6,250 subscribers www.TML1.org Volume 73, Number 4 April 2022



Tennessee cities call for return of sales tax revenues

BY DR. KEN MOORE Franklin Mayor & TML President

Tennessee's cities and towns play a critical role in enhancing the state's economy by acting as engines of economic growth, prosperity and competitiveness. Our state officials know this as 90% of sales tax revenue is generated by sales at local restaurants, grocery stores, retail and other businesses. And with no income tax, the sales tax is the No. 1 source of revenue the state of Tennessee uses to balance its budget and to fund essential programs and services.

Local, municipal taxes - primarily the property tax - pay for police, fire, street maintenance, water and sewer, schools, parks, libraries and other amenities - all the ingredients that attract and retain businesses and make Tennessee's communities desirable places for people to raise a family, start a business, and visit.

But as state government enjoys continued billion-dollar surpluses, our towns and cities are worried how they will continue to keep up with the investments needed that make Tennessee's fiscal health possible.

The rising costs associated with paving our roads, keeping our communities safe, maintaining our parks, and providing for weekly garbage pickup, continue to put pressures on our ability to provide basic city services.

Two pieces of legislation that have been introduced in both the House and Senate, if passed, will return millions of dollars in sales tax revenues to all cities and towns, easing the pressures on the local property tax. Each dollar of shared revenues returned to a community is a dollar less in local taxes that municipal taxpayers must pay.

In 2002 to address a serious budget crisis, the state of Tennessee altered its 55-year revenue-sharing relationship with local municipalities by increasing the sales tax rate to 7% from 6%, but keeping all the new revenue collected for the state's general fund. Additionally, the state capped the local government portion on single item sales and retained the state's 7% levy as well as the local option tax (2.75%)



Dr. Ken Moore

on purchases between \$1,600 and \$3,200.

In the 20 years since these austere measures were enacted, nearly \$2 billion in additional sales tax collections have been realized by the state -- \$2 billion that would have benefitted local taxpayers had the historical relationship not been altered in 2002.

Addressing a temporary state budget shortfall and propping up the state's emergency stopgaps long after the need has passed has placed and continues to place an increased burden on cities to raise revenue through property taxes and force city residents to shoulder a greater share of the burden for the operation of their own local gov-

City mayors, council members, and commissioners across the state are seeking the revenue-sharing relationship between state and local government to be applied to 100% of sales tax revenue that flows into the state's general fund.

If the state returned to sharing all of the sales tax revenue, it would provide relief to local taxpayers, allow local governments to meet funding demands that are necessary to maintain vital infrastructure, provide essential services to our citizens, fuel economic expansion, and afford the quality of life that has allowed this state to

Now is the time for the General Assembly to restore the historic revenue sharing relationship with local governments by fully sharing state shared revenues, and by also returning the local share of the Single Article Tax back to local governments. There has never been a better time fiscally to return the share of funding to the communities that help make this state great.

CIT training produces positive outcomes for first responders, citizens, and families

By KATE COIL

TML Communications Specialist

To ensure engagement with individuals experiencing mental health crises have positive outcomes, more law enforcement agencies and first responder units are participating in crisis intervention team (CIT) training.

Overall, 43.8 million adults in the U.S. experience some type of mental illness every year with nearly 10 million Americans struggling with serious or ongoing mental health issues - numbers exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

A recent survey of law enforcement agencies found that approximately 15% of all emergency calls are related to a mental health incident. Nearly a quarter of all individuals killed in officer-involved incidents are having a mental crisis at the time and those with mental health issues are 16 times more likely to be killed than any other type of suspect profile.

Following a series of nationally publicized incidents where interactions between mentally-ill individuals and law enforcement officers produced negative results, more and more agencies are trying to ensure their officers are trained to deal with these situations and produce a good outcome for everyone involved.

CIT training has its origins in Tennessee with the "Memphis Model," which was created through a partnership with officers with the Memphis Police Department, the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TDMHSAS), the Tennessee Department of Correction, and Tennessee's chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Health (NAMI-TN).

Kim Rush King, crime intervention team director with the Na-



CIT or crisis intervention team training can help produce positive outcomes for interactions between first responders and citizens experiencing mental health issues. Approximately 15% of all emergency calls are related to a mental health crisis with a growing number of Americans experiencing mental health issues following the pandemic.

tional Alliance on Mental Health's (NAMI) Tennessee chapter, said the goal of CIT training is to bring various resources and community agencies together to support police

"It really started because between 1986 and 1987 there were four major incidents between the Memphis Police Department and people who were mentally ill that did not end well," Rush King said. "After the very last incident in 1987, NAMI-TN's Memphis affiliate went to the Memphis Police Department and said I think everyone has realized this isn't the fault of law enforcement because law enforcement has never been trained to handle someone in a mental health crisis.'

Memphis Police Maj. Sam Cochran, since retired, and University of Memphis psychology professor Dr. Randy Dupont worked together with various community agencies and organizations to create the

"Memphis Model" that provides 40-hours of free, P.O.S.T.-certified training for law enforcement officers on how to improve outcomes during encounters with people living with behavioral health challenges. The model was first established in 1998, and has since spread across the country. Dupont still serves as the director of the Memphis Police Department's and Memphis Fire Department Critical Incident Services.

Lisa Ragan, director of consumer affairs and peer recovery services for the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (TNDMH-SAS), said further investment in the CIT model came for Tennessee in 2017 when the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) gave the state a planning grant aimed at expanding CIT training through work with NAMI-TN.

"That helped revitalize CIT See CIT on Page 6

Decatur Art Trail brings big artistic vision to small city's downtown

By KATE COIL

Leveraging local artists, grant funds, and community partnerships, the town of Decatur has created a local art trail bringing beauty and cheer to locals and visitors.

Laura Smith, city recorder and treasurer for Decatur, said what began as a small project designed to connect town assets has grown into the first phase of a downtown art trail that now includes murals, sidewalks, and a sculpture installation. The genesis of the project was Decatur's involvement in the Chattanooga-based Lyndhurst Foundation's Thriving Communities program.

"As we went through this program, it made us think about community resources, what we wanted for the community, and things we could do to enhance it," Smith said. "We decided to focus on downtown Decatur, which is the block that encircles the Meigs County Courthouse and includes the Decatur Municipal Building. We have a music stage here and have held a summer concert series here for a few years. It inspired us to put more art in the area to make it a more enjoyable place to visit."

Decatur officials used grand funds from the Lyndhurst Foundation to add two murals to the downtown area, one honoring veterans from the local area on the public library and a second in the style of a vintage postcard on the city's Masonic Lodge Building. The lodge mural showcases important aspects of local history and culture and is also near the Meigs County Historical Museum. These murals were painted by Athens-based artists Stephanie Burchfield and Donovan Klaaren.

Other funds were used to paint downtown street lights. Grace Blevens, an artist and middle school teacher who lives in Decatur, was chosen as the artist for the utility pole project. She later



The finishing touches are put on the new butterfly sculpture installation at Decatur's Veterans Park. The scultpure is the newest feature of the Decatur Art Walk. Knoxville-based artists Katie Dirnabuer and Mike Jewell, who operate the business Stolen Streetlights, came up with the idea of the sculpture.

contributed a lake scene mural to downtown as well.

With the success of these initial projects, Smith said the city then sought and received grant funds from the Tennessee Arts Commission to continue the artistic momentum downtown.

"The Tennessee Arts Commission is always a great resource for us, and we love them," she said. "They had money to put toward our next project, which was adding onto the murals downtown. We wanted to create the Decatur Art Trail that would connect our downtown area to our Veterans Memorial Park, which is our small city park."

The sidewalk that connects downtown Decatur to both Veterans Memorial Park and the local middle school then became the newest community canvas. Local high school and college students McKenzie Plank, Sara Plank, and Alisha Paxton painted the new

sidewalk art with McKenzie Plank and Sara Plank creating an accompanying Welcome Mural.

"In addition to just wanting to beautify the area, we want people to walk," Smith said. "We want to be a more walkable community and for everyone to get out and be more active. We came up with the idea of starting our art trail in downtown and added painting on the sidewalk. We had great local artists with amazing talent do that for us. We gave them a little direction, but basically told them we wanted something bright and fun. They came up with the design and painted every few squares of sidewalk then the Welcome Mural."

With four murals, utility pole art, and sidewalk art, a new sculpture recently installed at Veterans Park has rounded out what Decatur officials are dubbing the "first phase" of the city's art walk. Knoxville-based artists Katie Dirnabuer See **DECATUR** on Page 3

Morristown's Senter first woman to chair TMBF

Morristown Councilmember Kay Senter has been selected as the new chair of the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund (TMBF), the first woman to be named to that

Senter said she is excited to take on her new role with TMBF and to help local governments across Tennessee.

"I am incredibly honored to be selected to chair the TMBF Board," Senter said. "Over the years the Bond Fund has provided expertise in funding opportunities to cities and counties across the state of Tennessee. To be a part of an organization that continually strives to expand services and lower the cost of borrowing for our Tennessee cities and counties, now and in the future, is both humbling and tremendously exciting."

Senter first joined the TMBF Board in 2011. She has served in municipal government for 29 years, first elected to the Morristown City Council in 1993. During her tenure on the Morristown Council, she has served as vice-mayor and chaired the Morristown Finance Committee for several terms. She has also served as a past president of the Tennessee Municipal League and on the board of Public Entity Partners, formerly the Tennessee Risk Management Pool.

TMBF President and CEO

Kay Senter

Wade Morrell praised Senter's selection as the new board chairman.

"Kay has been an incredible director whose wealth of experience, unwavering integrity, and expert judgment have been invaluable to the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund since she first joined our Board in 2011," Morrell said. "Kay is the perfect choice for chairman of the board, and I am confident the Bond Fund is well-positioned for continued success under her leadership and guidance. It is a distinct honor to work with Kay and our many other talented directors, and I am incredibly grateful for the support and wise counsel they continue to provide."

Morrell also thanked Huntingdon Mayor Dale Kelley, who recently stepped down from the See SENTER on Page 7

NEWS ACROSS TENNESSEE



BOLIVAR

The city of Bolivarhas been awarded a \$595,675 grant through the Tennessee Department of Transportation's (TDOT) Multimodal Access Grant program. The grant is part of the city's 2021 Multimodal Access proposal, which will create a pedestrian walkway in east Bolivar from Third Street to Sand Beach Lake. The purpose of the walkway fulfills several local needs, including supporting and encouraging pedestrian transportation, promoting healthy lifestyle changes, and providing safe walking access from Bolivar's historic downtown area to the Sand Beach Lake Park and recreation area.

