80 grave markers are simple limestone slabs, although the cemetery does contain a box tomb and obelisks.

• **Market Street Bridge** – The Bridge, which spans the Tennessee River in Chattanooga is a unique structure in the state. Finished in 1917, a focal point of the steel and concrete bridge is the 310-foot bascule lift span that opens for river traffic. Ten deck girders and six concrete arches comprise the rest of the nearly 2,000-foot long bridge.

• **Minvilla** – The two buildings that comprise Minvilla were built in 1913 in an area of Knoxville that was rapidly expanding. The city's expanding streetcar system resulted in commercial and residential growth in what were then the northern suburbs of Knoxville. Minvilla was built close to the streetcar line and originally consisted of 13 attached row houses for the emerging middle class. Their Classical Revival design of the buildings is seen in the canted bays, multiple-pane windows and single-story porticos.

• **Municipal Public Works Garage Industrial District** – Historically and architecturally important, the six single-story brick buildings that comprise the Municipal Public Works Garage Industrial District were built circa 1940 as a New Deal project under the sponsorship of the Public Works Administration and the Works Progress Administration. Located in an area of Nashville known as Rolling Mill Hill, the buildings are constructed of load-bearing brick, have multiple-pane windows, parapet rooflines, bowed steel truss roofs and open interior spaces.

• **Stone Hall** – Located in the Donelson-Hermitage area of Davidson County, Stone Hall is comprised of the 1918 main house, a log guesthouse called Eversong and several outbuildings. Designed by Nashville architect George Waller, the two-story main building called Stone Hall is faced with coursed-ashlar limestone, has a hip roof and hip-roof dormers sheathed in concrete tile with tile coping, multiple light wood windows with limestone sills, a porch on the east, a patio on the west, a tall stone chimney and bay windows on the façade.

For more information about the Tennessee Historical Commission, visit www.tn.gov/environment/hist.

Obama's FY 2012 budget request gets mixed reviews from cities

BY NLC STAFF

Earlier this month, President Obama released his \$3.73 trillion budget request for FY 2012. According to the president, his request is designed "to help America win the future by out-innovating, out-educating, and out-building our global competition." But those investments will come at a price. The president's budget request includes more than \$1 trillion in deficit reduction, of which two-thirds comes from spending cuts.

In response to the President's request, NLC Executive Director Don Borut acknowledged disappointment and pledged that NLC and city leaders would work with the administration and Congress to ensure final spending decisions will help, not harm, local economies.

"We look forward to working with our federal partners to restore the opportunities that allow families to thrive and to restore the fiscal health of our national and local economies, so that our country, our cities and our families can prosper in the long run," Borut said.

The following summarizes highlights of the president's budget proposal targeted at municipalities.

Energy

Under Obama's request, the Department of Energy's (DOE's) budget would increase by 12 percent or \$3.1 billion in FY 2012 to meet priorities that include advancing research on clean energy technologies and manufacturing, doubling the share of electricity generated from clean energy sources by 2035, and putting one million electric vehicles on the road by 2015. DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy would receive \$3.2 billion for investments in solar and wind and other renewable energy technologies and energy efficiency improvements to the nation's building stock and vehicles.

Though the budget proposal does not include funding for the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant program, a popular local government program funded in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, it does include \$320 million for Weatherization Assistance Grants and creates a new "Race to Green" competitive grant program for states and municipal governments to improve the energy efficiency of commercial buildings.

Environment

Obama's request calls for \$9 billion for the EPA, a decrease of \$1.3 billion from FY 2010 levels. While providing \$46 million to support the 2012 implementation of a national program to reduce greenhouse gasses and improve fuel economy for cars and trucks, the proposal significantly reduces funding for the State Revolving Funds. The Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds would receive \$1.6 billion and \$990 million, respectively, representing a cut of \$947 million for the two programs. The Brownfields program would be funded at \$99 million and the Superfund program would be cut by approximately \$100 million to \$1.2 billion. The proposal also includes \$9.9 million for HUD, DOT, EPA Partnership for Sustainable Communities for technical assistance with smart growth initiatives.

Transportation

In the absence of a consensus on a long-term transportation reauthorization program, the president's request for transportation funding includes a \$556 billion six-year program and many changes in the underlying transportation program itself. While these far-reaching proposals call for increased spending, they do not identify a new funding source. They do specify that funding needs to come from user fees rather than general Treasury revenues. The request also includes funding for the national intercity

passenger rail program, a national infrastructure bank and an expanded high speed rail program. Under Obama's proposal, all surface transportation programs would be funded by a new method, the Transportation Trust Fund, ensuring more coordination among the current fragmented surface transportation programs within the DOT. The newly designated fund would replace the Highway Trust Fund, which federal fuel taxes currently support. Bowing to the reality of limited federal resources, the budget request also would expand financing programs. The Transportation Infrastructure Financing and Innovation Program, or TIFIA, would be increased 18 percent to \$2.34 billion, and loan guarantee programs would double to \$80 million. The proposed National Infrastructure Bank would be funded at \$50 billion.

