

TML Annual Conference session to focus on retail recruitment strategies

Retail is economic development and should be a component of your community's comprehensive economic development strategy.

That's the message that Kelly Cofer, president and CEO of The Retail Coach, will deliver during the TML Annual Conference in Memphis, held June 22-25.

Cofer, has 27 years of experience in all aspects of retail real estate and economic development in more than 180 cities and 22 states throughout America.

The following article was provided by Cofer and includes vital information on how cities can create aggressive recruiting strategies for retail development.

Retail is Economic Development
BY C. KELLY COFER
CEO, The Retail Coach

The horizon is looking brighter for retail recruitment and expansion. City leaders charged with achieving these important goals have faced tremendous challenges during recent years brought on by a difficult economy.

Retail choices enhance your community's quality of life, which is a component in recruiting businesses and a capable workforce. Your success will bring increased sales and property tax revenue; new jobs; more shopping and eating options; and reduced outflow of dollars to other communities.

The Economy and Retail

The big economic story of 2013 is the return of the U.S. housing market. Home values have already stabilized and are beginning to show appreciation in most U.S. markets. Home sales are up throughout the country, and new home construction



Citizens are motivated to shop locally because 68 cents of every dollar spent at a locally-owned retailer stays in the community.

surged in 2012 to an annual rate of 872,000, the highest since the financial crisis.

A continued boom in new-home

construction will fuel jobs – and vice versa, according to economists at IHS Global Insight. Each new home

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AG Day on the Hill celebrates, promotes state's food initiatives

State farming efforts emphasized to meet increasing food demands



Photo By Victoria South

Lt. Governor Ron Ramsey milks "Killer" the cow, only to lose the milking contest again this year to his opponent, House Speaker Beth Harwell, at Tennessee Ag Day on the Hill.

BY VICTORIA SOUTH
TML Communications Coordinator

Legislative Plaza quickly transformed into "down on the farm" April 2, as legislators, downtown workers and visitors of all ages, gathered to view a bounty of live food sources, crops, farm equipment and other exhibits at Tennessee's annual Ag Day on the Hill. Located at the plaza courtyard, pens of cattle, goats, pigs, chicken, sheep, bees, mules and horses not only drove home the idea of where food actually comes from, but reinforced the state's message to help keep Tennessee farms profitable.

Foregoing last year's goats for two dairy cows named "Giggles" and "Killer," the highlight of the morning was the annual milking contest between Lt. Governor Ron Ramsey, speaker of the Senate, and last year's champ, House Speaker

Beth Harwell. With the weigh-in complete, Rep. Harwell beat Ramsey again this year—fair and square.

"Perhaps Sen. Ramsey would like to trade his cowboy boots for a pair of high heels," Harwell quipped before the large crowd of onlookers.

"I believe there may have been some cheating going on," Ramsey sniffed, feigning indignation as the two accepted a donated check from the Farm and Forest Families of Tennessee to the Second Harvest Food Bank in the amount of \$750.

With 77,300 farms representing 10.8 million acres in production, Tennessee's agriculture and forestry contribute more than \$71 billion a year to the state's economy, employing nearly 364,000 residents.

However, staying ahead of the game, is of the utmost importance, according to Tennessee Agriculture Commissioner Julius Johnson, who

notes that 25 percent of Tennessee's total agriculture production is exported to other countries.

Johnson, in his tour of farms in Washington County, urged the state to focus on increasing its agriculture production over the next several decades to meet growing food demands. Nationwide statistics prove that by the year 2050, food for an ever increasing population is destined to become one of the world's most pressing issues, as the global population soars to nine billion people. "We've got to double farm income in this country and around the world applying every resource we can," Johnson said.

One of the issues at hand is farmland rapidly disappearing in the U.S. due to urban development in highways, industrial parks, and housing developments. In Tennessee, The American Farm-See **AG DAY** on Page 3

Senate committee imposes moratorium on annexations; TACIR to study PC1101 bills

Last week, the Senate State and Local Government Committee voted to refer all pending bills relating to PC1101 – annexations, growth plans, etc. – to the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR) for inclusion in the commission's comprehensive study of the efficacy of the current law.

The committee also adopted an amendment establishing a moratorium on annexations by ordinance, effective April 1, 2013, through June 30, 2015.

As the moratorium is effective April 1, all pending annexations will be frozen in their current status. Thus, any annexations that have not received final approval of the local governing body as of April 1 may not take effect.

Annexations by petition – at request of property owner – are not subject to the moratorium.

Last summer, Senate Majority Leader Mark Norris, who chairs TACIR, observed that it has

been 13 years since the growth plans required under PC1101 took effect. As such, he said sufficient time had elapsed in order to make a fair evaluation of the effectiveness of the law. Moreover, as the plans were to govern growth in the state for a 20-year period, he also felt there was sufficient time to carefully consider any changes for the future. Accordingly, Senator Norris charged the commission with conducting a complete and thorough review of the current law.

The amendment adopted in committee requires TACIR to report its findings to the speakers of the respective houses by January 2015. Presumably if legislation is proposed and adopted pursuant to TACIR's recommendation prior to June 30, 2015, then the moratorium would be lifted in accordance with the revised law.

TML will continue to keep you apprised of any additional information pertaining to this legislation

Franklin enlists experts' help to develop floodplain corridor

BY KELLY DANNENFELSER
Franklin Dept. of Planning

Community decisions in Franklin, over the last two decades, have directed development outside of the 100-year floodplain by prohibiting new development and also restricting uses through overlay zoning districts. But what happens in commercial areas developed prior to these decisions? Fifth Avenue North is the most impacted commercial corridor and a gateway into downtown Franklin. Some properties have been repeatedly impacted by flooding, most recently by the May 2010 flood that was declared a national disaster inundating many of the corridor's buildings.

City leaders decided to enlist some outside expertise to study the area, interview stakeholders, and provide recommendations for the future of this corridor. In January 2013, Franklin was selected to receive assistance from a Community Planning Assistance Team (CPAT) through the American Planning Association's (APA) professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners.

The corridor is situated between two National Register historic cemeteries and is adjacent to Hard Bargain, a historic African American neighborhood. The east side of the corridor is located in the locally designated Historic Preservation Overlay District and a portion of the area is located in the Downtown Franklin National Register Historic District. Most of the buildings in the floodplain along 5th Avenue North are not considered contributing to the architectural significance of the District. The city owns the future Bicentennial Park and the two historic cemeteries.

Significant public investment into this area has been funded, including \$17 million for the extension of 3rd Avenue N and the 5th Avenue N Streetscape improve-

ments. Construction is underway and expected completion is mid-2014. Both street projects will include bike lanes, curb and gutter, street lights, sidewalks, underground utilities, landscaping, and irrigation. The first phase of the 16-acre floodplain-covered Bicentennial Park is proceeding and will include a Harpeth River overlook, formal parkland, and a vital pedestrian connection from the neighborhoods north on Hillsboro Road into the Downtown. Public investment into an area is often a catalyst for private reinvestment and economic development.

The Franklin Land Use Plan encourages urban redevelopment along this corridor, with buildings pushed to the street, limited to two functional stories and commercial uses only, all with the assumption of floodplain modification. However, the floodplain depth in this area reaches six to eight feet and makes modification quite challenging. Currently, properties could be redeveloped according to legally non-conforming use regulations as long as that status is maintained (type of use does not change).

Redevelopment would involve building the first floor to one foot above the Base Flood Elevation, which is a significant height differential above the grade for the existing street and sidewalk. This corridor is adjacent to a local and National Register Historic District, with buildings dating back to the early 1800s. The District has a pedestrian scale and the impacts of raising the first floor elevations are uncertain regarding the design compatibility with historic structures.

City leadership, both administrative and elected, has changed significantly over the last five years and there exists some conflict between two schools of thought: (1) to maintain floodplain regulations and push development outside of the flood-See **FLOODPLAIN** on Page 8

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Memphis, TN

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www.Tml1.org



BY TML STAFF REPORTS

BRENTWOOD

Brentwood was ranked 30th and Germantown, 55th, on a list of the nation's 100 safest cities by the website NeighborhoodScout. Like Brentwood, Germantown has attracted upper-income residents, with relatively large percentages being college-educated. Spring Hill ranked 61st. The website, which provides real estate resources for those considering buying a home, measured crimes per 1,000 residents in cities with populations of 25,000 or more. Crimes include burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, homicide, forcible rape, armed robbery and aggravated assault.

CHATTANOOGA

The Chattanooga Convention and Visitors Bureau opened a temporary Chattanooga Visitors Center at Shuttle Park South located at 1398 Market Street, adjacent to the Chattanooga Choo Choo. The new location will be open daily from 10 am-5pm and will have full-time information specialists and brochures for our area attractions, restaurants, local services and more. The CVB also opened a new mobile Visitors Center near the Tennessee Aquarium. Visitors have instant access to the mobile website, www.chattanooga.com, which provides location-sensitive content with a GPS enabled device to locate the nearest restaurant, attraction or event.

CLARKSVILLE

The Clarksville Police Department is limiting the number of vehicles in funeral processions to six. That includes the hearse. A change in department policy specifies that any procession led by a city police officer will have a clearly marked final vehicle. Mourners driving behind it must obey traffic signals and are not considered part of the procession. In a statement announcing the policy change, police said one patrol unit will be assigned per funeral and the limit on the number of vehicles is to ensure public safety. Police Chief Al Ansley said off-duty officers can be hired as escorts for longer processions and there are also private companies that provide escort services for funerals.

COLUMBIA

The Columbia Housing and Redevelopment Corporation will soon start construction on a fourth and final home paid for through the Neighborhood Stabilization Program. The program, run by the Tennessee Housing Development Agency, awarded Columbia a \$500,000 grant in 2009 to demolish and rebuild homes in areas the city has designated for redevelopment, and the last home will be built within 30 days. With the grant, the city has torn down seven vacant and abandoned homes, mostly in the East Columbia area, and is rebuilding four in their places. The idea is to make the homes available for residents who have never owned a home before or who have had trouble keeping a home in the past. Residents who are interested in buying the homes must apply through the redevelopment corporation and can receive free counseling to learn how to budget for mortgage and utility payments and what it takes to own a home, such as improving their credit scores and getting a loan.

CROSSVILLE

Cumberland County's new Community Health Center replaces an outdated clinic built in 1966. At 30,000 square feet, the new facility is more than twice as large as the former building. The Cumberland County Health Department provides primary care, immunizations, child wellness visits and health screenings, among other services. As a federally qualified health center, the clinic provides primary care services to all patients regardless of ability to pay. Last year it served nearly 30,000 patients, 72 percent of whom were uninsured. The health center was built with federal, state and local dollars, including a \$4.5 million grant from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration.

FRANKLIN

Between 3,000 and 4,000 residents have moved to the city since the 2010 federal census, or so city officials suspect. Now, they want a new census this summer to confirm a new

population of more than 66,000 people in order to help improve the city's bottom line. Tennessee cities receive about \$101 per person in state-shared money based on their population and can conduct special censuses — at their expense — to show their populations have increased. Franklin last completed a special census in 2008 when census takers showed the city's population to be at more than 57,000 people, though that number was revised upwards after the federal census. The city could see as much as \$300,000 to \$400,000 in extra money per year, if the special census confirms larger population figures. But holding a census will also mean the city must spend about \$80,000 to pay for the census cards, census takers and the other tasks needed to cover the costs of a special census. The money for the special census must still be approved by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen as part of the city's new annual budget. In 2008, Franklin received more than \$636,000 in state-shared revenues because of its census findings.

