



TML District Meetings

As the 109th General Assembly convenes in January, state government leaders will address a number of complex issues of interest and concern to Tennessee's towns and cities.

Municipal officials are encouraged to attend the 2015 TML District Meetings in order to connect with fellow officials, discuss local topics, and receive information about emerging issues and the perennial concerns that have impacted our communities.

It is vital that our membership be educated and prepared to voice our concerns as deliberations begin.

TML staff will be on hand to present updates on the latest events and news affecting municipalities at the state and national levels, as well as the legislative agenda approved by the TML Board for the upcoming session.

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|----------------------------|---------|--|------------------|
| District 1 | Jan. 20 | Johnson City | 9 - 11:30 am |
| | | Memorial Park Community Center, 510 Bert St. | |
| District 2 | Jan. 21 | Maryville | 10 am - 12:30 pm |
| | | Maryville City Hall, 416 W. Broadway Ave. | |
| District 3 | Jan. 22 | Cleveland | 9:30 am - Noon |
| | | Cleveland Chamber of Commerce, 225 Keith St. | |
| District 4 | Jan. 27 | Sparta | 10 am - 12:30 pm |
| | | Oldham Theater, West Liberty Square | |
| Districts 5 & 6 | Jan. 26 | Murfreesboro | 10 am - 12:30 pm |
| | | Murfreesboro City Hall, 111 West Vine Street | |
| Districts 7 & 8 | Jan. 30 | Medina | 10 am - 12:30 pm |
| | | Medina City Hall, 201 Highway 45 E North | |

Gov. Haslam issues Special Session Proclamation to consider Insure Tennessee

Gov. Bill Haslam has officially issued a proclamation convening an "extraordinary session" of the 109th General Assembly to consider "Insure Tennessee," a two-year pilot program to provide health care coverage to Tennesseans who do not currently have access to health insurance or have limited options. The program is designed to reward healthy behaviors, promote personal responsibility and incentivize preventative care and healthy choices.

The proclamation calls for the special session to begin Monday, Feb. 2, at 4 p.m. CST for the legislature to consider a joint resolution authorizing the governor to implement Insure Tennessee.

"There are few challenges facing us today as great as those presented by our broken health care system," Haslam said. "The Insure Tennessee plan is a conservative approach that introduces market principles to Medicaid, provides health care coverage to more Tennesseans at no additional cost to taxpayers, and leverages a payment reform initiative that is working to control health care costs and improve the quality of care. I believe this plan is a critical first step to fundamentally changing health care in Tennessee."

In December the governor was joined by representatives from a coalition of business, health care and civic organizations when he announced his Insure Tennessee plan.

The plan does not create any new taxes nor adds any state cost to the budget. The hospital industry has committed that it will cover any additional cost to the state, and the program will automatically terminate in the event that either federal funding or support from the hospitals is modified in any way.

The plan would provide coverage to more than 200,000 uninsured Tennesseans earning less than 138 percent of the federal poverty level, valued at more than \$16,000 a year for an individual and \$27,000 for a family of three.

Five key areas of the governor's plan include: a fiscally sound and sustainable program; providing two new private market choices for Tennesseans; shifting the delivery model and payment of health care in Tennessee from fee-for-service to outcomes based; incentivizing Tennesseans to be more engaged and to take more personal responsibility in their health; and preparing participants for eventual transition to commercial health coverage.

Cities strive to regulate ride sharing services in 2015

BY VICTORIA SOUTH
TML Communications Coordinator

It's as American as apple pie—everyday citizens seizing the opportunity to make an income using their own vehicles to transport people. The rider/driver connection, made through app-based services such as Sidecar, Uber and Lyft, is touted as fast, friendly and informal—like a meetup between Facebook friends. But as the businesses proliferate throughout the U.S., cities are grappling with how to regulate these startups in regard to public safety, insurance, fares and so forth. The practice has also drawn disdain from the taxi industry, where drivers undergo significantly more regulatory oversight.

"Cities across the country are facing a balancing act with the boom in the use of Transportation Network Companies (TNC's) like Uber and Lyft," notes Karen Blake, University of Tennessee Municipal Technical Advisory Service municipal court specialist. "Cities have long regulated the taxi industry to ensure safe transportation—checking brake lights, safety belts, and other equipment, so it's no wonder taxi companies are balking at having to meet those standards when the TNC's don't."

In Nashville/Davidson County, the Metro-Nashville Commission held its final vote on new regulations governing app-based driving services in December, officially classifying them as TNCs, a term applying to livery vehicles such as limos and shuttles, but not taxis. The new rules require drivers to hold annual permits, pass background checks and obtain the same insurance as taxi drivers, as well as being subject to random inspections. The price floor for ride share service in Nashville was dropped last year by the council to \$9 from the standard \$45 fare charged by taxis. The matter has been delegated to the Transportation and Licensing Commission, which will set the minimum fares at its upcoming January meeting.

"We were able to find a way for Uber and Lyft to be legal and regulated along with other transportation industries in Nashville," said Billy Fields, director of the city's Transportation and Licensing Commission. "It's new technology, different—but just because it's different—it doesn't make it bad. We had to look at the world a little differently to see how it would fit in."

"I think we developed a pretty good ordinance," Fields adds. "We think there'll be changes we'll have to make, as we learn more and grow.

109th TN General Assembly underway Speakers Ramsey and Harwell elected to another term



Photo by Victoria South

During the first organizational days, Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey and House Speaker Beth Harwell presided over a joint session of the 109th Tennessee General Assembly.

The 109th General Assembly has begun, as state lawmakers gathered on Capitol Hill Jan. 13 to take the oath of office, elect officers and organize the business of the 2015-2016 legislative sessions.

One of the first orders of business was to elect speakers in both houses. The Senate and House overwhelmingly re-elected Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey and House Speaker Beth Harwell. Ramsey will begin his fifth term as Speaker of the Senate; Harwell will begin her third term as

Speaker of the House.

Among the 132 legislators sworn into office, were 23 new legislators—seven new Senators and 16 new Representatives.

Over the next several months, lawmakers will take up a multitude of issues, including evaluating Common Core education standards, balancing the budget amid another year of sluggish revenue growth, and tightening restrictions on abortion and changing how appellate judges are appointed as a result of Constitu-

tional Amendments approved in the November election.

But perhaps one of the biggest issues facing Gov. Bill Haslam and state legislators is whether to approve the Governor's plan for expanding the state's Medicaid program. Insure Tennessee would provide coverage to more than 200,000 uninsured Tennesseans. Haslam has called for a Special Session beginning Feb. 2 for lawmakers to consider his proposal for utilizing federal funds authorized by the Affordable Care Act.

State's Constitutional Officers re-elected to two-year term

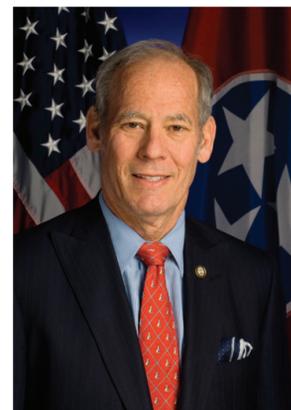
Members of the Tennessee Senate and House have re-elected Justin P. Wilson to serve as the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury and David H. Lillard as the state Treasurer. The vote by acclamation was taken during a joint session of the 109th General Assembly.

Wilson is Tennessee's 34th Comptroller of the Treasury and was re-elected to his fourth two-year term. He leads a staff of more than 500 employees.

The Comptroller's duties include the audit of state and local government entities and participation in the general financial and administrative management and oversight of state government.

The Tennessee General Assembly reelected, by acclamation, Lillard to a fourth term as Tennessee State Treasurer.

In his official capacity, Treas-



Comptroller Wilson



Treasurer Lillard

urer Lillard oversees the Tennessee Treasury Department and its more than 250 employees. The Treasury Department internally manages over \$45 billion in state and local govern-

ment funds.

Wilson and Lillard were re-elected to two-year terms. Secretary of State Tre Hargett is in the middle of his second four-year term.



The Lyft smartphone app pings participating drivers nearby, who provide an estimated time of arrival. Soon, a vehicle, outfitted with a whimsical hot pink mustache affixed to the car's grille, pulls up and greets the rider with a friendly fist bump and an invite to sit up front. The app will suggest the appropriate fare, called a "donation," and ask the rider to rate the driver following the service. The driver is asked to rate the rider as well. Uber, and its fleet of black Lincoln Town Cars, is a slightly more formal ride, while UberX utilizes any qualified driver with an acceptable vehicle.

out a few citations to drivers, who were technically breaking the law.

Memphis officials, on the other hand, asked that ride sharing services stop doing business altogether, until drivers acquired city permits.

The city also issued cease and desist orders, which were largely ignored by drivers.

"Cities often have trouble envisioning what they're regulating," See RIDE SHARING on Page 6

NEWS ACROSS TENNESSEE



ALCOA, FRANKLIN, KNOXVILLE

Smart Growth America—a national nonprofit that advocates for better cities, towns, and neighborhoods—announced that Alcoa is among 14 winning communities that will receive a free technical assistance workshop in 2015. Through the program, the city will receive hands-on assistance from national experts on how to cultivate smarter investments that will spur quality growth and development. In addition to the direct benefit that this technical assistance will provide, the TPO will use the workshop outcomes to engage other small communities in the region in the conversation, thereby spreading the ideas about quality downtown development and redevelopment to other communities seeking similar outcomes. The full list of winning communities includes the cities of Franklin and Knoxville.

ARLINGTON, ATOKA, MOUNT CARMEL

A new study by consumer advocacy website, *NerdWallet* says Arlington, Atoka and Mount Carmel are the places for young families to be. The study looked at home affordability, prosperity and growth, quality of education and family-friendliness when crunching the numbers. Arlington jumped 20 spots from last year's ranking to top the list. *NerdWallet* attributed Arlington's first place rank to "high growth in prosperity, as well as for its 'family friendliness' score." Family income growth from 1999-2013 has increased 77.36 percent in the town, according to the report. Atoka was no. 2 statewide with a 37.89 percent family growth percent and was highlighted for its good schools and parks. Mount Carmel grabbed the no. 3 place for its affordability and proximity to Cherokee National Forest. The town has seen a 31.04 percent increase in family income growth.

BOLIVER

The city recently received grant funding from the Department of Environment and Conservation for local parks and recreation to purchase property for the Hatchie Town River Park and Nature Center. The park will be located along the bank of the Hatchie River. The park will be dedicated to the river, educational and nature activities; fishing, boating, canoeing, kayaking, wildlife tours, bird watching and walking trails. A museum and nature center is in the plan to encourage local history, education and heritage tourism.