Housing, Community Revitalization

The President's proposal would decrease funding for HUD by 1 percent to \$34 billion. Although a 1 percent reduction appears small, the costs of funding existing housing vouchers and providing basic upkeep for public housing stock continue to grow. To meet the rising costs of keeping current housing assistance recipients in their homes, the proposed budget would provide less for community planning and development programs, including the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Despite campaign promises for full funding, the President's budget cuts CDBG by 7 percent, or \$300 million. However, the budget would maintain funding for the Sustainable Communities Initiative, a competitive grant program, at \$150 million and the Choice Neighborhoods program, the successor to HOPE VI, at \$250 million. Homeless Assistance Grants would see a significant increase, from \$1.86 billion to \$2.37 billion, primarily for the benefit of homeless veterans and families with children. Obama also wants to replace the expiring Empowerment Zone program, which awarded special tax credits for neighborhoods targeted for revitalization, with a "Growth Zone" program that would couple tax benefits and grant funding; and draw on resources from HUD, the Department of Commerce and the Department of Agriculture. Initial funding would provide for 20 Growth Zone neighborhoods.

Municipal Finance

In the FY 2012 request, Obama proposes making Build America Bonds (BABs) permanent; however, the subsidy, which the U.S. Treasury would provide, is reduced from 35 to 28 percent, a "revenue-neutral" subsidy rate. The request also calls for expanding the use of BABs, which had been limited to governmental issuers and capital expenditures, to be used more broadly for current refinancing and short-term working capital. They could also be sold by 501(c)(3) non-profits.

Workforce Development

While the President's overall request for the Department of Labor (DOL) is 13 percent lower than FY 2010, reductions in job training program funding were limited to 9 percent. If adopted into law, these cuts would come at a time when unemployment remains high and significant numbers of Americans remain in need of the re-employment and job training services offered by local one stop centers and workforce development programs. Under Obama's proposal, the dislocated worker program would receive \$1.4 billion in FY 2012, up from \$1.25 billion last year; however, both the disadvantaged adult and youth programs would be cut. The disadvantaged adult program would receive \$861 million, down from \$907 million last year, and the youth employment program would receive \$924 million, down from \$1.03 billion. State and local funding reductions would

occur as a result of proposed changes to DOL's Workforce Innovation Fund. Funds for the program would be cut by \$300 million to \$3.3 billion with the balance set aside for competitive grants to states, regions and localities wishing to transform their workforce systems or replicate successful ones to deliver better employment and education results. The department would spend \$500 million for Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training for competitive grants to higher education institutions that prepare workers for high skilled jobs, \$115 million for YouthBuild and \$60 million for Green Jobs.

Education

The Department of Education's budget proposal calls for an increase in overall spending by nearly 4.5 percent. Funding for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act Title I direct grants to local education agencies would increase from \$14.5 billion in FY 2011 to \$14.8 billion in FY 2012, but funding for other programs would decrease. Funding for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act would decrease from \$12.1 billion in FY 2011 to \$11.7 billion in FY 2012, and funds for Race to the Top would decrease from \$1.35 billion to \$900 million. The budget also calls for \$350 million for a new Early Learning Challenge Fund to boost quality early learning programs, \$300 million for a new round of Investing in Innovation grants, \$150 million for the Promise Neighborhoods program, which integrates educational and social services in targeted communities, and \$1.27 billion (an increase of \$100 million) for 21st Century Community Learning Centers.

Family Services

The budget for the Department of Health and Human Services calls for decreases to several community programs. Head Start would be funded at levels comparable to last year (\$8.1 billion) as would Social Services Block Grants at \$1.7 billion. Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program would be cut by more than half from \$5.3 billion in FY 2011 to \$2.6 billion in FY 2012.

Public Safety, Emergency

Obama's FY 2012 request calls for cuts in state and local criminal justice grants by \$588 million. However, a majority of these dollars would come from the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program and the ban on earmarks, keeping core grant programs for communities at near-level funding. COPS hiring grants for community policing stayed level at \$600 million, while Byrne Justice Assistance Grants were only decreased by \$50 million to \$487 million. Funding for reentry programs and problem solving courts also remained level. Obama's Homeland Security request sustains federal funding for state and local preparedness grants totaling over \$3.8 billion, including \$1.05 billion for the State Homeland Security Grant Program and \$920 million for the Urban Area Security Initiative. The budget also increases Assistance to Firefighter Grants to \$670 million, and \$600 million in various transportation and infrastructure protection grants.

Communications Services

Obama's budget lays out a plan to provide high-speed wireless services to at least 98 percent of all Americans within five years and build out a nationwide interoperable public safety communications network. Obama's initiative would support a one-time investment of \$5 billion to the Universal Service Fund so it can expand "4G" high-speed wireless technology throughout the United States. The program would also reallocate a portion of radio spectrum known as the D Block directly to public safety to help form the basis of a nationwide public safety communications network, as well as provide an infusion of funds to begin the build-out of the public safety network, finally fulfilling a key recommendation of the 9/11 commission. While the cost-revenue numbers on this program are complex, it is ultimately revenue generating due to the auction of underutilized spectrum. The federal government has estimated it could bring in upwards of \$27.8 billion from the sale of spectrum over the next 10 years. Approximately \$15 billion would be utilized for the construction of the new nationwide public safety network, and \$3 billion for investment in modernizing first responders' communications devices. The approximately \$10 billion remaining would be utilized to pay down the federal deficit.