HENDERSONVILLE

Man's best friends will soon have a space to call their own as plans unfold for the city's first dog park. Members of the park board voted unanimously to approve plans for the park to be built at Memorial Park. The Hendersonville Lions Club voted to help raise funds for the project by selling brick pavers for the walkway at a cost of \$100 each, that can be purchased by current pet owners or used to memorialize a lost pet. Larger pavers will be available for businesses at a cost of \$300 each and can be engraved with a business logo. Another option is a bench, in the \$200 to \$400 range with a plaque. Water stations can also be purchased to include a recognition plaque. The Lions Club hopes to raise much of the money required to get the dog park up and running with the help of the community.

JOHNSON CITY

An \$800,000 federal grant will help Johnson City implement a strategic plan to reduce crime, revitalize neighborhoods and keep kids out of trouble. The grant is administered by the Office of Criminal Justice Program. The city will join five other communities in Tennessee to implement the plan. The program has four prongs — pre-enforcement, which focuses on at-risk youths and residents and businesses in a target area; neighborhood revitalization, a way to eliminate trash, graffiti and improve housing and commercial properties in poor condition; enforcement, which impacts juveniles and adults to control drug and alcohol offenses, domestic violence crimes, prostitution and aggravated assault; and offender intervention.

KNOXVILLE

The Tennessee Valley Authority announced that a 10.6-acre site near the Pellissippi Parkway has been approved as a primary data center site. That approval, performed in conjunction with Deloitte Consulting, is aimed at luring companies to use the site for a data center, a collection of computer servers used to store massive amounts of digital information. John Bradley, TVA's senior vice president for economic development, compared the process to TVA's megasite program, which serves as an industrial seal of approval for manufacturing sites and has helped attract blue-chip companies like Volkswagen.

MEMPHIS

TJX Companies, Inc., is seeking a five-year tax break to help the retail apparel and home furnishings company open a distribution center creating 40 new jobs and investing \$6.9 million. The project will create \$1,302,750 in new tax revenue for Memphis and Shelby County, according to the area's Economic Development Growth Engine. TJX plans to lease 207,024 square feet before ramping up its Memphis footprint to 414,048 square feet, following the first 18 months of the lease. Based in Framingham, Mass., TJX is an off-price retailer of apparel and home fashions in the U.S. and worldwide.

MEMPHIS

Although vehicle emissions-testing will remain confined to Memphis for the near future, state officials likely will expand the requirement to in-

clude all of Shelby County within the next couple of years. However, there will be no countywide air-quality fee or tax increase to pay for inspections, the Shelby County commissioners were advised. Appearing before the commission's Conservation Committee, Chief Administrative Officer Harvey Kennedy said the county has agreed to let the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation take over the emissions-testing program. The county declined to assume control of the program after the Memphis City Council voted to stop funding it after this fiscal year ends June 30, saving the \$2.7 million in operating costs. Initially, TDEC's takeover means a contractor will run the program and charge a fee for the inspections, Kennedy said. The state will use city facilities, including the inspection station, with \$3.4 million in federal grant funds, and hire a contractor to test vehicles registered in Memphis.

NASHVILLE

The city will soon be featured in another TV series. The TNT cable network has ordered eight episodes of "Nashville Confidential," a "docudrama that will go behind the scenes in the 'Country Music Capital of the World.'" The show, "centering on some of Nashville's most compelling power couples," is set to launch early next year. Music City is currently being featured in ABC's "Nashville," now in its first season.

OAK RIDGE

The city Recreation and Parks Advisory Board held an open house-style meeting as an opportunity to share information and solicit feedback on the development usage policies for the city's first dog park. Radio Systems Corporation has agreed to give Oak Ridge \$100,000 through Legacy Parks to help build the park. The Parks Board, its Dog Park Working Committee, and city staff have been working together to develop a site plan and the ground rules for park use to ensure that all dogs and their owners have a fun and safe area. The meeting provided an opportunity to share information with the community, including background on the history of the dog park committee work and previous public engagement opportunities, the concept drawing for the site, and proposed park rules. The parks board and staff are also examining ways to generate interest in a Dog Park User Group that will help encourage appropriate park usage and care of the facility.

PARKERS CROSSROADS

A new state veteran's cemetery will be located in the Henderson County town. According to the cemetery steering committee, the first burial there is expected in August 2016. The committee said the new cem-

etry is needed because space is being rapidly used in veterans cemeteries in Memphis and Nashville. The total cost of developing the cemetery will be about \$6 million, including \$1 million for the land, which will be bought with state and donated funds. The federal government will pay for development.

PORTLAND

The city, located in Sumner County, is working toward reopening its downtown movie theater as part of a larger project to revitalize its down-

town district. The old Health Clinic is one of several old buildings about to see new life, thanks to a grant from the state to help revitalize the city's downtown. The 1930's-era Temple Theater hasn't shown a movie since the 50s. The city has gained ownership and is restoring the theater to its glory days. "We would really like to get it going in three to five years, maybe earlier if we could," said Mayor Ken Wilber. As part of the planning efforts, city officials traveled to Franklin to take a look at the restored Franklin Theater.

Gallatin Fire Department safety clowns win state award



Gallatin Mayor JoAnn Graves and State Fire Marshal Gary West (far right) with the city's Fire Safety Clown Troop.

The Gallatin Fire Department Fire Safety Clown Troop was selected as the Fire Safety Educators of the Year 2012 for Tennessee. The Gallatin Troop was selected by a committee of fire safety educators from across the state.

The program was conducted at Clyde Riggs Elementary in Portland in October 2012. Two days after that program, a family had a fire at their house and the daughters used what

they had learned from the program to get the family out safely, fire officials were told.

The Fire Safety Clown program was started in 2008 and conducts programs for students from pre-kindergarten through fifth grade in all schools within the city limits of Gallatin and by request at other schools in Sumner County and around the region.



Gallatin's award winning Fire Safety Clown program was started in 2008 and conducts programs for students from pre-kindergarten through fifth grade in all schools within the city limits.

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Ag Day on the Hill celebrates state's food initiatives

AG DAY from Page 1

land Trust estimates that farmland is disappearing at a rate of two acres per minute, with the amount of farmland decreased by six percent from 2002 to 2007 in figures provided by the University of Tennessee Extension Office.

"One of the most important ways to prevent farmland loss is to make farming more profitable; it's the single most important thing we can do," said Tom Womack, director of Public Affairs, Tennessee Department of Agriculture.

The state introduced the Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program in 2005 as a cost-sharing program designed to help farmers make strategic, long-term investments to increase farm efficiency and profitability. "We've got a \$21

spaces and farmland production can be an important part of the attractiveness and livability of our communities. Even in the urban settings there is more interest in the buy local movement and people wanting farm fresh products, so those two things work together."

At the University of Tennessee, research and education combine to bring farmers 21st century technology in farming methods to help increase production. The research makes it into the hands of farmers throughout the UT extension system, where there's an office in every county. The educators there teach farmers about the latest advances through group teaching seminars, technology and web-based information as well as publications produced each year.

people of the importance of remembering and how it contributes to their national security."

A worldwide increase in demand for beef, has tremendous potential in the state, as higher beef yields make the exporting of beef to other countries more cost efficient for Tennessee's smaller, rural farms—which make up the majority of farmland in the state.

According to Commissioner Johnson, a prior UT study emphasized the improving beef herds in the state above anything else, along with marketing more pounds of beef. "We emphasized genetics programs, improved bulls and assisted in the purchase of bulls, so markets would buy a higher quality animal, and that has been a big success story," he said. The state, along with Kentucky, currently receive anti-dotal funds by feed lot producers in the mid-west.

"The herds are performing much better, and producing more pounds of meat," Johnson said.

As for smaller farms, in Washington County, the local UT Agriculture Master Beef Producer Program recently graduated 57 farmers, most part-time with other jobs, who dedicated 30 hours for 10 nights to learn better techniques to ensure a good market and outlet for cattle herds in the area. Many are initially skeptical about investing 30 hours into the program, UT Extension Agent Anthony Shelton said.

"We always hear comments from participants who say they take away things that they never realized before," Shelton said. "They say, 'now I know how to work cattle more efficiently' or how to properly vaccinate. The little things that you do differently each day will help improve your herd. The program also gets people together, conversations start, and friendships and ideas are built between farmers."

The Master Beef program covers a wide range of topics: management and marketing, how to grow forages for grazing livestock, cattle reproduction cycles, mineral consumption and other nutritional needs for certain times of the year, carcass quality, handling equipment and cattle, selecting bulls, and vaccination programs.

As for the dairy industry, the story's more challenging, according to Johnson. The state loses around four dairies a month, most smaller operations, due to high costs.

"We have a task force in place with the Tennessee Dairy Producers Association trying to find ways of making a turn around to stop the slide of dairies in Tennessee while growing our industry," Johnson



Photos by Victoria South

Students engage as they learn about food sources at Ag Day on the Hill.

said. "We're still working on that."

At one time, before the 1985 federal government farm bill to regulate erosion went into effect, the state experienced soil loss at a rate of 15 tons per acre. As one of the leading states in the nation with conservation tillage, today, Tennessee's efforts in the 70s and 80s to control soil erosion through no-till farming has proven to be quite a success, as Johnson notes, "We used no till to lower our erosion rates down to five tons per acre, which is a very minimal amount of soil loss per year. It's called T value or tolerance level. We're making soil at the same rate as we're losing soil."

According to *Farmland Forecast*, a blog by agriculture-focused investment manager Colvin & Co., "the loss of farmland to soil erosion and development is a growing concern across the globe. Nationally, the decline in farmland is leading to the U.S. food supply being grown in smaller areas with a higher concentration, risking drought, floods, insects, crop disease and depleting soil quality."

"We're going to be producing food on 70 percent of the land that we actually farm today," Johnson said. "We're going to urbanize more, and as we eat up more of our land, there's going to be less land to produce food and fiber on. Technology has got to replace that loss of land, so we've got to invest in research and development to make sure we expand our ability to produce that food."

In addition to research colleges, such as UT, the state holds hope in private industry research and development. Tennessee's Department of Agriculture was on hand in Memphis recently as the Bayer Corpora-

tion announced a \$20 million expansion of a cotton seed facility at the Agri-Center International. The seed development research center will facilitate the expansion of cotton production, addressing its ability to withstand drought and other characteristics.

At the same time, the Helena Corporation also announced its expansion to develop agri-chemicals that will help address various problems with crops across the country.

As agricultural exports rise in Tennessee, the poor condition of locks in dams along rivers such as the Mississippi and Chickamauga in Chattanooga, are serious threats to the economy, as Johnson notes, 60 percent of U.S. grain exports travel by barge down the Mississippi River.

"There's one plant in Loudon that imports 40 barges of grain a month," he said. "At Chickamauga, there's coal going through that lock; timber products that are key to businesses in Tennessee and agriculture in East Tennessee. We need to make sure that lock stays operable, as well as those along the Tennessee River and Mississippi River."

According to Johnson, U.S. Sen. Lamar Alexander hopes to bring the projects closer to fruition by introducing legislation to address the funding formula for the repairs.

"That's our key infrastructure," Johnson continues. "These locks and dams must be repaired and we must fund these projects the way they need to be funded."

Tennessee's top agricultural commodities include cattle, soybeans, poultry, corn, cotton, greenhouse and nursery products, timber, dairy products, wheat, tobacco and hay.



House Speaker Beth Harwell and Department of Agriculture Commissioner Julius Johnson celebrate Ag Day on the Hill in the courtyard of Legislative Plaza.

million program this year, with farmers putting up 50 to 57 percent of the cost and state match of around 35 to 50 percent," Womack said. "If there's an economic incentive to keep farms in production, it's going to be our best tool."

The state also works with coalition groups, such as Tennessee Farmland Legacy to make farmers aware of opportunities and ways to pass farm land on to future generations.

"Our demographics are changing, as we get more organized, more cosmopolitan with our population here in Tennessee," notes Womack. "Sometimes that causes friction between rural and urban interests, but I think more and more, communities are realizing the importance of balance in their communities, open

"We have a very large diverse research portfolio, where on behalf of the industry in Tennessee, we direct research ranging from in-the-field studies, to looking at varieties of crops that work best to make the most money for the state, all the way to genetic research, where we look at ways to produce stronger plants resistant to pests and diseases," said UT Agriculture Chancellor Larry Arrington.