BRISTOL

The reptile and amphibian diversity of a Bristol municipal park will be the focus of a forthcoming scientific paper in the Southeastern Naturalist. Researchers from the Nature Center at Steele Creek Park and Northeast State Community College have authored the paper using a decades' worth of data collected from the park, which will aid in conservation efforts for the entire region. The study includes a list of the 41 reptile and amphibian species known to live within the park, including nine species new to Sullivan County. Research conducted for the paper was supported by the city of Bristol and Friends of Steele Creek Nature Center and Park.

CLARKSVILLE

Top American credit rating agency, Fitch Ratings Inc., announced it upgraded the city of Clarksville's new and outstanding general obligation (GO) bonds to 'AA+' with Outlook Stable from 'AA' on March 17. The agency reported the upgrade is based on the economic expansion and diversification rooted in the rapid population and tax base growth taking place within city limits. Fitch is confident in the city's ability to maintain a strong gap-closing capacity based on the city's history of strong levels of reserves, manageable fixed carrying costs, and demonstrated willingness to raise revenues. The upgrade from Fitch comes after Moody's Investors Service released on March 14 the city's Aa2 rating, referencing the same GO bonds. The upgrade from Fitch and assigned Aa2 rating from Moody's reaffirms the city's solid financial position with a healthy reserve and liquidity levels. For more information on the Fitch Ratings for the city of Clarksville, visit https://www.fitchratings. com/entity/clarksville-tn-99969.

COLUMBIA

Visit Columbia has launched the new Columbia Cultural Trail App, a self-guided tour takes visitors around Downtown Columbia and through the Columbia Arts District to explore the city's arts, music, rich culture, and history. Users will find a variety of murals, cultural places of interest, historical markers, live music venues, and more points of interest after downloading the free app from Google Play or Apple. The trail is approximately 3.5 miles round trip with an average walking time of 1 hour and 15 minutes. Some might prefer to drive the tour and park at select points of interest for a more in-depth exploration. The design of the app is also user-friendly, fresh, and modern making it easy to use and navigate. The app allows visitors to explore and learn about the community, while also allowing them to experience the arts and culture of Columbia hand in hand. The new Cultural Trail app is available for free download on your smartphone or tablet at https://apple.co/3H7Y4yc or search "Visit Columbia, TN" on the device's app store.

KNOXVILLE

ATC Drivetrain officials announced the company has selected Knoxville as the location for its newest manufacturing facility. ATC Drivetrain, a leading global independent remanufacturer of automotive powertrain and drivetrain systems, will invest \$8.3 million and create 218 new manufacturing jobs in Knox

County over the next five years. This is the latest of several new investments ATC Drivetrain has made recently, including the implementation of new technologies and capabilities in the global battery and electric vehicle powertrain market and an increased presence in the commercial vehicle market. ATC Drivetrain offers original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) a local solution by utilizing a combination of progressive engineering and state-of-the-art equipment to produce like new transmissions and engines. The site is scheduled to begin production in April 2022 and will support the company's growing remanufacturing and battery life cycle management businesses. Founded in 1938 and headquartered in Farmington Hills, Michigan, ATC Drivetrain supplies remanufacturing products and services to various international blue-chip automakers. In addition to operations in Europe and Asia, the Knoxville facility will be ATC Drivetrain's third manufacturing facility in the U.S. ATC Drivetrain currently operates two manufacturing facilities and a distribution center in Oklahoma City, Okla.

LEBANON

Vanderbilt LifeFlight has moved its fixed-wing airplane ambulance to the Lebanon Municipal Airport, allowing crews to respond more quickly to emergency requests in Middle Tennessee. The move was made because the Nashville International Airport's growth has led to more traffic, increasing the time Vanderbilt has to spend on refueling and taking off. Along with the airplane itself, Lebanon Municipal Airport will also house the Vanderbilt LifeFlight staff of five pilots, two mechanics, and 10 medical crew members. There are an additional eight Vanderbilt LifeFlight helicopters located at airports around the Middle Tennessee region. The hospital has offered the LifeFlight service since 2004.

NASHVILLE

The city of Nashville has agreed to acquire the Global Mall at the Crossings, formerly known as Hickory Hollow Mall, with the intention of leasing 600,000 square feet to Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC) to provide healthcare related services and retail space. The purchase is the latest in a series of municipal investments in southeast Nashville including a new city park and a new police precinct. Once the largest retail space in the state of Tennessee, the mall site will also include dedicated community space such as arts facilities, after-school youth programming, childcare, and municipal offices. The redevelopment would add to facilities already including Nashville State Community College, the Ford Ice Center, the Southeast Community Center, and the Nashville Public Library Southeast Branch.

SPRING HILL

GM Spring Hill has been chosen as the manufacturing site for the all-electric Cadillac Lyriq, the first electric Cadillac vehicle. The Cadillac Lyriq is produced alongside conventional models, including the Cadillac XT5, Cadillac XT6 and GMC Acadia. More electric models might be added at a later point, as the plant's total manufacturing capacity is estimated at nearly 200,000 per year. Customer deliveries of the limited-edition Cadillac Lyriq are expected to start in the first half of this year with the initial batch of reservations filling up in just over 10 minutes. General Motors investments in Spring Hill, Tennessee includes also a \$2.3 billion Ultium Cells battery gigafactory. It's a joint venture with LG Chem's LG Energy Solution, which is expected to start production in late 2023.

TULLAHOMA

The city of Tullahoma has been recognized along with four other communities as one of the 2022 Great American Defense Communities during the Defense Communities National Summit in Washington, D.C. The city

Gatlinburg welcomes new dog park



Gatlinburg city officials, residents, and their furry friends were on hand to cut the ribbon at the new Dog Park at Mills Park in conjunction with a "St. Pawtrick's Day" event. The Dog Park at Mills Park features a great opportunity for large and small dogs alike to have areas for their enjoyment. The park is divided into two fenced in areas: ones for larger dogs and another area for smaller dogs. Both enclosed areas feature a double-gated entrance to prevent dogs from getting loose. The two areas make up a safe space for dogs and their owners to enjoy. Both the large and small dog parks offer a fenced-in area for the dogs to exercise and play off leash. Both facilities feature shaded areas, benches, and dog-waste bags and trash cans. Water fountains are accessible outside the gates of both the large and small dog parks. Funds for the park came from a \$25,000 Dog Park Dash grant from the Boyd Foundation and additional funds from the city of Gatlinburg.

JCFD receives CFAI accreditation



The Johnson City Fire Department announced that for the first time in department history it has received Accredited Agency status with the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) for meeting the criteria established through the CFAI's voluntary self-assessment and accreditation program. JCFD is only the third agency in the state to receive this designation and also maintain an ISO rating of 1. Pictured left to right, Johnson City District Chief Jason Powell, Lt. Adam Momberger, Interim Fire Chief David Bell, and City Manager Cathy Ball.

Nolensville holds push-in ceremony



The town of Nolensville has held the first push-in ceremony for a fire truck only months after the establishment of it's first municipal fire department. The new, state-of-the-art fire engine – dubbed Engine 16 – was officially put into service through the ceremony, which is a traditional way for fire departments to welcome new equipment.

was honored for its support of Arnold Air Force Base, the only active-duty Air Force base in the state of Tennessee. Arnold AFB and the Arnold Engineering Development Center have contributed to the development of practically every one of the nation's top priority aerospace programs. The current National Defense Strategy has multiple objectives that require the support of AEDC ranges, test facilities, and a skilled workforce knowledgeable in hypersonic flight, directed energy, and the needs of next generation aircraft. The city partners with the base and other community organizations to improve the lives of airmen, veterans, guard, and reserve members and their families as well as AED complex volunteers. For more information on this program, please visit defensecommunities.

org/gadc.

Clarksville to replace oldest playground with Rotary funds



The Clarksville Rotary Foundation has been awarded a \$239,000 Clarksville-Montgomery County (CMC) Community Health Foundation grant to fund the renovation of Clarksville's Coy Lacy Park. The donation will enable Clarksville Parks and Recreation to replace all existing playground equipment with inclusive equipment that is entirely American Disability Act (ADA) accessible, including surface materials that exceed ADA guidelines for wheelchair accessibility. Constructed in 1994, the Coy Lacy Park playground is the oldest in the city park system.

Smyrna explores, preserves history in new docu-series

By KATE COILTML Communications Specialist

The town of Smyrna recently produced and completed a new, limited series preserving the community's oral history through conversations with longtime residents. The History of Smyrna series is produced in-house by the Smyrna Media Services Department and will premiere eight episodes now through August 2022.

"With the exponential growth we are experiencing in our community, preserving its history is extremely important," said Mayor Mary Esther Reed. "The format of this series allowed us to capture the stories of those who shaped our community and pass that legacy on to future generations."

The idea to preserve Smyrna's rich history was an interest of Town Manager Brian D. Hercules, and after talks with Mayor Reed and local residents, the planning of a documentary series took off.

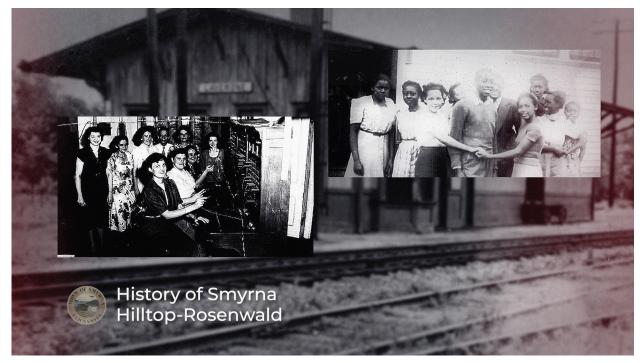
"I think it's important to remember where we came from," Hercules said. "Today we are a community of 54,000 people and really becoming our own city. For years we were seen sort as a step-child to Nashville or Murfreesboro. The mayor and council supported the project. We knew it would be more than one or two interviews. We needed to put meat on the bone so that people understand who we are and where we came from."

To host the series, the town asked three longtime local residents to bring their voices and experiences to the program. Marion Appleton grew up in Smyrna's black community and has been a longtime community leader and frequent face at town council meetings. Patsy Brown moved to Smyrna with her husband when he located to the air base as a member of the United States Air Force. She has been a homemaker and volunteer in the community for decades. Kenneth "Coon" Victory is the father of Mayor Mary Esther Reed and has been a respected member of the small business community in Smyrna, owning a lumber yard and serving on number boards and commissions including the Smyrna City Council.

