



Make plans to attend the TML Annual Conference in Murfreesboro, June 10-13

Registration now open

A veteran of three space shuttle flights, retired NASA Astronaut Rhea Seddon will serve as the keynote speaker at the TML 78th Annual Conference in Murfreesboro, June 10-13.

Seddon didn't originally set out to be a pioneer. Yet, as a physician and one of the first six women accepted by NASA into the astronaut program, a pioneer she was.

She spent 19 years with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. She served as a mission specialist on flights in 1985 and 1991, and as payload commander in charge of all science activities on her final flight in 1993. This brought her total time in space to 30 days.

In 2015, Seddon was the eighth woman inducted into the U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame.

Seddon will be one of many conference highlights planned for this year.

Mark Funkhouser, publisher of *Governing Magazine*, will open the conference on Sunday and will discuss *Key Trends and Challenges in Local Government*. In addition to his keynote address, he will facilitate a panel discussion made up of local elected officials on the numerous challenges facing city officials, as well as to help identify some successful strategies for



Rhea Seddon
NASA Astronaut

effectively managing community needs.

Two special outings are being planned for Saturday June 10, from 1 to 4 p.m. The Miracle Field at McKnight Park, a new facility specially designed for children with mental and physical disabilities, was developed through a private/public-partnership. Come explore and discover how Murfreesboro planned and paid for this special facility in their city.

A separate trip is also being planned for the Stones River National Battlefield for all those history buffs interested in discov-

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FCC threatens to limit local land use authority on wireless siting

BY ANGELINA PANETTIERI
National League of Cities

Earlier this year, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) issued a public notice seeking comment on two topics that could shape the future of city control over their rights-of-way.

The FCC's Wireless Bureau requested public comment on how to streamline the deployment of small wireless facilities, primarily through potential changes to local land-use ordinances.

This petition obviously represents both a serious preemption of local governments as well as a serious blow to many cities' ability to appropriately manage revenues as communications traffic increasingly shifts to broadband instead of traditional wireline phone or cable service.

This public notice raises several major concerns for cities.

The first is that the FCC wishes to use this proceeding to reexamine the facts of the decisions made in its 2009 and 2014 rule makings on local wireless facilities siting, questioning whether the evidence presented by local governments during those proceedings is still valid. Specifically, the notice questions the amount of time needed by local governments to process wireless siting applications for small-cell facilities, particularly when submitted in large quantities.

The notice requests feedback on streamlining local regulations when similar applications are submitted as batches.

The notice also questions the amount and structure of fees charged by local governments for applications and access to rights-of-way.

They have also requested comment generally on a petition filed by infrastructure company Mobilite regarding local government rules and procedures.

Mobilite has filed a Petition for Declaratory Ruling with the FCC's Wireless Telecommunications Bureau requesting an interpretation of Section 235(C) of the Communications Act of 1934 that would substantially limit cities' authority over public rights-of-way and ability to assess fees for access.

Specifically, the petition calls on the FCC to:

- Require cities to disclose to requesting providers all fees they have charged all other infrastructure providers for access to rights of way;
- Require cities to charge all carriers the same fees;
- Define "fair and reasonable compensation" as stated in Section 235(C) as the only amount that allows cities to recoup the costs related to reviewing and issuing permits and managing the rights of way, and specifically prohibiting any additional charges or revenue-based fees.

NLC has commented on this notice, in collaboration with other local government groups and state municipal leagues.



Gov. Bill Haslam's IMPROVE Act outlines projects in all 95 counties.

An online interactive map and a list of the proposed projects can be found on the Transportation Coalition's website at <http://www.tcoftn.org/backlog-and-new-projects.html>

Fraudulent lien scheme leads to arrests and new legislation to address activity by sovereign citizens in Tennessee

BY KATE COIL
TML Communications Specialist

A new bill before the Tennessee General Assembly aims to protect public and elected officials from predatory and unlawful liens taken out by sovereign citizens as a form of harassment.

Senate Bill 726, introduced by Sen. Brian Kelsey, R-Germantown, seeks to allow officials to remove fraudulent liens from the filing record. The bill comes on the heels of a recent joint investigation by the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation and Knoxville Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation that led to the arrests of 10 people and a 320-count indictment related to fraudulent liens being filed against dozens of public officials.

According to the TBI investigation, several individuals from East Tennessee filed Uniform Commercial Code liens and financing states with the Tennessee Secretary of State's Office against dozens of individuals across the state, the majority of whom were public officials such as police officers, attorneys, elected officials, appointed officials, city mayors, county mayors, sheriffs, judges and other government employees. The fraudulent liens ranged in amounts ranging from \$4 million to \$12 million.

Many of the 10 individuals arrested as part of the investigation



A year-long joint investigation by the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation and the Knoxville Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation has resulted in a 320-count indictment, and the arrests of 10 individuals on charges of unlawfully filing liens and making false entries into records.

identified themselves as sovereign citizens, a group of extremists who believe U.S. citizenship, established government, authority, and institutions are illegitimate and therefore consider themselves immune to or above the law. These groups frequently use fraudulent activity – nicknamed paper terrorism – to commit crimes under the belief that they are free from prosecution. Often times, government officials or entities are the targets of this paper terrorism, said TBI Deputy Director Jason Locke.

"The sovereign citizen ideology is one where individuals share a belief system that rejects

the concept of U.S. citizenship and governmental authority. Their ideology often based on their own interpretation of historical documents fundamental to American history and common law," Locke said. "When a fraudulent lien is placed, then the secretary of state files it and by law has to. Once those liens are in place, you have trouble establishing credit, you have trouble if you're going to refinance your house, get a car loan. It impacts every bit of your financial life."

While drawing a lien without a legal basis is a Class E Felony in See LIENS on Page 3

With nearly \$1B contribution to state economy, community hospitals work to provide essential care in rural areas

BY KATE COIL

Rural hospitals contributed nearly \$1 billion to Tennessee's economy last year and comprise nearly 50 percent of the state's acute care hospitals, according to a recently released report by the Tennessee Hospital Association.

The THA's 2017 Rural Impact Report said community hospitals in rural communities across Tennessee contributed \$994 million to the state's economy. The report also found these community hospitals are often the largest employer in their local area, contributing 15,654 jobs and a payroll of more than \$971 million to the state in 2015. Often times, healthcare can represent 20 percent of a community's employment and income.

Craig A. Becker, THA president and CEO, said these hospitals often serve as an economic engine for their areas.

"Tennessee's rural hospitals are the cornerstones of their communities," Becker said. "These facilities employ thousands of people and serve as major economic engines in their respective communities. In addition, they often are among the only options for rural residents when they need quality, affordable healthcare services."

According to the Tennessee Hospital Association, there are 61 hospitals in the state that meet the organization's definition of acute-care small and rural hospitals, including 16 certified critical access hospitals (CAHs) in THA's Small and Rural Constituency Section.

"If you look at the statistics, rural hospitals are often the No. 1 or No. 2 employer in their area," Becker said. "These aren't minimum wage jobs. These are higher paying jobs that require more education. They can bring up the average salary for a community. More than that, they often spearhead local

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The largest employer in the city of Columbia, Maury Regional Medical Center, has 28,000 full-time employees and a \$153 million payroll. In addition to the hospital in Columbia, the non-profit health care group also operates community hospitals in Lewisburg, Waynesboro, and Hohenwald.

TENNESSEE'S SMALL AND RURAL HOSPITALS: BY THE NUMBERS



Rural Hospitals 61



Critical Access Hospitals 15



Jobs 15,654



Charity Care \$94.6 million



Babies Delivered 12,224



Emergency Room Visits 980,808

NEWS ACROSS TENNESSEE



CLINTON

The town of Clinton has been listed as one of the top 10 cities in the U.S. for antiques, according to a list recently unveiled by famed international travel guide Fodor's. Clinton and the town's Clinton Antique Trail were praised by the travel guide for their "small-town, southern charm" and wide variety of antique shops set among historic homes. Described as an "antiques hub," the town also earned praise for the quality of its collectibles and primitives. Clinton was listed alongside other cities including Charleston, S.C.; Millerton, N.Y.; Adamstown, Pa.; Wiscasset, Maine; Buchanan, Va.; Galena, Ill.; Stillwater, Minn.; Walnut, Iowa; and Hazel, Ky.

COOKEVILLE

Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) will establish a Technology Integration Gateway in Cookeville, creating more than 300 jobs in the area during the next five years. The Gateway will create a wide range of technology jobs, including roles in information technology (IT) services, computer programming, engineering and software development. It will also provide cloud, cyber security, and data science expertise. Headquartered in McLean, Va., SAIC is a premier technology integrator in the technical, engineering, intelligence and IT sectors. SAIC employs more than 15,000 people worldwide. Expected to open this summer, the Technology Integration Gateway will serve federal defense and civilian agencies, state and local governments, as well as commercial businesses. SAIC is exploring partnership opportunities with Tennessee Tech to identify and provide high-tech training to prospective IT employees.

COLLIERVILLE

Construction is complete on a new expansion to the Collierville Animal Services shelter. The renovations included a new cat area, a storage space, a new cat intake room, a small dog intake room, two laundry rooms, an additional restroom, surgery prep room, surgery room, a small office for volunteers, a director's office, and a designated reception area. One storage cabinet was built and donated by a local Eagle Scout troop to help provide for shelter needs. Outside of the main structure, the shelter has two new isolation areas for animals requiring quarantine. Shelter officials said 75 percent of the construction costs were funded through public donations.

CROSSVILLE

The Crossville City Council has approved a \$10,000 donation for volunteers working to build new trails in the area. The nonprofit Friends of Crossville Trails will be using trail building experts and special equipment to construct a new trail off Woodlawn Drive and Wyatt Court. The 1.1-mile loop is located on city property and will eventually connect to Centennial Park via a bridge over the Little Obed River. Long-range plans include eventually connecting the trail to the Obed River Park. Equipment being used for the project will help clear vegetation and cut a rough trail with volunteers then finishing the work. City officials said donating the funds to the nonprofit and then allowing volunteers to finish the work means the city will not have to bid out the project. Plans call for the new segment to

be open in September when Crossville holds a hiking marathon.