The ten research and education centers scattered across the state also ensures the program's diversity in agriculture.

"You can't do all this research from one spot," Arrington explains. But what we're doing here today (Ag Day) is more of a concern that people have lost touch with where their food comes from. We try to remind

Community gardens feeding the needy, cities gain property control with state garden revisions

VICTORIA SOUTH
TML Communications Coordinator

Carl Wayne Hardeman's vision about feeding larger quantizes of people in need is as fertile as the deep rich soil at the Collierville Victory Garden, where last year, volunteers produced and donated a whopping 6,000 pounds of vegetables for needy families at the local Food Pantry and Memphis Food Bank.

Started five years ago by master gardeners Hardeman, Jimmy Gafford and Jeff Golladay, the garden sits on one tenth of an acre at the Collierville Christian Church and operates 100 percent on donations.

"We don't spend much money, Hardeman said, "a few hundred dollars a year mostly from volunteers, who chip in \$100 each. We plant from seeds and the rich soil requires little supplemental fertilizer. The church provides the water." The lot also produces plants for the area Habitat for Humanity landscaping projects in Shelby County and a large cut flower garden for local hospices and nursing homes.

The coffee-like soil, made from decomposed grass clippings and leaves, yields a bounty of about 1,100 garlic plants in 17 different varieties that run alongside rows of onions, radishes, carrots, lettuce, and sweet peas, followed by potatoes, cabbages and red potatoes mid-spring, and then sweet corn, tomatoes, and sweet potatoes in the summer. Collard and turnip greens and cabbage round out the fall.

With no fresh food at the local pantry, the group is definitely a

sight for sore eyes for those in need: families, the elderly—people unable to afford fresh vegetables or who don't have fresh produce readily available in their neighborhood stores.

Yet, like most successful gardeners, Hardeman is ready to plant bigger dreams. He would like a full acre to grow more food for the indigent as well as demonstrate sustainable, low maintenance gardening in a student-friendly environment. "I want to teach people in the inner-city that they can have large productive gardens for cheap," he said. "I have a tenth of an acre now and growing all this food, if I had an acre somewhere in town, think how many people we could feed."

Hardeman's vision may come true quicker than he thinks. With the state's rewrite to the Tennessee Community Gardening Act in place, Tennessee's communities may see a growth spurt in community gardens through revisions to HB 0394 sponsored by Rep. G.H. Hardaway and SB 0300, sponsored by Sen. Frank Nicely. The revisions remove the Department of Agriculture permitting process for using vacant public land for gardening and makes other revisions regarding community gardens.

"The bill affects every county in the state positively," said Hardaway before the House committee. "It provides guidance to local governments and creates an authority for local governments to create healthy eating and active living in their communities by encouraging and supporting community gardens. The Department of Agriculture appreciates the fact that it takes them out of the equation, in having local folks en-

listed to state government for having the right to use local public land for community gardens," he added.

The bill authorizes local governments to convey delinquent tax sale property to non-profit organizations deemed qualified to operate and maintain a community garden. And any local government may assist in the development of community gardens on vacant public land or on private property by expending funds and providing use of materials and equipment. Private land owners may also make property available to the local government for community gardening under designated terms and conditions.

"There would be subdivision regulations providing guidelines, as each community considers the process," remarked Portland Mayor Ken Wilber. "It's a good bill that encourages healthy activity."

Portland recently celebrated a community garden grand opening at Richland Park, sponsored by the city's Parks and Recreation Center. Parks & Rec employee Heidi Parker will be the event coordinator. "The garden is open to everyone, not just Portland residents," said Parker. "The most popular space so far is the 10 x 20."

Gardeners will pay a refundable \$25 deposit, that they will receive back for following the rules of garden maintenance and upkeep, basically in the form of community service such as keeping the garden clean and other activities. The city decided to waive the 2013 rental fees: \$50 for a full plot and \$30 for a half plot, for residents, and \$60 full and \$40 for non-residents.

"It will definitely be a learning experience, Wilber chuckled.



Carl Wayne Hardeman, a master gardener and one of the founders of the Collierville Victory Garden loads cabbages on a truck to be delivered to the local Food Pantry and Memphis Food Bank.

A relatively new gardener, Parker will have her own vegetable plot, that will contain produce that typically runs in the mid-to-upper cost range at neighborhood grocery stores: squash, zucchini, green peppers, tomatoes, cilantro, watermelons and onions. She's also excited about the upcoming garden-themed activities, like a salsa party, utilizing participant's fresh tomato crops this summer, along with the overall health and education benefits the garden will bring to the community.

"Portland Public Library's theme this year is 'Dig into Reading.' I hope to make the garden an educational tool for children by hosting a Marigold Mother's Day," she said. "We will let the children come over May 5 and plant marigolds for their moms."

The city plans to implement a

farmer's market in a couple of years, Parker notes, adding she views the garden as a precursor to that.

Revisions to HB 0394 authorizes the sale of community garden produce to defray operating and maintenance costs, with an exemption from sales tax at farmers markets, if the funds are reinvested into the garden project. The legislation also enlists the Department of Education to base programs around community gardens, pairing seniors 60 or older with K-12 students in a mentoring aspect. "It facilitates the experience and background of our grandparents by putting them in the situation where they can actually mentor some of the children, who otherwise may not have that opportunity," Hardaway told the committee. "It's what I consider one of the major points of the bill."



PEOPLE IN THE NEWS



BY TML STAFF REPORTS

Debbie Miller, former Tennessee Department of Children Services (DCS) executive director of family and child well-being, will return to the agency to now work in the area of independent living. Prior to working for DCS, Miller came to the agency with three decades of work in public policy and children's welfare.



Miller

Jackson City Councilman **Ernest Brooks II** was recently re-appointed to a third term to serve on the National League of Cities, Council for Youth, Education and Families. The council oversees and supports the work of the NLC's Institute for Youth, Education and Families, a national resource to cities and towns across America.



Brooks

Mt. Juliet's **David Hayes** is selected to serve on the federal Taxpayer Advocacy Panel, an advisory committee that provides views on key initia-

tives and taxpayer suggestions to improve IRS customer service and policies. Hayes, 66, is an established certified financial planner who has often dealt with the Internal Revenue Service. Hayes was selected to become one of 26 new members to serve a three-year term out of nearly 400 people from across the country who applied during an open recruitment period. Selected by the Treasury Department, the full panel has 77 members.



Hayes

LaVergne hired **Bruce Richardson** as the city administrator. Richardson was named interim city administrator in 2012, and also previously served as city recorder and assistant city administrator. He has been working for the city since June, 1993. Richardson was recently awarded the Certified Municipal Finance Officers certificate in Nashville. He is a member of the International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC) and the Tennessee Association of Municipal Clerks and Recorders (TAMCAR).



Richardson

U.S. Rep. **Marsha Blackburn** will be honored in New York's Central Park this month as one of 10 female difference makers. The Brentwood Republican will be honored April 14 as one of "10 high-powered women who are making a difference in the world." The acknowledgment comes as part of More Magazine/Fitness Magazine Women's Half-Marathon's 10th anniversary celebration. Blackburn, recently promoted to vice chair of the Energy and Commerce Committee, joins a select group of honorees including Anna Maria Chavez, CEO of Girl Scouts of the USA, and Elisabeth Hasselbeck, the Emmy-winning co-host of "The View."



Blackburn

Mt. Juliet's **David Hayes** is selected **Harry Conway**, Tullahoma criminal investigator, has been appointed to the Tennessee Joint Task Force on Children's Justice and Child Sexual Abuse (JTF). Conway has nearly 24 years of law enforcement experience. The JTF brings recommendations to the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth (TCCY) and advises state legislators.

High unemployment, skills gap, demand for services key concerns among city officials

A national survey of city officials shows that despite improvement in many economic health indicators, cities around the country report their economies have not yet rebounded due in large part to slow income and job growth. The basic needs of cities' most vulnerable populations are growing, local employer requirements outpace workforce skills, and high unemployment rates continue to plague cities, according to a new National League of Cities (NLC) report.

"While today's report shows some signs of progress, it reminds local leaders across the country that we must continue to drive economic development and job growth in our communities every day," said NLC President Marie Lopez Rogers, Mayor, Avondale, AZ. "We cannot have a full economic recovery if our most vulnerable residents are being left behind; accelerating this turnaround requires strong, common sense leadership in Washington who understand that the health of our national economy is directly linked to strong economies in cities and who are willing to support smart investments in cities."

The 2013 survey of cities' chief elected officials signals a sluggish overall economic recovery in cities and towns across the United States, despite a broader national recovery.

While just over half (52 percent) of respondents reported improvement in unemployment, two-thirds of city officials said that persistently high unemployment rates continue to cause economic instability in their communities. Further, the changing nature of the economy has underscored the need for local workforces with skills appropriately matched with local employer demand, but data from cities reflects that a skills gap is actually becoming more prevalent.

More than one in two city officials (53 percent) report that current local workforce skills are posing a problem for the economic health of their community. An overwhelming number of city officials (88 percent) also reported that workforce alignment has not improved over the past year. Education plays a factor too; more than eight in 10 (82 percent) of officials responded that the percentage of their population with a post-secondary degree has not increased.

"The report shows the weight that these barriers have on local economic growth," Christy McFarland, the report's author and Interim Director of NLC's Center for Research and Innovation said. "Workforce development and job creation are integral to the economic health of our communities, and without federal investment in these areas, we will probably continue to see high unemployment, severely hampering cities' economic recoveries."

A majority (56 percent) of city officials also report that the demand for basic survival services including food, heat, and clothing is a widespread problem in their community, and one in four responded that the condition has actually worsened in the past year.

While the report shows improvement in key indicators of local property tax base, including housing starts, building permits, and residential property values-it also revealed that a weakened real estate market continues to weigh on city's economic health.

Over half of city officials reported that commercial and residential property vacancies and values are still a problem for their communities. This may have continued implications for cities as most receive the vast majority of their revenues from property tax collections.

The survey also revealed the increasing confidence of local officials through anticipated spending and investment activities. More than one in two city officials anticipate increasing investment in 2013 in new infrastructure and capital projects. While these numbers are optimistic, officials remain cautious about proposals to change the tools needed to finance these projects. If the federal government limits the income tax exemption for interest earned on municipal bonds-the primary financing mechanism for local infrastructure projects-61 percent of respondents report that they would limit the number of projects undertaken; more than half report that they would also reduce the scope of the projects undertaken.

"Protecting the tax-exemption on municipal bonds is just one of the ways federal lawmakers can support economic development in cities," said NLC First Vice President Chris Coleman, mayor, St. Paul, MN.

"The report indicates that city leaders are ready to make infrastructure investments, but we must have the confidence from Washington lawmakers that we will be able to secure funding for these much needed projects that drive job creation and improve the quality of life for our citizens."

"This report clearly reinforces the urgency for the federal government to accelerate the nation's growth through smart investments and strategic cuts that will help build healthy local economies," said Clarence Anthony, NLC's executive director. He continued, "Local leaders continue to press for investments in workforce education to train workers to compete in the next generation of jobs, and in infrastructure investments that put people back to work while improving the ability of business to move products around the country."

The full report can be found at www.NLC.org.

The National League of Cities is dedicated to helping city leaders build better communities. NLC is a resource and advocate for 19,000 cities, towns and villages, representing more than 218 million Americans.

Through its Center for Research and Innovation, NLC develops, conducts, and reports research on issues affecting cities and towns. The Center assists cities and their leaders to implement innovative practices by providing qualified information and technical assistance.

"Swing for the Trees" has planting event

Officials from the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, the Nashville Sounds, Metro Parks staff, and Friends of Edwin Warner Park, along with other volunteers, gathered at the park to plant trees as part of the "Swing for the Trees" program.