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ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT ASSISTANT III

The University of Tennessee Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) is seeking qualified candidates for the position of Administrative Support Assistant III in our Nashville office. This position serves as general office manager and administrative assistant to consultants based in the Knoxville, Nashville and Johnson City offices. Orders office supplies and maintains inventory of equipment and its condition. Coordinates facility and service needs. Key detailed information into learning management system, GML (Lotus Notes database). Excellent customer service skills are required as well as the ability to plan and process projects and handle inquiries. Position requires expertise in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Power-point, Outlook). This position requires at least two years of college education or additional office experience evidencing writing and analytical skills. A high level of cognitive or intuitive skills are necessary to fully understand, design and implement successful solutions to municipal problems. Position is open until filled. Please send application and resume to: UT OHRM; 600 Henley Street, Suite 221; Knoxville, TN 37996. The University of Tennessee is an EEO/AA/Title IX/Section 504/ADA/ADEA institution in the provision of its education and employment programs and services. All qualified applicants will receive equal consideration for employment without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, physical or mental disability, or covered veteran status.

CHIEF BUILDING OFFICIAL

JOHNSON CITY. The city is looking for an innovative and committed professional with proven technical and leadership skills, to serve as Chief Building Official (CBO). As CBO, you'll plan, direct, and lead the city's Code Enforcement division activities and programs, within the Public Works department, while actively and visibly supporting the city's vision. The CBO will work with 12 staff members to provide efficient administration of all provisions of the municipal building codes, property maintenance codes and zoning ordinances. The CBO will administer the activities of the Board of Building Codes and Board of Dwelling Standards and Review. Candidates must have: strong interpersonal and communication skills (both verbal and written); demonstrated leadership ability; and at a minimum, a bachelor's degree; and/or 10 years previous experience in any combination of code enforcement; design, construction or inspection of building structures; or structural engineering or architecture. Salary range: \$49,227 to \$64,620 depending on experience. Position open until filled. For an application or city information visit www.johnsoncitytn.org. Apply to: Department of Human Resources, City of Johnson City, 601 East Main St., P.O. Box 2150, Johnson City, TN 37605. EEO/AA.

FINANCEDIRECTOR

BARTLETT. The city is seeking applicants for the position of Finance Director. This position is the city's authority on all aspects of financial management and requires a comprehensive understanding of city government finance. The finance director manages the budgeting, accounting, accounts payable, debt service management and information technology functions of government and participates in the cash management, pension, investments, and certain aspects of the payroll process and purchasing. This position requires a bachelor's degree in Accounting, Finance, Public Administration, or closely related field, and seven years

of progressive experience with a minimum of five years in a senior management role, preferably in the area of governmental accounting and budgeting. Candidate must have professional certification such as Certified Municipal Finance Officer (CMFO), Certified Governmental Financial Manager (CGFM), Certified Public Finance Officer (CPFO) or Certified Public Accountant (CPA) in Tennessee, in active status with a minimum of five years of primarily governmental experience, with at least three of those years in Tennessee, in order to comply with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Officer Certification and Education Act of 2007. Salary: \$96,159 - \$104,003 DOQ; comprehensive benefit package including the city Retirement Plan. Applications will be accepted until position is filled. Submit a letter of interest, current resume with salary history and at least three professional references to: Personnel Director, City of Bartlett, 6400 Stage Rd., Bartlett, TN 38134. Email: pvoss@cityofbartlett.org. EOE

POLICE CHIEF

GALLATIN. The city has an immediate opening for a Police Chief. The chief will assume responsibilities for a non-union department with 65 sworn officers and 23 civilians, a \$5.9 million budget, serving a diverse community. Salary range \$64,305 to \$102,801 with excellent benefits. Reporting to the city mayor in cooperation with city council, the chief will plan, organize, and oversee all police activities, develop annual budget and control budgeted expenses, formulate and implement police policies, manage employee relations, attend community meetings, and make presentations related to law enforcement activities. Qualifications include: any combination of education and experience equivalent to graduation from an accredited college or university with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice, law enforcement, or related field. Extensive work experience in Law Enforcement or a related field. Upper-level management experience preferred. Must possess a driver's license valid in the state of Tennessee and meet the minimum standards law (TCA 38-8-106) requirements for police officers and be able to provide documented proof upon request. Must be willing to meet residency requirements within 90 days of selection. Must have the abilities to perform all aspects of this executive position. To apply, please submit cover letter summarizing reason for interest and qualifications, a detailed resume including salary history, and three professional reference letters. Also, go to www.gallatinpd.org for further information about the police department, and under the contact site, download a city application, complete, and submit with the above documents. Mail to Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS), 226 Capitol Boulevard, Suite 606, Nashville, TN, 37219, Attn: Gallatin Police Chief Search. All applications must be received by Friday, March 11, 2011. EOE.

POLICE CHIEF

OAK RIDGE. The city is seeking a new Police Chief. Qualifications for the position include a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice, Public Administration, Management or a related field; ability to be certified by the Tennessee POST Commission within six months of hire; ability to obtain a valid Tennessee driver's license; and evidence of continued professional development through participation in professional association activities at the state and national levels and attendance at seminars and workshops in the law enforcement management field to stay abreast of changes in the field. Graduation from the FBI Academy or Southern Police Institute would be a plus. Please see the Recruitment Brochure at www.mercergroupinc.com for other requirements. The Oak Ridge Police Department is responsible for enhancing the safety and security of all residents and other persons working in or visiting the city. Starting salary will be market competitive, DOQ/E plus an automobile, benefits and reasonable relocation expenses. Brochure at www.mercergroupinc.com. Resumes by close of business March 18, 2011, to