DOVER

The Dover Police Department has received an IES Interactive Use-of-Force Training Simulator, a gift donated to the department by a sheriff's department in Nebraska. The Cass County Sheriff's Department received the simulator from the Center for Rural Development based in Kentucky. After the sheriff's office was able to purchase an upgraded simulator, the decision was made to donate it to the Dover Police Department so they and other law enforcement agencies in the area could use the training kit. The simulator comes with a CD, Sig Sauer with a laser barrel, and CO2 cartridges. The program can be used for training in active shooter scenarios, armed disturbances, burglaries and robberies, disorderly conduct, domestic, emotionally disturbed people, patrol, probation, a total of approximately 100 different scenarios. Departments can also work with program manufacturer IES to develop scenarios based around locations in their community.

JOHNSON CITY

Officials with Johnson City will soon be breaking ground on a 25-mile biking and walking loop trail that aims to connect every neighborhood in the city. The State of Franklin Trail will branch off the 10-mile Tweetsie Trail that connects Johnson City and Elizabethton. City officials said the success of the Tweetsie Trail is what prompted the creation of this new greenway. The first segment will be constructed through the Mountain Home VA campus and hospital. The entire project is estimated to cost between \$5-7 million and may possibly take 10 years of construction to complete if solely funded with new segments each year through the city budget.

KNOXVILLE

Construction will soon begin on the Change Center in Knoxville, an afterschool and weekend space for young people in the city. Located in a former warehouse, the facility at 203 Harriet Tubman Street was donated by the Overcoming Believers Church. The venue will house a skating rink, climbing wall, Hard Knox Pizza café, recording studio, and more in addition to providing job and mentoring opportunities for the city's youth. In April 2016, Knoxville Mayor Madeline Rogero announced the creation of the Change Center and its initial financial commitments and goals. Since then, 3,300 people have donated more than \$3 million. Additional donations have been allocated for operating funds, and \$527,000 is still being sought to purchase furniture, fixtures and equipment.

LAKELAND

The city of Lakeland is one of 37 entities across the country to receive a 2017 Cigarette Letter Prevention Program Grant from Keep America Beautiful. Each year, Keep America Beautiful awards CLPP grants to its affiliates, local governments, business improvement districts, downtown associations, parks and recreation areas, and other organizations dedicated to eradicating litter and beautifying their communities. Grant recipients in 2016 reported a 60 percent decrease in cigarette litter. Lakeland will share in \$297,500 worth of grant funds. Lakeland was the only Tennessee municipality to be awarded a grant, though Keep Tennessee Beautiful was also awarded funds to distribute to communities and organizations throughout the state as part of the grant program.

MEMPHIS

Bike lanes will be installed on 10 roads in Memphis during upcoming repaving projects. Streets selected for bike lanes include Riverside Drive between Jefferson and Beale, on Airways from Shelby Drive to the Mississippi state line, on Cooper between Washington and Central, on Getwell from Park to Interstate 240, on Hickory Hill from Mt. Moriah to Winchester, on North Mt. Moriah from Summer to Walnut Grove, on Knight Arnold from Hickory Hill to Ridgeway, on

Mendenhall from Knight Arnold to Mt. Moriah, on North Perkins from Summer to Walnut Grove, and on Riverdale from Winchester to Shelby. Construction on the project would begin as early as this fall and is 80 percent federally funded with a city match.

MORRISTOWN

Rockline Industries has announced it is opening a new subsidiary, Iatric Manufacturing Solutions, locating the subsidiary's first facility in Morristown. A consumer goods manufacturer and supplier, Rockline Industries said it plans to invest \$40.3 million and create 250 new jobs in the area through its Iatric Manufacturing Solutions operations. The new facility will be located in a 435,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art FDA-registered facility in Morristown. For over 40 years, Rockline Industries has been a leader in the consumer goods industry, manufacturing and supplying the best retailers in the world with medical wipes, baby wipes, coffee filters and other consumer products. Rockline's products are used in the consumer, health care, food service and hospitality industries. Iatric Manufacturing Solutions was born out of the rapidly increasing demand for Rockline's innovative wet wipes products. The new plant will be operational beginning in 2018. Rockline Industries was founded in 1976 and is headquartered in Sheboygan, Wis. It is one of the world's largest manufacturers of coffee filters and consumer, health care, industrial and institutional wet wipes.

NASHVILLE

The Nashville-Metro area is still growing by approximately 100 people a day, according to new information released by the U.S. Census Bureau. The new population estimates show the Nashville metro statistical area added 36,337 people between June 30, 2015, and July 1, 2016, averaging 100 new residents per day in one year. The overall 14-county region grew from 1,828,961 to 1,865,298, a 2 percent increase. Approximately 28 percent of the growth is attributed to new births and deaths in the area while 72 percent were those who moved to the area.

TULLAHOMA

The Tullahoma Regional Airport and William Northern Field in Tullahoma has been named the 2017 Airport of the Year by the Tennessee Aeronautics Commission (TAC). Since 2013, the Tullahoma Regional Airport has seen nearly \$4 million in improvement and construction projects including pavements maintenance projects, construction of two aprons, a publicly-funded maintenance hangar, two privately funded maintenance hangars, an access road, ramp repairs, remarking of the primary runway, and repairs to taxiways, giving access to the new Tullahoma Business Airpark. These projects have attracted a DOD contractor, Sarasota Avionics and XP Services avionics installer. Tullahoma's airport has more than 140 based aircraft and experiences approximately 40,000 flight operations per year. It has realized record fuel sales for three years in a row, and is home to the University of Tennessee Space Institute Flight Research Center, Vanderbilt Life Flight, and Skydive Tennessee and are the annual staging base for the Bonnaroo Music Festival.

WHITE HOUSE

The city of White House has joined social network Nextdoor, which allows residents to connect with other members of their neighborhood and community. The social network is used for everything from organizing garage sales to helping Neighborhood Watch groups monitor crime. City and police officials in White House will have the ability to post, receive private messages and work with residents to help keep neighborhoods secure. The city will also use the website to help share important information and updates on neighborhood news and projects. Nextdoor is free for the residents and the city. Neighborhoods establish and self-manage their own site. Information is only visible to verified members.

Franklin officials cut ribbon on city's new equestrian trail



Franklin Mayor Ken Moore, left, and City Administrator Eric Stuckey, right, pose with Stitch the horse before he heads out on the newly opened equestrian trail at the city's Harlinsdale Farm park. The park now offers 2.62 miles of standard horse trail and 0.33 miles of advanced riding trails.

Volunteers, city crews clean up Murfreesboro park, civil war fort



Volunteers and city crews work to remove limbs and brush from the Murfreesboro Greenway system at the Fortress Rosecrans Trailhead. The cleanup was part of Saving Battlefields Park Day and brought citizens out to Old Fort Park and Stones River National Battlefield. Part of the namesake of the city's Old Fort Park and Golf Course, the earthenwork fortress, was constructed in 1863. — (Photo by Jim Davis/Murfreesboro Parks & Recreation Department)

TCAT campus opens in Smyrna



Smyrna Town Council members, Gov. Bill Haslam, Tennessee Board of Regents members and Nissan officials gathered in Smyrna to cut the ribbon on the brand new Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT) campus. The new center serves a dual role as a training center for Nissan and satellite campus of the Murfreesboro TCAT facility. The \$35-million facility was built through a public-private partnership with Nissan.

Memphis to open new pocket park at formerly blighted site



Work is finishing up on a new pocket park in Memphis located on the former site of a Burger King. The city's new Madison Avenue Park will officially open to the public on April 21. The privately-funded park project is a multi-leveled space including ample green space, a small performance stage at the peak of its top level and a vitrine gallery space underneath. The PARC Foundation and Davies Toews Architecture co-designed the space and Montgomery Martin was the general contractor.

TENNESSEE TOWN & CITY

Tennessee Town & City (ISSN 00403415, USPS 539420) is published semi-monthly except in the months of June and December 19 times per year by Tennessee Municipal League, 226 Capitol Blvd, Suite 710, Nashville TN 37219-1894. Subscription rates: \$6 per year to members, \$15 to nonmembers, \$1 a copy. Periodicals Postage Paid at Nashville TN. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Tennessee Town & City, 226 Capitol Blvd, Suite 710, Nashville TN 37219-1894.

Official publication of the Tennessee Municipal League. Publisher: Margaret Mahery (mmahery@TML1.org); Editor: Carole Graves (cgraves@TML1.org); Phone: 615-255-6416. Advertising: Publisher reserves the right to reject any advertising deemed unacceptable. Fax classified ads to TT&C: Attention Carole Graves at 615-255-4752, or e-mail cgraves@TML1.org. Fax advertising copy to TT&C: Attention Debbie Kluth at 615-255-4752, or e-mail dkluth@TML1.org. Opinions expressed by non League officials or staff do not necessarily reflect policies of TML.

Sovereign citizens use paper terrorism tactics against public officials

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the state of Tennessee and forgery of more than \$250,000 in a Class A Felony in the state, victims of paper terrorism sometimes find they are sorting out the financial mess of a fraudulent lien long after the perpetrator has been brought to justice. Kelsey said the goal of his bill is to change that.

"Our police officers, judges and other elected and appointed officials should not have to endure this kind of abuse of our state's lien filing system," Kelsey said. "The arrests made by TBI illustrate the need for an easier way to remove improper liens. This method will provide a strong deterrent to bad actors attempting to file fraudulent liens. This legislation would help end such harassment."

Currently, officials can file a termination statement, which gives notice that a lien is disputed but does not remove the bogus lien from the file. This proposed legislation would allow fraudulent liens to be removed without requiring a court order.