"Swing for the Trees" is a tree planting program to promote the importance of trees to Tennessee. The TWRA participated in the program beginning last season. During the Sounds home games, where there was at least one broken bat, resulted in the opportunity for obtaining trees to be planted this spring. A total of 114 bats were broken by the Sounds in 2012.

Native trees including sugar maple, sycamore, northern red oak and red were planted along Vaughn Road between the Edwin Warner Park Headquarters and near the Little Harpeth River. The tree plantings will replace some of the trees used to make baseball bats and help to restore the riparian or stream bank habitats. In addition to wood products, trees provide shade, wildlife habitat, cool streams, fresh oxygen, erosion and flood control, and are a key part of contributing to Tennessee's year-round beauty.

TWRA, along with the Sounds, and the Tennessee Department of Agriculture-Division of Forestry are partners for the 2013 "Swing for the Trees" program. The Sounds play a 72-game home schedule and start the new campaign with an eight-game homestand beginning April 4.



Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency and Nashville Sounds were among those planting trees in Edwin Warner Park as part of the "Swing for the Trees" program. From left; Don King (TWRA Information and Education Division Chief), Pandy English (Instream Flow Coordinator, TWRA Environmental Services), Doug Scopel (Sounds Assistant General Manager), Brad Tammen (Sounds Vice President/General Manager) Steve Patrick (TWRA Assistant Director), and Ozzie (Sounds mascot).



TWRA, along with the Sounds, and the Tennessee Department of Agriculture-Division of Forestry are partners for the 2013 "Swing for the Trees" program.

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STATE BRIEFS



BY TML STAFF REPORTS

State losing war on Meth

Meth users have beaten new restrictions on how much pseudoephedrine — a main ingredient in methamphetamine, they're allowed to buy, despite a computer system designed to stop bulk sales. A bill in the legislature that would have made pseudoephedrine a prescription-only drug was killed yet again for another year. And funding to clean up meth labs across the state is set to run out at the end of this year. Not only is the meth problem growing, it's also spreading. According to local law enforcement, figures show that, according to the first three months of this year, Tennessee is No. 1 in the nation for meth use. A new computer system, called NPLEx, was put into place last year failed to make a dent in 2012. A state audit released in January concluded, "Methamphetamine lab incidents since the implementation of NPLEx in January 2012 have not decreased substantially and remain at high levels. Meth cleanup funding — about \$750,000 in state money — is set to run out at the end of this year.

State makes more than \$73 million unemployment overpayments

Tennessee made more than \$73 million in unemployment overpayments because of fraud and errors over the past six years, according to state auditors. The state comptroller's review of various agencies' compliance with federal requirements also found that people legitimately entitled to benefits didn't get them on a timely basis because of backlogs in the Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The problems threaten the integrity of the program, the comptroller's office said in its report. Auditors found poor systems for detecting fraud, backlogs in claims handling, and "automated approval of claims" without verifying that employees qualified.

Lawmakers push for clawback provisions

Lawmakers in the Tennessee General Assembly are pushing to include clawback provisions when providing state incentives. The provisions would cut off incentive money when companies don't deliver on the new jobs the incentives were to create. The clawback bill is sponsored in the Senate by State Sen. Lowe Finney, Jackson, who pointed to Hemlock Semiconductor's \$1.2 billion plant

in Clarksville as a prime example of why clawbacks are necessary. Tennessee agreed to give tens of millions for the solar company's construction in Clarksville. Hundreds of jobs were supposed to follow, but then demand tanked. Now, the billion-dollar facility sits unfinished and idle, and the jobs are nowhere in sight. A clawback provision would let the state cut its losses in such cases.

Personal income on the rise

Personal income growth in Tennessee grew 3.9 percent in 2012 — the fastest rate in the Southeast and the 10th best growth rate in the U.S. Nationwide, average state personal income growth slowed to 3.5 percent in 2012 from 5.2 percent in 2011, according to estimates released today by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. Inflation, as measured by the national price index for personal consumption expenditures, fell to 1.8 percent in 2012 from 2.4 percent in 2011. Overall, however, Tennessee's per capita income trails the national average. Tennessee's per capita income is \$37,678, which ranks 34th in the country. Nationally, the per capita income is \$42,693.

State parks kick off campground reservation system

Tennessee State Parks unveiled its new customer-friendly campground reservation system, offering visitors the ability to reserve campsites at 35 state parks up to one year in advance of their planned stay. Reservations can be made online, by visiting the park's office, or by calling an individual park during regular business hours. "Traditionally, campers have had to rely on obtaining their favorite camping spot on a first come, first served basis," said Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation Commissioner Bob Martineau. "With the new reservation service, visitors will be offered more ease and convenience when it comes to their park stay." To check availability and reserve campsites online or via phone, visit www.instateparks.com/reservations for a complete list of available campgrounds and phone numbers or visit the online site directly at <https://instateparks.itinio.com/>. Campers can select the state park they wish to visit, arrival/departure dates, and their preferred campsite. Visitors may reserve up to five sites per reservation. The online system features a campground map, offering photos and prices for each individual campsite.

Law to exempt newer cars from emissions testing moves to Senate. Cars newer than three years old could soon be exempt from required emissions tests. It's an idea state lawmakers are pushing forward, but they're wary of potential complications. Proponents call emissions testing on new cars unnecessary, saying they fail such tests less than one percent of the time. But TN Senator Jack Johnson explains that the exemption would force Tennessee to amp up environmental regulation elsewhere. "If we take out these newer cars, even though I would submit that they're not contributing pollutants to the atmosphere, we will still lose a certain number of credits according to the convoluted formula from the EPA." Johnson says to offset the proposed exemption, factories in Tennessee might face an added regulatory burden. Failing to meet EPA requirements could also put some federal dollars the state receives at risk.

TN named third freest state

According to its annual Freedom in the 50 States study, the Mercatus Center at George Mason University has named Tennessee the third freest state in the U.S. The center says the study determines if a state's "policies promote freedom in the fiscal, regulatory and personal realms." The study cites Tennessee's low tax rates, low government debt ratio and the fact that the state's government employment is relatively small as factors in the selection. According to the Mercatus Center, the freest state in the union is North Dakota.

GA/Tenn land dispute may reach Supreme Court

Tennessee's leaders aren't reacting well to Georgia's latest attempt to tap into the Tennessee River. Georgia officials argue the state line was misplaced in 1818. In a recent vote, Georgia senators approved House Resolution No. 4 with one key change: If Tennessee declines to settle, the dispute will be handed over to the attorney general, who will take the state before the Supreme Court. Gov. Haslam said "We will continue to protect the interests and resources of Tennessee." The resolution offers to relinquish 66.5 square miles of land that Georgia lawmakers claim is rightfully theirs in return for a 1.5-mile strip that would give them access to the Tennessee River at Nickajack Lake. The Peach State could build a pipeline to deliver up to one billion gallons of water a day to thirsty Atlanta and other parts of Georgia, Alabama and Florida. The resolution allows for a lawsuit to be filed if an agreement can't be reached by roughly this time next year.

State parks kick off campground reservation system



Tennessee State Parks unveiled its new customer-friendly campground reservation system recently, offering visitors the ability to reserve campsites at 35 state parks up to one year in advance of their planned stay. Campers can select the state park they wish to visit, arrival/departure dates, and their preferred campsite, up to five sites per reservation. The online system features a campground map, offering photos and prices for each individual campsite.

State task force meetings set for police officers; meth, pharmaceutical trends among topics that will be addressed

The Tennessee Methamphetamine and Pharmaceutical Task Force plans to conduct district-wide meetings for law enforcement in each of the three regions in the state: East, Middle and West.

Law enforcement officers should plan to attend the meeting that is most convenient to them, according to a news release.

Meeting highlights will include updates on methamphetamine trends, pharmaceutical/diversion trends, the ACS Container Program, legislative issues, a TMPTF status report, training announcements, an intel update, grant status, a guest speaker and breakout sessions.

- The East Tennessee meeting will begin at 10 a.m. April 25 at Fountainhead College of Technology, at 3203 Tazewell Pike in Knoxville. The key topic will be school resource officers, and the speaker will be Chris Caulpetzer of the Knoxville Police Department.

- The West Tennessee meeting will begin at 10 a.m. Sept. 11 in the Hamilton Performing Arts Center on the University of Memphis Lambuth campus, at 705 Lambuth

Bldv. in Jackson. The key topic will be the Tennessee Controlled Substance Database, and the speaker will be Dr. Michael O'Neil.

- The Middle Tennessee meeting will begin at 10 a.m. Oct. 29 at Montgomery Bell State Park, at 800 Hotel Ave. in Burns. The key topic will be medical identity theft, and the speaker has not been announced.

At each meeting, there will be breakout sessions for law enforcement officers to discuss in further detail any trends or cases of interest, and for industry representatives to discuss areas of interest and how they are addressing growing diversion and meth abuse problems.

Recertification will not be held at these meetings but will be held at several locations across the state this year, the release said. Notices will be sent out shortly.

Law enforcement officers should RSVP at least one week before the meeting date by contacting Debbie Maberry at debbie.maberry@13thdf.com or (931) 260-9510. To register, provide name, agency and phone number. Contact Maberry for more information.

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Held May 1, from 1 - 6 pm, at the War Memorial Auditorium in Nashville, this fifth annual regional summit focuses on key issues of land use and quality growth, along with updates on key regional issues of: transportation/transit and economic competitiveness, showcasing the successful broad implementation that is positioning Middle Tennessee to enhance communities and assets.

Featuring a diverse lineup of speakers, panelists, and leading thinkers from across the region, state, and country, national and peer region leaders include: Mitch Silver of Raleigh, N.C., and Robin Rathers from Austin, N.C.

This year's keynote speaker Tennessee Department of Transportation Commissioner John

Schroer, will share experiences and lessons from TDOT's outstanding efforts to connect transportation, land use planning, and investments that are providing good fiscal stewardship for Tennessee.

Mayors' panelists will provide updates on land use and quality growth and showcase comprehensive planning positioning Middle Tennessee to enhance communities and assets.

Regional Leaders panelists will provide progress reports on Transportation/Transit and Economic Competitiveness and discuss what the future holds for successful implementation

Nashville Mayor Karl Dean will provide the annual Regional Call to Action, and the winners of Cumberland Region Tomorrow's annual Regional Thinking and Action Awards will be announced.

The annual regional and state reception will conclude the day.

To register as a public representative or for more information, visit 10power.org. Or call Cumberland Region Tomorrow at 615-986-2698.

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Cities and food: Quandary, opportunity?

 BY NEAL PEIRCE
Washington Post Writers' Group

In the next 40 years, the world will need to produce as much food as it's produced over all of human history. Across the planet, hundreds of millions of people go to bed hungry every night – and more and more of them live in cities.

Tackling those awesome issues requires rare smarts and ingenuity. But earlier this month, I watched an earnest try at a "Feeding Cities" conference put on the University of Pennsylvania's Institute for Urban Research, backed by Rockefeller Foundation funding.

Cities' food demands are requiring a dramatic expansion of farmed territory. Drawn by the hope of better incomes, youth are moving to the cities, leaving agriculture to large-scale, intensive, corporate-driven farming systems and food distribution channels.

And on top of all those trends, Heather Grady of the Rockefeller Foundation noted in a keynote address, there is climate change – triggering either extreme heat or excessive rainfall, thus either drought or floods. One likely impact: price spikes, hitting first the poor who spend a large portion of their income on food.

Cities can try to toughen themselves, Grady said, by assembling disaster emergency funds and preparing themselves for "rapid rebound" – strengthening their infrastructure, building their resilience. But they can also gird themselves for the future, by reserving land for agriculture, either within their borders or in their surrounding regions.