James Mercer, The Mercer Group, Inc., 551 W Cordova Road, #726, Santa Fe, NM 87505. Voice: 505-466-9500; Fax: 505-466-1274, e-mail: jmercer@mercergroupinc.com; website: www.mercergroupinc.com. In accordance with the Tennessee Open Records law, all application materials are subject to public disclosure. Please contact James Mercer if you have questions about this law and its requirements. EOE.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

ATOKA. The town is accepting applications for the position of Public Works Director. This employee is directly responsible for the management of the Water and Wastewater Operations, Street Maintenance Operations, Park Maintenance and Garage Department Operations. This is a salaried position. Must be a High School graduate or equivalent. A bachelor's degree is a plus. A criminal record check, employment physical, and drug screening test will be required as conditions of employment. Must have experience in construction and maintenance equipment operation and/or related fields. Must be able to perform and/or manage multiple tasks, projects, and priorities concurrently. At least 3 years extensive responsible administrative and supervisory experience in the public works and public utilities field is required. Water distribution and wastewater collection certification by the State of Tennessee required within 18 months of employment. Employee must maintain an effective working relationship with the public and employees. For application and complete job description, visit Atoka City Hall, 334 Atoka Munford Ave, Atoka TN 38004. Deadline for acceptance is March 15, 2011 at 5 pm. For questions, call 901-837-5300. Office hours: 8am to 5pm Mon-Fri.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

ATOKA. The town is accepting applications for the position of Town Administrator. The employee is responsible for effective and efficient operation of the municipal government activities and support services under the general supervision of the mayor and Board of Aldermen. This is a salaried position. A criminal record check, employment physical, and drug screening test will be required as conditions of employment. Qualifications include a bachelor's degree with a public administration background and minimum of 3 years experience, or 3 years experience with the understanding that a bachelor's degree must be obtained within 3 years of employment. Position requires membership certificate in Tennessee City Manager Association, or agreement to obtain a membership within one year of employment. Must have knowledge of budgetary principles, administrative skills, practices and procedures of public administration; and must establish and maintain an effective working relationship with the public and employees. For application and complete job description, visit Atoka City Hall, 334 Atoka Munford Ave, Atoka TN 38004. Deadline for acceptance is March 15, 2011, at 5 pm. For more information, call 901-837-5300, 8am to 5pm Mon-Fri.



The city of Bartlett closes a \$475,000 capital outlay note with the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund (TMBF) for an acquisition of equipment. Pictured are: Mark Brown, finance director; Mayor Keith McDonald; Stefanie McGee, city clerk; and Tommy Green, TMBF representative.

NLC 2011 Congressional City Conference March 12

Decisions made at the national level have direct and lasting impacts on cities and towns.

At NLC's Congressional City Conference, March 12-16 in Washington, D.C., attendees are given the most up-to-date information on the federal policy issues that are most likely to affect cities.

If you are unfamiliar with how federal policy and municipal realities intersect, the 2011 Congressional City Conference is the ideal event to connect with experienced local officials and public administrators from

across the country, to learn the latest news on funding, regulatory and legislative changes that affect cities and to develop relationships with your Congressional delegation.

The Congressional City Conference will lead you to a new world of ideas and skills that will enhance your professional and personal lives. If you have not already signed up to come there is still time to register online.

Learn more about the conference and register at the conference website. www.NLC.org

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Cities' fiscal nightmares: What's next?

BY NEAL PEIRCE

Cities' revenues will plunge sharply as property taxes, in their first year of recession-impacted reassessments, get set to decline deeply in 2011. Local government fiscal shortfalls may total as much as \$83 billion, which the National League of Cities (NLC) estimates may force up to 500,000 staff reductions. Basic city services will shrink. Infrastructure projects will be cancelled or postponed.

These are hard times for America's local governments. Economists may declare the Great Recession "over," but localities see a different picture. The federal stimulus monies that helped so many of them balance their budgets ran out Dec. 31. So does Washington's two-year-old "Build America" bond program, which has made local infrastructure borrowing more affordable.

Plus, as yet another season of compounded budget cuts dawns, cities must also struggle with unrelenting increases in health care costs. Many also face a fearsome debt overhang of heavy pension obligations.

Will "higher" governments help out? Not likely right now. Washington will be focusing on deficit trimming. States have their own budget nightmares. And then there's raw partisanship. Republicans made net gains of six governorships and some 680 legislative seats in the midterm election; even if they commiserate with cities, they'll fear tea-party retribution if they lift a finger to help.

If there's any good news, says Chris Hoene, the NLC's fiscal guru, it's that actual city bankruptcies remain rare, that more than 90 percent of localities are balancing their budgets -- so far. And that while some mayors see massive layoffs coming, others say they're using this moment to clean up inefficient bureaucracies.

This would be an ideal time for

states to let local governments diversify their tax bases. But exactly the reverse seems to be occurring. Missouri seemed in an almost vengeful anti-urban mood, for example, when a state initiative passed last month explicitly denied cities the right to impose income taxes on local workers. Only St. Louis and Kansas City, it turns out, currently have such taxes, and they depend on them massively -- for 42 percent and 33 percent of their respective revenues. Now they'll lose those monies, and possibly skirt with bankruptcy, unless they can persuade their voters to re-approve the levies every five years.

A bigger and even gloomier long-term picture -- not just for cities but all levels of America's federalism system -- emerged at a recent panel discussion of the National Academy of Public Administration in Washington.