"Fraudulent liens filed against our elected officials cut against the very fabric of our free society. This bill will create a better mechanism to ensure these criminals cannot impede our democracy," said House bill sponsor Rep. William Lamberth, R-Cottontown.

Public officials can file an affidavit stating the lien was filed without "any reasonable basis or legal cause." The Secretary of State's office will then give notice to the purported secured party. If the secured party does not respond to dispute the affidavit, the lien is removed from the record. If the secured party believes that the lien is valid, he or she can appeal to an administrative law judge who will determine whether the lien was validly filed. The purported secured party will be required to file a cost bond in connection with the dispute, and the prevailing party will be awarded attorneys' fees, costs and expenses.

The measure has gained support from both the Secretary of State and the Administrative Office of the Courts. Secretary of State Tre Hargett says he hopes the passage of the bill will help victims of paper terrorism while simultaneously making it easier to prosecute those who commit it.

"These arrests send a clear message. Public officials as well as state and local government employees shouldn't be harassed with fraudulent liens just for doing their jobs," Hargett said. "We believe this will provide an expedited and uncomplicated remedy to this targeted abuse. Additionally, since legal costs associated with this process can be recovered under this legislation, fraudulent filers should

think twice before they file."

Rachel Harmon, general counsel of the Administrative Office of the Courts, helped draft the legislation.

"Members of the judiciary at all levels have been victims of fraudulent lien filings," Harmon said. "The impact of those filings can be an impediment to the judicial process. The judiciary is appreciative of the efforts to provide a mechanism to remedy this concerning trend."

During the first wave of the antigovernment "Patriot" movement in the 1990s, more than 25 states passed new laws or strengthened old ones to punish the filing of fraudulent liens and other paper terror tactics. Tennessee is one of several states to consider such measures during this second wave of antigovernment movements, which has been gaining steam since 2009.

The National Association of Secretaries of State reported in 2014 that at least 17 states permit offices either to refuse to accept bogus filings or expunge them from the record after filing. At least seven states had a system for expedited judicial relief; at least 14 allowed penalties in a civil lawsuit; and at least 10 made filing a false lien a crime. The NASS also found liens filed electronically were less likely to be reviewed for fraud.

Alabama, Georgia and Louisiana were among the first states to pass laws regarding fraudulent liens in 2012. Illinois and Maine were among eight states to pass such measures in 2013, and five did so in 2014, including Hawaii. In 2015, states including California, Indiana, Maryland, Nevada, New Jersey, North Carolina and North Dakota passed measures related to fraudulent liens filed against government officials.

Many of these laws were passed within the last seven years. The NASS classified the types of laws into three categories: pre-filing remedies, post-filing remedies and criminal penalties.

Pre-filing remedies are laws enacted to prevent fraudulent liens from being filed in the first place, often giving authority to registers of deeds and court clerks to not file liens they suspect are fraudulent. Alabama, California, Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, Washington and West Virginia all have such measures on their books.

The bulk of the laws passed by states focus on allowing victims to more easily nullify or expunge fraudulent liens from their record while also increasing penalties for perpetrators.

Milan firefighters serve up lunches, community outreach at middle school

BY KATE COIL
TML Communications Specialist

When students at Milan Middle School went to the cafeteria March 22 they found members of the local fire department standing in for their usual lunch ladies.

For three days before Spring Break, members of the Milan Area Fire Department volunteered their time at the middle school to help prepare, serve, and clean up after lunch periods at the school. Captain Belton Luter with the Milan Fire Department said this is the second time department members have volunteered to help serve lunch at the school with two shifts helping serve lunch over three days.

Luter said the department was invited by the cafeteria manager last year and again this year to help out. In addition to serving the kids, Luter said the firefighters also gave the cafeteria workers a chance to catch up on meal planning for the rest of the week.

"A lot of the kids enjoy it, and if we can serve food, the staff can prep food for the next day. It's just one of the ways we get to serve others," he said. "Some of the kids were more excited about getting their lunch. Some of them were saying hello or said they didn't expect to see us but remembered us. We went out and swept and mopped while they ate."

While the kids have fun getting to see the local firefighters in their school, Luter said it is often the firefighters themselves who have the most fun working the lunch shift.

"When they get to middle school, some students already know what they want to do or what they don't want to do," he said. "Maybe by us just being there made someone think 'hey, I want to be a fireman.' Most of the guys in the department enjoy it. We're usually running calls, training or waiting at the station for another call. It's nice to be able to get out of the station sometimes and do something nice in the community."

Milan's smaller size makes it easier to get to know kids in the area, Luter said.

"We also get to interact a lot with the kids because we are in a smaller community," Luter said. "We are a town of about 7,000 people, and a lot of the kids we see around town we know by name. It's good for them to see that their community cares about them. It's good for the teachers, too, to know we are there if they need us."

The presence of firefighters in the middle school also serves as a way to show students there are adults in their community they can look to and depend on.

"We want the kids to be able to ask us anything," he said. "If something is going wrong and they see us and know us, they can talk to us. Sometimes, kids have something



Anthony Shostrand, a firefighter and EMT with the Milan Fire Area Department, hands off a lunch to a student at Milan Middle School. Firefighters have been coming to the school to help with serving lunch and cleaning up afterwards for two years to reach out to students and school employees.



Students at Milan Middle School receive their nacho bar lunch from members of the Milan Area Fire Department. From right to left in the background are Fire Lt. Brian Coplen, Firefighter Jason Wall and Firefighter Daniel Gault.

going on in their lives that they don't feel comfortable talking to their mom or dad about, but if they see us, they can talk to us."

Luter said events like serving lunch at the middle school are some of the many ways the department works to build relationships in the community.

"I think it's important when the police and fire departments can get out in the community and show people what we do," Luter said. "We don't just run fire and medical calls. We do smoke alarm

testing and installation. We also try to go out to a lot of public events in town. We sometimes go down to the senior citizen center to help set up chairs for an event. One of the guys in the department is in a baseball league. We sometimes take the truck out and go watch the games just so people in the community can see us out there. This is a chance for us to go out in the public and talk to people. We want to be out in the community so they know we appreciate them as much as they appreciate us."

Community hospitals contribute millions to Tennessee economy, provide essential care to rural regions

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health initiatives, health fairs and other events in the community. Many people think of hospitals as only doing sick care, but the amount of wellness care they do is even higher."

Maury Regional Medical Center is an example of one such community hospital that has a major impact on its local population. In addition to its flagship in Columbia, Maury Regional operates hospitals in Lewisburg, Waynesboro, and Hohenwald. The not-for-profit regional health system also operates Family Health Group (FHG), a network of physician practices in Maury, Lewis, Marshall and Wayne counties.

Columbia City Manager Tony Massey said Maury Regional's financial investment in the city goes beyond the salaries it pays its employees.

"Maury Regional is a very significant part of Columbia's local economy," Massey said. "They are our No. 1 employer with approximately 28,000 full-time employees and a \$153 million payroll. They also contribute more than \$2 million to local charities and community organization. The doctor's offices, pharmacies and all the support business that are here because of Maury Regional. They also made a major multi-million

dollar commitment in moving their cancer center to the mall a few years ago."

Massey said the quality of care the hospital offers has also made Columbia a health care destination for those living outside of Columbia and Maury County.

"We are very proud since it has been recognized as one of the premiere hospitals in the United States," he said. "It has won excellence awards and was recognized as the No. 1 hospital in Tennessee through CareCheck in 2017. When you match us up with the hospital in Nashville in terms of our quality and quantity, we match up very well. They are a major part of our community."

With the Baby Boomer generation aging and requiring more health care, Becker said rural hospitals often provide essential care.

"As they get older, these people want to stay in their community," he said. "Having a local hospital allows them to do so. Rural hospitals can help retain populations. They also can bring in business. Many businesses when they choose to relocate to an area they look at two things: the local school system and the local hospital."

While some rural communities find their populations stagnating or decreasing as younger residents leave the area, Becker said hospi-

tals can help inject new life into a community.

"If you look at the job of a physician or a nurse practitioner, especially in a hospital setting, it's something that most people don't still want to be doing when they are in their fifties or sixties," he said. "These are jobs for younger people, and they can bring younger people to an area."

Despite the economic impact rural hospitals have, they are facing challenges. Recruitment of health-care professionals can sometimes be hard in smaller communities, but Becker said there are those who prefer providing health care in a rural setting.

"The best-case situation is usually when you have someone from that community who is invested and wants to work in their hometown," he said. "There are also people who prefer living in a rural area. Most people who can't live without being 15 minutes from a mall don't chose to work in rural hospitals."

Rural hospitals often have limited financial resources, capital and a finite number of patients. Additionally, the state's rural hospitals provide millions worth of uncompensated or charity care to uninsured and under-insured Tennesseans. In 2015, rural hospitals provided \$292 million in uncom-

pensated care including \$124 million reimbursed TennCare costs.

Becker said the charity care provided by hospitals can be essential.

"Many of our rural hospitals providing charity care are doing so to unemployed individuals," he said. "It is certainly cheaper for these people to be treated locally than have to go to a larger hospital further away. A lot of our rural communities also have a large elderly population on Medicare or a low-wage earning population that relies heavily on Medicaid. Unfortunately, without expansions these programs don't always cover everything. These people would rather be treated by 'family' than go somewhere else. If they had to go further away for treatment, it would cost them even more."

The reduction in hospital payments, shrinking rural populations, and rising health care costs have led to the closure of 80 rural hospitals across the country since 2010. Between 2010 and 2016, nine rural hospitals closed around the state: Gibson General Hospital in Trenton, Haywood Park Community Hospital in Brownsville, Humboldt General Hospital, Parkridge West Hospital in Jasper, Methodist Fayette in Somerville, McNairy Regional Hospital in Selmer, Starr Regional Medical Center in

Etowah, United Regional Medical Center in Manchester, and Pioneer Community Hospital of Scott in Oneida.