"We came up with specific topics for each segment – like the depot district, athletics, and all aspects of the community," Hercules said. "We helped guide them with the topics, but we didn't get in their way. They did a great job of including people from all



From left to right, longtime Smyrna residents Marion Appleton, Kenneth "Coon" Victory, Donny Holland, and Patsy Brown are some of those featured in the eight-part series chronicling the early history of Smyrna. Appleton, Brown, and Victory were selected as the hosts of the series because of their longtime involvement in various areas of the community.



Photos showing the history of the Hilltop neighborhood and its Rosenwald school as part of the episode on the subject. The series covers a variety of aspects of Smyrna history including the U.S. Air Force base that became the municipal airport, the downtown depot district, local businesses, education and athletics, and charting the communities growth throughout the 1900s.

parts of the community. Everyone brought different aspects to the table that blended very well."

The series chronicles Smyrna's growth and evolution from a train depot stop to a town centered around a World War II Air Force base to a community without a major industry to the opening of the Nissan plant and the changes brought to Smyrna by the automotive industry. Episodes highlight various topics like the history of individual neighborhoods and schools, the business

community, local athletics, local businesses, and the people who made these places memorable.

Each episode features between 10 to 12 local residents telling their stories like 96-year-old World War II veteran Charles Lee Williams. Hercules said one of the goals of the series has been to capture the stories of some of Smyrna's oldest residents before they are lost. Filming locations have included city-owned locations and local landmarks like the Smyrna Airport, the Smyrna De-

pot District, and the Rosenwald Community Center.

In addition to being interviewed, participants brought their own pieces of Smyrna history.

"Some of the folks we interviewed came in with pictures, drawings and memorabilia," Hercules said. "It was amazing to watch them remember those old days."

After filming was completed in November, the town hosted a special watch party for those inTo Watch "History of Smyrna"

Visit the town's YouTube channel at https://www.youtube.com/user/townofsmyrna)

Watch live from the town's website at townofsmyrna.org/departments/media-services)

volved in making the series with each participant receiving their own Oscar statute to thank them for participating.

"This has been a fun project that has really engaged the community," Hercules said. "The community has just been phenomenal; they love what we've done. It's really grown into something that I don't think anybody expected when we first started."

The feedback for the project has been overwhelmingly positive.

"People appreciate that the town brought something to light that is going to be a part of our history. It prolongs our history. It has preserved our history. When you have the opportunity to talk with the founding fathers of our community and hear their stories, it's amazing. It's wonderful to see them light up when they talk about how proud they are of our town."

Hercules said the city may continue to make a couple episodes of the series a year to create a further backlog of Smyrna history as told by local residents.

The series was filmed and produced by town's media production team – consisting of Smyrna Public Information Officer Kathy Ferrell and Media Program Producer Brett Beauregard.

Those who want to watch the History of Smyrna series can do so on the town's YouTube channel (https://www.youtube.com/user/townofsmyrna) or live from the town's website (town-ofsmyrna.org/departments/me-dia-services).

Decatur Art Trail brings big artistic vision to small city

DECATUR from Page 1

and Mike Jewell, who operate the business Stolen Streetlights, came up with the idea of the butterfly sculpture.

"We wanted it to be bright, fun, and family-friendly," Smith said. "They came up with the idea of this butterfly that can also be a photo opportunity. People can take their photo in front of it. I had no idea what a sculpture would cost or what we could get for our small budget. We had \$10,000 and that was it; we didn't have any money to match it. Our butterfly sculpture is amazing; it's perfect for our park."

While the trail wasn't made overnight, Smith said being open to available opportunities has helped Decatur slowly build something unique.

"We are a small town that has a small budget. We don't have a lot of money to put toward art, even though we love it. Sometimes the have-tos come before what we like to do. We have to take opportunities as they come with funding. Looking back and seeing how many stages we went through to create something we can call a trail is amazing. It was important to build relationships with the Thriving Communities program, the Lyndhurst Foundation, and the Tennessee Arts Commission. They saw our passion for wanting to do something in our town. Small things and small changes make a big difference in a town our size."

As the art trail has grown, Smith said she has also seen an increase in other beautification efforts downtown from businesses investing more in landscaping and the local school's FFA chapter has both offered to take care of downtown planters and painted those



By leveraging grant funds overtime, Decatur was able to slowly grow its public art into a walkable area of downtown. Murals, sidewalk blocks, lightfixtures, planters, and most recently a sculpture now make up the fun, family-friendly Decatur Art Walk.

planters to fit in with the art theme.

"Those partners are amazing in a small town where we all know each other," Smith said. "Everyone has their own job to do and gets focused on their own area of the world. It's great to have partnerships where we can all work together for the betterment of everyone."

Members of the public have also expressed how much they enjoy the trail.

"A lot of our feedback comes from when we post pictures on our town's Facebook page," she said. "Everybody loves it and thinks it really adds to the community. They appreciate anything that brightens up the town that we love so much. Small town people have so much pride in where they come from and where they live. Seeing something that beautifies their town makes them proud."

Smith said public art doesn't

have to be solely the domain of bigger cities and that it is just as important for smaller communities to have public art for citizens to enjoy.

"We completely rely on grants to fund most of our art if not all of it," Smith said. "Sometimes we get caught up in this is the way something has always been or our town has always looked this way. We sometimes think of art and murals as being a big city thing, but we can have that in Decatur.

We are one of the smallest towns around and people love it. I work in downtown and I often see people taking pictures with the mural or at the park in front of the butterfly. You don't have to go to a big city like Nashville to take a picture at a mural for Instagram. Those of us who live in Decatur can still have a piece of that."

To see more of the Decatur Art Trail, visit https://ttc.tml1.org/.



PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Tracy Baker, assistant city administrator for Sevierville, has been named an International City/County Management



Tracy Baker

Association (ICMA) Woman to Know for 2022. Baker has served as Sevierville's assistant city administrator since 2010 and before that was an MTAS Postgraduate Fellow in the Southeast Tennessee area. She holds a master's of public administration for the University of Tennessee at Knoxville and two bachelor's degrees from the University of Tennessee at Martin. Baker is the past president of the Tennessee City Management Association.

Buddy Billings is retiring as chief of the Collierville Fire Department after more than four decades of service. Bill-



Buddy Billings

ings' last day with the department is June 30. He began his career as a police dispatcher with the city in 1978 and then transferred to the fire department in 1979. He had earned the rank of fire marshal by 1995. He has been chief of the department for the last six years.

Archie Brummit, fire chief for the city of Clinton, has retired after 44 years as a firefighter. Brummit joined the



Archie Brummit

Clinton Fire Department in 1978 as a firefighter, rising to the rank of captain in 1986 and chief in 1996. Under his leadership, the department's staff has increased, more than 8 new vehicles have been purchased for the department, the department headquarters has been renovated, and the city's ISO rating has gone from a 4 to a 2.

Freeman Cooper, former Chattanooga Police Chief, died Thursday, March 24, 2022, after a battle with Stage IV lung cancer.



Freeman Cooper

Cooper retired as the CPD chief in 2010. He had served with CPD since 1982, working in patrol, internal affairs, training, and serving as executive chief in 2004 before being appointed chief of the department in 2007.

Doug Edwards, the director of administration, Human Resources, and benefits for the city of Lawrence-



Doug Edwards

burg, will be leaving to assume a human resources director position with a construction company in Fayetteville. Edwards, a retired U.S. Army officer and West Point graduate, has served the city of Lawrenceburg for the past 11 years and served as the state conference chair for the TPMA's annual conference in 2018

Steve Glover, at-large Metro Nashville councilmember, has resigned from his position due to ongoing health issues.



Steve Glover

Glover represented Nashville's District 12 from 2011 until 2019 and then was elected as an at-large councilman in 2019. Before serving on the Metro Nashville City Council, Glover also served on the Metro Nashville School Board.

Richard Hickey has been selected as the new chief of the Brentwood Police Department, following the retirement of Chief Jeff Hughes after 36 years with the city. Hickey

is the fourth chief of police since the department as founded in 1971. He has been with the city of Brentwood since 1991 and cel-



Richard Hickey

ebrated 30 years with the city last year. During his career, Hickey has served as a patrol officer, field training officer, crime scene technician, investigator, detective, lieutenant, captain, and most recently as the department's assistant chief. Hickey received his bachelor's degree in communications from Middle Tennessee State University and is also a graduate of the FBI National Academy.

Richard Howell has retired as police chief of Fayetteville after a more than three-decade career in law enforce-



Richard Howell

ment. Howell has been with the Fayetteville Police Department for 32 years and not only served as the city's police chief but also spent seven months as the interim city administrator for Fayetteville. Police Commander Jesse Casias will be taking over the interim police chief duties until a permanent replacement can be found.

Kevin L. Helms was recently recognized by the International City/ County Management Association (IC-



Kevin Helms

CMA) for 25 years of service to local government. A native of Alabama, Helms has spent his entire career serving Tennessee cities. He has served as city manager/administrator of Clifton, Fayetteville, Oak Hill, and Harriman. In Harriman, Helms served as the city's first city manager following a charter change which created the position in 2014. Helms has previously served as president of the Tennessee City Management Association (TCMA) and on the Tennessee Municipal League Board of Directors and Executive Committee. Late last year Helms accepted a newly created position as project manager for the city of Athens.

Mark Hutton has been appointed to fill a vacant seat on the Bristol City Council. A local minister, Hutton has resigned



Mark Hutton

his seat on the Sullivan County Commission to take the city council seat. Hutton is a Bristol native and will be taking the seat vacated by Councilman Chad Keen, who resigned the seat in February to pursue other interests. Hutton will serve the remainder of Keen's term, which ends in November. Hutton holds a bachelor's degree in biology and English literature from Carson-Newman, a master's degree in literature from ETSU, a master's in divinity from Samford University, and a doctorate from Covenant Theological Seminary. Hutton has served on the Sullivan County Commission since 2018.

Kelli Johnson has been selected as the main street manager for the city of Columbia, a newly-created, full-time position with the city.

A Columbia native, Johnson's background is in marketing and events, having worked with nonprofit and for-prof-



Kelli Johnson

it organizations including the Spring Hill Chamber of Commerce. She graduated from Columbia Academy and went on to Lipscomb University where she attained her bachelor's degree in strategic communication.