CLARKSVILLE

Officials for Hemlock Semiconductor Group announced they are closing their \$1.2 billion Clarksville plant, permanently. The company's president said that the final decision was based on "sustained adverse market conditions created by industry oversupply and ongoing challenges presented by global trade disputes." The site currently sits on approximately 1,300 acres.

CROSSVILLE

The city has been designated as a Valley Sustainable Silver Community in the Tennessee Valley Authority's (TVA) economic development program. The Valley Sustainable Communities Program, now in its second year, was initiated by TVA Economic Development as part of its

community preparedness offerings to assist communities in evaluating existing sustainable programs, cataloging their sustainable assets, and increasing future commitments to sustainability. The goal of the program is to document a community's assets and increase the likelihood that they will be viewed as progressive and competitive by companies looking to invest in new or expanded locations.

DICKSON

Company officials announced that the Quad/Graphics plant will close permanently on March 12, impacting about 115 employees. According to a company spokesperson, the plant shuttering was triggered by Gannett's decision to cease publishing USA Weekend and the reduced circulation of *Parade* magazine, which represented about one-third of the plant's total volume. Employees impacted by the closure will have the opportunity to transfer to another facility. The company, which is based in Sussex, Wis., has facilities in Nashville and in Franklin, Ky and nearly 60 plants nationwide.

JOHNSON CITY

The city has completed the Brush Creek Aeration Project with a \$20,000-\$30,000 monthly savings to taxpayers. The project was made possible through a Clean Tennessee Energy Grant awarded in 2012. The city is on track to save more than \$250,000 annually with the upgrades, according to Jeff Corder, water/wastewater superintendent. The \$150,000 grant criteria included energy efficiency, air quality, general public benefit, protection of environmental resources, and creative/new technology. The grant provided 42 percent of the total project funding, resulting in a net cost of \$210,000. Diffusers in all four basins were replaced, along with the air header line feeding the basins. Twenty new air control valves were also installed and all exterior lighting fixtures were upgraded to LEDs as part of the overall project.

KINGSTON

While it isn't part of their job description, Kingston Public Works employees brought joy to children throughout the city and Roane County by repairing bikes to present to children for Christmas. The department gave away 12 bikes, with 20 more in surplus for children in Kingston and Roane County.

LA VERGNE

The city's Police Department was recognized with a DUI Enforcement Award by the Governor's Highway Safety Office, along with Mothers Against Drunk Driving. As a recipient of a grant from the Governor's Highway Safety Office, LPD expanded its DUI enforcement. Officers were recognized for their efforts in speed enforcement, seat belt enforcement, impaired driving enforcement, and child passenger safety.

MURFREESBORO

The city's single-family permits rose in 2014, a reflection of continued regional recovery in housing. City officials expect the trend to continue in 2015. "It appears the strong demand for new homes, though not at the brisk pace prior to the recession, is on a strong growth trajectory," said Interim City Planning Director

Gary Whitaker. "It also appears that Murfreesboro will continue to struggle with a shortage of building lots as the number of lots available for construction is at a 20-year low." Final figures for 2014, released by the city's Building & Codes Department, indicate permitting for single-family detached units increased by 58 units in 2014 to 647 units compared to 589 units in 2013. The Building & Codes Department issued an average of 49.1 single-family permits per month in 2013 compared to an average 53.9 per month in 2014. A total of 451 units were permitted in 2012.

NASHVILLE

Bridgestone Americas secured more than \$56 million in Metro-Nashville tax incentives for a planned headquarters relocation to downtown. Bridgestone Americas officials held a January groundbreaking for a more than \$200 million privately constructed building that will consolidate the tire company's existing headquarters in Donelson with office divisions that are currently in Illinois and Indiana, keeping 1,100 employees while bringing 600 more here from other states.

NASHVILLE

The city's strategy to restore the health of waterways that were damaged with debris and erosion during historic flooding in May 2010, has been awarded the Cities of Service Blueprint Contest. Nashville's proposal, as presented in a report called "Storm Busters Blueprint," would improve waterways and expand green infrastructure through coordinated restoration and resiliency efforts—such as full-scale tree plantings and creation of rain gardens—with the help of community partners and volunteers. As the grand-prize winner, the city will receive \$35,000, and its Storm Busters Blueprint is now published in the Cities of Service online resource library.

NOLENSVILLE

The staff for the city's highly anticipated recreation center will start moving into the building and pre-selling passes by mid-January. The \$5 million project, funded jointly by the county and the city, should reach the "substantial completion" status soon at the former elementary school site. The wellness center, basketball gymnasium and other programming rooms will be finished, with the outdoor pool being completed after the official opening. The project took longer than expected in large part due to the amount of renovation required to convert the 1980s and '90s part of the school building into a rec center. The facility will also feature a multipurpose meeting room with a dark ceiling, stage lights, a small stage, and an adjacent warming room for food, and a large scale dance room with a two-way mirrored room for parents to view their children.

VONORE

Yamaha Jet Boat Manufacturing USA is expanding its production facility, creating 150 new jobs. The company will spend about \$18 million to buy a 36,000-square-foot building next to its current plant that will be used for offices and production. Yamaha plans to begin operating in the new location by the end of next year, with production scheduled to begin in the second half of 2016. State economic development officials planned to seek approval from the State Funding Board for a Fast Track grant of \$870,000 for the expansion. Yamaha is the largest manufacturer of 19- to 24-foot sport boats in the United States.

Greenville Fire Dept. receives \$50,000 donation toward new training facility



US Nitrogen presents the Greenville Fire Department with a check for \$50,000 to construct a five-story training facility.

US Nitrogen presented the Greenville Fire Department with a check for \$50,000 on Dec. 16 to construct a five-story training facility that will simulate fire and rescue emergencies faced by local and regional personnel.

The facility will be constructed with stacked steel storage containers and will include steps, cage ladders and metal grating at the top to allow for rappelling training. The five-story structure will simulate rescue scenarios in multistory residential or commercial facilities.

US Nitrogen's monetary donation will go toward the construction of the facility and necessary training equipment. US Nitrogen will also

provide the used storage containers from its plant worksite.

"We can conduct live burn, confined space and rescue training and other practical skills training right here in Greenville," Fire Chief Mark Foulks said.

Greenville Light and Power provided the property for the structure and construction is expected to begin in the next few weeks.

The facility will host basic fire-fighting training classes for cadets and ongoing practical skills training for region members, and will be available for private companies, such as US Nitrogen, to conduct emergency and rescue training.

Knoxville employees complete greenway project, save \$145K



Knoxville's Third Creek Greenway re-routing project was completed entirely in-house by city employees saving taxpayers about \$145,000.

A trail-rerouting project to alleviate frequent flooding on a stretch of Knoxville's popular Third Creek Greenway has been completed—welcome news for the hundreds of daily runners, walkers and bicyclists who sometimes have had to endure soggy or muddy treks after a hard rain. The work from August to December never closed the greenway's older route near Tobler Lane in West Knoxville while the new 650-foot-long stretch of asphalt was being laid in a new bed on slightly higher ground.

The project was completed entirely in-house by city employees who worked in various crews. Working in-house saved taxpayers about \$145,000, compared with the estimate from a private contractor. The final bill was \$80,000—down from the original private estimate of

\$225,000.

One main design challenge was managing water runoff from a 60-inch drainage pipe running underneath the railroad tracks. Employees designed a special type of culvert to direct water into the creek. The design, called a high-flow/low-flow culvert, propels water through a continually narrowing pathway, resulting in a self-cleaning design.

With the greenway shifting to higher ground, City crews will no longer have to clean up the mess left behind after heavy rains—another efficiency that allows the Public Service Department staff to focus on other problem areas.

During peak summer months, an estimated 2,500 people a week use the Tobler Lane section of Third Creek Greenway.

TML requests E-mail addresses

The quickest way to keep city officials apprised of legislative happenings is through e-mail 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 Mona Lawrence, by fax at 615-255-4752, by e-mail to mlawrence@TML1.org, or call 615-255-6416.

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Nationwide Retirement Solutions



Moody reports local government financial outlook stable for 2015

BY DEREK PRALL

American City and County Magazine

The fiscal outlook for U.S. local governments in 2015 is neither positive nor negative. It's stable, according to Moody's Investor Services.

Moody's came to this conclusion as local governments are continuing to recover – slowly but steadily – from the economic recession. Contributing to the recovery are property tax revenues, which have been growing modestly, driven by a stabilized housing market and local governments' willingness to exercise property-taxing authority.

These findings are in line with greater state figures, according to *The Washington Post*. Citing a report from the Fitch ratings agency, state governments are also enjoying mostly stable ratings for 2015. Moody's expects to see property tax rate revenues increase by 2 to 3 percent in 2015, a little less than the 5 percent average growth rate prevalent before the economic downturn. Tax caps, anti-tax sentiment and an uneven recovery in the housing market have limited the growth, but the predictability of property tax revenue continues to be a strong suit for local government finances.

Threatening the stability, Moody's says, are impending fixed cost obligations. Debt, capital expenditures, pensions and health benefits

are likely to consume an increasing share of 2015 budgets, which will prompt local governments to cut costs, increase taxes or tap into reserves.

However, fewer local government sectors are feeling major credit pressures this year than last. In 2013, Moody's designated 21 local government state/sector combinations as "pressured;" this year the number was 13.

Reasons for these financial pressures vary, but commonalities include a limited willingness or ability to raise revenues (taxes), limited ability or willingness to reduce expenditures, outsized pension or other post-employment benefit liabilities, lagging economic recovery or imbalanced financial operations.

Adding to the overall stability of the sector, several Moody's-rated local government defaults have been resolved over the past year. These include defaults from Jefferson County, Ala.; Harrisburg, Pa.; Pontiac, Mich.; Vadnais, Minn.; Monticello, Minn.; and Stockton, Calif.

Since the outlook is a forecast, it is subject to change. Moody's says an increase to the healthy 5-6 percent annual property tax growth could prompt a move into a positive outlook, while a decline in this growth could lead to a more negative financial future.

State Funding Board projects slow growth

The State Funding Board projects that Tennessee revenue growth will slow down in the upcoming budget year.

Under revenue estimates adopted by the Board, the state's general fund would grow 2.6 percent to 3 percent in the budget year that begins on July 1. That compares with a revised projection for the current budget year's collections to grow

3.85 percent to 4.2 percent. At the top of the range of the projections, the state's general fund would grow by \$409 million in the current budget year and by \$304 million in the next.

The Revenue Department estimates that the phase-out of the state inheritance tax will cause those collections to be \$34 million next year, down from \$107 million in the 2013-2014 budget year.

Applications for TDEC's Clean Energy Grants due Jan. 30

In November, Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam and Department of Environment and Conservation Commissioner Bob Martineau announced a fourth offering of the Clean Tennessee Energy Grants (CTEG), totaling \$2 million, to fund energy efficiency projects for municipal governments, county governments, utility districts and other similar entities across Tennessee.