While the number may seem small, these closures can have a big impact on the communities they serve.

"You lose jobs and often times you lose population," Becker said. "Without a local hospital, a lot of times we see local pharmacies go out of business as well. Losing a hospital is sort of a community's canary in a coal mine."

Becker said charity care often eats away at a rural hospital's budget. The result is that a hospital may struggle to stay open and provide essential care to residents in need. Without a local hospital, Becker said residents who struggle to pay for health care may face even more costs as they have to travel further away to seek care for other institutions.

To help keep rural hospitals afloat, Becker said the best thing municipal officials can do is advocate for the expansion of health care coverage to those most in need and help close the gap for those on Medicare and Medicaid.

"A lot of people say this is something we can't afford to do," he said, "but we know this is something that we can't afford not to do."



PEOPLE

Russell Brashear has been named the assistant transportation director for the city of Murfreesboro. Brashear was selected from a pool of 55 applicants and five finalists for the position. He has more than 25 years of transportation management experience and has worked in Ohio, Florida, and Nashville. He most recently served as general manager of the National Express Transit Corporation for the Westmoreland County Transportation Authority in Westmoreland County, Pa. A native of Murfreesboro, he earned a bachelor's degree in aerospace administration from Middle Tennessee State University and holds certifications as an Accredited Airport Executive (AAE), and Certified Parking Facility Manager (CPFM).



Russell Brashear

managing director of Hagerty Peterson and Company LLC, which has offices in Nashville and Chicago. This year, he also joined the private investment firm Hall Capital. Hagerty's appointment was confirmed by Congress before he officially took on the role.

Collierville Mayor Stan Joyner has been selected by the Rotary Club of Memphis East as the recipient of the 2017 Dunavant Public Servant Award. The award, which is named after long time Probate Court Clerk Bobby Joe Dunavant, is presented annually to one non-elected official and one elected official in Memphis and Shelby County for their commitment to public service.



Stan Joyner

Jimmy Richards, chief operations officer for the Newbern Police Department, will be retiring from his position after more than 33 years of service. A Vietnam War veteran who served in the Army's 34th Air Defense Command, Richards returned home and began work with the Newbern Police Department in 1978. He worked as a patrolman, dispatcher, investigator and served twice as interim police chief during his time with the department.



Jimmy Richards

Mike Swift has been selected as the new director of finance for the city of Maryville. Swift has already joined the staff of the city and will be training under current Finance Director Debbie Caughron until her retirement in June. A certified public accountant, Swift has worked as the chief financial officer and director of administration and finance division for Shelby County since 2011. He has a total 26 years of experience directing Shelby County's financial operations. He earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Missouri and has served on numerous professional boards and committees including six years on the Government Finance Officers Association's Cash Management Committee.



Mike Swift

James Ellis has been appointed the director of the Johnson City Department of Parks and Recreation. A 40-year veteran city employee, Ellis previously served as the assistant director of Parks and Recreation. He joined the department in 1978 and was promoted to recreation supervisor in 1980. In 1983, he began serving as athletic director until he was promoted to assistant director in 2011. He has been serving as director of the department on an interim basis since December. Ellis said his priorities for the department include completing existing projects such as the Rotary Park inclusive playground and splash pad as well as improvements to the Civitan Park soccer complex.



James Ellis

Bill Hargerty, a Nashville-based businessman, has been nominated to serve as the U.S. ambassador to Japan. A private equity investor who had played a prominent role in President Donald Trump's transition team, Hargerty served as commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development from 2011 to 2014. He also spent three years working in Tokyo for Boston Consulting Group. Hargerty is currently the



Bill Hargerty

Charles "Bones" Seivers honored with Lifetime Achievement Award

The Boys & Girls Club of North Anderson County, a member of Boys & Girls Clubs of the Tennessee Valley, recently honored Charles "Bones" Seivers with a Lifetime Achievement Award.

The award was given to Seivers during the annual Anderson County Hall of Fame Induction Banquet on March 30 in Clinton.

Each year, local individuals are inducted into the Hall of Fame, which was established in 2007, for their achievements as business leaders, athletes, elected officials, visionaries, volunteers, members of the military, coaches and youth mentors and educators.

A Clinton native, Seivers first entered public office in 1962, when he ran for an open alderman seat. Seivers continuously served the citizens of Clinton as an elected official for 13 years. He served four two-year terms as alderman; and in 1970, he was elected mayor. In 1972, he was appointed as the

city's first administrator and city manager – a role he served in for 20 years.

In 1979, Seivers served as one of the founding members on the TML Insurance Pool Board of Trustees, now known as the TML Risk Management Pool. It was the first of its kind in the country and served as the first statewide municipal liability pool.

In 1985, he worked to bring municipalities and the state together and helped create the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund so that municipalities could obtain low-cost financing for capital improvement needs.

In 1995, the Bond Fund was asked by the Tennessee County Services to structure a similar program for counties, resulting in the formation of the Tennessee County Services Loan Program. Now, after more than 25 years, the Municipal Bond Fund and the County Loan Program have made more than



Charles "Bones" Seivers

1,000 loans totaling \$3.4 billion – and having saved cities and counties \$400 million in interest costs alone.

In Clinton, two community landmarks were dedicated in his honor: The Clinton Community Center and the Charles G. Seivers Boulevard. And recently in Nashville, the Capitol Boulevard Building was renamed the Charles "Bones" Seivers Building.

Greeneville Police K-9s receive new vests



Members of Greeneville's K-9 Unit include, left to right, Lt. Cameron Spradlin and Kajo, Officer Eddie Key and Ace, Lt. Steve Spano and Rex, and Officer David Shell and Grim. Vests were recently donated to the four K-9 officers to help protect them in the line of duty.

Four Greeneville Police Department K-9 officers now have extra protection while serving their community.

Nonprofit Vested Interest in K9s, Inc., and Nebraska-based Perrigo Animal Health donated four bullet and stab-proof vests to the Greeneville Police Department to protect K-9 Officers Kajo, Ace, Rex, and Grim.

In most cases, law enforcement agencies do not have the budget to purchase K-9 protective vests because they cost \$1,050.00 each. As a result, police dogs are left unprotected while fighting crime.

K-9 unit supervisor, Lt. Steve Spano, who is partnered with K-9

Officer Rex, said the donation is important to both the dogs and their handlers.

"The Greeneville Police Department's K-9 units are deployed on a daily basis to serve and protect the citizens of Greeneville and Greene County," he said. "There have been several times that the K-9's have been sent into situations where the handlers have feared their partners might be injured or worse. These vests will help insure a long healthy career with us here at the Greeneville Police Department."

Greeneville Police Chief Terry Cannon of the Greeneville Police Department has long placed a very high regard for the health and safe-

ty of K-9 officers.

"These dogs are as big a part of our family here at the police department as any other employee," Cannon said.

Since Perrigo Animal Health and Vested Interest in K9s began working together in 2013, the groups have donated more than 75 police dog vests.

Vested Interest in K9s, Inc., was established in 2009 to assist law enforcement agencies with this potentially lifesaving body armor for their four-legged K-9 officers. More than 2,400 law enforcement dogs in all 50 states have received lifesaving body armor from Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. Learn more at www.vik9s.org.

Registration now open for TML Annual Conference in Murfreesboro, June 10-13

CONFERENCE from Page 1
er the Battle of Stones River and exploring what the soldiers did more than 150 years ago. A special program with a park ranger will be planned for TML Conference attendees and their families.

Both events are free but do require those interested to sign up in advance. TML is moving to an online registration process for the 2017 Annual Conference. There

are two forms: a delegate registration form for municipal officials/staff and a spouse/guest form for non-municipal registrants.

Each municipality will be able to use a single form to register all city attendees.

Forms are available on the TML website on the 2017 Annual Conference page under the Conferences tab on the left.

If you have any questions

throughout the registration process, contact Sylvia Harris at (615) 425-3903 or sharris@tml1.org

Schedule At-A-Glance

SATURDAY, JUNE 10

8 am - 12 pm MTAS EOA
1 - 4 pm Pre-Conference Outings
7 - 8:30 pm Welcome Reception

SUNDAY, JUNE 11

7 am - 1 pm Golf Outing
10 am - 5 pm Registration
10:30 am - 5 pm Exhibit Hall
10:30 - 11:30am Workshops
11:30 am - 1:30 pm Lunch
1:45 - 2:15 pm District Meetings
2:30 - 4 pm Opening Session
4 - 5 pm Roundtable Discussions Exhibit Hall
6 - 9 pm Host City Reception

MONDAY, JUNE 12

8 - 8:30 am Continental Breakfast
9 am - 3 pm Registration
8:45 - 9:45 am Workshops
10 - 10:45 am Business Meeting
11 - 11:45 am General Session
12 - 1:30 pm Lunch
2:30 - 3:30 pm Workshops
3:45 - 4:45 pm Workshops
6 - 11pm Pool Party

TUESDAY, JUNE 13

8 - 10 am Awards Breakfast

TML requests E-mail addresses

The quickest way to keep city officials apprised of legislative happenings is through email or fax. With so many recent municipal elections, TML has been working to update its elected officials and city staff contact information. Send your updates to Jackie Gupton, by fax at 615-255-4752, by email to jgupton@TML1.org, or call 615-255-6416.

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Water and Wastewater Systems

STATE BRIEFS



Tennessee's preliminary unemployment rate for February was 5.3 percent according to the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development. This is an improvement from the revised January rate of 5.4 percent. February's U.S. preliminary rate is 4.7 percent, matching Tennessee with a tenth of a percentage point decline from the previous month. Over the past year, Tennessee's rate has increased by six-tenths of a percentage point while the national rate has declined by two-tenths. February's largest workforce increases occurred in the leisure/hospitality, trade/transportation/utilities, and professional/business services industries.