Danger No. 1: Demography.

As the baby boom generation ages, the share of our population in the 24-to-60 working age, income-producing group will decline dramatically. That shift will seriously depress growth in U.S. economic productivity, noted Mark Pisano, former executive director of the Southern California Association of Governments. Indeed, just as foreign competition stiffens dramatically, we'll be losing the talents of "the best-educated population cohort in history."

Incredibly, we're letting disputes over national immigration policy choke off the flow of students and skilled foreigners seeking entry into the country. Immigrants, disproportionately, start new companies and help our economy grow.

Danger No. 2: Ballooning and seemingly uncontrollable health expenditures. In 1978, health outlays were just 12 percent of state and local expenditures. Today, driven especially by Medicare, they're 20 percent -- and rising. Prison, school and welfare outlays are also up

sharply gauged against personal income. In 1978, the Government Accountability Office found, 21 percent of federal grants to states were for health; today they're 58 percent -- "crowding out everything else, including welfare, education, transportation and revenue sharing," the GAO's Michelle Sager told the National Academy panel.

The net result, according to GAO simulations based on current spending trends: State and local shortfalls will rise inexorably for decades, until they reach "an inevitable tipping point" of sheer impossibility to finance.

The clear need: not just huge health cost restraints and reforms, but ways to gin up national and state economic productivity. A nation that thinks there's salvation in increased consumer spending -- "Black Friday" shopping sprees and the like -- misses the point. So does deluding ourselves to think tax cuts alone will somehow magically make everything work right.

To compete globally, to have any chance of curing our oncoming deficit tsunami, we'll need remade and stronger systems of education, energy, infrastructure and environmental safeguards. Also imperative will be inventive cures for our gaping income inequities, together with deliberate policies to mobilize the talent pools focused in our metro regions. With luck, official Washington will pay very serious attention to the recommendations of the bipartisan commissions that have been devising pathways to curbing the nation's gargantuan federal deficits. But unless we also find ways to bolster our national economic productivity, and rethink how all levels of the federal system interrelate and can work together, we'll never get maximum results -- or a secure future.

Editor's Note: Neal Peirce is columnist with the *The Washington Post Writers Group*. His opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the *Tennessee Municipal League*.

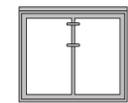
**March 9: Monteagle**

Taste of the Mountain Food Fair Held at the National Guard Armory. Local restaurants and businesses prepare all types of cuisine for tasting. Held from 5-8 pm. Tickets \$8 advanced, \$10 at the door. For more information, call Dee Hargis at 931-924-5353.

March 12: Etowah

Cousin Jake Bluegrass Festival Held at the Historic Gem Theater Downtown, the festival honors Cousin Jake Tullock, who grew up in Etowah and landed a job as a long-time bass player with Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs. Begins at 12 pm. There will be lots of jamming at the L&N Depot Museum, so bring your instruments. Pick up bargains at the many antique shops and outlets located in downtown. For more information, call 423-263-7608.

COMING
UP

**Mar. 8-10: Direct Farm Marketing for Success IV: Tools for Marketing on the Web.**

Sponsored by the University of Tennessee Center for Profitable Agriculture in cooperation with the Tennessee Farm Fresh program. For farmers who direct market products to consumers -- farmers market vendors, on-farm retail market owners, roadside stand operators, etc. Workshops designed to show how farmers can connect with potential customers through social media, customer surveys and other means. Dates are March 8 in Jackson, March 9 in Nashville and March 10 in Cookeville. For workshop details, directions to the workshop locations and the registration form, please click on the . Contact Megan Bruch with questions at mlbruch@utk.edu or call 931-486-2777.

April 14-16: The Annual 2011 Tennessee Greenways and Trails Forum.

"Building Connections," a three-day networking and skill-building conference, will be held at Murfreesboro's Patterson Park Community Center. Enjoy expert presenters from across the country, a variety of diverse field trips and educational sessions. Sessions will highlight the impact greenways and trails have on our communities. For registration and information, visit www.tn.gov/environment/recreation/.

April 27 - 29: TCMA 2011 Spring Conference.

Held at the Franklin Marriott Cool Springs Hotel, 700 Cool Springs Blvd. For reservations, call 888-403-6772. On-line reservations may be made at www.marriott.com/bnacs.

IPS launches Public Service Legacy Society

The UT Institute for Public Service recently launched the Public Service Legacy Society to honor individuals who remember the institute or one of its agencies - the County Technical Assistance Service, the Municipal Technical Advisory Service, the Law Enforcement Innovation Center, the Center for Industrial Services or the Jimmy Naifeh Center for Effective Leadership - in their estate plans.

As a charter member of the society, Metro Davidson County Trustee Charlie Cardwell is strategically planning to continue his legacy of public service for the greater good through a trust set up to benefit the work of the County Technical Assistance Service (CTAS).

"Joining the society made sense to me as I wanted to do something to give back to an important organization that touches the lives of nearly all Tennesseans," Cardwell said. "Choosing to support IPS through my estate plan worked for me knowing that a program assisting the mission of CTAS will be perma-

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nently funded. I hope others consider joining as well."

There are many ways one can become a member of the Public Service Legacy Society.