Funding for the projects comes from an April 2011 Clean Air Act settlement with the Tennessee Valley Authority. CTEG provides financial assistance to municipal government, county government, utility districts, and other entities created by statute (e.g. airport authority) to purchase, install and construct energy projects. Eligible categories of the Clean Tennessee Energy Grant Program include:

- Cleaner Alternative Energy – biomass, geothermal, solar, wind
- Energy Conservation – lighting, HVAC improvements, improved fuel efficiency, insulation, idling minimization
- Air Quality Improvement – reduction in greenhouse gases, sulfur dioxide, volatile organic

compounds, oxides of nitrogen, hazardous air pollutants

The maximum grant amount per project is \$250,000 and requires a match from the applicant. Grant applications are available on TDEC's website and will be accepted until January 30, 2015. Recipients are expected to be announced in the summer. Grant recipients will be selected with careful consideration given to the projects that meet the selection criteria and express the greatest need.

To learn more about the Clean Tennessee Energy Grant or to obtain an application, please visit <http://www.tn.gov/environment/grants.energy.shtml> or contact Kathy Glapa at (615) 253-8780 or Kathy.Glapa@tn.gov.

Visit tnenergy.org for more news, updates, and blog posts.

TML RISK MANAGEMENT POOL BOARD TO MEET

Notice is hereby given that the Board of Directors of the TML Risk Management Pool will meet in regular session on Friday, February 13, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. local time in the Board Room at The Pool, 5100 Maryland Way, Brentwood, Tennessee for the purpose of considering and transacting all business which may properly come before the Board. Additional information concerning the meeting may be obtained by calling The Pool's office at 800-624-9698.

Shelbyville reaping benefits of comprehensive city-wide energy efficiency project

Ameresco, a leading energy efficiency and renewable energy company, and the city of Shelbyville successfully partnered on a comprehensive \$1.7 million Energy Savings Performance Contract (ESPC) to improve city buildings and increase overall energy efficiency. The project improvements are also expected to enhance comfort for building occupants and improve light quality and visibility.

As part of the ESPC project, Ameresco conducted an energy audit on more than 183,000 square feet of building space and identified energy conservation measures (ECMs) that Ameresco in partnership with the city designed, constructed, commissioned, and will verify. Crucial improvements at the city's recreation center, especially at its indoor swimming pool, were a driving force behind the project Ameresco was selected to develop and implement. The project was authorized by a unanimous vote of the city council and financed through a Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund loan.

Work on the city's project commenced in the fall of 2013. A wide range of ECMs, including lighting upgrades; water retrofits and plumbing upgrades; the replacement of electric resistance heaters in fire hall bays with gas units; heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) renovations; programmable thermostats; and a variety of improvements at the city's community recreation center, were all integral to the comprehensive efficiency project.

Some of the specific ECMs Ameresco implemented at the recreation center included the installation of cooling towers for the chillers, a boiler replacement, hot water valves



for reheat coils plus a new variable speed drive for pool pumping, a liquid pool cover, and a pool chlorinator.

In addition to the work completed at the recreation center, improvements were made at the local airport, animal control office, city hall, fire stations 1 and 2, police department, and the public works facilities.

Under the ESPC, the budget-neutral energy efficiency upgrades and improvements were made possible by the guaranteed minimum level of energy savings over the term of the project contract. Ameresco coordinated the upfront project costs, and the city will repay the investment over time with the energy use and utility cost savings.

The ESPC has made it possible for the city to effectively upgrade its facilities while utilizing tax dollars in an efficient and environmentally responsible way – and without incurring additional taxpayer expense.

Completed in June 2014, the project is delivering greater energy efficiency and significant financial, comfort and environmental benefits for the community. Shelbyville is on track to realize more than \$125,000 annually in energy savings. The environmental benefits associated with the project include a reduction of more than 275 metric tons of CO₂, which is the equivalent to eliminating 58 cars from the city roads annually.

Incorporating radon resistant practices with new construction can improve health

BY MARK PENLAND

TDEC

Office of Sustainable Practices

Radon resistant new construction (RRNC) is a building practice that is gaining wider acceptance in Tennessee. Many builders are incorporating the practice in response to consumer pressure and a handful of communities have adopted RRNC into their building code.

RRNC uses practical and straightforward methods and common building materials to reduce risk for inhabitants and improve a home's overall function. The basic components are a gravel base that makes an "air flow layer", plastic sheeting, vent pipe, sealing and caulking at the foundation, and an electrical junction box in the attic that could power a fan on the vent pipe.

What is radon and why should homeowners be concerned? Radon is a colorless, odorless gas formed by the decay of uranium that occurs naturally in the soil and can enter homes through cracks and crevices

in the foundation and basement walls. The amount of radon present is often dependent upon the type of soil and geology but elevated levels have been found in all 95 counties in Tennessee.

Although Tennessee doesn't currently require RRNC in the building codes, local communities such as the town of Farragut are weighing the health risk and the benefits of adding this protection into their codes.

Based upon estimates by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, approximately 21,000 lung cancer deaths each year are attributed to radon exposure. The risk in Tennessee is elevated with around 70 percent of Tennesseans living in regions identified by the EPA to be at high or moderate levels for radon. Gov. Bill Haslam proclaimed January as Radon Action Month to raise awareness in Tennessee.

John Householder, with the town of Farragut Building Codes Enforcement Department, said, "The citizens of Farragut have been very receptive to the requirement of RRNC, as they understand it can have a direct impact on their long term personal health." He recommended that residents planning to build a new home should ask their builder questions or contact their local building enforcement officer for information about RRNC methods.

There are both passive and active ways to prevent radon from entering homes. Using the prescribed method, a system can be activated in response

to a radon test that comes back above action levels. RRNC typically costs a builder between \$350 and \$500. The costs could actually be less if the builder is already using some of the same techniques for moisture control. In comparison, system installation in an existing home can cost approximately \$800 to \$2500, therefore, RRNC can yield savings of 128 to 400 percent.

In addition to lessening the health risks associated with radon, other benefits from using RRNC methods can include improved energy efficiency, reduced humidity levels, prevention of odors and mold, and preventing leakage of other natural gasses from the soil. It is estimated that including radon resistant new construction methods, can save approximately \$65 per year in energy costs for the average homeowner. RRNC features can be an important selling point for home buyers familiar with the risks posed of increased radon levels in the home.

The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) Office of Sustainable Practices manages the statewide indoor Radon Program. Please join with Gov. Haslam in prioritizing radon awareness and promoting radon resistant new construction to minimize risk and costs in the future.

For additional information visit the TDEC web site at http://www.state.tn.us/environment/sustainable-practices_radon-program.shtml

Happy New Year!

Ameresco hopes that 2015 is a year of opportunity for your community. With a track record of billions in successful budget-neutral facility solutions projects, we can partner with you to provide facility solutions and ignite the possibilities of the New Year.

To learn more call your local representative at 615-661-0015 or visit www.ameresco.com

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STATE BRIEFS

TN wins "State of the Year"

For the second straight year, Tennessee won a top ranking for boosting jobs and capital investments through company relocations and expansions. Economic development and site selector magazine *Business Facilities* named Tennessee its 2014 "State of the Year," pointing to its emphasis on infrastructure and education as supportive to companies' growth. States are evaluated based on top economic projects throughout the year, taking into consideration job creation and investment size, as well as economic development strategies, workforce development, incentives, and cooperation between state and local offices.

Study says Insure Tennessee could bring \$1.14B to state

A University of Tennessee economic study commissioned by advocates for Medicaid expansion says Gov. Haslam's Insure Tennessee could create 15,000 jobs and bring \$1.14 billion in new spending to the state. According to the study released by UT's Center for Business and Economic Research, an estimated 200,000 of the 470,000 eligible Tennesseans would participate in Haslam's proposed version of Medicaid expansion. The \$1.14 billion figure comes from an estimated \$5,705 in medical spending by each of those 200,000 people. The study was commissioned by the Coalition for a Healthy Tennessee, a nonprofit that supports expanding insurance for those who cannot afford it.

New Transportation Coalition formed

A newly formed coalition of Tennessee transportation organizations and public officials will seek to build support for increased state taxes and fees to help resolve the state's transportation infrastructure woes. The state is among a number of others, where concerns over the level of future federal funding has led transportation advocates in and out of government to look at augmenting state revenue sources. The new Transportation Coalition of Tennessee said the state highway department will need an additional \$800 million a year to begin addressing an \$8 billion backlog of badly needed road projects. The coalition wants "a comprehensive funding solution to maintain and expand Tennessee's critical transportation system," said Susie Alcorn, executive director of the Tennessee Infrastructure Alliance. The goal is to "increase and reform Tennessee's transportation fees," she said.

TN scores high on disease preparedness

Tennessee is one of the most prepared states in the nation when it comes to responding to a disease outbreak, according to a new report. The report from Trust for America's Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation said the Volunteer State was one of several to score an 8 on a 10-point indicator that has to do with preparedness.

Harwell to examine fiscal note process

The House of Representatives wants to make sure the price tag on new legislation is accurate. In late November, House Speaker Beth Harwell announced she is working with the National Conference of State Legislatures to examine the fiscal

review committee and fiscal note process to determine if best practices are in place to ensure accurate and independent fiscal notes. The committee consists of members from both state legislative chambers. It looks at proposed legislation and attaches an anticipated price tag for local or state government if the bill becomes law, known as a "fiscal note."

General Assembly features new website

A redesigned website for the Tennessee General Assembly features upgrades to bill tracking and video streaming functions. The site, previously redesigned in 2008, has a new theme and layout that is meant to make it easier to find information about lawmakers and legislation. It is also designed to display and stream video to all major mobile devices. The new site offers users the ability to track as many bills as they want, up from the three-bill limit in the previous version. And the site will also highlight the latest action taken on a piece of legislation.

State's long-term debt decreases

Tennessee's long-term general obligation debt has decreased by more than \$175 million since June 30, 2012. The state Comptroller's Office has just released the State of Tennessee Indebtedness Report, documenting Tennessee's solid credit ratings and debt management record. The re-

port shows the state's total long-term outstanding general obligation debt is \$1.8 billion. The state's general obligation bonds are used primarily to fund capital projects, provide grants to local development boards and support economic development. The report states that Tennessee has one of the lowest overall debt burdens in the country, and is currently projected to repay more than 66 percent of its outstanding general obligation debt within 10 years. To view the Indebtedness Report online, go to: <http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/sl/index.asp>

Deaths on TN highways reach record low

There were 961 deaths on Tennessee's streets and highways in 2014, the second lowest number of traffic fatalities in the state in more than 50 years and a 3.4 percent decrease from the 995 traffic deaths in 2013, according to preliminary figures released by state officials. The 961 deaths represent Tennessee's second-lowest vehicular death toll since 1963 and the fifth time that traffic deaths have dipped below 1,000 since that year. The 2014 traffic-fatality numbers include vehicular deaths reported by all Tennessee law enforcement agencies. Tennessee Highway Patrol Col. Tracy Trott credited DUI and seat belt enforcement for the decline in traffic-related deaths.