Chad Keen, a longtime city councilman for the city of Bristol, is resigning after nearly nine years of service. Keen



Chad Keen

was first elected to the city council in 2013 and served as Bristol's mayor from 2016 to 2017. Keen said he is resigning his seat to focus on future professional and personal endeavors. Keen was first elected to the city council in 2013 and later served as mayor in 2016 and 2017. He has represented the city on numerous boards and commissions A lifelong resident of Bristol, Keen earned his degree in business administration from King University. Following a career in manufacturing, he founded his own business, Keen Promotions, which he has operated for more than 20 years.

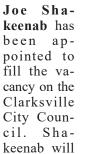
Joe Reagan, former Brentwood mayor and commissioner whose community service earned him the nick-

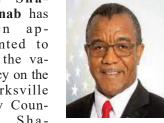


Joe Reagan

March 17, 2022, at the age of 94. Reagan began his service to the city of Brentwood in 1993 after running for an at-large commission seat when his wife Betty left her own seat on the board. He served on the commission until 2011, serving as vice mayor and mayor of the city. He decided not to seek re-election when the symptoms of the polio he had contracted as a child impacted his health. In addition to serving as a city commissioner and mayor, Reagan was on the original Williamson County Parks and Recreation Board, the Brentwood Park Board and was instrumental in forming the partnership between Williamson County and the city of Brentwood to construct the Indoor Soccer Arena at Crockett Park. The soccer arena was renamed the Joe Reagan Field in his honor in 2019.

name "Mr. Brentwood," died





Joe Shakeenab

represent the city's Ward 11 after Councilwoman Ashlee Evans resigned the seat in February when her husband was relocated to Fort Bragg. A Mississippi native, Shakeenab served more than 28 years in the military including 20 in special forces. He is also president of the Austin Peay State University (APSU) National Alumni Association and Military Alumni Chapter. He is also a member of the APSU Tower Club and serves in various committees, such as the Comprehensive Capital Campaign Committee and African American

Newport Mayor Dykes lauded with Cocke County Citizenship Award



Newport Mayor Roland Dykes III received the Cocke County Citizenship Award from the Senior Citizens Home Assistance Service (SCHAS) to honor his service work in the community. In addition to his role as the mayor of Newport, Dykes was noted for his leadership roles as president of the Tanner Preservation Alliance and Tennessee Picnic Association, a Black and African-American historical society that holds a homecoming festival near the anniversary of emancipation in Tennessee. Dykes father is a previous recipient of the award and also a previous mayor of Newport.

Columbia Vice Mayor Martin honored as Woman of Influence

Dr. Christa Martin, vice mayor of Columbia, has been selected as the one of the 2022 Women of Influence honorees by the Nashville Business Journal.

The award is given out to women leading top companies and nonprofits, supporting their communities, and inspiring those coming behind them. Martin is one of 35 honorees in 10 categories being honored.

Martin is presently the longest serving member of the Columbia City Council having first been appointed in 1992. She represented the city's third ward until she was elected the first black female vice mayor in city history in 2014. Martin has served on the TML Board of Directors and was the inaugural recipient of the Bob Kirk Local Government Leadership Award.

In addition to her service to Columbia, Martin has worked for Columbia State Community College as a programmer analyst, assistant director, and director of



Dr. Christa Martin

computer services since 1979. Martin presently serves as assistant to the president for access and diversity.

She holds numerous degrees including a bachelor's degree and master's degree in information systems from Middle Tennessee State University and a doctorate of education in higher education leadership from Nova Southeastern University.

Culture Center Advisory Committee. Shakeenab holds a bachelor's degree in public management and a master's degree in strategic leadership, both from APSU.

Tamara Steward has been appointed the first chief equity officer for the city of Chattanooga by Mayor Tim Kelly.



Steward will oversee the city's new Department of Equity and Community Engagement as well as the Office of New Americans. A Chattanooga native, Steward holds a bachelor's degree in sociology from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and a master's in business administration from Bryan College. She has previously worked with organizations included the Tennessee Valley Authority, Hamilton Health Care System, and Chattanooga Area Regional Transportation Authority.

Terry Sweat has retired as finance director for the city of La Follette after 31 years with the city. Sweat will cease his full-



Terry Sweat

time duties with the city but said he will continue to work on a part-time basis. In addition to serving as La Follette's finance director, Sweat has served as the interim city administrator. Sweat is a La Follette

native and a graduate of La Follette High School.

Barry Turner has been s e l e c t e d as the new director of the city of Cookeville's Water Quality and Control Depart-

Barry Turner

ment and will serve as the department's designee until the retirement of current director Ronnie Kelly. Turner holds a civil engineering degree from Tennessee Tech University. He has been employed by the city of Cookeville for 33 years.

Donna Turner has been hired as the new police chief for the city of Covington, the first woman to hold the of-



fice. Turner earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from the University of Tennessee at Martin in 1997 and a master's in criminal justice with a focus in law enforcement administration from the University of Memphis in 2004. She has worked for both the city of Martin and city of Jackson's police departments, the Madison County Sheriff's Office, the Tipton County Sheriff's Office, the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, and most recently led the Tennessee Department of Corrections Office of Investigations and Conduct.

VAUF()

J. R. Wauford & Company, Consulting Engineers, Inc.

Data-driven approach can help reduce homelessness

By KATE COIL TML Communications Specialist

Nonprofit organizations can be valuable partners for mayors in Tennessee and across the nation who are working to solve issues surrounding homelessness in their communities.

NLC hosted a webinar "Survey Findings on Mayors and Homelessness: Challenges, Opportunities, and Solutions" to discuss how local governments can work with community-based initiatives to find effective solutions to this problem.

One participant in this discussion was Jake Maguire, the co-director of Built for Zero, a community-based solutions approach to homelessness that has formed a network of 90 city and county governments nationwide. The goal of the organization is to help communities bring the amount of chronically homeless and veteran homeless individuals to zero. So far, 14 communities partnering with the organization have met this goal.

"Communities often start by thinking about technical intervention like do we have enough housing or do we have the right services," Maguire said. "Actually, the thing that is needed to make those kinds of things add up to a result is by putting them into the right kind of operating system or management system."

In his experience, Maguire said successful communities are those who have:

- A shared measurable aim,
- Nimble, integrated team,
- Rapid and granular feedback loop including frequent data
- Proven technical strategies,
- Adequate and flexible resources.

Many cities have numerous nonprofits, social service agencies, and other groups that touch issues of homelessness in some way, but they are separate entities with different revenue streams who rarely report to each other or a single group.

"One of the first challenges for a mayor is how you exercise meaningful authority over a problem with a landscape of actors I have to work my way through," Maguire said. "Because the landscape of authority is so fragmented in communities there is often no integrated approach to solving this problem. If you are a mayor who is trying to streamline processes and make services effective and clear, you run into the challenge right away of such a fragmented landscape of authority. Because no one person is formally in charge, the pieces are sort of thrown together in a slapdash manner that is not designed to create any kind of outcome."

By collecting data monthly rather than yearly, the city of Chattanooga was able to more effectively target homeless veterans with services they need and see what issues were causing previously housed individuals to lose that housing.

Mayors across the nation have reported they feel there is a lack of data surrounding homelessness



Nonprofit Built for Zero is showing how more data collection can help reduce homelessness in communities across the country. The organization helped the city of Chattanooga get to functional zero veteran homelessness through a data-driven approach. By collecting data monthly rather than yearly, the city of Chattanooga was able to more effectively target homeless veterans with services they need and see what issues were causing previously housed individuals to lose that housing.

in their communities, which can make it difficult to measure if efforts to solve the issue are actually working. Rather than one-a-year point-in-time surveys done on the street, Maguire said taking monthover-month data can paint a clearer picture of issues in a community and show whether or not programs are working.

"Homelessness is an incredibly dynamic problem that changes night-by-night," he said. "I think we treat it often like a static policy problem that if we pass a new law or spend money in a new way we will suddenly see the problem go down. It actually has to be managed in a much more real-time way."

One city Maguire said has utilized data to change how it addresses homelessness with success is Chattanooga.

"They were working on reducing and ending veteran homelessness; they set a clear goal," he said. "As they moved from a once-a-year point-in-time count to month-overmonth data they were able to see that number decrease. They dug into that data and started to see where some of the leverage points might be. They identified landlords outreach and bringing more Section 8 landlords to the table. They found processing improvements so as they brought those landlords to the table they could process things more quickly. With relatively little infusion of their own resources they were able to significantly reduce veteran homelessness."

A lack of funding and inadequate resources are another chal-

What Can Elected Leaders Do?

Shared, Measurable

- Use your pulpit to set a clear vision + measurable end state for your community
- Use city contracts + licenses to incentivize data sharing and systemwide participation from all providers

Nimble command center team

Use convening power to get players to a single table Build actionable shared authority

Proven technical strategies

Require evidence-based available funding

Rapid, by-name feedback loop

Demand quality data + release it regularly Brief the press on what you're learning + adjusting each month

Flexible housing + service resources

Incentivize data-targeted housing development Remove barriers to

repurposing funds in

response to data

Through a data-driven approach, Built for Zero has identified several things cities need to do in order to reduce homelessness to functional zero. These steps include setting goals, creating a flexible team, incorporating constant feedback and data, working provable strategies, and flexible resources.

Maguire said inflexible resource streams can also be a problem. The result is city leadership and citizens can be become frustrated or burned out on the issue and look for shortterm solutions that may eliminate evidence of the homeliness problem but do nothing to resolve the problem itself.

The model set up by Chattanooga also allowed an action structure for officials to take action if homeless numbers began to spike again. By identifying inflow and outflow, they were able to identify individuals who had not found success in certain programs or back into the system. Finding that two programs were being overloaded, the city was able to work with other nonprofit organizations to help share resources and burdens to rebalance ratios.

In January 2020, Chattanooga was proud to announce they had reached functional zero for veteran homelessness. The city even received accolades from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for the achievement.

"This achievement is proof that functional zero is within reach anywhere public, private and non-profit partners use data to deploy the

lenge many communities face, but situations and had found their way right resources at the right times to the right Veterans," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs (VA) Robert Wilkie. "Through ongoing collaboration, VA, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and community-centric organizations such as the Chattanooga Regional Homeless Coalition have helped more homeless and atrisk veterans secure and remain in stable housing in recent years than at any other time in history. The VA remains committed to building on this remarkable progress."

For more information, visit https://community.solutions/builtfor-zero/.

No loan is too large or too small



The Town of Livingston has used TMBF programs 14 times since 1996. Most recently, the town closed a \$4,558,635 water and sewer refunding bond issue. By refunding the outstanding bonds, the town saved approximately \$538,000 over the term of the bond. Seated left to right: Linda Mooningham, TMBF Marketing Director and Legal Coordinator, Livingston Mayor Curtis Hayes, and Town Clerk Phyllis Looper.