A simple bequest through an existing will is an option as well as creating a trust as Cardwell is doing. One can also contribute to existing endowments through an estate gift or give any appreciated assets such as stocks or bonds. Some individuals choose to make a gift that provides a lifetime of tax-free income at a rate much higher than commercial annuities. It also is possible to see a

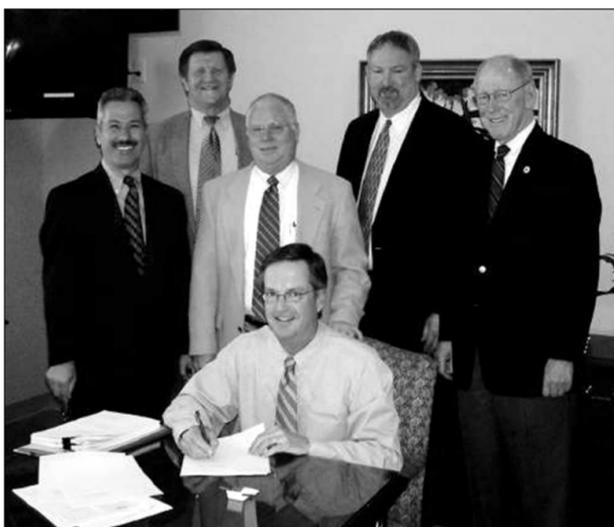
reduction in estate taxes as a result of free, confidential estate planning assistance provided by the staff of the University of Tennessee Foundation.

Whatever the reason for donation, the gift will affect the economic development, law enforcement, technical advising, training and leadership development in our great state of Tennessee for many years to come.

For more information about the society, contact Paul Bowman, the Institute for Public Service's development director, at (865)974-6587.

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The city of Murfreesboro closes a \$103 million loan, the largest in TMBF history.



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

Senate State & Local Chair Ken Yager is passionate about public service

BY GAELSTAHL

It's rare for a boy to live out his boyhood dreams. Wannabe cowboys and firemen at 10 are apt to become mechanics, accountants or lawyers and such. Ken Yager's dream never dimmed. He set his sights on public service when his eighth grade teacher Mary Lester Campbell made civics and history come so profoundly alive and interesting that he methodically began mapping out a three higher degrees path that's never veered from civic and educational service. All of his career jobs have involved public service including governmental and educational positions that usually involve higher responsibilities than wages. He's been a lifelong teacher while also serving as Roane County attorney, county executive, a state senator, and many volunteer community service involvements. In his spare time he's practiced law and real estate.

He grew up in Camden on the west bank of the Tennessee River in Benton County. Born Jan. 5, 1947, he graduated from Camden Central High School in 1965 and worked his way as a janitor and a cashier through four years of college at nearby UT-Martin. He majored in liberal arts and history and graduated with a B.A. in 1969.

It hadn't been easy. Yager was four years old when his father, 41, dropped dead of a massive heart attack. For years, his mother, Marie Yager Edstrom, a much younger woman, would struggle as a single mother to raise her son and three daughters. That was infinitely more difficult back then in the 1950s. The Great Society Economic Opportunity Act's social and economic assistance programs: Medicare, Medicaid, Food Stamps, and Community Action Agencies helping the poor become self-sufficient wouldn't kick in until the mid-1960s.

She did it by working as a cook in the school lunch room and also at a retail job. The example of his mother working day and night to keep their family a tightly knit unit was sewn into the fabric of Yager's life. She always made time for them, rarely spoke a cross word, never complained that she'd worked all week and needed a day of rest. She had them up and out for Sunday school and church. From her, Yager learned the value of work and family, and calls it the ballast of his ship.

Yager left Camden in 1969 to pursue a master's degree in education at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. Unable to afford going full-time, he found a teaching job down the road at Harriman. During the summers he worked on his M.S., which he received in 1972. Instead of teaching a year and moving on, he fell in love with the town at the foot of the eastern slope of the Cumberland Plateau. After five years teaching, he left Harriman in 1974 to get a law degree at the University of Memphis, earned his J.D. in 1977, and went back home in 1977 – to Harriman – where he had a private law practice for 10 years.

He was elected Roane County attorney in 1978 and county executive in 1982. Twenty four years later, in 2006, he retired, and was elected state senator in 2008. During his first two years he was a member of the State and Local (S&L) and Transportation committees. This session, Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey named him chair of the powerful S&L. He also became a member of the Joint Fiscal Review Committee.

Yager says that the most influential people in his life have been the women in his life – his mother, when he was younger, and his wife for more than 28 years. He was a second year lawyer when he met Malinda Raby, a graduate of Oliver Springs High School and fresh out of college. He spotted her working in the Clerk and Masters Office at Roane County Court House, dated her starting in 1978 and married her in 1983.

Politics is a jealous mistress, Yager admits. He knows he's been fortunate that Malinda Yager has understood and accepted his being gone so much campaigning or doing public duties while the children were being raised and guided through school and other activities. More-

over, she's been the one he could count on for advice and solid support. They have two children, Bonnie-Marie who is assistant director of Bryan College's Worldview Program in Dayton, and Will, a music major senior at Maryville College. Malinda Yager works at Roane State.

TT&C: When you retired as county executive in 2006, did you anticipate there would be an open seat in 2008?

KY: I've always been active in whatever community I live and try to give back. Frankly, I'd always wanted to serve in the General Assembly. For 10 years, people had tried to recruit me to run for the seat but I wasn't ready then. I had children at home, so I declined. But with the children grown, I had pretty well decided to run for the seat in 2008, and when that seat came open, I ran and was elected.