The Tennessee Department of Health has created a web-based resource to help reunite lost pets with their owners. Those who find stray pets wearing TDH rabies tags can now use this tool on the TDH website to identify the veterinarians who vaccinated the animals, who can then help find the owners. If a rabies tag was not issued by the Tennessee Department of Health, pet finders can call the telephone number on the tag to contact the agency that issued it. Some larger cities in Tennessee have their own licensing systems for rabies tags separate from TDH. A list of state-issued rabies tags are available at tn.gov/health/article/rabies-tags.

Preliminary results show 109 fire-related deaths occurred in Tennessee during 2016, according to the State Fire Marshal's Office 2016 Annual Report. The figure does not include deaths attributed to the Sevier County wildfires because they are part of an ongoing investigation. While Tennessee's fire-related fatalities climbed last year, the overall trend of Tennessee's fire death rate continues to decline when viewed with Tennessee's historical fire data. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) ranked Tennessee No. 6 in the nation for fire deaths with 17.7 deaths per million for the 2006-2010 measurement period. The SFMO expects the cumulative reduction in the state's annual fire death rate since the last

NATIONAL BRIEFS

Heroin use in the U.S. has risen fivefold and dependence on the drug has more than tripled, according to recent findings by the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health. The new study found that whites and men with low incomes and low levels of education experienced the highest increases in heroin use. Whites aged 18 to 44 accounted for the biggest rise in heroin use, fueled in part by the opioid abuse crises. Researchers said the results are troubling because many of the categories that experienced growth in abuse are also groups with fewer resources to deal with the issue. Heroin use among women and unmarried adults as increased, but not as prominently as for whites and low-income, under-educated males.

U.S. auto sales in March increased almost 1.9 percent from a year earlier, despite consumer discounts remaining at record levels. Industry consultants J.D. Power and LMC Automotive said new vehicle sales reached about 1.62 million in March with the seasonally adjusted annualized rate for the month will be 17.3 million vehicles, up from 16.8 million a year earlier. U.S. sales of new cars and trucks hit a record high of 17.55 million units in 2016.

Renters are now more common than homeowners in the largest 100 cities across the country. According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau, 52 of the 100 largest cities in the country have more renters than homeowners regardless of the housing market climate of the community. Homeownership has fallen steadily for a decade as foreclosures and the subprime mortgage crises forced many former homeowners into rental situations. Renting likely will continue to rise through 2030, due to demographic trends like aging baby boomers who are opting to downsize to rentals

measurement period will mean Tennessee will no longer be ranked in the top 10 states when the NFPA releases their new state rankings sometime in 2017.

More than 1,000 acres and \$8 million have been donated to expanding the Cumberland Trail located in Cumberland, Rhea and Bledsoe counties. Farmer and businessman George Lindemann donated 1,034 acres of land and \$8.27 million around Soak Creek in Rhea County to Justin P. Wilson Cumberland Trail State Park to help expand the trail. When completed, the Cumberland Trail will cover 300 miles in Tennessee, connecting the Tennessee River Gorge to Cumberland Gap. The trail will eventually connect the state to the Great Eastern Trail, which will stretch from Alabama to New York. Soak Creek where the land is located was recently added to the list of Tennessee scenic rivers. Lindemann's donation is one of the largest private land donations in recent state history.

Museums across state take home awards from TAM conference

Museums across the state of Tennessee took home awards for exhibits, publications, special events, and educational programs on topics ranging from World War II to Shakespeare to country music. The Tennessee Association of Museums (TAM) present awards of excellence and commendation were awarded on a variety of topics to museums based on their size and budget during their annual conference in Pigeon Forge. Awards of excellence were given for outstanding and exemplary accomplishment while commendations were given to those who did not meet the excellence category but still warranted recognition.

Museums with a budget of \$50,000 or less

The West Tennessee Regional Art Center in Humboldt took home three awards of excellence: in the audio/visual/film/documentary category for its Drone Visits WTRAC video; the publication award for its flat paper printed materials for the Jewel in the Crown fundraising event; and for special event with the Jewel in the Crown event.

Greeneville's City Car Garage Museum took home commendations for temporary exhibit with its the Vehicles of Downtown Abbey and publication for its *Take a Road Trip Back in Time* cookbook.

Wartrace's Tennessee Walking Horse National Museum was commended for temporary exhibit with its Mother's Day Mare exhibit and in the special or novelty category for its horse head wreath.

Museums with a budget between \$50,000 and \$200,000

Collierville's Morton Museum took home the most awards with four awards of excellence: best temporary exhibit for its Portrait of Collierville: 1940-1945; best education program for the 2016 Morton Museum Dairy Workshop; special event for its 2016 Train Heritage Day; and a special recognition for its Frisco 1351 Project.

Collegedale's Lynn H. Wood Archaeological Museum took home two awards of excellence for audio/visual exhibit component for its A World in Miniature Exhibit's interactive software and blockbuster exhibit for its exhibit A World in Miniature: Creation, Cosmos, Ecology on Seals from Biblical Times.

Pall Mall's Sergeant York Patriotic Foundation took home two awards of excellence for permanent exhibit for the Sergeant York State Historic Park and special event for the Stand By the Boys in the Trenches event.

Nashville's Grassmere Historic Farm at the Nashville Zoo was also given an award of excellence for its Croft Clues educational program. Jonesborough's Heritage Alliance of Northeastern Tennessee and Southwestern Virginia received an award of excellence for its Not Your Ordinary Dinner Party special event and a commendation for its A Spot on the Hill education program.

Greeneville's Museums of Tusculum was awarded excellence for the permanent exhibit Andrew Johnson's Political Career Before the Vice Presidency, and the Greene County History Museum took home a commendation for its Mice

TDOT announces message sign winners

Five winning messages have been selected from the Tennessee Department of Transportation's recent Dynamic Message Sign Contest. More than 2,000 entries were submitted and nearly 8,000 votes were cast for the 15 finalist messages.

The messages covered issues such as distracted driving, seatbelt usage, impaired driving, speeding and aggressive driving.

The top five messages in order of votes are:

- Do your duty. Seatbelt your booty.
- Use your blinking blinker.
- Be Kind. Don't ride my behind.
- In a hurry? Shoulda left early. Slow down.
- We've upped our road safety, so up yours.

The winning messages will be placed in rotation to run on the overhead Dynamic Message Signs statewide throughout the year. Some of the entries were modified slightly to fit guidelines for the signs.

There are also three honorable mentions that will be placed in

TDOT Dynamic Message Sign Contest Winners



Do your duty. Seatbelt your booty!



Use your blinking blinker!



Be Kind. Don't ride my behind.

rotation:

- Smashville is a rink thing, not a drink thing.
- Don't let Halloween end in horror. Drive sober.
- March madness. For the hardwood, not the highway.

"I want to thank everyone who submitted messages and took part in the voting process," said TDOT Commissioner John Schroer. "We received such creative messages this year. TDOT is honored to partner with the public to raise safety awareness. Even if a submission didn't win, there's still a chance that message may be seen periodically on our DMS boards."

rotation:

A total of 177 Dynamic Message Signs are located in the state's four urban areas (Chattanooga, Knoxville, Memphis, and Nashville) and in some rural areas across the state. The main purpose of the signs is to alert motorists of incidents, lane blockages, hazardous road conditions, or Amber Alerts.

In 2012, TDOT became the first DOT in the nation to display roadway fatality numbers on the overhead signs. In addition to the fatality statistics, safety messages are displayed during off-peak travel times.



Left to Right: World War I re-enactors from Pall Mall's Sgt. York Patriotic Foundation, biblical seals from Collegedale's Lynn H. Wood Archaeological Museum, and metalworking from the Memphis Metal Museum's "Inches from Earth" exhibit all took home awards at the Tennessee Association of Museum's conference.

in the Museum educational program.

The Fort Defiance Civil War Park and Interpretive Center in Clarksville took home two commendations: one for its educational program Christmas in Occupied Clarksville and a second for special recognition for its New Providence Freedman School research and presentation.

The Cookeville History Museum, in partnership with Tennessee Technological University, was also commended for its temporary exhibit World War I: A View from the Eastern Front.

Museums with a budget between \$200,000 and \$500,000

Nashville's Belmont Mansion took home four awards. The mansion won best flat paper publication for its Belmont Estate: Gardens and Grounds Self-Guided Tour, for audio/visual/film/documentary with its Belmont Mansion Upstairs Video Tour, and website for its Belmont Mansion Virtual Estate Tour.

Columbia's President James K. Polk Home and Museum took home an award of excellence for its temporary exhibit West to Prosperity: Polk Home at 200.

Vonore's Fort Loudon State Historic Park took home an excellence award for special recognition for its Ronald W. Black Memorial Research Library.

Athens' McMinn County Living Heritage Museum, was commended for its flat paper publication Final Home Port: USS Charles R Ware.

Museums with a budget between \$500,000 and \$1 M

Nashville's Parthenon took home awards of excellence in educational programming for its First Folio: The Book that Gave us Shakespeare, which also took home a commendation for traveling exhibits. The museum also won for excellence in special recognition for its Lost History of the Parthenon documentary.

Museums with a budget of \$1M or more.

The Memphis Metal Museum

took home the most awards in this category with 11 awards including three awards of excellence for its temporary exhibit Inches from the Earth, its gallery guide for Inches from the Earth, and its blockbuster exhibit with Master Metalsmith Hoss Haley. Eight commendations were awarded to the museum for its blacksmith shop and foundry permanent exhibit, Master Metalsmith Hoss Haley publication, Hoss Haley PR kit, flat paper publication for Repair Days 2016 Trifold, newsletter for its third quarter calendar, its FIRE t-shirt, its museum website, and a special recognition for its holiday guide and cookbook.

Nashville's Frist Center for the Visual Arts took home five awards of excellence: for its book catalog Shinique Smith: Wonder and Rainbows; gallery guide: Treasures from the House of Alba; audio visual component for its Samauri: Fact or Fiction; special recognition for its Samauri: Way of the Warrior advertising; and blockbuster exhibit for its Bellissima! The Italian Automotive Renaissance. The museum also received commendations for its That You Have dance performance as a special event; its Treasures From the House of Alba as a temporary exhibit; and commendations for flat paper, educational program and audio/visual/film/documentary for its Bellissima! The Italian Automotive Renaissance.