See us for your special projects needs. (615) 255-1561



The City of Medina closed on a \$500,000 note issued for street paving. It was the first time the city has used any of the TMBF programs. Seated left to right: City Recorder Kim Gilley and Medina Mayor Vance Coleman. Standing: Tommy Green, TMBF Marketing Representative.



CIT training produces positive outcomes for first responders, citizens, and families

throughout the state," Ragan said. "It led to the development of a CIT Task Force on how we could support local communities across the state to adopt the process. Since then, we have received another DOJ grant with NAMI-TN and the department has also added significant funding to support the program."

While many departments are interested in adding CIT training or professionals to their staff, Rush King said not all officials know what to expect when it comes to the program.

'CIT really is all about community partnerships," she said. "In talking with law enforcement officers across the state, when it comes to dealing with a person in a mental health crisis they really don't know where to go. They don't know where their resources are in the community. Usually, the person ends up in either jail or the hospital. We bring community partners and resources together and educate departments. We develop steering committees for these community partners that meet once a month."

The other part of the training is the 40-hour, week-long training program for officers, which is offered at no cost to any department that wants it.

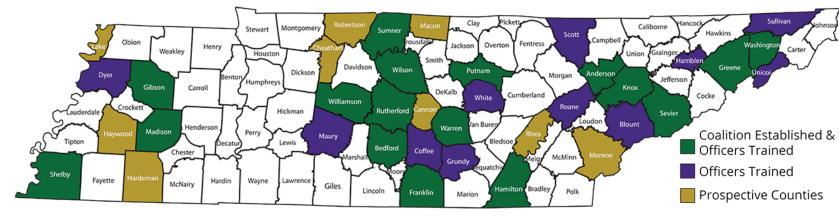
"A lot of the focus is on mental health," Rush King said. "But mental health is a large umbrella, so topics under that might be someone who has dementia but it looks like a psychotic episode. You need to deal with that person differently than a veteran who is dealing from a flashback with PTSD. We do a special hour and a half on autism."

Medications and their effects are also discussed during the training sessions as well as how to recognize the signs of a person who may be self-medicating with non-prescription means.

'We also bring pharmacists and nurse practitioners in to talk about what medications these people might be on," Rush King said. "We might encounter people who are having issues because they don't want to take their medications because of the side effects, so we educate them on what the side effects are and why there is such a cocktail of meds for some conditions. Because law enforcement deals with a lot of illegal substances, we also discuss how a lot of people may have a primary mental health diagnosis with a secondary substance abuse issue. It gives them a way to step back a little bit and explore more of the

Training also brings in those with mental health issues and their family members to discuss their dealings with law enforcement.

"Hearing it from their perspective really resonates with the officers," Rush King said. "We then get into the de-escalation model and role play based on real calls. At the end of the training, we have a graduation ceremony and each county has designed its own pin for officers to wear. When someone with mental health issues sees an officer with that pin, they know they are with someone who has



A map of where law enforcement agencies in Tennessee have already received CIT triainings.

been trained to help them."

Rush King said she has noticed an uptick in the number of agencies seeking out CIT training, especially in rural communities. NAMI-TN held nine trainings averaging around 25-27 officers between August and December 2021 with even more scheduled for this year.

"CIT spreads by word of mouth," she said. "The sheriff of one county will talk to the sheriff of another county next to them. I am getting more calls and emails asking about CIT. That's the beauty of it. I'm especially interested in helping our rural counties in Tennessee."

NAMI-TN has also utilized DOJ funds and a partnership with the Hendersonville Police Department in order to provide data-driven examples of CIT success.

'Through our DOJ grant, we have established a form that collects data," Rush King said. "The Hendersonville Police Department has agreed to do a pilot with us using that form. Now, we are able to track more of the mental health calls that come in. When we dispatch a CIT officer to that call, we are seeing fewer and fewer arrests because those issues are being handled elsewhere. Because of CIT and the training that officers and first responders have received, they are able to recognize symptoms of certain diagnoses as well as ask questions they've never thought of asking before. By keeping that conversation going, you are able to de-escalate the situation and find better solutions."

Rush King said she frequently gets texts or emails not only from officers about how CIT has improved their policing but also from those with mental health issues and their families expressing how CITtrained officers made a difference in their lives.

"I was forwarded a Facebook post from someone in the Upper Cumberland area that was talking about the CIT officer who responded to her and how kind and helpful they were to her," she said. "I forwarded that information on to the police chief. It's hard enough for a person or their family to experience a mental health crisis. It's important to know that when they call law enforcement that their loved one is going to be taken care of, that those officers know and understand because they are trained. Honestly, all of us need to see that somebody

Ragan said knowing local officers are trained in CIT can

Police-Mental Health Collaboration Programs



Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT)

Crisis intervention teams are composed of experienced law enforcement officers who volunteer to receive specialized training to respond to mental health calls. These officers are then dispatched to mental health calls or assist other officers who are not CIT trained.



Co-Responder Teams

Trained law enforcement officers and mental health professionals who respond to mental health calls as a team and generally work together for an entire shift, riding in the same car.



Mobile **Crisis Teams**

Mental health professionals working as a team with specialized training to help stabilize individuals during law enforcement encounters and during crisis situations. Teams can respond to law enforcement or

mental health calls



Case Management **Teams**

Behavioral health professionals, law enforcement officers, peers and others that form a team to coordinate care and develop collaborative solutions to reduce repeat interactions with individuals



Crisis Stabilization Centers

Facilities where law enforcement officers can take individuals experiencing mental health crisis that serve as alternatives to jail and emergency departments.

One of the goals for CIT Training is to identify community organizations that can help support law enforcement responding to mental health calls. By working together, these organizations and law enforcement can help direction those suffering from mental illnesses to resources that will focus on helping their needs rather than incarceration.

be reassuring for members of the public.

"It's incredibly comforting and reassuring to feel like you can turn to the police in a crisis situation and you are going to get someone who is trained appropriately. It is a best-case scenario for someone's loved ones. That's kind of the beauty of the community coalition and local CIT groups that meet regularly. That can include individuals with real experiences, family members,

and others who

can play an active role, making connections and building commu-

CIT training can make a major difference for officers as well.

"CIT does not take the place of officer safety," she said. "It's all about patience, slowing down, and taking the time. The benefit is they learn what resources are available, which is the most amazing thing for many officers. It gives them options they didn't know they had

The CIT Top 10

Interested in implementing a crisis intervention training program? The University of Memphis Crisis Intervention Training Center crafted the CIT Core Elements. Fully developed CIT programs have the following:

- 01. Partnerships among law enforcement, advocacy, and mental health systems
- 02. Community ownership over planning,
- implementation, and networking 03. Policies and procedures
- 04. CIT officers, dispatchers, and
- coordinators 05. CIT training for officers and
- dispatchers Source: Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)

Programs: A Best Practice Guide for Transforming Community Responses to Mental Health Crisis, CIT International, 201 06. Mental health receiving facility

07. Evaluationzand research

08. In-service training 09. Recognition and honors

10. Outreach to develop CIT in other communitie

Known as the Memphis Model, CIT was developed through cooperation between the Memphis Police Department, University of Memphis, and NAMI-TN. Retired Memphis Police Maj. Sam Cochran and University of Memphis psychology professor Dr.

> before. It also reduces arrests and use of force."

While keeping those with mental health issues from incarceration can save tax dollars, Ragan said the most important result from CIT is that it ensures both officers and individuals in crisis go home at the end of the day.

"It absolutely saves lives," Ragan. "It is a proven method. It's a win-win for everyone. People are going to get the care they really

need. They are going to be diverted from incarceration whenever possible. It really improves job satisfaction for the officers themselves. They want to help people, and this gives them the tools to help people in a positive way. It improves community relationships and the community itself."

To learn more about CIT training, visit https://www.namitn. org/ or https://www.tn.gov/behavioral-health/cit.

State releases \$3.6B Transportation Improvement Plan for 2023-2025

Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee and Tennessee Department of Transportation Interim Commissioner Joe Galbato released TDOT's annual three-year transportation program, featuring just over \$3.6 billion in infrastructure investments for 58 individual project phases in 34 counties across the

The program supports Governor Lee's first Executive Order by funding work on 22 highway and bridge projects in economically distressed and at-risk counties.

"Investing in infrastructure is an important part of driving economic opportunity throughout our state," Gov. Lee said. "In addition to core transportation program funding, we've added \$519 million in General Fund dollars for new transportation investments supporting job creation in Tennessee."

The program emphasizes the repair and replacement of bridges, with activities beginning on 34 structures in 17 counties. Nine of those bridges are on the state highway system, with the other 25 on local roads.

The comprehensive program also continues to build on the IMPROVE Act's progress, which provides for infrastructure in-



The proposed three-year TDOT transportation program features \$3.6 billion worth of improvement projects, including construction to several critical state projects, including work near the Blue Oval City site. Funding will also support funding for transit agencies, support for transit services, and incident management programs.

vestments in all 95 counties.

This year's program budgets dollars for 92 of the 962 projects identified in the 2017 legislation. And through the General Fund allocation to the department, three programs supporting 22 additional projects are funded in the state budget.

Construction will begin in FY 2023 on several critical transportation projects across the state: Knox - Blount Counties, Re-

located Alcoa Highway (SR

115/US 129)

- Hamilton County, I-75 Interchange Modification at Hamilton Place Mall
 - Davidson County, Nolensville Pike from Old Hickory Boulevard to Mill Creek (SR

11/US 31A)

- Trousdale County, North of SR 10 to near Cedar Bluff Road Intersection (SR 141)
- Benton County, Camden Bypass to Tennessee River (SR 1/US 70)
- Haywood County, SR 194 (Blue Oval City)

Besides the 2023 budgeted program, partial plans for 2024 and 2025 are included for planning. The comprehensive multimodal program contains components for rail, waterway, and aviation projects, funds statewide initiatives to improve safety, and addresses congestion through our **HELP** and Incident Management Programs.

It also provides funding for transit agencies in all 95 counties supporting both rural and urban transit services throughout Tennessee.

A complete list of projects and programs funded through the 2023-2025 three-year multimodal program can be viewed on the TDOT website at https://www. tn.gov/tdot/program-development-and-administration-home/ program-development-and-administration-state-programs.