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TDOT ready to tackle winter weather

The Tennessee Department of Transportation is stocked and ready to clear roadways of ice and snow this season. Salt supplies have been replenished in all 95 counties, and crews have readied snow plows and brine trucks for the winter season.

"Our salt bins are fully stocked and we have more than a thousand employees ready to mobilize in the event of inclement weather," TDOT Commissioner John Schroer said.

Salt is in short supply across the nation after last year's severe winter. This year, TDOT's salt shipments are coming from South America. While all of TDOT's 132 salt bins have been filled to capacity, new orders may take some time to arrive. In anticipation of possible delays in future salt shipments, TDOT personnel will make every effort to conserve salt supplies. TDOT's fleet of salt and brine trucks have been calibrated to disperse only the correct amount of salt or salt brine, which will prevent unnecessary overuse of these supplies. TDOT can also use chemical additives such as calcium chloride to stretch salt supplies.

TDOT's statewide 2014/2015 winter weather budget is \$19.6 million, and includes salt, salt brine, overtime for employees, and equipment maintenance. The department has a total of three salt vendors to refill salt bins in all 95 Tennessee counties.

TDOT currently has more than 200,000 tons of salt and more than 2 million gallons of salt brine ready for use. Salt brine is a salt/water mixture used as a pre-treatment for roads prior to a winter storm or to melt snow on roadways when temperatures are hovering around the freezing mark. Salt is applied to roads once snow



Salt is in short supply across the nation after last year's severe winter. This year, TDOT's salt shipments are coming from South America.

has started to accumulate.

When snow hits Tennessee, TDOT ice and snow removal teams focus first on clearing interstates and heavily traveled state routes and will specifically target areas vulnerable to freezing, such as hills, curves, ramps, bridges and interchanges. During prolonged weather events, crews may have to clear roadways repeatedly.

TDOT has a number of tools available to keep motorists informed about travel conditions including the TDOT SmartWay website (www.tn.gov/tdot/tdotsmartway) and the 511 motorist information line. You can also receive traffic alerts via TDOT's multiple Twitter feeds, including statewide traffic tweets @TN511 or any of TDOT's other Twitter pages. Smartphone users can download TDOT's new SmartWay web application at www.TNsmartway.com/Traffic to access TDOT's live streaming SmartWay cameras, dynamic message signs, incidents, construction, and road conditions on interstates and state routes.

For more information about TDOT winter weather preparations, or for a regional breakdown of TDOT winter weather supplies and equipment, visit the TDOT web site at <http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/mediaroom/snowbuster.htm>.

Franklin's Battlefield Park receives Four Star Award from TN Parks Association



Franklin's Eastern Flank Battlefield Park and Event Facility has won the Four Star Award from the Tennessee Recreation and Parks Association for excellence in Parks and Recreation-Renovated Facility. This outstanding achievement was recognized during the association's 63rd Annual Conference in Nashville in November. The Four Star Awards recognize excellence in programming, marketing, renovated and new facility design; as well as individual service and benefactor awards for community partners. The city received a grant of \$500,000 in 2011 from the state and Gov. Haslam, and TDOT Commissioner John Schroer. The city matched the funds to work with TDOT in following the Park Master Plan to install a loop road replicating the original farm road for a total price of more than \$1.3 million, adding an entrance and exit, exclusive to the park. There was also an addition of a new shared parking lot (pervious concrete) to service the Fleming Center and Carnton Mansion for tourism, buses and general park users. The construction included the addition of a stone entry sign and new trees.

State's Nov. unemployment rate decreases to 6.8 percent

Tennessee Labor & Workforce Development Commissioner Burns Phillips announced the Tennessee preliminary unemployment rate for November was 6.8 percent, three tenths of one percentage point lower than the October revised rate of 7.1 percent. The U.S. preliminary rate for November was 5.8 percent, unchanged from the prior month.

Economic Summary

- Over the past year, Tennessee's unemployment rate decreased from 7.9 percent to 6.8 percent while the

national rate declined from 7.0 percent to 5.8 percent.

- Total nonfarm employment decreased 1,900 jobs from October to November. The largest decreases occurred in accommodation/food services, retail trade, and administrative/support/waste services.

- Over the year, nonfarm employment increased 53,900 jobs. The largest increases occurred in professional/business services, trade/transportation/utilities, and durable goods manufacturing.

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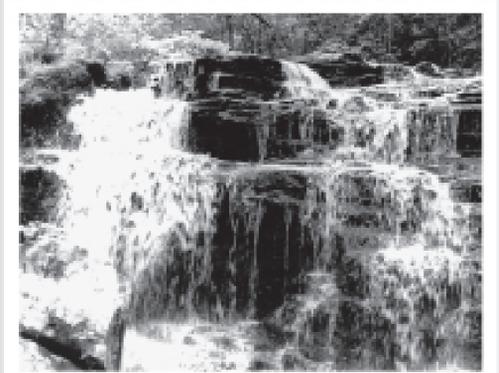
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PEOPLE

State Rep. Brenda Gilmore is being recognized nationally for her environmental efforts in schools. The Center for Green Schools at



Gilmore

the U.S. Green Building Council announced Gilmore as a 2014 "Best of Green Schools" recipient. The award recognizes 10 individuals, institutions, projects and events representing the best environmental efforts in schools across the country. Gilmore is being recognized in the policy maker category. During the last legislative session, she championed legislation that encourages school districts to utilize less toxic products and schedule all cleaning and maintenance at times that limit student and staff exposure to possibly harmful chemicals.

Warren Anthony Jasper will be the Brigadier General Wendell H. Gilbert Tennessee State Veterans Home Administrator. The 108-bed State Veterans Home is currently under construction in Clarksville.



Jasper

Jasper served seven years in the United States Air Force, which included assignments at the Pentagon and as a Branch Chief with the Secretary of Defense studying electronic warfare with the Joint Test Force. The former Air Force officer most recently served as an Assistant Attorney General and Senior Counsel at the Tennessee Attorney General's Office.

Jeff Spalding, 54, a former chief financial officer for the city of Indianapolis and most recently director of fiscal policy and analysis for the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, has been named executive director of the legislature's Fiscal Review Committee, subject to a formal vote at the next committee meeting. He was one of five finalists interviewed privately by committee members Dec. 10. He succeeds Luke Geise, who resigned in October and has taken a position with the Department of Environment and Conservation.

Joni Kies, longtime information systems director for the Secretary of State's office, was recently honored by the Information Technology Management Association with an "Outstanding IT Career Achievement" award. The award is given to individuals who demonstrate leadership ability and enact changes resulting in savings of time, money and service improvements.



Kies

Mt. Juliet Fire Chief **Error Kinney** has resigned. Kinney, a former tight end for the Tennessee Titans, was hired to oversee the city's new fire department, which was re-started in 2013. Kinney cited personal opportunities and obligations as his reasons for stepping down from the post. Assistant Chief Jamie Luffman has been named as the city's interim chief.



Charlie Gentry is Clarksville's new chief of administration. A former public utilities senior director for Clarksville Gas and Water, Gentry has experience in city government and running several successful businesses.

Longtime Pulaski Mayor **Dr. Stacey Aymett Garner** has passed away. He was 90 years old. Garner served the city as mayor from 1961-1990 and was a four-year city alderman. He served as president of The Tennessee Municipal League in 1976 and practiced dentistry for 62 years before his retirement in 2009.



Garner

Capt. **Ron Harrison** has been appointed as Cleveland's new fire chief. He replaces Chief **Steve Haun** who has retired after 33 years of service. Harrison was promoted to captain in 2006 and has served the city fire department for nearly 20 years. He currently commands Station Four, one of the department's largest satellite stations.



Harrison

TCSA's Debbie Blanchard passes away following courageous cancer battle

County associations and officials have lost a valuable ally with the death of Debbie Blanchard, chief administrative officer for the Tennessee County Services Association (TCSA). She had been with the County Technical Assistance Service (CTAS) for nearly 15 years.



Blanchard

Born in Greenville, MS, Blanchard (61) lost her lengthy battle with cancer Dec. 14. She was a resident of Hermitage, Tenn.

"We lost a good friend and amazing human being to cancer," said David Connor, TCSA executive director. "I had the privilege of working daily with Debbie for more than a decade. But this year, after she received a terminal diagnosis and continued to fight, to love, to care and to endure, I witnessed a strength like I'd never seen before."

Blanchard began her career with the Muscular Dystrophy Association and the State of New Hampshire. She started with the Tennessee Department of Surplus Property in 1987 and went on to work as a legislative assistant to state Rep. Arnold Stulce from 1992-2000.

Her work at CTAS started in January 2001 as an administrative assistant, which put her in daily

contact with county officials through direct assistance to county associations. She joined TCSA full time July 1, 2014.

TCHOA recently honored Blanchard for her outstanding customer service, professional dedication and personal commitment to the goals and objectives of the association.

Blanchard is survived by her companion, Tommy Williams of Wilson County, son Jason Carpenter, and brother Steve Blanchard of Texas. She was preceded in death by her parents, Sidney and Dolly Blanchard.

Shannon Logan, Murfreesboro's assistant to the city manager, has stepped down to accept a position with the General Council of Finance and Administration for the United Methodist Church in Nashville. Logan also served the city for eight years as principal planner with the city's Planning Department.



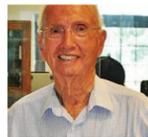
Logan

Shan Criswell was recently appointed as assistant director of Bartlett's Parks & Recreation Department. Criswell started working for the city in 1987 as the facility manager of Singleton Community Center. Prior to that, she worked for the Memphis Park Commission.

Debbie Cairncross is Bartlett's new purchasing agent. She will develop new centralized purchase policies and procedures for all departments, administer contracts, review purchase orders, and develop and issue RFPs and RFQs for services, supplies and equipment. Cairncross formerly managed purchasing for the Shelby County Corrections Department.

Former Tellico Plains mayor

Charles A. Hall, who wrote the town's history and built a museum in his name, has died.



Hall

Hall, 90, was mayor for 31 years and was involved in the creation of Cherochala Skyway. He wrote "A History of Tellico Plains, TN" in 2001 and built the Charles Hall Museum the following year. Hall was also a member of the town's fire department for 52 years and served as a member of Monroe County Court and as county commissioner.

Former Athens City Councilman and dedicated community servant **Charlie Myers** passed away recently.