The Tennessee State Museum in Nashville took home six awards with five awards of excellence. The awards of excellence were presented for the I Have A Voice: Tennessee's African-American Musical Heritage temporary exhibit; its flat paper for an educational poster; educational program of its Lunch and Learn series; and audio visual exhibit component for its Burgner Musical Desk presentation. The museum also won three commendation awards for its website, special recognition for its Mercy Street blog, and special event for its new museum groundbreaking and statewide community meetings.

The Cheekwood Botanical Garden in Nashville took home five awards with three awards of excellence for its temporary exhibit Steve

Tobin: Southern Roots; novelty publication for its Passport: International Playhouses; and audio/visual/film/documentary for its Kensuke Yamada: Diving Through Clouds documentary. The museum also took home two special commendations for its website and special event First Thursday Nights in the Gardens.

Knoxville's East Tennessee Historical Society took home an award for temporary exhibit and audio visual component both for Come to Make Records: Knoxville's Contribution to American Popular Music. Knoxville's McClung Museum of Natural History also took home an excellence award for its Maya Festival educational program.

Nashville's Country Music Hall of Fame took home an excellence award for its book/catalog Home of 1000 Hits: Historic RCA Studio B. The city's Andrew Jackson's Hermitage was commended for its permanent exhibit Inclusive Representation through Faux Food.

Bristol's Birthplace of Country Museum won an excellence award for its educational program YWCA Bristol TechGYRLS Museum Day LIVE! Radio Program.

Union City's Discovery Park of America took home five awards of commendation for its flat paper DPA's Beer Blues and Brats Festival poster, special or novelty publication for its Jurassic Journey Dinosaur Puzzle, educational program for its Brain Awareness Day, special event for kits Kid's NOON Year's Eve Party, and special recognition for its Beer Blues and Brats marketing campaign.

Clarksville's Customs House Museum and Cultural Center was also commended for its temporary exhibit Of Stars and Stripes.

President's Award

The East Tennessee Historical Society's temporary exhibits Come to Make Records, Knoxville's Contribution to American Popular Music tied with the Parthenon documentary to receive the TAM's president's award.



CLASSIFIED ADS

Advertising: \$9.25 per column inch. No charge to TML members. Send advertising to: Carole Graves e-mail: cgraves@TML1.org.

AIRPORT MANAGER

SAVANNAH / HARDIN COUNTY
The city of Savannah and Hardin County, as joint owners of the Savannah/Hardin County Airport are seeking an airport manager to oversee the operations of the Savannah I Hardin County Airport. The position is open due to the pending retirement of the current airport manager, who has served in the position for over 30 years. The chosen candidate would hopefully bring forth the same passion and dedication as shown by the retiring manager. The airport manager position is an at-will employee and reports directly to the Savannah I Hardin County Airport Commission, a seven member board made up of appointees from both Hardin County and the city of Savannah governments. The manager position requires exercising independent judgment, and is responsible for providing general direction to plan and organize all activities concerned with day-to-day operations of the airport. The ideal candidate will have graduated from an accredited four year college or university with major course work in airport management, two years management experience, or any combination of education, training and experience which provides the required knowledge and abilities. The manager must possess the ability to both comprehend and present technical information as well as assist with hands on building and ground maintenance and fueling aircraft. Starting salary dependent on experience and qualifications. Position will have a paid health insurance plan. EOE/ Drug-free workplace. Resumes will be accepted until April 28 at 5:00P.M., C.D.T. All interested applicants must submit a resume and cover letter along with three personal and three professional references to: City of Savannah 140 Main Street, Savannah, Tennessee 38372 Attn: Garry Welch Chairman - Savannah I Hardin County Airport Commission

ASSISTANT PLANNER

MT. JULIET. The city of Mt. Juliet is seeking a candidate for a full-time assistant planner in the Planning & Zoning Department. A detailed job description and requirements are available online. Applications must be filed electronically and are available at the city's website, www.mtjuliet-tn.gov. The city will accept electronic applications until positions are filled. The city of Mt. Juliet reserves the right to stop accepting applications at any time. For questions, regarding the electronic application process, please call (615) 754-2552. EOE/ Drug-free Workplace

CITY MANAGER

LOUDON. The city of Loudon is seeking applications for a skilled manager to lead its dynamic city operations. The desired candidate will be a proven manager with excellent, communication and problem solving skills. A bachelor's degree in engineering, public administration, business administration or a related field is preferred. Ideally the candidate will possess a minimum of five years of experience in upper level city administration. The position reports to the city mayor and a five person Utility Board of Directors. The city of Loudon employs a staff of more than 150 in utilities, including electric, gas, water, and wastewater as well as police, fire, parks and recreation, and public works. The city of Loudon offers a competitive salary and complete benefits package including participation in the TCRS. If you are a highly motivated team player, and enjoy working in a challenging environment, email your resume and salary requirements to: John Canada at john.canada@loudonutilities.org. EOE

EQUIPMENT OPERATOR I

GALLATIN. The city of Gallatin Public Works Department is currently accepting applications for an equipment operator I in the Streets Division. The purpose of this position is to perform semiskilled work in a variety of construction, repair

and maintenance assignments involving the use of specialized tools. This is a 40 hours per week, day shift position with some weekend work required. The starting rate is \$12.16 + excellent benefits. Duties include performing general street, utility, building and grounds work; operating dump truck and light to medium construction equipment. Applicants must have knowledge of the traffic laws and regulations governing equipment operation, skill in the operation of a variety of small, medium and heavy equipment, and the ability to understand and effectively carry out written and oral instructions. At the minimum, applicants must possess a high school diploma and must have 1 year of recent work experience in installation, concrete, or asphalt services. A Class A-57 CDL is required. To see a more detailed description and to apply, go to www.gallatinonthemove.com. Applications are being accepted on an ongoing basis to fill current and future vacancies. EOE.

FINANCE DIRECTOR

NOLENSVILLE. The town of Nolensville is currently seeking an experienced professional to serve as finance director. This position, which reports directly to the town administrator, oversees a small and talented staff in the finance department and directs all accounting and financial operations of the town. The finance director oversees purchasing, accounts payable, accounting, auditing, and revenue collection services and activities. In addition, the finance director performs a variety of professional level financial management responsibilities including analysis, preparation, and maintenance of the annual budget, financial records, statements, and reports with significant responsibility and interaction regarding the annual financial audit. The ideal candidate will have a broad based knowledge of governmental accounting and methods of financial control and reporting as well as outstanding organizational skills and a focus on timely delivery of reports and projects. The position requires any combination of education and experience equivalent to graduation from an accredited college or university with major course work in accounting, business administration, or related field (CPA or advanced degree preferred with consideration given for TN CMFO designation), with six years of progressively responsible experience in governmental accounting, auditing, or related areas and experience in a supervisory capacity of accounting functions and personnel. Previous experience as a local government finance director or assistant finance director or equivalent is preferred. Salary Range: \$51,876-\$70,185 (starting salary is DOQ) and a very attractive benefits package. Interested parties can apply by emailing resumes to the Town Administrator, kmclawhon@nolensvilletn.gov. Questions should be directed to Ken McLawhon at 615-776-6693.

FIRE CHIEF

JOHNSON CITY. The city of Johnson City is looking for an innovative and committed fire professional to serve as the city's next fire chief. Under the general direction and supervision of the city manager, the chief plans, organizes, directs, coordinates and evaluates the firefighting, prevention, EMS, and fire service activities of the Johnson City Fire Department. The chief will maintain the highest level of ethics, integrity, and accountability. He/she will be an effective and impartial leader with outstanding interpersonal skills, a talent for communications at all levels of the organization, and strong management/organizational skills. The new chief must have the ability to direct, manage, and affect confidence in Fire Department personnel at all levels. The chief will provide leadership and drive the vision for the Johnson City Fire Department. The position supervises two assistant chiefs who are assigned to the Operations and Administrative divisions of the department. The chief will also support community education efforts and will represent the division in the local community and on a regional basis. The position is open due to the

impending retirement of the current fire chief. The Johnson City Fire Department provides fire suppression, rescue, EMS, prevention and inspections. It is staffed with 120+ full-time employees with 110 members dedicated to fire suppression. The department responds from nine fire stations, operating nine pumper and three ladder trucks. The fire suppression department works a 24-hour shift schedule. The department currently holds a Class I ISO rating. Requirements include a bachelor's degree, in a related field (Fire Science, Engineering, Business Administration, Emergency Management, etc.) from an accredited university or college, and a minimum of seven to 10 years of command level officer experience. Completion of the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer (EFO) program or a master's degree is preferred. Applications will be received on-line at www.johnsoncitytn.org until the position is filled. Salary range begins at \$71,356 and tops at \$115,653 To apply from the main web page please follow the steps below: select department and divisions, Human Resources, current job openings. EEO /Drug Free Workplace.

MECHANIC

LA VERGNE. The city of La Vergne is accepting employment applications for a full-time mechanic in the Public Works Department. Rate of pay is \$16.94 hourly. Performs semi-skilled, skilled, and administrative work in maintaining the vehicles and mechanical equipment of the department. Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Certification is a plus. Works under the direction and close supervision of the public works manager. Job qualifications include: graduation from high school diploma or GED equivalent is required; specialized training in mechanics, maintenance management, or a closely related field required; three years of related experience required; current/valid Tennessee driver's license is required; safe driving Record required.; and current/valid CDL is preferred. Please visit our website, www.lavergnetn.gov, to review the job posting and complete an online employment application for consideration for this position. Open until filled. EOE /Drug-free workplace. All candidates selected for any job opening must pass a physical exam and a drug screen before starting the job.