Joan Clos, executive director of U.N.-HABITAT, suggested there is a clear alternative to heavy reliance on distant food supply chains: "We should shorten the distance and create a kind of a cycle – the energy the city produces, the relationship with the land. If rural land nearby is well preserved, it has a huge advantage for the city – it can provide food, it can drain water, it can serve as a city edge to prevent sprawl."

That means, Grady said, slowing conversion of farmlands to built-up and often paved-over, thus water-impermeable, land: "This benefits health and nutrition; it also permits safe failure on the flooding front. Food buffer and flood buffer – two public goods are enhanced."

Another battle worth waging, is to reduce the egregious waste that's plaguing food systems worldwide. Food loss and waste per person in the United States have been estimated at a world-leading 650 pounds a person a year. Explanations range from careless farming to inefficient food processing to retail stories simply discarding foodstuffs that are past their sell-by dates. "In richer countries, we throw away as much food per capita as people in many parts of the world have to eat," Grady noted. The problem in the developing world is different but just as serious -- about 40 percent of harvests rot between farm and market because of improper storage and protection against storms and extreme temperatures.

"If we got rid of waste in the food process, we could go a long way toward feeding the 9 billion people" likely to be on Earth in 2050, Barbara Burlingame of the United

Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization noted.

But there's also a joy to local foods and greater self-sufficiency – a theme underscored by Drew Becher, president of the nearly 190-year-old Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, which encourages and works closely with about 270 community gardens across the Philadelphia area.

The society, which hosts the world's largest indoor flower show each spring, is now showing how to integrate vegetables into attractive garden settings. The embracing idea, Becher said, is to create social networks, opportunities for physical exercise, "outdoor classrooms for hands-on learning."

Which can be a source of exuberant fun, Indonesian architect Ridwan Kamil told the Penn gathering. Dismayed that Jakarta looked too drab, he used Twitter to suggest barren spaces between buildings be made into vegetable gardens. Young people responded in droves, creating a wave of community gardens, the new gardeners eating their own produce and selling it to nearby markets and restaurants.

"We choose a vegetable of the month, then have a once-a-month festival and invite the musical and cooking communities to interact," said Kamil. "We cook live, very fresh. The music community helps the mood."

To date, city-produced foods account for a tiny share of urban food needs. But one is led to wonder: If city food demand is a top 21st-century concern, perhaps city ingenuity -- and spirit -- can also help to forge answers.

NATIONAL BRIEFS

The U.S. Senate approved an amendment sponsored by Sen. Lamar Alexander, Tenn., that would allow states to choose whether to collect sales taxes from Internet-based retailers. The measure was passed by a 75-24 vote as an amendment to a budget resolution. Because the budget resolution is non-binding, however, the vote on the amendment was largely symbolic. *Reuters* reports. "Still, the approval should reassure states and 'bricks and mortar' retailers that Congress will come together to pass a bill soon." The Marketplace Fairness Act was first introduced in the Senate in 2011, and was reintroduced in February. In Tennessee, Amazon.com has agreed to begin collecting sales taxes from consumers beginning in 2014, if no national legislation is approved.

A national survey finds that retiring baby boomers were the main reason why businesses valued at less than \$50 million were put up for sale in the fourth quarter of 2012. The study, was done by the International Business Brokers Association, M&A Source and

Pepperdine University's Graziadio School of Business and Management. The fourth quarter survey also found that business brokers and advisors who focus on mergers and acquisitions are more optimistic about sales in 2013. Business sales are expected to pick up due to baby boomer retirements (35 percent), market clarity following the presidential election (20 percent) and the fiscal cliff resolution (14 percent).

The U.S. Census Bureau reports that more Americans are debt-free now than in 2000, but the remaining debtors increased their load by 40 percent. In 2000, 74 percent of American households had some kind of debt. By 2011, that number had decreased to 69 percent. But the median debt load increased to \$70,000 — up from an inflation-adjusted \$50,971 in 2000 — while seniors doubled their median debt to \$26,000.

Real estate equity for U.S. homeowners made its biggest leap in 65 years in 2012, as home values climbed to their highest levels since 2007, Bloomberg reports.

That means more property owners should be able to get equity loans on their homes. Federal Reserve statistics show that home values regained a collective \$1.6 trillion last year, boosting by 25 percent the amount by which the value of homes exceeds their mortgages.

During the month of April, in honor of Earth Month, The National League of Cities Sustainability Program will be hosting a special webinar series highlighting city leadership in sustainability. Elected officials and their staff are playing a critical role in advancing social, economic and environmental sustainability. Through April 30, each Tuesday at 2 pm ET, NLC will profile a different city in a 30-minute webinar. Cities will present innovative programs, policies or initiatives that have been critical in moving the sustainability conversation forward in their communities. To participate, visit <http://www.nlc.org/media-center/news-search/nlc-%E2%80%9Cearth-month%E2%80%9D-webinar-series-highlights-city-leadership-in-sustainability>

COMING UP

April 13 & May 4: Homefront to Heartland' Conferences; UT Extension hosts "Women in Agriculture and the Vital Roles They Play." When it comes to agriculture and agri-business, women can be just as successful as men, and can be valuable partners in farming operations. April 13—Murfreesboro, Rutherford County Extension Office, 315 John Rice Blvd. May 4—Jackson, UT West Tennessee Research and Education Center, 605 Airways Blvd. All conferences held from 8:30 to 4:30. Register, online at www.homefronttoheartland.com. By phone, call 865-974-7108. Or make checks payable to UT Extension and mail with completed registration form to: Alice Rhea, UT Extension Eastern Region Office, 1801 Downtown West Blvd. Knoxville, TN 37919.

April 15: Public seminar, "Preventing Tragedy: A Community United," hosted by the Oak Ridge Police Department, at The New Hope Center, 602 Scarboro Road from 6 pm to 8 pm. Designed to make citizens aware of possible warning signs of violent behavior and a plan for how to alert the proper agency. Speakers include Jim Akagi, Oak Ridge chief of police, Ben Harrington, executive director of the Mental Health Association of East Tennessee, and Andy Burr LPC, Ridgeview Psychiatric Center. For pre-registration email preventingtragedy@ridgevw.com. For more information visit www.oakridgetn.gov.

April 24-26: Tennessee City Management's Conference, Hampton Inn & Suites, Nashville. To register, visit http://www.tncma.org/upcoming_events/pdfs/spring_registration.pdf

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No loan is too large or too small



The city of Dyersburg closed a \$4.5 million loan to use on various municipal projects.



The town of Cumberland Gap closed a \$5,000 Highway Safety Grant Anticipation Note.



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Advertising: \$9.25 per column inch. No charge to TML members. Send advertising to: TT&C Classified Ads, Mona Lawrence, 226 Capitol Blvd. Suite 710, Nashville TN 37219; e-mail: mlawrence@TML1.org; or fax: 615-255 4752.

BUILDING INSPECTOR

COLLIERVILLE. The city is seeking qualified applicants for the position of Building Inspector for the city's Development Department. This position performs responsible enforcement of town codes and ordinances and investigative work in the inspection of all town commercial, industrial, and residential structures and properties. May require attending meetings after normal business hours. The applicant must possess a journeyman level certification or equivalent in the assigned area of building or plumbing at time of hire. Must obtain certification from the International Code Council as a Building Inspector and one additional Inspector certification within 12 months of employment and maintain certification throughout employment. Valid Motor Vehicle Operator's License required at the time of hire. Candidate must be able to pass a work related physical and drug test. Qualifications include: High school diploma or GED supplemented by technical or college level courses in building construction, electrical, mechanical, or structural engineering or related areas; and five (5) years experience in the building construction industry, skilled construction trades or in comparable code enforcement work, three of which must be in the assigned area of responsibility of building or plumbing; or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities for this job. Minimum salary is \$32,799.00 with excellent benefits package. Selection process may include: examinations, interviews, assessment centers, practical skills, etc. Drug testing may be required. FLSA Status: Non-Exempt. Please apply at the Human Resources Office, 500 Poplar View Parkway, Collierville, TN, 38017. A new application must be submitted for each job applied for. We regret we are unable to answer all inquiries. We will only notify candidates selected for testing or interviews. Pursuant to Tennessee open records law, applications and resumes are subject to disclosure. If special accommodations are required during the selection process due to a disability, please notify the Human Resources Office at 901-457-2290. EOE. Minorities, women, and disabled applicants are encouraged to apply. The Town of Collierville is a drug free work place.

CITY MANAGER

LEWISBURG. The city is seeking qualified applicants for the position of City Manager. The position is responsible to the mayor and a five (5) member council for the administration of all city services and departments, including but not limited to administration, personnel, finance and budgeting, code enforcement, public works, sanitation, streets, public safety, industrial development, recreation, planning and zoning. A bachelor's degree and ten (10) years of experience in city management in a similar sized city is preferred. Experience in budgeting, control of revenues and expenditures, management of multiple departments, legislative issues, economic development, storm water operations and planning are high priorities. Must be capable of learning any computer applications deemed necessary or applicable to the position. The successful candidate must reside within five (5) miles of the corporate limits of Lewisburg, in Marshall County, within 90 days from date of hire. The city has an annual budget of \$10,000,000 with 105 full time employees and 60 part time employees. The position has an excellent benefit package. Salary DOQ. EOE. An application, resume and salary demand should be submitted by April 19, 2013 to: The University of Tennessee, Municipal Technical Advisory Service, 226 Capitol Blvd., Nashville TN, 37219-1804, Attn: Dana Deem, or by email to: dana.deem@tennessee.edu.

CITY MANAGER

KINGSTON. Qualified applicants are being sought for the position of city manager. The City has a seven-member council, a population of 6,000, and an annual budget of \$11,500,000 with 65

full-time employees and 10+ part-time employees. The current City Manager has announced his pending retirement after twelve years in this position. Oversees the day-to-day operations of the city and supervises all department heads including: police, fire, parks and recreation, public works, water and sewer utilities and fiscal operations. The successful candidate must have a bachelor's degree in public/business management or a related field, and three years of government management experience with strong leadership and interpersonal skills. A master's degree and city management experience is desired including experience in land use, residential development, and infrastructure expansion. Skills in budgeting, long-range planning, financial management/fiscal operations, utility management and engineering, personnel issues, and public safety planning are essential. Social media and oral/written communication skills (including grant writing) are a must. Resumes, along with a cover letter and three professional references must be received by April 15, 2013, at: The University of Tennessee, Municipal Technical Advisory Service, Attn: Warren Nevad, 120 Conference Center, Knoxville TN, 37996. Electronic submissions shall be received at warren.nevad@tennessee.edu by April 15, 2013. The city has a competitive salary and benefits package; including retirement, health and life insurance, depending on qualifications. This position will remain open until filled. EOE

CITY MANAGER

Forest Hills. The city, located within Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, is seeking applicants for City Manager. The current city manager has announced his pending retirement. Experience in budgeting and budget management, legislative issues, planning and zoning, historic preservation and storm water management are high priorities. Candidates must be able to demonstrate a record of achievement and innovation that will allow the city to build upon its strong tradition of providing superior services to its residents and customers. The ideal candidate will have a bachelor's degree in Public Administration, Business Management or a related field; a master's degree is preferred. Candidates will have substantial experience as a city manager or assistant city manager in a similarly sized community, with preference given to applicants with five years of municipal experience with broad and complex management responsibility. Candidates must be certified, or be willing and able to become certified, as a certified municipal finance officer and city recorder. Resumes, along with a cover letter and three professional references will be received at: The University of Tennessee, Municipal Technical Advisory Service, 226 Capitol Blvd., Nashville TN, 37219-1804, Attn: Dana Deem. The city has a competitive salary and benefits package; including retirement, health and life insurance, depending on qualifications. This position will remain open until filled.