Myers

The former insurance executive who was appointed to the council in February 1999, won re-election and served for approximately seven years. Completing a brief term as vice mayor, Myers served with the National League of Cities and on the Athens Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, where he was influential in the "Leadership McMinn" program. Myers also served as president of the McMinn County Habitat for Humanity.

Tenn U.S. Sens. Lamar Alexander, Bob Corker receive significant chairmanships

Sen. Lamar Alexander has been elected to chair the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, where he is currently the ranking Republican member. He will also serve on the Energy and Water Appropriations subcommittee; Energy and Natural Resources; and Rules and Administration.



Alexander



Corker

Sen. Bob Corker was named chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. In addition he is a

member of the Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee; the Budget Committee; and the Special Committee on Aging.

Haslam names two new commissioners

Gov. Haslam has tapped Randy Boyd as the new commissioner of Economic and Community Development.



Boyd

A successful entrepreneur, Boyd, 55, served as a full-time, unpaid special advisor to the governor for higher education in 2013, focusing on the "Drive to 55" initiative and resulting in the Tennessee Promise program to provide two years of tuition free community college or college of applied technology (TCAT) to graduating high school seniors. Boyd is chairman of Radio Systems Corporation in Knoxville, which he started in 1991. He is replacing Bill Hagerty, who announced he is returning to the private sector.

Dr. Candice McQueen, a native of Clarksville and a teacher and dean at Lipscomb University, has been selected as commissioner of



McQueen

the Department of Education. McQueen, 40, currently serves on Lipscomb executive leadership team as senior vice president, and as dean she oversees the College of Education as well as the 1,300 pre-k through 12th grade students in three schools at Lipscomb Academy. She has led training, support and professional development efforts for thousands of current and future classroom teachers, instructional coaches and school leaders.

Deborah Tate new director of the Administrative Office of the Courts

The Tennessee Supreme Court announced that Nashville attorney and former Federal Communications Commissioner Deborah Taylor Tate will become director of the Administrative Office of the Courts.

Tate, who was twice nominated by President George W. Bush and unanimously approved by the U.S. Senate to the FCC, began her professional career in Tennessee state government. She served as assistant legal counsel and senior policy advisor to two former Tennessee governors: Don Sundquist and Sen. Lamar Alexander.

Tate also served as both chairman and director of the Tennessee Regulatory Authority, led the health facilities commission and was a director at Vanderbilt University



Tate

Institute of Public Policy. Tate received both her B.A. and J.D. from the University of Tennessee-Knoxville and also studied at Vanderbilt University Law School while working as a law clerk to Gov. Alexander.

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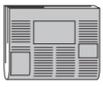
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AIRPORT DIRECTOR

SHELBYVILLE. The city is accepting applications for Director of Shelbyville Municipal Airport. This is a highly responsible, department director level, administrative position. This is a newly created city employee position. Shelbyville is a historic, economically and racially diverse community located in southern Middle Tennessee and is the county seat of Bedford County. The Airport Director is responsible for the administration of the City's General Aviation Airport, including all personnel matters, budget, Airport operations, Airport marketing, and Airport property maintenance. Desired qualifications include a bachelor's degree in Aviation, Political Science, Business or a related field from an accredited university; five to seven years relevant experience is required; or any equivalent combination of education, training and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities for this job. Salary range of \$49,000 to \$59,990, plus excellent benefits. Letters of interest and resumes should be submitted on or before Friday, Feb. 27, 2015, to the City of Shelbyville, Attention: City Manager, 201 N. Spring St. Shelbyville, TN 37160. Successful applicants will be required to pass a background check, physical, psychological and drug/alcohol test prior to final consideration for the position. The City of Shelbyville is a Drug Free /EOE Workplace. For more information, please visit our website: www.shelbyvilletn.org

FIRE CHIEF

COLUMBIA. The city is currently accepting applications for fire chief. The Columbia Fire Department is a comprehensive, all hazards department, responding to emergency events involving the following: fire suppression emergencies, technical rescues (water, confined spaces, extrications and industrial accidents), medical emergencies, hazardous materials, natural disasters and potential terrorism events. The city currently holds ISO public protection class rating of 3/9. The Fire Department operates with an annual budget of approximately \$7 million, and employs approximately 84 full-time firefighters, with a total of 90 employees. The Fire Chief is responsible for providing direction and leadership for the department. The Chief will be responsible for planning for the future, development and implementation of policies and procedures, command of field operations, training, administrative support, and providing policy guidance. Having experience in budgeting and budget management, able to build relationships with other departments, outside agencies and the community are high priorities. The Chief should be comfortable being visible in the community and responsive to the concerns of elected and appointed officials, employees and residents. The ideal candidate should be fair, reasonable and approachable with a team approach to decision making. Candidates must be able to demonstrate a record of achievement, innovation and service. The ideal candidate will have a minimum of eight years of progressively responsible supervisory and/or administrative experience in the firefighting service including public education and prevention in a similarly sized community. The candidate will have a bachelor's degree in fire science, public administration or a closely related field or will have national or state certifications such as E.F.O., Fire Officer III from the Tennessee Commission on Fire Fighting or TFACA, or both. Submit cover letter, resume, salary history, city application (available at www.columbiatn.com), with 4 professional references no later than 4 pm Jan. 30, 2015, to: Personnel Department, City of Columbia, 700 N. Garden Street, Columbia, TN, 38401, or electronically to: hr@columbiatn.com. The city has a competitive salary and benefits package; including retirement, health and life insurance. The city of Columbia is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER, PORTLAND. The city is seeking qualified applicants for the position of Human Resources Manager. Currently the position reports directly to the mayor. This position has responsibility for the daily administration of the city's human resources programs, policies and procedures ensuring compliance

with all applicable laws and/or regulations. The position coordinates and administers any combination of the following: benefits administration, payroll administration, worker's compensation administration, recruitment and selection processes, safety and wellness, insurance, training and development. The position will be knowledgeable of federal laws affecting public sector entities, and certain portions of the Tennessee Code Annotated. Must have the ability to effectively communicate both orally and in writing; develop and conduct effective training programs; and develop and manage a budget. This position requires a bachelor's degree in Personnel/Human Resources, Business Administration, or a related field, and at least three years of experience as a human resources generalist, preferably with some municipal government experience. Salary: DOQ; comprehensive benefit package including the city retirement plan. Applications will be accepted until 4:30 pm on Jan. 23, 2015. A background investigation and pre-employment physical will be required. **EOE/DRUG FREE WORKPLACE.** Submit a letter of interest, current resume with salary history and at least three professional references to: UT-MTAS, attn.: Portland Human Resources Manager; 226 Capitol Blvd. Suite 606, Nashville, TN 37219; or via email to: gary.jaeckel@tennessee.edu

HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR

SHELBYVILLE. The city is accepting applications for a Human Resources Director. This is a highly responsible Department Director level professional administrative position. This is a newly created position. Shelbyville is a historic, economically and racially diverse community located in southern Middle Tennessee and is the county seat of Bedford County. The Human Resources Director is responsible for the administration of the City's human resources program, including all personnel matters, employee benefits and training. The position also serves as the city's Risk Management and Safety Director. The city has 165 full-time employees and 92 part-time, temporary or seasonal employee positions. The City provides a wide array of public services in 12 operating Departments. Qualifications include a Bachelor's degree in Human Resources, Organizational Development, Political Science, Business or a related field from an accredited university; five to seven years relevant experience is required; or any equivalent combination of education, training and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities for this job. Public sector HR work experience is desired. Salary range of \$39,000 to \$44,300, plus excellent benefits. Letters of interest and resumes should be submitted on or before Friday, Jan. 23, 2015, to the City of Shelbyville, Attention: City Manager, 201 N. Spring St. Shelbyville, TN 37160. Position open until filled. Successful applicants will be required to pass a background check, physical, psychological and drug/alcohol test prior to final consideration for the position. The City of Shelbyville is a Drug Free /EOE Workplace. For more information, please visit our website: www.shelbyvilletn.org. For more information, please visit our website: www.shelbyvilletn.org

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST

BRISTOL. Under the direction of the Director of Community Development, this position is to administer the Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Partnership Grant the city receives from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Employees in this job classification are responsible for process and compliance issues related to funding agency regulations and standards, and oversees adherence to administrative, fiscal and accounting policies and procedures related to grant funds. This position maintains detailed files for projects in connection with program funds, provides staff assistance to the Community Development Advisory Committee, conducts pre-bidding and bidding of rehabilitation/reconstruction projects, communicates with project applicants, coordinates with First Tennessee Development District regarding the administration of HOME funds, oversees and maintains financial records of the program, and researches to secure additional grant funds. This candidate must have a Bachelor's Degree in Urban Planning, Development or related field; supplemented by two years responsible funds accounting experience in grants or funding within a

similar government institution; or an equivalent combination of education, training and experience. Salary Range: \$37,400 annually. To download an application and review summary of benefits go to: www.bristoltn.org. Apply to Human Resources Department, P. O. Box 1189, 801 Anderson Street, Room 204, Bristol, Tennessee 37621-1189. EOE/AA. Women/minorities encouraged to apply. The position will remain open until filled.

WASTEWATER COLLECTIONS SYSTEM TECHNICIAN

ARLINGTON. The town is accepting applications for a Wastewater Collections System Technician. Beginning salary is between \$31,269.89 and \$37,523.87 depending on experience and qualifications. This position is full time and comes with a full benefit package including vacation, sick days and paid holidays. Qualified applicants must have a State of Tennessee Grade II Collections System Certification, have graduated from a standard high school or equivalent GED, possess a valid State of Tennessee driver license, and have experience in an industrial or municipal setting. Pre-employment drug screen and physical will be required. This position will remain open until filled. The complete job description and application may be found on the town's website at www.townofarlington.org under employment opportunities or by contacting (901)867-2620. Completed applications must be returned to: Town of Arlington, Attn: Human Resources P.O. Box 507 Arlington, TN 38002. The Town of Arlington is EOE.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT CHIEF OPERATOR

PORTLAND. The city is accepting applications for the position of Wastewater Treatment Plant Chief Operator. Starting rate of pay is \$18.71 per hour DOE and qualifications. This position is full time, with full benefit package available including vacation, sick days, paid holidays; health, dental, vision, life/AD&D, TCRS retirement and supplemental voluntary benefits. Graduation from a standard high school or equivalent GED with additional formal training (post-secondary is preferred) in chemistry, biology, sanitary and/or environmental engineering or related fields as applicable to the wastewater treatment industry. At least 3 years' experience in the operation of a water treatment facility. Strongly prefer minimum of one year experience in supervision at the wastewater treatment plant level. Must possess a valid, Tennessee driver's license. Must possess a valid, State of Tennessee Class III Wastewater Treatment Plant Operators license. Must achieve State of Tennessee Class IV Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator license within 18 months of placement in position. An application and job description may be obtained from the receptionist at Portland City Hall, Monday through Friday, 8 am to 4:30 pm. A complete job description is posted on the city's website, can www.cityofportlandtn.gov and by clicking the link: Portland Employment Opportunity. This position is open until filled. Applications must be returned to: Human Resources, Attn: John Grubbs, Portland City Hall, 100 South Russell Street, Portland, Tenn., 37148. Pre-employment drug screen and physical may be required. The city of Portland is EOE.