STATE **BRIEFS**

Tennessee State Parks had an economic impact of \$2.1 billion in Fiscal Year 2021, as the parks posted 38.5 million visits, according to a report done for the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC). The figures for FY21 show a steady climb in recent years in economic impact and number of visits. Cumulatively in fiscal years 2019-21, Tennessee State Parks had an economic impact of \$4.3 billion, with 109.7 million visits. The figures reflect parks activity through lodging, shopping and recreation spending. Tennessee State Parks is one of only seven state parks systems in the country that do not charge admission fees. The economic impact of Tennessee State Parks in FY2020 was \$1.84 billion with 34.7 million park visits.

The second phase of the Interstate 24 SMART Corridor began on April 3. The work on a total of 67 overhead gantries will prompt overnight lane closures along the corridor from Nashville to Murfreesboro. The gantries will be placed over the east and westbound lanes of the interstate as part of the new Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) throughout the corridor between mile markers 53 and 70. The entirety of the construction is expected to last until November, at which time the gantries will become operational. Stansell Electric Company Inc. will first construct the lane control sign gantries and then install the necessary commu-

Nearly a dozen cities awarded **Traffic Signal Modernization Program grants**

Nearly a dozen cities and one county have been awarded funds from the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) Traffic Signal Modernization program.

The Traffic Signal Modernization Program (TSMP) is a TDOT pilot program designed to help communities and their local traffic signal maintaining agencies modernize existing traffic signal equipment and operations. Total grant funds for the project are capped at \$250,000 and are state contracted with the goal of upgrading signals within a year of project selection.

TDOT announced the municipalities of Camden, Dayton, Decherd, Dunlap, Eastview, Elizabethton, Greeneville, Jacksboro, Kingston Springs, and New Tazewell along with Sullivan County were the recipients of this pilot program grant funds.

Through new equipment, advance detection, timing optimization plans, pedestrian signals, push button devices, and other methods funds will be used for upgrades that are predicted to improve safety for both motorists and pedestrians. Modernization of traffic signals can led to crash reduction, reduction in congestion, energy efficiency savings, reductions in maintenance costs, improved signal visibility, and automated collection of traffic data, which can be valuable for data-driven government decisions.

For more info on the program, visit https://www.tn.gov/tdot/traf- fic-operations-division/traffic-engineering-office/signal-and-lighting-design/traffic-signal-modernization-program.html.

nication devices. Once the gantries are up, testing will be conducted in the following months. The work will be done in the overnight hours to limit impacts to traffic. The current plan is to work two weeks on then one week off, weather permitting. TDOT will implement the following lane closures and rolling roadblocks as the gantries are erected. More information on the project can be found on the TDOT website.

The cities of Alexandria, Copperhill, Cumberland Gap, Decherd, Loretto, Newbern, Oneida, Rossville, Tellico Plains and Waverly have been selected to participate in the eighth round of the Tennessee Downtowns Program by **TNECD.** TNECD provides the Tennessee Downtowns program to communities that want to pursue the Main Street America approach to downtown revitalization. Since its inception in 2010, 66 communities have participated in the Tennessee Downtowns program, and the newly designated communities bring that total to 76. The Tennessee Downtowns program helps local communities revitalize traditional commercial districts, enhance community livability, spur job creation and maintain the historic character of downtown districts. The two-year program coaches selected communities and their steering committees through the steps of launching effective renewal efforts. Tennessee Downtowns includes community training in the Main Street America program and a \$15,000 grant for a downtown improvement project. The newly selected communities all have downtown commercial districts established at least 50 years ago and have demonstrated their readiness to organize efforts for downtown revitalization according to Main Street America principles.

Automated litter and debris removal devices installed along Tennessee River watershed

The Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) has teamed up with Keep the Tennessee River Beautiful (KTRB) and other partners to establish a network of Seabin automated litter and debris removal devices across the Tennessee River watershed, including in seven Tennessee cities.

Seabin devices work continuously to skim and collect marine debris from the surface of the water. Each receptacle can remove up to 3,000 pounds of marine debris a year and will also filter out gasoline, oils, and microplastics from the water. The 17-Seabin deployment will be the world's largest network of such devices in a river system.

The network was made possible through grants from TDOT and Keep America Beautiful (KAB). TDOT's contribution includes the purchase and installation of 10 devices at locations throughout Tennessee, as well as funding for 2 years of water-based cleanups of the river and its tributaries within the state. The grant was made in conjunction with the Department's Nobody Trashes Tennessee litter prevention campaign.

"TDOT's partnership with Keep the Tennessee River Beautiful demonstrates the link between roadside litter and debris that ends up in our waterways," said TDOT Commissioner Joseph Galbato. "Investing in this substantial network of litter removal devices is another example of how TDOT promotes innovative solutions to making our state cleaner and keeping our waterways clear."

In addition to the Tennessee Seabins, two devices will be installed on the Tennessee River in Alabama, and another will be deployed on a tributary in North Carolina. The Seabin network features the following locations:



Tennessee Aquarium staff empty the Seabin on the Tennessee River in Chattanooga. The technology is being employed in several locations along the river.

- Tellico Marina & Lake in Vonore
- Louisville Landing Marina in Louisville
- Volunteer Landing Marina in Knoxville
- Tennessee Aquarium in Chat-
- tanooga Harrison Bay State Park in
- **Soddy-Daisy** Pickwick Landing State Park
- in Hardin County Paris Landing State Park in Henry County
- Lake Ocoee Inn & Marina in **Benton** Clifton RV & Marina in Clif-
- Fontana Village Resort & Ma-
- rina in Fontana, N.C.
- Joe Wheeler State Park in Rogersville, Ala.
- Florence Harbor Marina in Florence, Ala.

"Until now, all of our work has only been able to prevent microplastics in our waterways, so we are thrilled to be making an effort to actually mitigate microplastics out of the water," said Kathleen

Gibi, KTRB executive director. "We're grateful to TDOT and Keep America Beautiful for these—as I see it-revolutionary grants and to our partners who will be maintaining the Seabins to make this trailblazing project possible."

A demonstration of the Seabin device and announcement of the new network was made in Chattanooga. The announcement coincides with World Water Day and the event was sponsored by representatives from TDOT, Keep America Beautiful, the city of Chattanooga, and the Tennessee Aquarium.

Keep the Tennessee River Beautiful is continuing to work with stakeholders to identify the most impactful locations for five remaining Seabin devices. To have a device installed, hosts must provide electricity, regular maintenance, and track the quantity of litter collected. Interested parties, such as river-based businesses or local governments, are encouraged to contact https://www.keeptnriv- erbeautiful.org/ to discuss poten-

Tennessee's population could increase 1 million by 2040

From the Boyd Center for Business and Economic Research

Tennessee could grow by nearly a million people over the next 20 years and reach a total population of 7.87 million by 2040.

The Boyd Center for Business and Economic Research, housed within the Haslam College of Business at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, released population projections that include data on age and race demographics for each of the state's 95 counties from 2020 to 2070.

Tennessee's population has more than tripled in the last century. It grew from 2.34 million in 1920 to a total of 6.91 million according to the 2020 Census. Its projected to add an additional million new residents by 2040.

They show Tennessee's population growing older and more diverse in the coming decades. By 2040, the state's median age is projected to climb from 38.8 years to 40.7 years. This increase reflects growth among the state's fastest growing age group: people 65 years and older.

An increase in the senior population is expected to push the number of retirement-aged people in the state from 1.18 million in 2020 to 1.65 million in 2020—a nearly 40 percent increase. For comparison, the number of people under age 20 will grow only 13 percent over the same period and reach 1.9 million people.

Projected Population

7,867,656

in 2040

Matt Harris, associate professor of economics and researcher for the Boyd Center population projections, noted that the senior population growth would account for roughly half (47.2 percent) of the state's total projected increase over the next 20 years.

"Most of the growth in the senior population is driven by continued aging of the cohort born in the late 1950s and 1960s rather than by older individuals moving to Tennessee - although retirees moving to Tennessee does play a part," Harris said.

Tennessee's senior population will grow by 469,000 people between 2020 and 2040. The increase in the number of people 65 years and older is expected to account for nearly half of the state's total population gain over the next two decades.

The number of people in their prime working years, ages 25 to 54, is projected to increase at a slower pace than the state's population as whole. With just an expected 7.9 percent growth among this group, the number of available workers could become a limitation on the state's productivity. Harris also noted that the growing senior population could place additional

Population Change from 2020

+980,822

14.2% increase

constraints on the labor force as families balance employment and elder care responsibilities. "As the number of seniors in

Tennessee continues to increase, so will the number of individuals requiring care. Much of that care is provided by families, particularly in areas where there are not options for formal care – either in home or residential," Harris said. "There is a considerable body of research showing that informal care to older relatives decreases engagement with the labor force."

Racial and ethnic diversity among the state's residents is also expected to continue increasing. Tennessee's largest racial group, non-Hispanic white, will add 211,000 people by 2040. Two out of three people in the state will be white, down from 73 percent in 2020. The share of the population that is non-Hispanic Black or African Americans will remain at 16.7 percent in 2040, but will add 164,000 people.

As was the case between 2010 and 2020, the fastest growing group will continue to be Hispanic. An addition of 394,000 people is expected to increase this group's share of the total from 5.9 percent in 2020 to 10.2 percent by 2040.

The residual, "Other or two or more races" category is also expected to increase from 4.1 percent to 6.4 percent by 2040.

Between 2020 and 2040, the fastest growing racial and ethnic groups will be "Hispanic" and "Other Non-Hispanic" races (Including "Two or More Races").

2020 Census data that includes detailed age, sex and race/ethnicity is not yet available in the U.S. Census Bureau's Population Estimates data. Boyd Center researchers note that at the county level, differences between the estimates and decennial census were a cause for concern. This was particularly true in Davidson County were the estimates fell 21,000 people below the county's official 2020 tally of 715,884.

Further, the new data reflecting the impact of COVID-19 pandemic in the second half of 2020 and 2021 aren't available either.

"Ultimately, these projections serve as a very interim update. Many of factors that we evaluate for this project including births, deaths and state-to-state migration have changed in some way due to the pandemic," Harris said. "In some cases, we know the degree of change and in other cases we are still waiting on data that will tell us the degree to which population will be affected in the long term."

The Boyd Center is evaluating the release of an additional projection update in the fourth quarter of 2022 if sufficient data are available.



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Passwords—a gaping security hole you can easily plug

BY JOE HOWLAND VC-3 Chief Information Security Officer

Before you start reading this post, take our short password self-assessment.