METER READER

GALLATIN. The city of Gallatin Public Utilities Department is currently accepting applications for a meter reader. The purpose of this position is to perform field and technical work in locating, reading, and recording readings for water and/or gas meters using a hand-held meter reading computer, does related work as required. This is a 40 hours per week, day shift position with no weekend work required. The starting rate is \$13.41 + excellent benefits. Duties include locating and reading water or gas meters on assigned routes and records usage; assisting with fieldwork; initiating and terminating service; preparing and maintaining files and records; keeping records of meters read and reports meters not accessible for reading; repairing or replacing leaking or damaged water meters. The successful applicant will have general knowledge of the geography and street locations of the City, the ability to write legibly, ability to make simple arithmetical calculations rapidly and accurately; as well as the ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with the general public. Qualified applicants must possess a high school diploma/equivalent with one year recent work experience in locating and reading water and/or gas meters or utilities experience. A valid driver's license is also required. Interested persons must apply on-line at www.gallatinonthemove.com under "Employment" at the top of the webpage and follow the Instructions. Application deadline is May 5, 2017. EOE.

PLANNER / SR. PLANNER

MORRISTOWN. The city of Morristown is now accepting applications to fill one position, either for planner or senior planner, depending on qualifications. Planner is classified at level 11 (\$17.41 hour) and senior planner is classified at level 15 (\$20.95) on the city's salary schedule. Planner essential duties and responsibilities include the following yet

other duties may be assigned: assists with the development of current, long-range, transportation, community development and/or other planning activities. Provides assistance and development information to the public. Assists in the staff support to various boards and commissions. Senior planner essential duties and responsibilities include the following: interprets Federal and/or local regulations and ordinances. Analyzes and summarizes existing conditions, derives conclusions, makes recommendations and develops projections such as for population trends, etc. Prepares reports and supports graphic display materials descriptive of research and recommendations. Explains planning problems and procedures to the general public on inquiry. Complete job description and qualifications can be obtained from the city's website. Applications may be obtained from the Human Resources Department on the second floor of City Center, or on the city's website at www.mymorristown.com. Applications will be taken until position is filled. Send completed applications to: City of Morristown, Attn: Human Resources - Planner, P.O. Box 1499, Morristown, TN 37816-1499. EOE/ Drug-free workplace.

PRINCIPAL PLANNER

MARYVILLE. The city of Maryville is seeking an experienced principal planner to be responsible for managing the city's planning program. Reports to the director of Development Services. Requirements include a master's degree in urban planning, project management and supervisory experience; or equivalent combination of education and experience. AICP certification required. Hiring range: \$65,418 - \$85,834 DOE plus an excellent benefits package. Applications are available at the Maryville Municipal Center, Human Resources, 400 W. Broadway or on our website www.maryvillegov.com. Nepotism policy prohibits hiring relatives of city employees. Deadline to apply: Friday, April 28, 2017. EOE.

PROCUREMENT SPECIALIST

COLLIERVILLE.
The purpose of this classification is to perform skilled technical work in the procurement of a variety of materials, equipment, and supplies in accordance with prescribed purchasing regulations and procedures for the town of Collierville and to coordinate documentation covering contractual obligations between the town of Collierville and various vendors, contractors, and services providers. Requires an associate's degree with major coursework in business administration, public administration or a closely related field; supplemented by four years of job related experience; or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities for this job. Proficiency in Microsoft Word and Excel are required. Requires a valid motor vehicle operators license. Salary: DOQ with excellent benefits package. Open until filled. Full job descriptions are available upon request. Call 901-457-2296. Apply to Human Resources Office, 500 Poplar View Parkway, Collierville, TN Please submit a new application each time you apply for a town job. Pursuant to Tennessee open records law, applications and resumes are subject to disclosure. EOE/ Drug Free Workplace.

PROCUREMENT TECHNICIAN

COLLIERVILLE. The purpose of this classification is to perform entry level to intermediate technical work in procurement of a variety of materials, equipment, and supplies in accordance with prescribed purchasing regulations and procedures for the town of Collierville. Requires a high school diploma or GED supplemented by college level coursework in business administration, public administration or a closely related field; Associate's degree preferred; or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities for this job. Requires a valid motor vehicle operators license. Salary: DOQ with excellent benefits package. Open until filled. Full job descriptions are available upon request. Call 901-457-2296. APPLY to Human Resources Office, 500 Poplar View Parkway, Collierville, TN Please submit a new application each time you apply for a town job.

Pursuant to Tennessee open records law, applications and resumes are subject to disclosure. EOE/ Drug-Free Workplace.

TRANSPORTATION

PROJECT MANAGER

MT. JULIET. The city of Mt. Juliet is seeking a candidate for a full-time transportation project manager in the Public Works Department. A detailed job description and requirements are available online. Applications must be filed electronically and are available at the city's website, www.mtjuliet-tn.gov. The city will accept electronic applications until positions are filled. The city of Mt. Juliet reserves the right to stop accepting applications at any time. For questions regarding the electronic application process, please call (615) 754-2552. EOE/ Drug-free Workplace

WATER / UTILITIES MANAGER

WARTRACE. The town of Wartrace is looking for a water and utilities manager to supervise the overall operations of Wartrace Waterworks and Sewer Systems and the Public Works Department. Responsible for proper operation, maintenance, reporting, collection, treatment, distribution and/or disposal of water and wastewater. Maintenance of city fleet, equipment, streets, storm water drains, city owned buildings, and parks. Supervises three employees. Prefer four or more years of experience and state of Tennessee Grade 1 Water Distribution, Grade 1 Wastewater Treatment and Grade 1 Wastewater Collection Certifications. Valid Tennessee driver's license and valid Tennessee CDL license or ability to obtain within 6 months. All licenses will be verified. Experience with Telemetry and SCADA Systems, administrative and supervisory skills, experience with operation of heavy equipment: backhoe, skid loader, etc. Knowledge of safety requirements and precautions. Finalist must pass a background check and drug test prior to employment. Work hours are Monday through Friday, 7:30 am. - 4:00 p.m. (subject to change). Some overtime required (on call hours), some weekends. Employment applications available online at www.townofwartrace.com or mail resume to Town of Wartrace, P.O. Box 158, Wartrace, TN 37183.

UTILITY SERVICE WORKER

GALLATIN. The city of Gallatin's Public Utilities Department is seeking qualified applicants for the position of Utility Service Worker in the Sewer Division. The purpose of this position is to perform unskilled manual and semiskilled work assisting in the installation, construction, repair, maintenance and care of utility lines and related structures. This is a 40 hour per week, day time position with some weekend work required. The starting rate is \$13.41 + excellent benefits. Duties include assisting in the flushing and maintenance of water distribution lines and appurtenances, maintenance and repair of water distribution and sanitary sewer lines and related infrastructure; making water and sewer taps and repairing leaks. Applicants must have general knowledge of the tools, materials and equipment used in general construction and maintenance work as well as the ability to understand and follow oral and written instruction. At minimum, applicants must have a high school diploma/equivalent, with six months' of recent work experience in construction, equipment operation, or utilities experience; or an equivalent combination of education and experience. To see a more detailed description and to apply, go to www.gallatinonthemove.com. The deadline to apply is April 20, 2017. EOE.

WATER/WASTEWATER

OPERATOR
WARTRACE. The town of Wartrace is looking for a water/wastewater operator. Experience required, wastewater distribution license helpful. Must be able to lift up to 70 pounds. Valid driver's license required, CDL helpful. All licenses verified prior to employment. Must pass drug screening prior to employment. Work hours are Monday through Friday, 7:30 am. - 4:00 p.m. (subject to change). Some overtime required (on call hours), some weekends. Employment applications available online at www.townofwartrace.com or mail resume to Town of Wartrace, P.O. Box 158, Wartrace, TN 37183

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Updates on two Supreme Court cases

BY LISA SORONEN
Executive Director
State & Local Legal Center

One step closer to Supreme Court ruling on Quill

Normally state trial court decisions aren't noteworthy but this is a crucial ruling on the way to (hopefully) getting Quill overturned.

A state trial court judge in South Dakota has ruled that a South Dakota law requiring remote sellers to collect sales tax is unconstitutional. This ruling was expected for precisely the reason the judge stated—a lower court must follow Supreme Court precedent.

In *Quill Corp. v. North Dakota*, decided in 1992, the Supreme Court held that states cannot require retailers with no in-state physical presence to collect sales tax. The South Dakota law directly contradicts this precedent.

In 2015 Justice Kennedy criticized Quill in *Direct Marketing Association v. Brohl* noting that internet sales have risen astronomically since 1992 and states are unable to collect most taxes due on sales from out-of-state vendors. He stated the "legal system should find an appropriate case for this Court to reexamine Quill."

South Dakota v. Wayfair provides the Supreme Court the perfect opportunity to overturn Quill if the Court is ready. Judge Barnett seemed sympathetic to that outcome noting that he was bound by precedent "even when changing times and events clearly suggest a different outcome."

Last year Supreme Court nominee Judge Gorsuch ruled on *Direct Marketing Association v. Brohl* and (strongly) implied that given the opportunity the U.S. Supreme Court should overrule Quill.

South Dakota will certainly appeal this decision to the South Dakota Supreme Court which will rule against the state as well. The U.S. Supreme Court can then decide whether it wants to review *South Dakota v. Wayfair*.

WOTUS to stay at SCOTUS

The Trump Administration asked the Supreme Court to hold "in abeyance" litigation over whether a federal district court or a federal court of appeals has jurisdiction to rule whether the current 2015 Waters of the United States (WOTUS) definitional rule violates the Clean Water Act. On April 2, the Supreme Court denied the motion meaning the litigation will proceed.

President Trump's February 28 executive order Restoring the Rule of Law, Federalism, and Economic Growth by Reviewing the "Waters of the United States" Rule calls for the "rescinding or revising" of the WOTUS rule. Many state and local governments objected to the broad nature of this rule, in particular to the expansive definition of ditches and the ambiguous definition of tributaries.