CODES ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

Lenoir City. The city of is seeking qualified applicants for the position of Codes Enforcement Officer. The ideal candidate will have recognized building official certification credentials (residential, commercial, plumbing, and plans examiner). City planning and storm water management experience is a plus. The Codes Enforcement Officer reports to the City's Public Safety Director and is responsible for performing professional and technical duties consistent with this responsible position. Candidate will be proficient in such areas, but not limited to, as working independently and with others; technical work in the enforcement of planning and zoning codes; appropriate computer applications; good interpersonal and communication skills (both verbal and written); and construction/inspection of building structures. Salary and benefits are competitive, including retirement. Qualified applicants shall submit a resume with references no later than 4:00 P.M. on Tuesday, April 30, 2013. Apply to City Administrator, City of Lenoir City, 600 East Broadway, P.O. Box 445, Lenoir City, TN 37771. EOE.

CODES ADMINISTRATOR

MILLERSVILLE. The city has an immediate opening for a Codes Adminis-

trator to manage the operations of the Codes Department, including the enforcement of building and zoning codes and city ordinances. The employee shall keep and manage all departmental records and communicate with other city, state and federal departments to coordinate community development, stormwater program and floodplain maps. The employee must use independent judgment and must have strong verbal and written communication skills and the ability to work well with the public. The preferred candidate will have experience with the review and issuance of building permits and have a strong understanding of zoning and code regulations. Building inspector certification is preferred but not required. Duties also include other support services under the general supervision of the city manager. See job openings on the city's website at www.cityofmillersville.com for more information. The position offers a competitive salary and benefit package that includes health, dental, and life insurance, paid holidays, vacation and retirement plan. A city application is required and is available at city hall or at www.cityofmillersville.com. Send application, resume and cover letter to: City of Millersville, 1246 Louisville Hwy., Millersville, TN 37072. EOE

DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

LaVergne. The city is seeking qualified applicants for the position of Director of Human Resources. The position reports to the mayor and city administrator. This position is responsible for all strategic human resources functions for the city. The HR Director works closely with the city administrator, the mayor and Department Heads. The HR Director performs a variety of complex administrative, technical and professional work in directing and supervising the personnel systems of the organization, including classification, compensation, coordination of benefits and insurance administration, recruitment, selection, labor relations, employment law, compliance, training and development and performance review administration. Detailed job description along with benefits information can be found by applying online via the city website at: www.lavergnetn.gov

HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR

KINGSPORT. The city is seeking qualified candidates for the position of Human Resources Director. The city employs approximately 725 full time and 150 part time employees. This position reports to the city manager or his designee. The ideal candidate thorough knowledge of employment laws, including application to the workforce and organization; be a self-motivated, results oriented leader, possess excellent communication skills and be a team player that approaches the job through collaboration and cooperation to meet city and team goals. Qualifications are: bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in human resource management, business administration, public administration or a closely related field and 10 years full time experience in Human Resources with at least two (2) years of management experience. PHR/SPHR or IPMA-CP certification preferred. Salary Range: \$55,336 - \$78,582. Complete application and upload résumé at <http://agency.governmentjobs.com/kingsport>. Application deadline April 30, 2013.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Keep Tennessee Beautiful (KTnB) is seeking applicants for Executive Director. The position inspires a vision and provides leadership that will help create a respect for the environment, social responsibility, and lead community improvement in all 95 counties of the state. Monitors legislation, agency partnerships, and state and local activity that affect the environment and quality of life in communities; develops sponsor and funding sources for academic and professional research and operations to support the mission of KTnB. Maintains good standing with Tennessee and local affiliates and KTnB; ensures that state and affiliate programs adhere to the policies and mission of KTnB. Ensures that KTnB implements and satisfies the requirements of the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) contract. Maintains statewide community involvement through volunteer action

in affiliate communities and provide assistance and support to those communities. Provide leadership to the KTnB State Leaders Council, composed of community leaders from across the state. Plans conferences and events including the State Conference, National Planting Day for Tennessee, Tennessee Recycles, Great American Clean-Up, and other events held in urban and rural areas. Develops and implements behavioral and project training for affiliates, staff, and board members. Provides direction, management, and supervision for KTnB staff. Minimum Qualifications: Requires a Master's degree and five years of relevant experience in non-profit management, marketing, fundraising, or advocacy training experience. Relevant experience may substitute for required education. It is expected that the successful candidate will reside in the Memphis area within six months of employment. Both in-state and some out-of state travel is required. The position is grant funded, continuation is contingent upon continued funding. Applications must be submitted through the University's WorkForum website at <https://workforum.memphis.edu>. Applicants must complete all applicable sections of the online application in order to be considered for this position. Please upload a cover letter, resume, and reference list after completing your application, if required by the system.

FIRE CHIEF

MANCHESTER. The city is seeking qualified applicants for the position of Fire Chief. This position reports to the Board of Mayor and Alderman. Minimum requirements: Master's Degree (MA) or equivalent; or four to ten years related experience and/or training; or equivalent combination of education and experience. Current Tennessee Driver's License, Firefighting Certificate. Meet annual training requirement for the State of Tennessee Additional Proficiency Pay. Duties include: Developing yearly budget for submission to Finance Director; develop equipment replacement schedule based on needs of the department and to insure compliance with current ISO rating and/or upgrading ISO rating; directs training of personnel and administers laws and regulations affecting department; Conduct personnel evaluations; evaluates fire prevention and fire control policies by keeping abreast of new methods and conducting studies of department operations; assumes personal command at multiple alarm fires; supervises firefighters engaged in operations and maintenance of fire station and equipment; coordinates mutual fire protection plans with surrounding municipalities and Volunteer Fire Departments; surveys buildings, ground and equipment to estimate needs of department and prepare departmental budgets; confers with officials and community groups and conducts public relation campaigns to present need for changes in laws and policies and to encourage fire prevention. Submit applications or resumes to Heather Lovvorn, e-mail hlovvorn@cityofmanchestertn.com or mail applications to: City of Manchester; Attn: Heather Lovvorn, P.O. Box 209, Manchester, TN 37349. Deadline for applications is Wednesday, April 10, 2013 at 9 am. EOE

GENERAL MANAGER

Etowah. The city's Utilities Board is seeking a general manager. Applicants should have a minimum of a four year degree in engineering, business or related field from an accredited university and eight years of experience in progressively responsible positions preferably with a full service utility system, with a minimum of five years supervisory experience on the senior or management level. A civil engineering degree, experience as a licensed engineer or as an electrical engineer are preferred as are high level budgetary, financial and communication skills. Resume must include a summary of education, work experience, accomplishments relevant to the position and contact information for three work references and two personal references. Please include official transcript, community involvement, salary history, and salary expectations. Submissions will be accepted through May 10, 2013 or until the position is filled. Mail resume and supporting documents to: Search Committee, Etowah Utility Board, P.O. Box 927, Etowah, TN., 37331.

HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR

KINGSPORT. The city is seeking qualified candidates for the position of Hu-

man Resources Director. Kingsport employs approximately 725 full time and 150 part time employees. This position reports to the City Manager or his designee. The ideal candidate will have 10 years of increasingly responsible professional experience in Human Resources including two (2) years of management responsibility; thorough knowledge of employment laws and their application to the workforce and organization; be a self-motivated, results oriented leader possessing excellent communication skills; team player that approaches the job through collaboration and cooperation to meet city and team goals. Qualifications include: Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university in human resource management, business administration, public administration or a closely related field and ten years full time experience in Human Resources with at least two years of management experience. PHR/SPHR or IPMA-CP certification preferred. Salary Range: \$55,336 to \$78,582. Complete application and upload résumé to the website <http://agency.governmentjobs.com/kingsport>. Application deadline is April 30, 2013.

POLICE CHIEF

MCKENZIE. The city is taking resumes for the position of Police Chief until April 15, 2013. Applicants should have a minimum of eight (8) years police experience, a minimum of three (3) years of command experience, and be Post Certified or able to be Post Certified. Salary is determined by experience and qualifications. McKenzie is located in Carroll County in Northwest Tennessee. The population within the corporate city limits is 5,310. For information about the city of McKenzie, visit www.mckenziemtn.gov. Resumes should be sent to: Attention: Mayor Jill Holland, City of McKenzie, 2470 Cedar St., P.O. Box 160, McKenzie, TN 38201. EOE.

TOWN MANAGER

SIGNAL MOUNTAIN. A bedroom community of Chattanooga, is seeking a qualified applicant for the position of town manager. The town manager serves as the chief administrative officer in a full service community of 8,000 citizens with a council-manager form of government and a 10.3m budget. The town manager is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the town and abiding by the ordinances and policies of the five-member elected council. The town's administrative structure includes eight (8) departments, 90 permanent employees, and 14 volunteer boards. Minimum qualifications include a BS/BA in public administration or related field with a minimum of three (3) years experience as a town manager, MS/MA in public administration or a related field with experience in local government, or seven (7) years experience as a department head with management experience as a town manager or assistant manager. Applicants must possess proven management, leadership, team building, communication, and municipal finance skills. For community information, visit the website www.signalmountaintn.gov. Letters of interest with resumes, salary expectations and references will be accepted until April 12. Applicants should submit information to Margaret Norris, 600 Henley Street, Suite 120, Knoxville, TN 37996-4105 or email margaret.norris@tennessee.edu.

WATER TREATMENT PLANT MANAGER

WAYNESBORO. The city is accepting applications for the position of Water Treatment Plant Manager. Applicants must have a high school diploma or GED, Tennessee Grade 3 Water Treatment License, be in good standing with the state, and have a minimum of three (3) years in water plant operation experience. The employee is responsible for the supervision of the operation and maintenance of the water treatment plant and staff. Salary is negotiable. Benefits include health insurance, dental insurance, paid vacation and holidays, retirement plan and deferred compensation plan. Application and/or resumes should be submitted detailing experience and training to: Waynesboro City Hall, P.O. Box 471, Waynesboro, TN 38485, or send by e-mail to chickman@cityofwaynesboro.org by April 15, 2013. The city reserves the right to reject any/or all applications. EOE.

WATER TREATMENT PLANT MANAGER

WHITE PINE. The town is accepting applications for the position of Wastewater Treatment Plant Manager/Supervisor. Applicants must have a high school diploma, or GED, Tennessee Grade 3 Wastewater Treatment license, and a Grade 2 Wastewater Collections license, and in good standing with the state. Experience is a plus in wastewater treatment. The employee is responsible for the supervision of the wastewater treatment plant and staff. Additional supervisory duties will also be expected. Application and/or resumes should be submitted detailing experience and training to: Town Hall, 1548 Main Street, PO Box 66, White Pine, TN 37890, or send by email to whitepine@charter.net by April 19, 2013. The town reserves the right to reject any/or all applications. EOE.

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Knoxville Homemaker program turns blighted property into beautiful home



Knoxville's Homemaker Program helps private buyers turn problem properties into neighborhood assets.

As part of Community Development Week, city staff in Knoxville are holding an open house of a formerly blighted home in the Holston Hills neighborhood.

The original property owner passed away in 2000 without a will. The property was certified as blighted by the city's Better Building Board in 2006. The home's ceilings had fallen and crumbled in almost every room of the house. An appraiser determined the structure had no contributing economic value.

The city obtained the property via eminent domain in 2011 with a deposit of \$10,000 to Circuit Court. The property was sold through the Community Development Department's Homemaker Program on May 4, 2012, for \$17,500. In addition to the cost of the property, the new owner has invested in excess of \$90,000 in rehabilitation dollars.

It is now a beautiful 1,620-square-foot, 3-bedroom, 2 1/2 bath, 2 car attached garage home with hardwood floors, granite



The new owner has invested in excess of \$90,000 in rehabilitation dollars. The home is now on the market listed for \$168,000.

countertops, new roof and HVAC along with upgraded plumbing and electrical with nearly 1/3 acre of land. It is listed for sale at \$168,000.

"This is just one illustration of

how the Homemaker Program helps private buyers turn problem properties into neighborhood assets," said Becky Wade, director of Community Development.