1. Do you have your password written down somewhere to help you remember it?

2. Do you use a simple, easy-to-remember password (such as your kid's name, your pet's name, or your birthdate)? 3. Do you use the same password for many websites and applications you access?

4. Do you share your password with co-workers just to make things easier?

5. At work, do you save your passwords on your web browser so that you can log in without typing your password?

If you said "yes" to any of these questions then you've got a security risk on your hands.

Why? First, simple passwords are easier to crack. Nowadays, even inexperienced hackers have access to automated password cracking software. This software can easily crack short, common, and simply constructed passwords with ease.

Second, writing down or sharing passwords with co-workers may give others unauthorized access to data and applications. What if a disgruntled employee sees your password on your desk? What if someone you think is a trusted employee uses the password you share with them to gain access to unauthorized information?

Finally, even saving passwords on your web browser (like you do at home) is not wise when working for a municipality. All it takes is an unauthorized person to sit at your computer or a hacker to gain access to your device to access sensitive information.

So, what do you and your employees need to do? Implementing the following best practices will help plug these security gaps.

1. Do not write passwords down and leave them visible. This is an easy security

tip, but you need to make sure Morristown's Senter to chair TMBF

chairman position to serve as the

Mayor Dale Kelley for his lead-

ership as chairman for the past

five years and for his service

on our Board since 2009," he

said. "We are very fortunate

that Mayor Kelley will remain

on our board as vice chairman."

ed in 1985 and first began mak-

ing loans in 1986. Since then,

TMBF has loaned \$4.9 billion

to 215 different cities and 72

different counties in the state.

These loans have saved bor-

rowers a total of \$705 million in

interest costs alone. Loans made

from the fund have ranged from

\$4,500 to \$83.8 million with the

average loan size at around \$3

million.

TMBF was formally creat-

"I would also like to thank

SENTER from Page 1

TMBF vice chair.

employees follow it. One tool that can help eliminate this problem is a password manager, which enforces the use of complex passwords, stores them securely, and automatically enters them when you log into applications. A reputable password manager can help employees avoid the temptation of writing down their passwords on sticky notes.

2. Use a password on all devices.

Many employees often use passwords on their desktop computers but it's easy to forget to set up a password on laptops, tablets, and smartphones. Mobile devices are perhaps even easier from which to steal information. A thief or disgruntled employee can steal a smartphone in seconds and quickly gain unauthorized access to municipal email and applications. Protect all devices with passwords.

3. Do not use simple or obvious passwords.

Instead, use strong passwords such as long passphrases (like "The brown fox is 2fast!") or complex passwords consisting of a mix of letters, numbers, and special characters. Strong passwords go a long way toward preventing hackers from getting into city applications. 4. Do not save passwords to websites and applications.

You may do this so that you can easily stay logged into your favorite websites and applications. However, if someone gets access to your device, then they can gain access to unauthorized information without even needing to crack a password. While web browsers have gotten better with password security, some exploits have targeted these cached passwords within

As stated above, we recommend using a password manager that stores and encrypts passwords much more securely than a web browser. Also, enforce a policy at your municipality that employees cannot save passwords on even their most frequently used applications.

5. Change passwords regularly. Yes, this annoys employees

but it helps with security. The longer a password is in use, the more likely that hackers will be able to crack it. The more you change passwords, the more difficult you make a hacker's job. Many cyber criminals focus on user credentials

"We are very fortunate to have

Wade Morrell serve as the TMBF

president and CEO," Senter said.

"Wade is focused on expanding

services to our cities. He evaluates

new program ideas that TMBF can

incorporate to be competitive and

to provide access to the best rates

that meet the ever-changing needs

of our cities. Under Wade's lead-

ership, TMBF has added 15 new

banks to the program and a 20-year

fixed loan option. These additions

enhance current services provided

by TMBF loans such as the draw-

down feature, pre-pay option

and completion of administrative

services for cities pertaining to

loans. In addition, TMBF by-laws

have been revised and updated to

ensure our best efforts to be open,

transparent and representative of

Additionally, Senter has

all cities across the state."

as the key to their cyberattacks. Once inside your systems, they can then attack you in more ways.

This is why phishing attacks are so common—and successful. They work. People are gullible and often hand over usernames and passwords without realizing it—such as getting fooled by a fake login site. It doesn't matter how complex of a password you've created if you end up handing it over to a criminal. By changing passwords regularly, there's more of a chance that a stolen password's value has a limited lifespan.

6. Do not use the same password for all systems you access.

We know—another annoyance! But think about it. Let's say an employee uses the same password for five different software applications that give access to confidential information at your municipality. If a hacker or disgruntled employee gets one password, then they have access to all five applications. Mitigate the chance of a data breach by requiring different passwords for each application.

7. Use multi-factor authentication whenever possible.

Many applications now offer the option of setting up multi-factor authentication (MFA), the process of adding another layer of protection to your security in addition to a username and password. For example, MFA may require you to first enter your username and password as normal. Then, you will get a code to your phone and input that code into a field that appears after you log in. In other words, you've added another "factor" of authentication that makes it more difficult for hackers. Even if a hacker gets your username and password, they must still have your phone in order to break into your application.

Cybersecurity continues to evolve. In the future, passwords may go away and get replaced by different forms of authentication. Certain password-less methods have been around for a long time that center on something you own (such as a smartphone) or something you are (such as fingerprint or retinal scan).

In the meantime, by following the best practices outlined above, you will make your municipality's cybersecurity much stronger.

served on the University of Ten-

nessee-Municipal Technical Advi-

sory Service (UT-MTAS) advisory

board, for two terms on the Ten-

nessee Advisory Commission on

Intergovernmental Relations (TA-

CIR), and as a past-president of

Tennessee Women in Government.

nessee on the National League

of Cities (NLC) Public Safety

Steering Committee/Advocacy

Committee from 1993 to 2020.

She is past-president of the NLC

Women in Municipal Government

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degree from Emory and Henry

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from the University of Tennessee at

Knoxville. She taught English for

38 years at Morristown-Hamblen

Senter holds a bachelor's

the groups advisory board.

East High School.

She has also represented Ten-

TENNESSEE FESTIVALS

April 16: Fayetteville Slawburger Festival

Come to historic downtown Fayetteville to try a unique southern tradition: the slawburger. For more info, visit http://slawburgerfesti- val.com/

April 22-24: Erwin NoliFest

book.com/Nolifest

The springtime gathering for whitewater enthusiasts featuring kayak and onewheel races, outdoors enthusiasts and more. For more info, visit https://www.face-

April 23-24: South Pittsburg

National Cornbread Festival We are ready to welcome you back to enjoy the sights, sounds and tastes of the Annual National Cornbread Festival. For more info, visit https://nationalcornbread. com/

April 23-30: Paris

69th Annual World's Biggest Fish

Come out to Paris to enjoy carnival rides, a fishing rodeo, and all the fried catfish you can eat. For more info, visit https://www.facebook. com/WorldsBiggestFishFry.

April 30-May 7: Dresden Tennessee Iris Festival

2022 marks the forty-second anniversary of the celebration of the Tennessee Iris Festival here in Dresden. For more info, visit https://www.tennesseeirisfestival.

May 1-7: Humboldt

84th Annual West Tennessee Strawberry Festival

Come out for 75,000 friends and neighbors, nine blocks, and more than 20 plus events that are sure to entertain the entire family, come celebrate and experience the food, fun, and entertainment that West Tennessee has to offer. For more info, visit https://strawberryfestivaltn.com/

May 6-7: Sweetwater

Blooms, Bluegrass, & BBQ Fes-

Enjoy music themed floral arrangements, bluegrass bands, and a official world food cahmpionships BBQ qualifying event. For more info, visit https://www. bloomsbluegrassbbq.com/

May 9-14: Dayton

Tennessee Strawberry Festival A Dayton tradition since 1947 celebrating the area's premier crop. For more info, visit https:// tnstrawberryfestival.com/

May 13-14: Portland Middle Tennessee Strawberry

Festival

Travel to Portland to enjoy the events, the food, the community and the small-town feel with family and friends. For more info, visit https://www.middletennesseestrawberryfestival.net/

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Ed Stewart, ChFC, CLU, CF **Financial Advisor**

'Signature Lakes' to promote recreation, tourism across Tennessee

By KATE COIL

TML Communications Specialist

A new initiative will honor a Tennessee fishing legend while promoting visitation and outdoor recreation in lakes across the state.

Gov. Bill Lee has teamed up with Tennessee-born fishing legend Bill Dance along with the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, and Tennessee State Parks to launch the Bill Dance Signature Lakes program. In addition to highlighting 18 lakes across the state as top fishing destinations, the initiative also pledges \$15 million in investments to improve these waters including increased stocking, habitat and fisheries management, and improved access for fishing and boating.

"Bill Dance is a tremendous advocate for our Tennessee rural communities and we are thrilled to partner with him," said Gov. Lee. "The Bill Dance Signature Lakes highlights the importance of lakeside tourism with premier fishing opportunities and we believe this project is especially important as communities recover from the recent storms."

Tennessee is home to halfa-million acres of lakes and 1.7 million people who fish according to the American Sportfishing Association.

"I'm unbelievably humbled and excited to be involved in such a helpful project that will benefit so many people and our natural resources in my great home state of Tennessee," said Bill Dance. "You can bet your favorite lure this project will definitely have a ripple effect for a mighty long time, not only giving the weekend fisherman, but tournament anglers a wonderful fishery as well, thanks to the great state of Tennessee and my friends at TWRA."

Endorsed by Bill Dance Outdoors, several projects are slated to begin in 2022 with a completion target date of fall 2024 to make improvements at various lakes. In partnership with the Tennessee Valley Authority, the nine large reservoir lakes will receive new or upgraded ramps to improve access for both recreational fishing and tournaments. Each of the 18 lakes will see above-water upgrades including courtesy docks, parking, additional access points, fishing piers, and new signage. Several of the smaller lakes in the program will receive additional management with regular stockings to encourage family fishing.

Communities near these lakes will benefit economically from increased visitation leading to purchases of gas, food, and overnight stays as well as increased opportunities for businesses that cater to anglers. Bill Dance Signature Lakes touches 39 counties including 22 at-risk or economically distressed counties, and is an important step in helping those communities create new revenue streams through increased visitation. Fishing generates \$1.2 billion in economic impact annually and supports 7,480 jobs across the state.