Five cities receive \$10K Green Development grants

The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation awarded \$103,080 to five local governments to fund green infrastructure and low-impact development projects beginning March 2015. The Green Development Grant Program provides funding through a competitive process for projects such as rain gardens, green roofs, pervious concrete applications, trees and tree boxes, in addition to outreach and education efforts designed to promote green development in Tennessee communities.

The grant recipients are:

- Chattanooga received \$10,000 to develop and implement a Low Impact Development model competition for students. The competition will recognize outstanding achievement in developing green infrastructure models and understanding of water quality, as it relates to these practices.

Cities regulate ride sharing

RIDESHARING from Page 1 notes Janelle Orsi, executive director of the Sustainable Economics Law Center, in an interview with *Governing*. "A lot of change does come when people break the laws. Given the latent customer demand and the likely drawn-out process of revamping city rules, why wouldn't a ride-share company skirt regulations?"

While there is an existing ordinance governing vehicles for hire in Knoxville, ride sharing is still in the developing stages with the city, according to Communications Manager Eric Vreeland. "Uber and Lyft are among a number of transportation for-profit enterprises that are creating new business models that don't completely align with the city's existing ordinance," he said. "The city is aware of some compliance challenges, and we're studying the issue."

Knoxville's staff attorney Crista Cuccaro has conducted discussions with the city's Police Department and others, according to Vreeland, and is in the process of looking at possible ordinance revisions. "While the ordinance is being reviewed, anyone operating out of compliance with the ordinance can obviously be cited for a violation," Vreeland said.

So far, states have let cities decide how to deal with the issue of regulating ride share companies, but that could be changing, according to *Governing Magazine*, which reports that last year, "Colorado became the second state—after California, to establish statewide rules for ridesharing companies, and the first to do so legislatively." The magazine states Illinois and Michigan lawmakers are considering making ridesharing a state-regulated enterprise and preempt local oversight of the businesses. "In the District of Columbia, a new law permits ridesharing but also deregulates taxi meter fares when passengers order rides online—a concession meant to make the taxi industry more competitive," the authors state.

Among mounting concerns about ride shares in statehouses across the country are matters of public safety and adequate insurance coverage.

"We've seen something of an explosion of issues occur during the past 10 days," writes Charles Thompson, executive director and general council of the International

Municipal Lawyer's Association in Bethesda, MD. In a recent e-mail, Thompson cites "allegations of a rape in India; (India's home ministry has advised all states to ban unregistered web-based taxi firms after a driver for the Uber service was accused of raping a passenger in the capital Delhi.); a suit by Portland to stop Uber from violating its laws; suits by cities in California; a rape allegation in Chicago; a manslaughter trial in San Francisco and more."

In March 2014, Tennessee's Department of Commerce and Insurance cautioned citizens that ride sharing services such as Uber and Lyft might not be fully insured. "The Department wants Tennesseans to know that most standard auto insurance policies contain exclusions for livery or driving for hire," Julie McPeak, the department's commissioner, announced in a press release. "These gaps can leave individuals in insurance limbo without the coverage needed to protect their vehicle and passengers in the event of an accident." McPeak notes that while TNC's might be required by local governments to carry liability insurance, "they might not have medical payments coverage, comprehensive, collision, uninsured, and underinsured motorist coverage."

J.B. Wogan, in the article "How will the Sharing Economy Change the Way Cities Function?" states the idea of sharing stems from "a world where 'ownership' is a rapidly changing concept. Particularly among millennials," he writes. "The notion of ownership doesn't seem to have the same cachet it once did." Wogan cites that in 2010, adults ages 21 to 34 bought just 27 percent of all new cars sold in America, down from 38 percent in 1985. To keep up with the trend, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation have funded a column "The Shared City" on the website NextCity.org, to report on the sharing movement and how it's changing local communities.

In the meantime, the taxi industry may be shoring up with some app-based services of their own. According to *CNN Money*, New York and Chicago could soon be launching smartphone apps for e-hailing taxis, built on the same platform as Uber and Lyft. The app would be called Universal E-Hail and would be created by the cities' Taxi & Limousine Commission.

vide natural habitat for pollinators and provide aesthetic value to the library lawn.

- Ducktown received \$25,000. The city along with the Southeast Tennessee Development District will install green infrastructure in the form of tree wells, pervious pavers and bioretention cells to improve Spruce Street's stormwater drainage while also addressing water quality with the added benefit of making the street more attractive and accessible to pedestrians.

- Lewisburg received \$23,000 for a comprehensive plan to improve the popular Rock Creek Park which host numerous festivals and events throughout the year. The city plans to remove 4,500 square feet of asphalt to create public green space. The existing parking lot will be replaced with pervious pavers to address stormwater runoff by providing a more natural infiltration of stormwater into the ground.



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Must all signs be treated the same?

BY LISA SORONEN

Executive Director

State and Local Legal Center

The Supreme Court's decision in the case of *Reed v. Town of Gilbert*, Arizona could upset sign codes nationally. Most sign codes, like Gilbert's, include different categories of temporary signs. It makes sense, for example, to give people more time to remove thousands of election signs and less time to remove a few yard sale signs. In this case, the Court will decide whether local governments may regulate temporary directional signs differently than other temporary signs.

Practically speaking, the Court could rule that all temporary signs must have the same time, place and manner requirements. NLC joined the State and Local Legal Center's (SLLC) amicus brief asking the court not to go that far.

Gilbert's Sign Code includes temporary directional signs, political signs and ideological signs. After being notified that its tempo-

rary directional signs announcing the time and location of church services were displayed longer than allowed, the Good News church sued Gilbert. The church claimed Gilbert's Sign Code violates the First Amendment because temporary directional signs receive the less favorable treatment (in terms of size, location, duration, etc.) than political signs and ideological signs.

The Ninth Circuit ruled that Gilbert's Sign Code does not violate the First Amendment because the distinctions between the three sign categories are "content-neutral;" all signs in each category are treated the same regardless of their content even if the three categories of signs are treated differently. Because the lower court concluded that the sign categories are "content-neutral," it applied intermediate scrutiny rather than strict scrutiny. The different treatment of temporary signs would not serve a "compelling" government interest as strict scrutiny requires, but does serve a "significant" government interest as intermediate

scrutiny requires.

The SLLC's amicus brief argues that Gilbert's Sign Code does not violate the First Amendment. Sign codes with multiple categories of temporary signs are common; they are usually classified by function, with their own time, place and manner requirements. And the fact that a temporary sign must be read to determine what kind of temporary sign it is does not render a sign code "content-based." Finally, even when the three categories of temporary signs at issue in this case are compared with each other, they are regulated by purpose, rather than by content, meaning strict scrutiny should not apply.

Bill Brinton of the law firm Rogers Towers wrote the SLLC's brief, which was also joined by the National Association of Counties, the International City/County Management Association, the United States Conference of Mayors, the International Municipal Lawyers Association, the American Planning Association and Scenic America.

NATIONAL BRIEFS



U.S. renters paid \$441 billion for apartments and houses this year, a \$20.6 billion increase, as fewer Americans owned their homes and landlords with tight inventories raised leasing charges, according to Zillow. The number of rental households grew by 2 percent, or 770,000, nationally during 2014, the Seattle-based real estate information service said. In the New York metropolitan area, the largest U.S. housing market, the number of rental residences expanded by 63,000 to 3.4 million, with tenants spending a total of \$50 billion for shelter. Demand for rentals has grown after owners of more than 5 million U.S. homes went through foreclosure since 2007, mortgage lending tightened and younger families postponed buying because they can't afford or prefer not to own property. That may change slowly as rents rise and

the economy improves, said Skylar Olsen, senior economist at Zillow. Zillow projects rents will increase 3.5 percent in 2015, compared with a gain in home values of more than 2.5 percent. The U.S. inflation rate was 1.3 percent in the 12 months through November. Home prices will rise more slowly than rents because fewer investors are competing to buy a smaller supply of discount-priced foreclosures, while the inventory of non-distressed properties is growing as prospective home sellers gain equity with appreciating prices, Olsen said.

The *Nashville Business Journal* notes **American workers reported growing confidence in both the overall economy and the labor market in December, according to a monthly survey from Randstad US.** The Randstad U.S. Employee

Confidence Index, which tracks U.S. workers' monthly perspectives around jobs and the economy, shows the December index increased 1.3 points from 58.3 to a nearly eight-year high of 60.0. The last time the Employee Confidence Index reached 60 or above was in February 2007, when it attained 60.4. Additionally, the Randstad Macroeconomic Confidence Index, which measures employees' confidence in the overall strength of the economy, rose 1.6 percentage points to 50.5 in December from 48.9 in November. This reading marks the highest level since Randstad began tracking the Macroeconomic Confidence Index in 2004. The Randstad Personal Confidence Index, a measure of workers' confidence in their own employment situation, rose 1.1 points in December to 69.6 from 68.5 the previous month.

UT MTAS January MAP Class

Insurance Services Office Fire Suppression Rating Schedule

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) Fire Suppression Rating Schedule is the manual used in evaluating a community's fire protection capabilities. Using the schedule, ISO evaluates the communications capability, the fire department, and the water supply to develop a numerical grading called a Public Protection Classification, commonly called ISO rating.

This class will familiarize students with the Fire Suppression Rating Schedule, to allow the understanding of major elements used by ISO, to prepare to make strategic operational and budgetary decisions on how to improve the Public Protection Class, and how to develop and implement a plan to improve the Public Protection Class for the community.

Target Audience: Elected officials, city managers, city administrators, fire chiefs, directors of emergency communication centers/dispatch offices, and water directors/supervisors.

Time: 8:30-4:30 CST/EST**Schedule of Sessions:**

Jan. 21 — Knoxville-EST

Jan. 22 — Franklin-CST

Jan. 28 — Jackson-CST

Jan. 29 — Collierville-CST

Locations: Jackson-Jackson Energy Authority Training Center, 320 Hwy. 45 Bypass

Knoxville-UT Conference Center, 600 Henley St.

Franklin-Franklin Police Dept., 900 Columbia Ave. Community Rm. 1

Collierville-Collierville Fire Dept., 1251 Peterson Lake Road

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For registration assistance, call 865-974-0411. Or for more information, contact Kurt Frederick, training consultant, at 615-253-6385.