The original property owner passed away without a will. The property was certified as blighted by the city's Better Building Board and determined to have no contributing economic value.



The home's ceilings had fallen and crumbled in almost every room of the house.

Franklin enlists experts' help to develop floodplain corridor

FLOODPLAIN from Page 1
plain for public safety purposes; and (2) to capitalize on economic development opportunities in this important gateway location. There is also both a strong historic preservation emphasis in the community and an acute sensitivity to private property rights.

Since the May 2010 flood, city administration has directed staff to hold multiple informational meetings and workshops with nonresidential property owners to identify options to provide more flexibility for property owners to use their properties. Two ordinance amendments were drafted and passed with public support to provide limited relief to property owners for historic structures and nonresidential structures in the floodplain. The city also clarified timeframes for abandonment of a commercial use following a natural disaster. Multiple properties have benefitted from these decisions, although these changes were considered interim measures until a proper study could be completed.

The CPAT study will help the community assess all the factors and explore potential future scenarios for the corridor in a visual way and to provide recommendations that address community concerns. Some of these factors include the floodplain, public safety, health and welfare, gateway/corridor visioning, feasibility and uses, visual impacts and Historic District compatibility, pedestrian oriented streetscape, and positive and negative economic impacts. It is hoped that this exercise will give the community a better understanding of the opportunities and constraints in this area, help to identify meaningful options for this corridor, and assist the community in forming a collective vision for how to move forward.

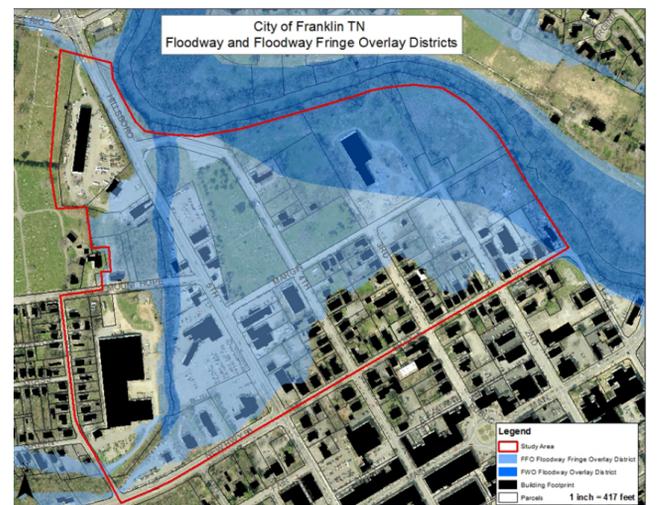
The CPAT study is a 6-8 month process in which a multidisciplinary team of five experts from across the country come to Franklin for an intensive 4-5 day study with multiple public forums, stakeholder interviews and creative community engagement. The expertise is provided pro bono with the local community covering the travel related expenses.

"The American Planning Association is excited to embark on another Community Planning Assistance team in Franklin," said Thomas Bassett, APA senior program associate. "We will be selecting a team leader to visit Franklin in the coming weeks to refine the project scope and prepare for the full team visit. The project is very timely and addresses important issues that can be applied not only to Franklin but to other downtown areas as well."

The site visit is tentatively planned for May, and the week-long study is anticipated to take place in July/August 2013. For more information, contact Kelly Dannenfels, AICP, at kellyd@franklintn.gov.



Most of the buildings in the floodplain along 5th Avenue North are not considered contributing to the architectural significance of the District.



A map of Franklin's 100-year floodplain corridor.

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How to create aggressive recruiting strategies for retail development

RETAIL from Page 1

that's built creates an average of three jobs for a year. That's not factoring in the ripple effect – for instance, among retailers as people furnish their new homes.

The return of "the wealth effect" triggered by home value appreciation is the single most important trend to watch for retail, states an industry forecast by Chainlinks Retail Advisors. Housing related retailers ranging from home goods to furniture to do-it-yourself home improvement stores rallied in late 2012, and visible increases in consumer spending should occur by 2014.

Mom-and-pops, who have largely been missing in action since 2008, will also increasingly return to the retail marketplace with new small business concepts Chainlinks predicts. Leading the way will be restaurants, which will account for up to 40 percent of all new tenancy in the marketplace.

However, retailer expansion in 2013 is still about the sure thing, with greater population densities and higher income demographics winning out most of the time.

That doesn't mean your community should give up on establishing an aggressive Retail Economic Development Plan if you are a rural, small or mid-size community. Retail recruitment and expansion is a process, not an event. Each step you take now builds a foundation for future success in attracting the retailers that are most likely to thrive in your community.

How Do You Convince a Retailer You Are a Sure Thing?

There are 10 Steps that should be components of a Retail Economic Development Plan that will give you a competitive advantage in today's economy.

1. Look at your community through the eyes of a retailer and developer

First impressions are important because retailers always seek to minimize risk and maximize profits. Tour your community and try to look at it as an outsider would. What kind of first impression does your town offer? What can you improve? Things to pay close attention to include appearance; pride of ownership of residential and commercial properties; a functional infrastructure; evidence of crime; codes and code enforcement; and the vitality of your downtown area.

Understand that retailers will be looking for opportunities – not just sites. To be successful, a retail site must have each of these essential location factors:

- Visibility
- Accessibility
- Regional exposure
- Population density
- Population growth
- Operational convenience
- Safety and security
- Adequate parking
- Adequate signage

2. Know your competition.

When a retailer comes into the marketplace, they evaluate the entire region, including the towns surrounding your community. You need to assess what these competing communities offer when it comes to attracting retail; what they are doing to recruit retail; and what incentives are offering. Additionally, perform a SWOT analysis of your own community from a retailer's perspective. That means identifying your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and limitations.

3. Know your retail trade area.

A Retail Trade Area is the largest distance consumers are willing to travel to purchase retail goods and services. The size depends upon the variety of goods and services offered in your community and proximity to retail in nearby competing communities. An accurate Retail Trade Area is the foundational tool for a retail recruitment strategy.

You will want to identify your Primary Retail Trade Area, which encompasses consumers who are likely to shop in your community more than once per week. This is where retailers derive approximately 80 – 85 percent of their business. You should also identify your Secondary Retail Trade Area, encompassing consumers who are likely to shop in your community once per week, or once every two weeks. This is where retailers derive approximately 15 - 20 percent of their business.

Once you have determined your Primary and Secondary Retail Trade

Areas, market this population data to retailers and real estate developers instead of your community population, which is always a much smaller number.

4. Know your demographics and psychographics.

This should include your daytime population - the people who are employed in your community. Restaurants must have a healthy daytime population to ensure a good lunch business. Restaurants cannot survive on dinner business alone.

Psychographics are important to retailers as they seek to perfect the site selection process and identify a customer base with a desire for their products or services. Psychographic variables are any attributes relating to personality, values, attitudes, interests or lifestyles.

5. Know how much retail opportunity exists.

Conduct a Retail/Gap Opportunity Analysis to discover what retail segments are leaking sales to surrounding communities. This information is meaningful to retailers looking for unmet consumer demands in your community.

A Retail/Gap Opportunity Analysis calculates estimated potential retail sales (demand) for your Retail Trade Area and compares these figures to estimated actual sales figures (supply) to estimate retail dollars "coming in" or "flowing out" of your community. The study also identifies the retail sales surpluses and/or leakages for as many as 52 different retail sectors. This distinguishes the retail categories that have the highest propensity for success in your community and quantifies their retail potential.

If you are a college community, be sure to also capture student spending data in your market analysis. Student spending has a positive impact and can be quantified for retailers through a spending survey focused on purchasing habits and retailer-type preferences.

6. Target retailers that are a good match for your community

Develop marketing and feasibility packages that are customized to your Retail Trade Area and the site selection criteria of specific retailers. Your marketing packages should include: Retail Trade Area; Retail Trade Area population; demographics; psychographics; Retailer Gap/Opportunity information; traffic counts; aerial photographs of your community and surrounding area; and information on available sites. (Retailers are site driven.)

When you contact retailers, you must be ready to provide this information quickly and easily.

Also be aware that retailers and developers may visit your community without your knowledge. All of your retail information should be available and easy for them to find on your city's website.

7. Involve your stakeholders

Your stakeholders include chamber of commerce representatives, brokers, developers, investors and entrepreneurs in your community. These are key players who can help market your community's retail opportunities to their clients and other contacts. Make sure everyone has the same marketing and feasibility information. Articulate your community's retail recruitment and expansion strategies. A rule of thumb we've learned through the

71% of respondents are motivated to shop locally because 68 cents of every dollar spent at a locally-owned retailer stays in the community.

Source: International Council of Shopping Centers Survey

years: "If they are not in on it – and up on it – they will be down on it."

8. Have a retail retention program

Retail retention is just as important as retail recruitment when it comes to the long-term economic strength of your community. The success of your existing retailers leads to increased sales tax revenue as well as job growth. Additionally, these business owners are ambassadors who present a positive image for new retail and business recruitment.

Make sure that you have a current database of your retailers with their contact information. Outreach



Housing related retailers ranging from home goods to furniture to do-it-yourself home improvement stores rallied in late 2012 and visible increases in consumer spending should occur by 2014.



Retail retention is just as important as retail recruitment when it comes to the long-term economic strength of your community. The success of your existing retailers leads to increased sales tax revenue as well as job growth.

activities to share your most current retail market information should be established. Events that have proven to be successful include Economic Outlook Sessions, Breakfast or Lunch with the Mayor; Retail Business Workshops; and one-on-one meetings and visits with business owners and managers.

The information you offer from market studies such as the Retail Trade Area Determination and Retail Gap/Opportunity Analysis gives your existing retailers a better understanding of the spending patterns and purchasing behaviors of consumers in the community. They can make adjustments in their product and service offerings to keep more residents shopping locally and better target their marketing to draw from a broader base of customers throughout your Retail Trade Area.

9. Participate in retail industry events.

Go where the retailers and developers go. The most important events are the national and regional conferences presented by the International Council of Shopping Center (ICSC). Consider exhibiting at targeted events or at least attending to network. ICSC will present the 2013 Global Retail Real Estate Convention (RECON) in Las Vegas May 19-22. With more than 30,000 attendees and 1,000 exhibitors, it's the largest industry convention. You can get more information about RECON and regional conferences such as the Chicago Deal Making Conference in October at www.icsc.org.

10. Be tenacious and patient.

Don't be discouraged if you do not achieve success within the first six or even 12 months of your Retail Economic Development Plan. As stated above, retail recruitment is a process, not an event. You can look



April 13-20: Winchester

High on the Hog Festival
A carnival, 5K Run/Walk, corn hole and horseshoe pitching contests, food, free concert and KCBS BBQ contest. For complete line up of events, visit http://www.highonthehogfestival.com/Home_Page.html

Apr. 13: Memphis

Rock-n-Romp
A free backyard party with local bands and musicians from 2–5pm at the Mud Island River Park and the Mississippi River. For more information, visit www.mudisland.com.

Apr. 20-28: Paris

World's Biggest Fish Fry
Henry County Fair Grounds, 517 Royal Oak Drive. More than five tons of catfish serves thousands every year. Events take place over the last full week of April: an IPRA rodeo, parade, Horse & Mule Pull, Small Fry Parade, catfish races, carnival, music, arts & crafts and much more! For a complete schedule of events, visit <http://www.worldsbiggestfishfry.com/>

Apr. 28-May 4: Trenton

Teapot Festival
Held Downtown. Celebrates the city's rare 500-piece collection of porcelain teapots. Begins with a lighting of the teapots ceremony at city hall. Music and fireworks show highlights the first evening, a parade, chocolate extravaganza, arts & crafts show, antique car exhibition, tennis and softball tournaments and other athletic competitions. A fireworks, display and street dance highlight the final day. The teapots may be viewed all year round, seven days a week, 24 hours a day. For more information, call 731-855-2013.