TT&C: How do you think your local government experiences will enhance your effectiveness as chairman of S&L?

KY: I'll understand what those hundreds of bills that affect local governments involve. I was on the receiving end for 24 years. As Roane county executive, I worked closely with the County Commission, which taught me a lot about the legislative system. I also began having regular meetings with city mayors and thinking of them not as adversaries but partners. Cities have a more focused constituency within the county than we who represent the whole county, but we deal with the same issues and problems. It helps to have worked closely with city mayors. As state senator and as chair of S&L, I feel the same toward all local governments.

TT&C: As county executive, you were a good fiscal manager, left after 24 years with a budget surplus and improved the county's credit rating. You supported the county school system and were known for creating partnerships. Any other accomplishments?

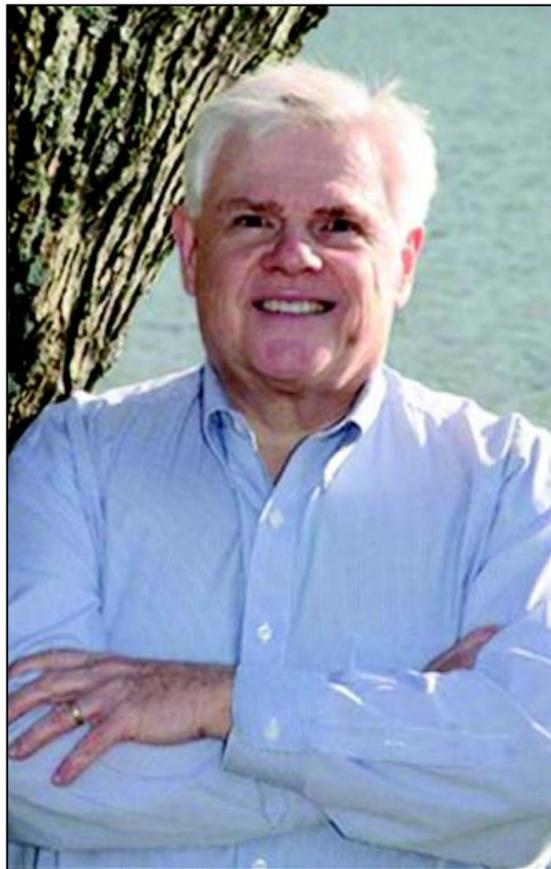
KY: I'm pleased that we unified our industrial recruitment/tourism efforts. We used to have separate industrial board, chamber of commerce, and tourism committee. We helped unite them into the Roane Alliance that works as a single group to promote Roane County. When our landfill closed in the 1990s I considered building a new landfill. Instead we created the county's first recycling center. I helped secure a regional primary care veterans clinic in Roane County. One of the last things I did before leaving office was site a new county industrial park that now has six new industries. All of those and many other things we accomplished were done in partnership.

I wouldn't trade my experience in local government for anything. That's the front line, where the action is. My years as county executive left me with highest admiration for local officials. We legislators in Nashville have a measure of insulation. City and county mayors don't; they are closely connected to the people they serve. I learned firsthand they are asked to do more with less – what imagination and perseverance that calls for.

TT&C: Your Senate district is rural but scenically exciting.

KY: I have six rural counties: Campbell, Scott, Fentress, Morgan, Roane, and Rhea. The district stretches from Graysville to Jellico and is quite diverse: from agriculture to advance technology at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in west Oak Ridge. Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, in the 12th district, is one of the most beautiful wildlife areas in the nation. Standing atop that spectacular gorge two years ago led me to tell an Oneida newspaper editor that I wanted to get of the main roads to see more of the county. He arranged what is now an annual bike to some of the most scenic spots.

My district is also plagued by



Sen. Ken Yager

double digit unemployments. I am anxious to work with the cities, counties and state to help these communities find the resources they need to create an environment for job growth.

TT&C: Education must be your first love what with being into teaching most of your life?

KY: I've always been associated with education but I've had just one profession – public service. Education is a major public service. Most folks look at the government side of my public service career, but education plays a vital part. It was teaching junior high that brought me to Harriman and gave me the courage to try other ways to serve. I've always said that if you can teach junior high school you can do anything. I went on from that first teaching job to get my law degree and then began teaching law and history at night, even while I was county executive. I was a part-time, adjunct instructor at Roane State Community College. When I retired as county executive in 2006, I taught full-time and had an administrative position.

“We need to make sure that burdens from above on local governments are minimized so you can do what you're asked to perform.”

– Sen. Ken Yager

TT&C: This year, just your third year in the Senate, you're on the Joint Fiscal Review Committee?

KY: My colleagues in the Senate honored me by electing me to serve there. I'm greatly interested in the financial affairs of the state. As county executive I was the chief fiscal officer for Roane county and chair of the Budget Committee. I understand government budgets. Every budget is cost-driven. If you're going to have successful programs they've got to be in the budget. That means being able to manage the budget. Fiscal Review helps me learn that and do that at the state level. It's an independent committee made up of House and Senate members. It prepares the fiscal notes attached to all bills. It looks at a lot of fiscal matters including the review of all state contracts. Probably half of all state contracts are noncompetitive. We look at those closely.

TT&C: Last year, you sponsored for TML a bill that would require the Dept. of Environment and Conservation to provide a municipality electronic notification of any proposed rule with the potential to affect that city?