Jan. 17: Monteagle

Low Country Boil

National Guard Armory, 107 Armory Road (Hwy 41 between Monteagle and Tracy City). Starts at 4pm serving until 7 pm CST. Great food and music with your family and friends. Enjoy music with Bazzania for an evening in South Louisiana with a menu of shrimp, potatoes, sausages and corn, cooked in a Cajun seasoning, with dirty rice, bread pudding with rum sauce and tea. Proceeds to benefit non-profits: Friends of the South Cumberland, the Monteagle Food Bank, and the Monteagle Mountain Chamber. Tickets are \$15 in advance and \$18 at the door. Seating is limited. For questions or ticket purchase, call 931-924-5353 or email mmtnchamber@blomand.net Tennessee.

Jan. 30-Feb. 1: Tiptonville

Annual Reelfoot Lake Eagle Festival

Reelfoot Lake, State Route 21. Family friendly weekend with eagle tours. Get a map of the eagle nests and venture out on your own. Bird of prey shows, art and photography contests, photography tours, vendors, children's activities, and story telling. Sponsored by the Reelfoot Lake Tourism Council. For more information, call 731-253-2007 or e-mail visit@reelfoottourism.com.

Jan. 31: Knoxville

Chocolatfest

From 10am-3pm at the Knoxville Expo Center, 5441 Clinton Highway. Admission free. Chocolate tasting pass - \$15 to get a box (or bring your own) to take from booth to booth for delicious samples. VIP tasting pass - \$30. Musical performances by Johnathan Clayton and more. Fun for the kids and a silent auction. Visit <http://www.chocolatfestknoxville.com/>.



Feb. 17-Mar. 24: Class Profit and Production on Small Acreage.

Held in Cleveland by UT/TSU Bradley County Extension Office. Covers the basics of getting started with a small fruit orchard, vegetable garden, greenhouse, layer flock or small livestock. Learn to manage insect and disease pressure as well as basic finance as well as farmer's market setup. Open to all. Taught by University specialists on Tues. evenings. Registration ends Feb. 10. To register, call 423-728 7001.

Feb. 26-27: The Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development, Research and Planning Division and Grant Writing USA present a two-day grants workshop in Nashville at the William R. Snodgrass Tennessee Tower, 312 Rosa L. Parks Ave., 3rd Floor, Media Room. Learn how to find grants and write winning proposals. Beginning and experienced grant writers from city, county and state agencies encouraged to attend. For more information, contact Sally Haar, TDEC Research and Planning Division, 615.253.3563 or sally.haar@tn.gov.

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Senate: new year, new beginnings at opening day of legislative session



Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey, and Sens. Mark Norris and Bo Watson



Sen. Mark Green



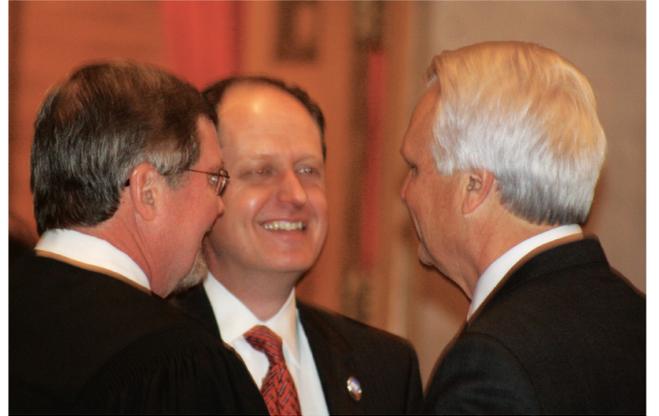
Sen. Paul Bailey



Sen. Bo Watson



Sen. Ken Yager



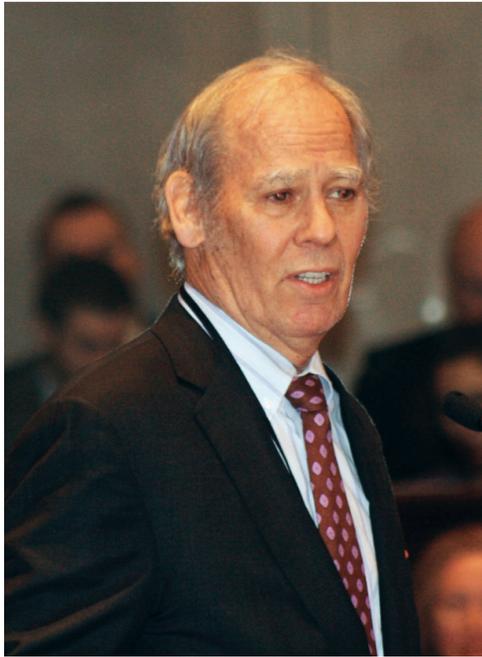
Judge Jeffrey S. Bivins, TN Supreme Court Justice; Sen. Jack Johnson and Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey



Sen. Rusty Crowe is sworn in with his family at his side.



Sen. Ferrell Haile



State Comptroller of the Treasury Justin Wilson



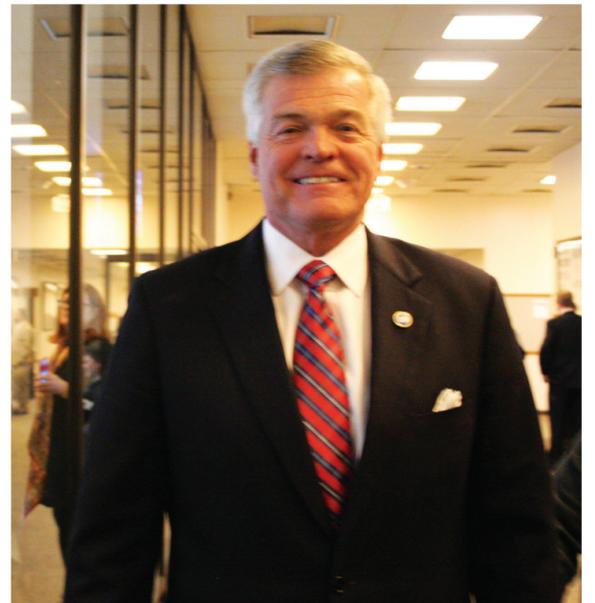
Sen. Janice Bowling



Sen. Thelma Harper



Sen. Richard Briggs



Sen. Jim Tracy



Sens. Becky Massey and Mike Bell



Sen. Steve Southerland

Representatives: new year, new beginnings at opening day of legislative session



Rep. Charles Sargent and House Speaker Beth Harwell



Rep. Curtis Johnson is sworn in as House Speaker Pro Tempore



Rep. Steve McDaniel



Rep. Brenda Gilmore



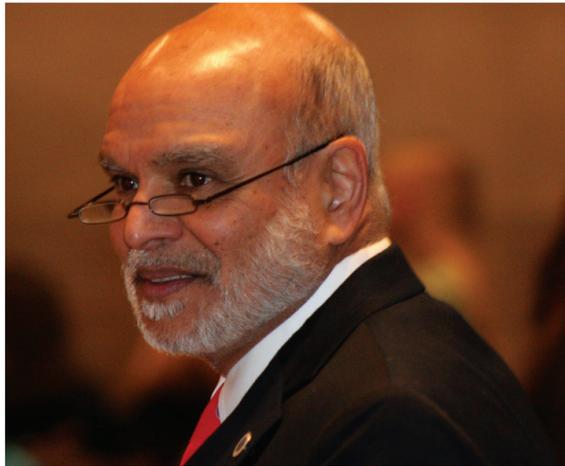
Reps. Bill Beck, Johnny Shaw, Craig Fitzhugh and David Shepard



Rep. John Holsclaw



Rep. Akbari Raumesh, Sen. Reginald Tate and Rep. Karen Camper



Rep. Sabi Kumar



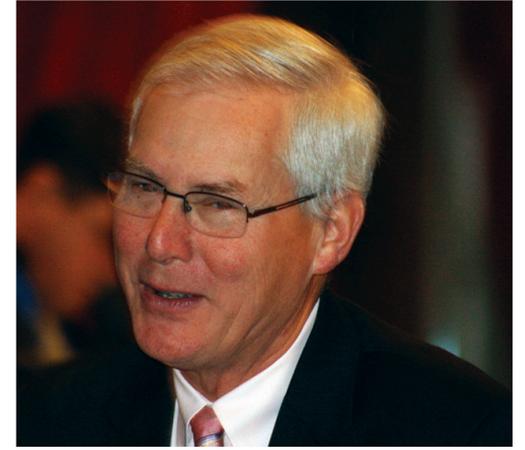
Rep. Dawn White



Rep. Bud Hulsey



House Speaker Beth Harwell and Rep. Leigh Wilburn



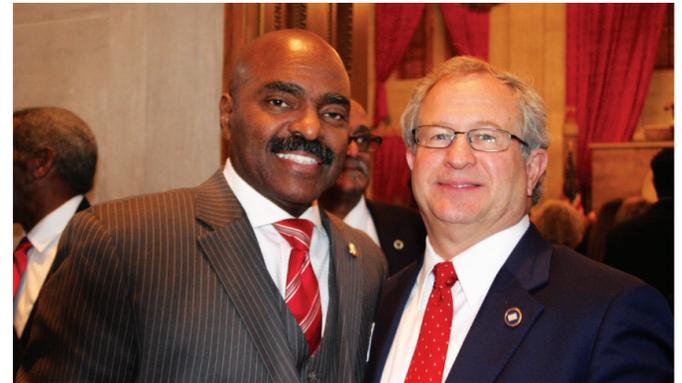
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TN Health Commissioner Dreyzehner says partnership is key for preparedness of outbreaks, infectious diseases

BY LINDA BRYANT

Dr. John Dreyzehner never planned on working at the top rungs of state government. When Gov. Bill Haslam called to offer him a job as the Tennessee Department of Health Commissioner in 2011, he was deeply immersed in the public health issues of the Tri-Cities region of Bristol, Johnson City and Kingsport. The 51-year-old was actually living in Virginia and working as the director of Virginia's Cumberland Plateau Health District.

Dr. Dreyzehner built a distinguished reputation for making a difference in public health issues impacting the Central Appalachia, which includes both Tennessee and Virginia. It's safe to say he was too busy working in the field to know the name he was making for himself was rippling all the way to the Tennessee governor's office. He was stunned when he was offered the commissioner's position, especially since he'd never even met Gov. Haslam. Nonetheless, Dreyzehner was pleased and honored to accept the job; especially since he felt taking the job would allow him to serve more people.