1000 ACRE LAKE

Clarksburg, Huntington, and McLemoresville are each within 6 miles of 1000 Acre Recreational Lake. The largest man-made lake in West Tennessee, more than 22 miles of shoreline and 17,000 acres of water have made this area a destination for water sports including boating, jet skiing, water skiing, and swimming. The entire southern third of the lake is dedicated to fishing with bass, bluegill, sunfish, catfish, and crappie among the most popular catches.

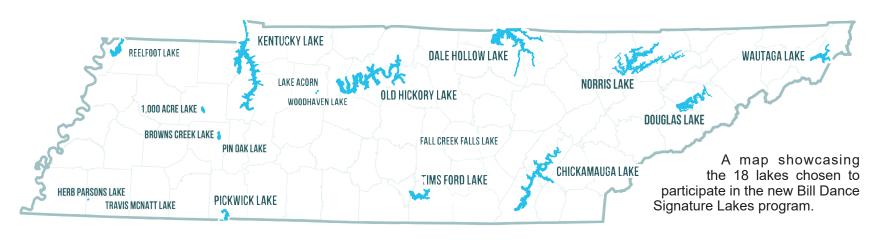
BROWNS CREEK and PIN OAK LAKES

Within 10 miles of Lexington, Parkers Crossroads, and Parsons, Browns Creek and Pin Oak lakes is two of three lakes located entirely within Natchez Trace State Park. Pin Oak Lake is the largest of the three at 690-acres and is maintained by the park with bass, bluegill, crappie, and catfish found in its waters. Browns Creek Lake is 167 acres and is managed by TWRA. Browns Creek Lake is known for its trophy largemouth bass with several surveys documenting 10-pound bass in its waters. The state park is also home to the 90-acre Maple's Creek

Lake. Visitors to the park can also



1,000 Acre Lake is the largest man-made lake in West Tennessee and one of 18 included as the part of the new Bill Dance Signature Lakes initiative. The goal of the program is mainly to highlight some of the best fishing available in the state as well as promote other types of tourism and recreation based around the half a million acres of lake water in the state.



enjoy swimming, biking, hiking, camping, boating, watersports, birding, as well as a firing and archery range.

CHICKAMAUGA LAKE

The municipalities of Dayton, Soddy-Daisy, Lakesite, and Chattanooga all sit along this lake, which is also a short distance away from Decatur, Graysville, Charleston, Cleveland, and Red **Bank** – to name a few. Chickamauga has consistently been ranked not only one of the top bass lakes in the state but in the country, even hosting major tournaments and being dubbed "the Land of the Giants" for the massive bass found in its waters. The 34,500-acre lake is also a hotspot for catfish, crappie, sauger, bluegill, and sunfish. Those who come to its waters to fish often stay to take part in the area's great hiking, camping, and other watersports.

DALE HOLLOW LAKE

Between Celina and Byrdstown and north of Livingston, Dale Hollow Lake is a 27,000-acre body of water shared by Tennessee and Kentucky. Vote the fourth best lake in the country in the USA Today Float Your Boat contest, Dale Hollow has become a recreation destination for water skiing, wakeboarding, and tubing. Of course, fishing is one of the most popular reasons visitors come to Dale Hollow with the lake producing the largest smallmouth bass ever caught in the world. In addition to record-breaking smallmouth bass, fishermen come here for largemouth bass, crappie, muskellunge, walleye, catfish, gar, and trout. Out of the water, visitors can also enjoy horseback riding, hiking, biking, camping, hunting, wildlife viewing, and local historical and wine tours.

DOUGLAS LAKE

Dandridge and Baneberry both sit on the shores of Douglas Lake, though municipalities including Newport, Sevierville, Pigeon Forge, and White Pine are not too far away either. With a surface area of 30,400 acres and a shoreline of 550 miles, Douglas Lake's position in the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains has made it a major attraction for boating, fishing, camping, swimming, and birding. It is especially noted as one of the premiere crappie destinations in the nation, ranking in the top five, and as one of the top ten largemouth bass destinations, hosting multiple professional tournaments. An estimated 1.7 million visitors come to Douglas Lake every year.

FALL CREEK FALLS LAKE Between Spencer and Pikeville, Fall Creek Falls Lake is 345 acres of water dominating the southern

portion of Fall Creek Falls State Park. In addition to largemouth bass, the lake has been known to produce record catches for channel catfish and bluegills. Boat and bank fishing opportunities abound. Cabins and the newly renovated Fall Creek Falls lodge also sit along the lakeside with plenty of opportunity for hiking, rock climbing, biking, birding, golfing, nature viewing, and more in the area. The park is also home to the canopy challenge course that tests agility and resolve.

HERB PARSONS LAKE

Just outside Memphis and near the municipalities of Germantown, Collierville, Piperton, Rossville, Moscow, Williston, Somerville, and Oakland, Herb Parsons Lake is home to largemouth bass, bluegill, crappie, redear sunfish, and three types of catfish. The 177acre lake offers both a boat launch and an accessible fishing pier Named after Somerville native exhibition shooter Herb Parsons, the lake is also known for its walking trails, bike trails, picnicking, and beaver dams on the southern part of the lake.

KENTUCKY LAKE

One of the lakes that helps make the famed Land Between the Lakes National Recreation area, Kentucky Lake's footprint in Tennessee extends near the cities of Paris, Big Sandy, Tennessee Ridge, Erin, Camden, Waverly, and New Johnsonville. Three state parks and the Big Sandy Unit of the Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge also border the lake in Tennessee. Kentucky Lake is the largest artificial lake by surface area in the U.S. east of the Mississippi with 160,309 acres of water and 2,064 miles of shoreline divided over two states. It holds records for the largest white bass, buffalo carp, and yellow park as well as draws anglers for largemouth and smallmouth bass, crappie, catfish, panfish, sunfish, bluegill, and sauger.

LAKE ACORN and LAKE WOODHAVEN

Near the municipalities of Burns, Dickson, and White Bluff, Lake Acorn and Lake Woodhaven are two o three lakes found within Montgomery Bell State Park. The larger of the two signature lakes at the park, Lake Woodhaven is a 50-acre lake with a year-round boat lunch. Lake Acorn is open to fishing year-round but private boats are only allowed to launch from its boat dock between September and May. Catfish, bluegill, redear sunfish, crappie, and bass can be found in both lakes. Lake Acorn also has a swimming beach and is open to paddling. Outside of the water, visitors can also enjoy golfing, hiking, camping, birding,

mountain biking, and picnicking.

NORRIS LAKE

Created by the first major TVA project, Norris Lake helped create the town of Norris but also serves as a recreation draw for Maynardville, Rocky Top, Caryville, and LaFollette. Featuring 800 miles of shoreline and 33,840 acres of water surface, the lake is home to 22 marinas and resorts, three state parks, two wildlife management areas, and 14 species available for fishing. While bass fishing - particularly striped bass – is one of the most popular activities, anglers can also catch crappie, walleye, and trout. Host to numerous tournaments, Norris Lake was also featured on the Outdoor Channel's "Fishing University."

OLD HICKORY LAKE

Hendersonville, Gallatin, Mt. Juliet, and Nashville all have borders with this 22.500-acre lake that is one of the most popular recreational lakes in the state. There are 41 public boat access sites and four marinas - two in Hendersonville, one in Mt. Juliet, and one in Gallatin. There are also eight public fishing piers for use. Bank and boat fishing are both popular on Old Hickory Lake with anglers coming out for bass, crappie, sauger, and catfish with opportunities for fishing practically year-round. In addition to fishing and boating, jet skiing, sailing, paddle boarding, kayaking, and swimming are popular lake activities.

PICKWICK LAKE

East of Guys, Michie, Eastview, and Selmer and south of Adamsville, Crump, Savannah, and Stantonville, Pickwick Lake reaches into Mississippi and Alabama as well as Tennessee. Known for its sportfishing, the lake has produced record-size smallmouth bass and catfish. Anglers can also find other varieties of bass and sauger in the water with bank and boat fishing both proving production. Pickwick Landing State Park is home to a marina for launching boats as well as a lodge and campsites for overnight stays. Other activities on the lake include hiking, golfing, disc golf, swimming, and birding.

REELFOOT LAKE

The only natural lake in the state of Tennessee, Reelfoot Lake is bordered by the cities of Tiptonville and Samburg and a short drive from Ridgely and Hornbeak. The lake covers 15,000 acres and until 2003 was the world's only legal commercial fishery for crappie. Fishing remains a popular activity on the lake with catfish, bream, bass, and bluegill also found in its waters with its bluegill noted by Game and Fish Magazine. The cypress groves make for a natural fish hatchery and plenty of knowledgeable local guides are available to guide visitors to the best angling spots. Reelfoot Lake State Park is also home to five public boat launch ramps and has numerous fish cleaning stations. Reelfoot is also a popular destination for recreational boating, waterfowl hunting, hiking, camping, and wildlife view, particularly its bald eagles.

TIMS FORD LAKE

Winchester, Decherd, Estill Springs, and Lynchburg all have borders with Tims Ford Lake, which is also a short distance from Cowan and Tullahoma. With 10,700 surface acres of water, Tims Ford Lake is home to numerous recreational facilities run by the city of Winchester, Tims Ford State Park, and the TVA. There are two public marinas, three public fishing piers, and 14 public boat ramps accessible in the area. The park is known for its bass - particularly smallmouth bass - with striped bass commonly exceeding 15 pounds and hybrid bass around seven pounds. Numerous local and professional bass tournaments are held on the lake. Anglers can also catch rainbow and brown trout below the dam as well as crappie, catfish, bluegill, sunfish, warmouth, and walleye.

TRAVIS MCNATT LAKE

While it was named for Big Hill Pond, the biggest body of water in this state park between Middleton and Ramer is actually Travis McNatt Lake, formerly known as Big Hill Pond Lake. The 165-acre lake is accessible for both boat and bank fishing and is known for its bass, bream, and catfish. The oxbows, sloughs, and swamp areas make the lake a great habitat for fish as well as waterfowl. Visitors can also take the boardwalk through the Dismal Swamp or go horseback riding, camping, hiking, biking, and wildlife viewing.

WATAUGA LAKE

Between Elizabethton and the North Carolina state line in the Cherokee National Forest is Watauga Lake, which is known to bring in visitors from Mountain City, Johnson City, and Bristol as well as Virginia and North Carolina. Covering more than 10 square miles of surface area, the lake has 104.9-miles of largely undeveloped shoreline and is considered one of the most beautiful and pristine mountain lakes operated by TVA. There are several public and private boat launches and marinas and the lake is known for its crappie, bluegill, trout, bass, and walleye. There are also several fishing guides operating in the area for those who want to try their hands at boat and fly fishing.