The 2015 WOTUS rule is subject to complicated litigation. In October 2015, the Sixth Circuit issued a temporary stay of the rule preventing it from going into effect nationally. In February 2016, the Sixth Circuit ruled that it, rather than a federal district court, has jurisdiction to rule on whether the WOTUS

rule exceeded the Clean Water Act.

In January 2017, the Supreme Court agreed to review the Sixth Circuit ruling that an appellate court not a district court has jurisdiction to rule on WOTUS. This case, *National Association of Manufacturers v. Department of Defense*, will not be heard until next fall 2017—meaning the Supreme Court may not issue an opinion in this case until as late as June 2018.

The federal government asked the litigation before the Supreme Court to be temporarily halted because the 2015 WOTUS rule may be rescinded or revised per the Executive Order meaning the Sixth Circuit's ruling it had jurisdiction "may ultimately have little significance for the Rule that is currently under review by the court of appeals."

A number of parties and interveners who support the 2015 WOTUS rule objected. Conservation groups argued it is "quite unlikely that the detailed rule and technical record at issue could properly be reconsidered so quickly, and it would be inappropriate to prejudge the outcome of the deliberative process of notice-and-comment rulemaking that would apply to any such action."

Per regular practice the Supreme Court did not explain why it denied the abeyance motion. That the motion was opposed and that the process to finalize new rules is lengthy (and hasn't yet begun here) may have been factors. Also, the Supreme Court may be anxious to resolve the decade long confusion over federal court jurisdiction under the Clean Water Act, which would apply to future definitions of WOTUS—whatever they might be.



April 20-22: Clarksville Rivers & Spires Festival
Award-winning, free festival has more than 100 entertainers like Montgomery Gentry, For King and Country, Drowning Pool, and lots of local talent. A kid's area, car show, the Clarksville Civitan \$10,000 Scavenger Hunt, international area that features more than 26 countries' food and culture, and so much more. It all happens in the heart of downtown Clarksville. For more information go to <https://riversandspires.com/>

April 21-22: Winchester High on the Hog Festival
A week of family fun, including music, food vendors, and an annual Backyard BBQ competition. For more information and a complete schedule of activities go to: www.highonthegofestival.com

April 21-23: Union City Civil War Days
Come face-to-face with history as the Civil War is brought to life with reenactors demonstrating life in the 1800s with authentic period clothing, cannons and other weapons, and more on the Great Lawn at Discovery Park of America. For more information go to www.discoveryparkofamerica.com/visit/events/civil-war-days-april-21-23/

April 22: Wartrace Dixie Line Days Train Show
More than 500 modelers and rail fans congregate in Wartrace. The event is a celebration of the town's historical ties to the railroad. Below are some pictures of the event, layouts, and full scale trains as they passed through the event. For more information, contact The Dixie Flyer, 98 Main Street East, Wartrace, 37183. 1-800-465-0448.

April 29-30: South Pittsburg The National Cornbread Festival
Celebrating more than 20 years as the festival that gives attendees a taste of some of the best cornbread in the country. Come enjoy a week-long carnival, fireworks, historic tours, music and more. For more information go to <http://national-cornbread.com/>

May 20: Knoxville International Biscuit Festival
Named one of the top 10 food festivals in the U.S., it's held at Market Square in downtown Knoxville. Stroll along Biscuit Boulevard to sample more than 20 of the region's best restaurants and bakers' take on the biscuit – from sweet to savory – for \$15. Cast your vote for your favorite and help them secure the People's Choice Award. For more information go to <http://www.biscuitfest.com/>

New map provides legislators with school data

The Tennessee Comptroller's Office has created new and updated interactive maps featuring a wide range of education data at the school and school district levels.

The maps illustrate the Tennessee House of Representatives and Senate legislative districts overlaid with school district and school level information. The legislative profile maps are both clickable and searchable. A user

can search by legislator, school district, and school name.

The maps include demographic information, accountability, performance and financial data. Some specific data points include the number and type of schools (e.g., traditional, charter, private, etc.), school designation, average ACT score, per-pupil expenditure by average daily membership, and average classroom teacher salary.

The maps can be found at <http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/OREA/MappingTN>.

"We hope this online resource will be helpful to Tennessee legislators who are charged with making important decisions that impact our public schools," said Comptroller Justin P. Wilson. "We also believe Tennessee citizens and media will find this information useful and informative."

UT-MTAS APRIL / MAY MAP CLASSES

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No loan is too large or too small



The town of Livingston recently closed a \$3 million fixed rate loan with the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund to finance water and sewer system improvements. Pictured are Livingston Town Clerk Phyllis Looper, TMBF representative Linda Mooningham, Livingston Mayor Curtis Hayes, and Vice Mayor Bill Winningham.



The city of Humboldt recently closed a \$3,825,000 fixed rate loan with the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund to finance renovations and improvements to city schools. Pictured are Humboldt Mayor Marvin Sikes, TMBF representative Tommy Green, and Humboldt Treasurer Kim Hadley.



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Public / Private partnership restore wetlands in Chapel Hill

BY KELSEY DAVIS

TDEC Sustainable Practices

In honor of Tennessee State Parks' 80th anniversary, Henry Horton State Park in Chapel Hill unveiled a newly restored wetland area, complete with a new parking lot, trails, and an observation deck, all of which were donated and built by the General Motors Foundation.

Thanks to the partnership between General Motors, park staff, the Friends of Henry Horton, the town of Chapel Hill, the Tennessee Environmental Council, the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC), and local volunteers, the wetlands restoration project is a huge success. Through the extensive efforts of everyone involved, one of the most diverse ecosystems has been re-introduced into the region, while simultaneously improving local water quality.

When purchased by the park in 2006, the 65-acre area located in Middle Tennessee was nothing more than an agricultural field. The park planted native grasses and designated it as a natural area. Two years ago in 2015, Ronnie Bowers from TDEC visited Henry Horton and told them he thought they had a wetland on their hands.

This strip of land nestled between the Duck River and a ridgeline would have naturally flooded, forming a set of berms along the outside of the field. The berms would cause the field to hold water and result in a wetland area. More than 100 years ago the area was drained and converted into fields for agricultural use. TDEC decided to restore this area to its original state, as a native wetland. The TDEC team had to re-flood and re-plant the land to achieve this goal.

First, the field elevation had to be lowered to its original level, as it had been raised for use as farm land. Additionally, the berms had to be rebuilt so that the land would naturally flood and hold water again. Prior to flooding the land, a mix of wetland seed was planted so that the wetlands would have native vegetative growth.

Within a week of finishing the berms, the field was flooded. The week after, ducks and frogs had already inhabited the newly constructed wetlands. Now, the restored wetland area provides crucial habitats for native vegetation and wildlife.

Due to its connection to the Duck River, this project will not only benefit the region's ecological health, but also its human health, by providing both safe drinking water and improved flood management. The wetlands will help the Duck River maintain clean water for both the wildlife that inhabits it and the visitors who recreate on it.

Last spring, the Friends of Henry Horton applied for a \$10,000 grant from General Motors. After meeting with GM, they were awarded the grant to help build the observation platform in their new wetlands.

Last fall when construction began on the observation deck, GM employees began showing up as volunteers to help build the deck. Within a month and a half, the deck was completed, and on Jan. 20 the new observation platform was unveiled to the public. TDEC Commissioner Bob Martineau, Deputy Commissioners Brock Hill and Shari Meghreblian, as well as Marshall County Mayor Joe Boyd Liggett all spoke to the 50 plus park supporters present at the ribbon cutting.

After the unveiling, a guided tour of the new site was held to enjoy the wildlife and appreciate the new vantage point for observation. It will now be used as an educational tool and as an excellent rest spot for many of the hikers. The area officially opened to the public March 1.

In addition to the observation platform, the wetlands also feature a 0.95-mile trail that connects with the park's 10-mile main trail system so that visitors can hike in

from a trailhead. Visitors can drive directly to the wetland, which is served by a new parking lot that can accommodate up to 12 vehicles. Visitors can also access the area by water, as the wetland is connected to a put-in on the Duck River that was constructed in 2015.

In addition to the new observation platform, a previously constructed observation tower at the end of the Adeline Wilhoite River Trail offers an elevated perspective to view the wetland and its connection to the river.

This restoration and educational project is a perfect example of a successful public-private partnership that produces ecological, social, and economic benefits for both the local community and the entire region. GM helped make this once in a lifetime opportunity come to life with both dollars and hard work. Now a beautiful feature has been added to the park for visitors to enjoy and to learn about the great biodiverse ecosystem of a wetland. It will also serve as a model and teaching tool for future restorations across the state and region.



Henry Horton State Park in Chapel Hill has unveiled a newly restored wetland area, complete with a new parking lot, trails, and an observation deck, all of which were donated and built by the General Motors Foundation.



Last fall, when construction began on the observation deck, GM employees began showing up as volunteers to help build the deck.



Within a month and a half, the deck was completed. On Jan. 20, the new observation platform was unveiled to the public.



(Above left) Hundreds of volunteers from General Motors, park staff, the Friends of Henry Horton, the town of Chapel Hill, the Tennessee Environmental Council, the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation and local residents turned out to plant trees and help with the project. Even TDEC Commissioner Bob Martineau turned out for the event and helped with the tree planting efforts.



Through extensive efforts of a public/private partnership, one of the most diverse ecosystems has been re-introduced into the region while simultaneously improving local water quality. The wetlands will help the Duck River maintain clean water for both the wildlife that inhabits it and the visitors who recreate on it. Ducks and frogs have already inhabited the newly constructed wetlands.

Author's Bio: Kelsey Davis is an environmental specialist with the TDEC Office of Sustainable Practices where her primary focus is on reducing waste at state parks through recycling and organics diversion. Davis holds a bachelor's degree in business economics, a master's degree in sustainability, and is a LEED Green Associate.