KY: I don't think it was unreasonable to expect TDEC to provide notice to municipalities of rules that would affect them. By filing the bill we may have accomplished the intent of the bill by bringing TDEC and TML together to address the issue. We'll be looking at that again. Cities – and counties are sometimes asked

to do more for less. We need to make sure that burdens from above on local governments are minimized so you can do what you're asked to perform.

TT&C: You also initiated legislation with regard to streamline sales tax collections, specifically, to capture state and local revenue from internet sales as well as local businesses?

KY: That bill directs the Dept. of Revenue to study the benefits and hurdles to that goal and report to the Finance, Ways & Means Committee. No votes were taken in House or Senate last year but we'll be looking at that again. Sales

tax is a substantial source of income to cities and counties. Many Internet sales are exempt from collecting sales tax. This will create a bigger hole in local government revenues. It's not just about TML and counties. It's a national issue for all states without a state income tax.

TT&C: Your Senate bill for safe storage of coal fly ash passed 33-0 after TVA's holding pond cracked and 5.4 million cubic yards of ash were released into Roane County. Is the community recovering? Were you involved in the clean-up's technical and political aftermath?

KY: It was a catastrophe for Roane County when millions of yards of coal ash sank into the Emory River and negatively impacted residential values and future development and recreational use of beautiful Watts Bar Lake in Roane County. It's been a long, slow recovery process.

It's to TVA's credit that it acted promptly and decisively, but there is plenty more work to be done. We have to get that fly ash out of the river but where do we store it? There were

no provisions to landfill the fly ash, so I co-sponsored, with former Sen. Tim Burchett, a bill to prohibit the issuance of permits for storage of coal fly ash in landfills unless they are capped properly and contain a liner for the protection of groundwater.

As to the other question, the responsibility was largely on local officials to work with TVA. I played a supporting role in joint public hearings with the House Environment Committee, but local officials get the credit for dealing with this nightmare for two years – so far. When I looked at that site the day after it happened, I predicted it would cost \$1 billion to clean up and TVA would be here for 25 years. The clean up costs have already reached \$1 billion, and TVA will be here a long, long time – as they should.

TT&C: Your bill to protect Community Action Agencies from tort liability the same way Human Resources Agencies (HRA) are was signed into law. You won an award for that?

KY: I served on the Board of Directors for our Mideast Community Action Agency for 26 years and during my first year in the legislature, I was honored to be selected as Legislator of the Year by the Tennessee Community Action Agencies. CAAs, federally chartered under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, run federally funded anti-poverty programs to assist thousands of economically disadvantaged citizens and

senior citizens, Head Start program and service block grants. They were never accorded status of immunity from tort liability in Tennessee as HRAs were. I carried this law in the Senate. Rep. Harry Tindell carried it in the House. It gives CAAs that same protection. They're run on close margins, so savings on insurance enables them to put that money into the programs.

TT&C: TML joined you in supporting Gov. Bredesen's enactment of the Clean Energy Act. What does that act do?

KY: The intent was to have the state lead by example in energy efficiency and clean energy technology with improved energy management of state buildings and motor vehicle fleets. It provided a sales tax credit for industries developing clean energy technologies, for conservation and innovation regarding residential building codes, and making them eligible for federal funds to weatherize.

Tennessee, which used to enjoy cheap TVA electricity, has the highest per capita electricity consumption in the country. I was glad to co-sponsor that bill because its provisions deserved bipartisan support. Also, while most cities already have building codes, this one gave counties the choice to participate in the state building code plan if they wanted.

TT&C: Your bill to change the name of the Mental Retardation Services Agency in the Department of Finance to Intellectual Disabilities passed and it was moved?

KY: We're talking about two bills here. The bill that I sponsored changed the name and all references to it in the statutes from Mental Retardation to Intellectual Disabilities because of the stigma attached to the words mental retardation. The second bill created a separate Dept. of Intellectual Disabilities to which Gov. Bill Haslam named Jim Henry its first commissioner.

Jim Henry, a former Kingston mayor and a fellow Roane County resident, is one of the finest public servants I've been privileged to know over 30 years. We've worked together in many capacities. He was a mayor, served in the legislature, was also the economic developer for a short time for Roane County, and has worked closely with the Michael Dunn Center, a Roane County nonprofit that trains citizens with intellectual disabilities. He has a son who is intellectually disabled. He's been a supervisory officer for troubled youth, many of whom are disabled. He understands the problems they and their families and caregivers go through every day.

TT&C: You co-sponsored the bill that created the Silver Alert System that helps locate missing individuals with Alzheimer's or dementia much like the Amber Alert helps locate missing children?

KY: Yes. I was familiar with Alzheimer's from caring for an elderly relative that had Alzheimer's during the last five years of her life. I saw the need for this type of alert system. Someone with Alzheimer's is not responsible for where they are or know how to get home. This alert gets local law enforcement agencies to work with TBI, the media and transportation officials to alert the public about missing seniors. The first 24 hours are critical, and the Alzheimer's Association says six in 10 will wander away.

TT&C: What issues will likely come before your committee this year?

KY: State and Local is one of the busiest committees. Between 400 and jurisdiction over 14 budgets. We'll be looking at several issues certain to generate divergent opinions like the sale of wine in grocery stores, implementation of the Voter Confidence Act, a re-write of the alcohol code, photo ID for voting, English only drivers' exams and any matter relating to city and county government. I have a great committee and my experience in local government as prepared me.