Apr. 28: KNOXVILLE

Historic Fourth and Gill 2013 Tour of Homes

The Historic Fourth and Gill neighborhood from 1- 6 pm. Tickets are \$10 per person and children under 12 admitted free. Tickets may be purchased during event hours until 5 pm the day of the tour at the Central United Methodist Church, 201 3rd Avenue. Fourth and Gill is one of Knoxville's most beloved historic neighborhoods, and this is the first time since 2010 that its homes have been open to the public. The Tour of Homes invites guests inside six historic homes, one beautiful new home and stately Central United Methodist Church. A sanctioned event of the Dogwood Arts Festival. The Fourth and Gill Neighborhood is the festival's original urban walking trail. Maps are located in a special event mailbox on the west side of the street adjacent to Brownlow Lofts. A red trolley bus, hosted by a tour guide, will be driving the tour route transporting guests to each home. For more information, visit www.fourthandgill.org.

Rep. Matthew Hill takes on new chairmanship role; pledges efficiency, fairness, open-door policy

BY LINDA BRYANT

Rep. Matthew Hill (R-District 93) has politics in his blood. Some of his most vivid memories are of campaigning side by side when his father ran for office in Sullivan County.

"I saw my dad's passion and how much he cared about his community," Hill said. "My mom has a social work background, so I also witnessed how much she cared about people. It made such a big impression on me. I think I knew from an early age I'd be involved in public service, but I never thought it would happen when I was so young. But one thing I've learned is that politics is rarely predictable."

Hill received his bachelor's degree in communications and broadcasting from East Tennessee State University. After graduation, he worked for Appalachian Radio Group, the 29-year-old Christian radio station owned by the Hill family. He also hosted a popular talk show, "Good Morning Tri-Cities," for seven years.

In 2004, Hill ran for state representative, in part, because he opposed a state income tax, an issue his opponent had voted for. Much to his surprise, he won the election, and at the age of 25, became one of the state's youngest elected officials.

Hill says his nine years of experience in the legislature have helped him blend his strong conservative message with his desire to look out for everyone, including those who don't agree with him.

"I take the attitude of service that has been instilled in me by my parents and translate it back into government service," he said. "When I first was elected, I thought it was all about passing bills and laws. I was wrong; it's about helping people. I am a glorified Rolodex. My job is helping cut through the red tape. The day that I don't feel like I'm helping people I'm going home."

Hill and his wife Amanda live in Jonesborough and have two children, Caleb and Abigail. His commute to Nashville—almost 300 miles round trip—is one of the longest of the legislature's 132 members. He admits the demands of the legislative service, including the drive-time, can be exhausting.

"Amanda deserves credit," Hill said. "She's not co-captain, she's the general. She puts up with a tremendous amount to allow me to do this. I'm eternally grateful."

Kenneth Hill, Matthew's father, is director of the Tennessee Regulatory Authority and his brother, Timothy, was elected to the state legislature last year representing District 3 in the Blountville area.

TT&C: You ran for county commissioner in your early 20s and lost by 60 votes. What was that like?

Hill: I'm actually glad I lost that one. It's a very good thing to know what it feels like to lose.

TT&C: What made you decide to run for the District 93 seat in 2004?

Hill: People in the community started to call me to encourage me to run, but it would be an understatement to say that anyone gave me a chance. I got a little bit more than 50 percent of the vote in a three-way primary. I was shocked. We knocked on thousands of doors and didn't really have a whole lot of money but we had the message.

TT&C: Talk a little bit about your style, your method of working with your constituents.

Hill: It's important to call people back, to answer emails. Even when the answer is no, most people still say, "Thanks for respecting me, thanks for trying." I always tell people, there's a time to campaign and there's a time to govern. Right now is my time to serve. There will be plenty of time for politics and campaigning in the future. I don't ask people what political party they're affiliated with or who they voted for. That's not how I roll.

When I'm done with this job, either by choice or by force, I want the people of Jonesborough and Washington County to know their community is better off than when I started. I want my son and daughter to be proud of their dad. I can't please everyone; I might make some people mad, but I still have to live with them back home. I see them at Walmart, church and the doctor's office. When it comes right down to it, I believe in helping people and not over thinking it. And, of course, never be dishonorable, never be disrespectful.

There's a section of my district called Keystone. I know they don't vote for me in the same numbers other areas do. I still try to help them with anything they need. The best compliment I've ever received is when I went to the Limestone Ruritan Fish Fry and these old gentlemen came up to me and said, "Hey Matthew!" They call other politicians Mr. Smith or Representative Jones. I'm just Matthew, and it's a badge of honor I take very seriously.

TT&C: You have an interesting background in broadcast journalism and talk radio. How do you think that helps you as a legislator – or do you think it helps?

Hill: When you host a local talk show, it is all



Rep. Matthew Hill was appointed this year as chairman of the House Local Government Committee.



Hill says one aspect as a legislator he enjoys the most is helping people. "The day I don't feel like I'm helping people, I'm going home."

about extemporaneous speaking. You do all your prep, all your research, all your reading and then people would just call in. Being on the radio was hardcore – two hours a day, five days a week. It's the best preparation I could have ever received for this job. Before getting into radio, I went to the national finals in extemporaneous speaking as a student. It was extremely useful to my work in broadcasting and to my work as a legislator.

TT&C: This year, your younger brother has joined you in the legislature – what is that like to have a family member serve with you?

Hill: Sometimes I hear him talking to constituents on the phone in his office. It makes me so very proud. He brings that same heart of service that we learned from my father. But I never tell him what to do. I make observations and suggestions based on about nine years of experience. One of the proudest moments of my entire life was the day we were both sworn in.

"We don't need to be so adversarial on both sides. It all comes back to being in a partnership. We are all in this thing together for heaven's sake." - Rep. Matthew Hill

TT&C: This is the first time that you have chaired a full committee. How have you approached this new role as chairmanship? Are there traits, qualities or pitfalls that you have observed in others that you will emulate or avoid?

Hill: I believe that being able to chair the house sub-committee last year was excellent training. Still, it's a lot more work than anybody could ever imagine. I understand sometimes people's bills fail, you can't pass everything, but I want to be seen as fair. I always want discussion. Some bills are very simple, so you don't need a lot of discussion. I want to be judicious with everyone's time and efficient with the operation of the committee.

I have an open door policy. I've lost count of how many meetings I've had to make sure I know all sides of an issue. It's important to listen to everyone from mayors, county officials, road superintendents and the list goes on. They should feel like they can talk to me. If I don't agree with you, I'm going to tell you and that's OK.

TT&C: This is also the first year that State and Local government has been split into two separate committees. How do you think this will affect the legislative process?

What differences have you seen so far as compared to the way things have run in previous years?

Hill: I think it's really good. The volume of legislation is greatly reduced. It gives you more time to be deliberative. Last year state and local had the second highest volume of bills next to finance. Now it's evened out. Before you'd have 800 bills, and that includes private acts. Now you have a couple of hundred and you should be able to give them due diligence if you are allowed. It's hard to give due diligence to hundreds of bills coming through a committee. The one hiccup is what happened with the wine bill. That was a procedural issue and that's very hard to explain to people.

TT&C: The so-called wine bill would have allowed local communities to vote selling wine in supermarkets. It was a surprise to some when you changed your vote from yes to no. Your no vote ending up being the decisive vote. What happened?

Hill: I think the wine in grocery store issue was hijacked by the media. It was inappropriate. I'm not minimizing the fact that it's an important issue to many Tennesseans, but to occupy so much media attention and so much of the committee's time—and then to have it end the way it ended—was extremely frustrating to me.

The votes came down the way they did because there was a motion called for to call the question which cut off all debate and forced a vote. We were about to substantially change alcohol law in Tennessee for the first time in 70 years with no discussion, no question, and no comment – not one syllable and with no amendments considered. It was unacceptable. It was just wrong. I've been taking you-know-what ever since, but my conscience is clear. I sleep just fine. I say again, I was not elected to come down here and just ram legislation through.

TT&C: There seems to be an undercurrent saying that the wine bill might come back. Is that still being discussed?

Hill: It hasn't been discussed with me. You'd have to have a vote to reconsider actions, and I've made it very clear until I get a commitment that we're going to have a real discussion

and a real debate, I'm not going to do anything. I'm not saying you have to adopt amendments, just that they need to be up for discussion.

A few people have emailed me that weren't very nice. If they put their phone number down I'd call them. When I explain what I just explained to you, they're fine, they understand.

TT&C: How do you deal with it when there's a lot of dissent or when others don't agree with you?

Hill: I don't want to intentionally make people mad. But sometimes, after you've exhausted all measures to try to help people, you've just got to do what you've got to do. It's important to try to work out compromises, but sometimes you simply can't.

I work very hard to keep connections with the people in my district, and I think they understand where I'm coming from. There's a note on my desk from a gentleman with a bridge that's been washed out in his area. I don't know if I can help him or not, but I'm going to try. I was home recently and a woman approached me in a diner and asked to set up a meeting. I don't know what she wants to talk about yet, but I could tell it's bad because she didn't want to talk about it in front of people. Am I going to listen to her and see if there's anything I can do to help? Of course I am.

TT&C: What are some of the hot topics that are being deliberated in your committee?

Hill: Annexation is the elephant in the room, so let's just talk about it. You have candidates, who are now elected officials, who ran on a platform of 'stop the city from encroaching on you' and that type of thing. They have to attempt to fulfill those promises.

Do I have any annexation bills filed? No. Have I signed on to any? No. I believe annexation is necessary, but I believe it needs to be responsible and it needs to be respectful. I think you have a plethora of these annexation bills for two main reasons. One, I think a lot of people made campaign promises and two, you are getting close to the end of 1101 and they want to get to their shot before it ends. I think the makeup of the committee is a contributing factor. You have almost entirely a brand new committee that's never served on the state or local level, me included.

The lack of discussion continues to be a problem. For example, today when I ran the subcommittee for a few minutes there were three or four annexation bills under consideration. No one asked a question—not one on either side of the issue. It has shocked me to no end to see how many of these bills have gotten through and moved on.

TT&C: Some members of the TN General Assembly view local governments as political subdivision and partners with the state, while others see it more as ruler-subject relationship and local governments are subjects of the state. What camp or school of thought would you say that you follow?

Hill: Neither one. I'm a big student of Tennessee history. When someone says that cities are creations of the state they are correct. You can't deny it, it's a historical fact. It doesn't mean that cities are to be subservient and beat down within an inch of their lives. Many of our cities are the economic drivers in their communities. If we aren't careful, we're going to do what they did in the 1980s and it's going to be state versus cities. In that case, the state will always win, just by the makeup of this legislature. We don't need to be so adversarial on both sides. It all comes back to being in a partnership. We are all in this thing together for heaven's sake.

Here's a good example of a partnership that works. Johnston City Transit, JCT, is one of the best run operations I've ever known. They leverage the local, state and federal monies in a way that should be the envy of all governments. They find ways to use it to buy new buses, keep the routes, keep the fares low and serve more people. It's a great microcosmic example of partnership.

TT&C: How would you describe your relationships with city officials in your district?

Hill: It's good, and I think it's getting better. It's a balance. The city needs and wants things. If their wishes don't come through, it has nothing to do with lack of desire or will. Sometimes there's no more money and sometimes somebody else got the money.

I have a very good relationship with the police chief of Johnson City and a very good relationship with the firefighters, police officers, EMS workers and first responders. I think city resident-wise I do just fine or I wouldn't be sitting here.

I understand that the annexation issue is getting some people worked up. I believe they will be able to separate the issue and understand there are certain things I have to do as a chairman versus being an individual legislator. For example, one of the legislators bringing an annexation bill represents the other half of Johnson City. This is the kind of thing that makes my role immensely more complicated.

TT&C: What legislation have you passed for municipalities in your district?

Hill: Nothing this year. I try to be real careful about it because I'm the chairman.