Licensed to practice in Tennessee and Virginia, Dr. Dreyzehner is a Fellow of the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine. Prior to his return to his public health job in Virginia in 2002, he was in the clinical practice of occupational medicine. He began medical service in 1989 as a United States Air Force flight surgeon. He also has practiced for several years in the field of addiction medicine while working on substance abuse prevention, treatment and control in his public health role. He holds appointments as adjunct faculty with East Tennessee State University's College of Public Health, founding faculty of the Healthy Appalachia Institute and visiting assistant professor of public health at the University of Virginia. Dreyzehner and his wife Jana, a child psychiatrist, have two grown children.

TML recently sat down with Dr. Dreyzehner to discuss some of the Department of Health's most critical functions, particularly as it applies to infectious diseases and viruses and to key health indicators such as obesity and tobacco use.

TT & C: You have a background in occupational medicine and addiction medicine, particularly in the state of Virginia. How did you end up in Tennessee in this state leadership position?

JD: I was born and raised in Chicago. I was a flight surgeon in the Air Force. I got to know Appalachia while I was in college and stationed in Virginia. After the Air Force, my wife and I decided we wanted to move back to that part of the country. After a few years, I realized I really missed having a mission. I enjoyed what I was doing, and felt like I was making a difference in the community. But I really missed doing something that felt bigger than me. I was looking for more of a purpose. There was an opening in the local public health department, and I was encouraged to apply for it.

I decided early on that I couldn't really make an impact in those areas unless I got more involved externally in the entire region. I served on a number of boards and committees in the Tri-Cities area. The healthcare in that area had facilities in both Virginia and Tennessee. Working with two states to serve the area was interesting. We could do some innovative things on the Tennessee side that we couldn't do on the Virginia side, and we could sometimes do some innovative things on the Virginia side that we couldn't do on the Tennessee side. We took advantage of it, and we had multiple opportunities to innovate.

One day I got a call asking me if I'd be interested in interviewing for this role with the state. I was very honored to even be asked. My first day was Sept. 19, 2011. Most commissioners had been named early, but there was an interim commissioner prior to me — Susan Cooper. I had never met the governor. He was immediately very kind and very approachable. He is very much the way he appears.

TT & C: Can you explain some of the basics of the Tennessee Department of Health?

JD: Our department provides direct services for one in five Tennesseans annually, and we serve seven regions of the state. If you are in a restaurant in Tennessee, you'll know that it's getting inspected twice a year by one of our environmental health inspectors. Our department performs healthcare facility and healthcare professional



Practicing what he preaches, TN Health Commissioner Dreyzehner rolls up his sleeve for his annual flu shot.



Health Commissioner Dreyzehner, right, flanked by Dr. Marion Kainer and Chief Medical Officer David Reagan, as they address media questions about Ebola.

regulations. We license more than 260,000 healthcare professionals, and we regulate around 2,000 healthcare facilities. That's about 10 percent of Tennessee's gross domestic product and about 14 percent of its workforce.

We are a large care providing entity. We provide primary care for more than 100,000 patients every year. We provide nutrition services for more than 500,000 individuals annually, although that number changes because people come in and out of eligibility. We have a bricks and mortar presence in all 95 counties. Eighty-nine of those counties are called Metros. They report to their county mayors, not to me. They are really important partners for us. They receive significant funding through our department — around 40 percent of their budgets.

TT & C: What are some of your biggest concerns?

JD: Our main focus is not on care, although we have primary care clinics, it's on prevention. We are really focused on the big three — tobacco abstinence, better nutrition and physical activity. We're really suffering in our state right now. We are No. 46 for tobacco use, 40th for obesity and 49th for physical activity. For the last 25 years we've been bouncing along in the bottom 10 in the country. Having said that, the health of the United States is among the poorest of the developed world, despite the fact that we spend more than twice as much.

What we are really battling is people's lack of understanding about what causes people to be healthy. Health and prosperity are linked. Here's a key thing for your readership to know — if you show me a healthy community, I'll show you a prosperous one. Show me a community that's not prospering, and I'll show one with poor health. The big thing that most people don't understand well enough is that education and meaningful work are directly linked to health.

It's all about purpose, and education is often the place where you learn about what your purpose is before someone will pay you to do it. We are social animals. People who are engaged in their lives and communities are healthier. People who are working live longer. If you look at people with similar body habits, health risk factors and genetics and one has a job and another doesn't, the working person will live many years longer. This is even if they are equally sedentary and are similar in body composition; the working person will live longer. It has a lot to do with being engaged with something that's purposeful and meaningful and being recognized by your "tribe."

TT & C: Is Tennessee at risk for a superbug or the Ebola virus? What

role would our local communities play if something happens?

JD: It's important to recognize that this is one world, and that means it's one health — whether we are talking about human health or animal health or even plant health. All living things on the earth are connected. In fact, all living things on the earth share a common genome. We are the dominant species on the planet, and many of the diseases that threaten us come from other species. Ebola is a classic example of a virus that is very devastating in human beings that is probably not very significant in the host animals in which it exists. We believe, although it has not been conclusively proven, that a species of a fruit bat in Africa may be the carriers of the virus and possibly other mammals such as the great apes may be carriers.

The current Ebola epidemic is believed to have begun as a result of the contact that a two-year old child had with bush meat. There's a taste for and a market for wild game in Africa. People are exposed to viruses that exist in wild animals, typically during preparation. Generally cooking destroys or inactivates the organisms but where Ebola is concerned when the animals have not been cooked. There are raw body fluids in your eyes, mouth, nose and open cuts. It can be transmitted that way. In this case the two-year-old got sick and infected a large number of people. I think this was in December 2013, and the outbreak wasn't recognized until March 2014, and here we are today. Now it is a global concern.

All these diseases and viruses are a little bit different, and you have to respond to them differently. For Ebola we're fortunate that when people are exposed and not sick they are not infectious. They aren't infectious until they start exhibiting symptoms.

Today you've heard about Ebola. You haven't heard as much about a disease called MERS-CoV or Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus. It is very concerning, unlike some disease threats that can be transmitted via an airborne route. You probably remember SARS virus from the middle of the last decade. There's another epidemic that anyone in the pork industry is well aware of — a virus that has been very destructive to swine herds because it's killing baby swine. It doesn't appear to be a human threat other than to the economics of that industry, but we just never really know where the next disease is going to come from.

TT & C: When it comes right down to it, how is Tennessee doing with preparation for serious outbreaks?

JD: That is the important question to be asking as we are feeling much more comfortable and confident with our Ebola viral disease preparation.

We are proud of the fact that Tennessee has been recognized by Trust for America's Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation as one of the top five prepared states for outbreaks and infectious diseases. The recognition is partly because we've had a constant focus on this issue.

You can't create a state of preparedness and readiness in a short period of time. It requires, above all, relationships and knowledge of systems. You have to constantly nurture relationships and individual and group knowledge of how various systems work in order to assure preparedness. It's not a thing that you can buy and have. Yes, there are equipment issues and physical and data and communication infrastructure issues. But the most important thing — and the thing people forget most frequently and that needs to be continuously nurtured — are the relationships and knowledge that people in positions have of each other and each other's capabilities. And, of course, much of this goes on at the local level.

TT & C: What kind of infrastructure do we have in place to deal with outbreaks if they happen?

JD: We have a lot of infrastructure in place in our country and state. I chair a committee called the Public Health Preparedness Policy Committee. We've really worked hard on the healthcare side to be able to deliver care "just in time," and to try to deliver as much care outside of an intensive scene as possible. We don't have a lot of excess bed capacity, for example, because it costs a lot of money to maintain beds. What we do have, and this is where the local angle becomes important, is that we do have existing infrastructure and people who can put those pieces of infrastructure together who can operate logically and in alignment. That is a part of public health's role and the emergency response role. Our response in the state is to the present Ebola concerns has been a partnership between Public Health, our hospitals, our other care providers and our Emergency Medical System.

TT & C: How is the department's relationship with communities throughout the state?

JD: We have a physical presence in every county at the very local level. Our local county health departments work very closely with city and county mayors. We have representatives on every community health council. It isn't just top down, it's also bottom up. When we go into a school, it's not necessarily our central office calling a county mayor, it's the local county health director who they know, see and might go to church with. We look very hard on building and maintaining those relationships, and not just when issues like Ebola emerge. We work together 365 days a year.

TT & C: Can you give an example of preparedness working well in preparation?

JD: All preparedness begins locally. One of the things I'm most proud of in the Tri-Cities is the Mountain Empire Public Health Emergency Coordination Council. It continues to function. That group came out of some phone calls I made to colleagues on the Tennessee side during the run up to the second Gulf War when there was a real concern that some biological agents could be released. We asked, for example, what would we do as a region if smallpox started visiting the world again? It felt like a possibility then and continues to be a possibility.

Smallpox has not been eradicated from the globe and most people aren't immunized against it any more. It is closely held in a few laboratories, but we have not destroyed that virus. It could threaten populations again. When this was happening, we brought in hospitals, public health and local industries and began talking about what our posture would be. We began creating awareness, and ultimately we began vaccinating some key staff in concert with a CDC initiative to make sure there were some people that had immunity.

We have a school located in Knox County that was an early adopter of a school-located flu vaccine program. The school wants their kids to be well and learning. It's beneficial to them to have their kids vaccinated because they are more likely to stay in school. This school is a great example of how local entities work successfully with us. From a community standpoint we know that school and preschool settings are places where the flu epidemic heats up every year. We're helping schools and tamping down the epidemic in the community. Every

year we are essentially conducting an exercise in how we'd address some type of public health issue in Tennessee communities.

TT&C: What do many of your plans call for?

JD: They call for going into a setting that's accessible to a lot of people, and in most communities a school is a designated gathering point where people go to get what we call in the profession medical countermeasure. That countermeasure might be medication or vaccinations, but in order to do that you have to have the infrastructure in place to make that happen. The schools and their personnel are already there; the public health officials are already there, the local political leaders are there and the emergency medical folks are there. But the key missing ingredient is for them to work together regularly and to learn to trust each other and come up with a plan for coordinating local activities when something happens. You want to know if your mayor is supportive and have a plan for how you're going to set up operations if there is a health crisis in the community.

With H1N1, the 2009 pandemic, we already had in place for several years the school-located vaccine programs. Counties in Central Appalachia led the state for most phases of vaccines in schools. Here we were: a part of the country known for its relatively low trust in government, but were leaders because we had already been going into the schools for a number of years. We already had the relationships. We'd built trust, and were able to say things like: "Instead of coming in once or twice this year, we'll be coming in four times." Other places they'd say things such as, "Isn't there a risk with you coming into the school with this vaccine?" The trick is to build relationships in local communities before people are worried.

TT & C: Do you have other concerns about viruses and other diseases?

JD: Unfortunately, flu will kill several Tennesseans this year. I don't know how many, but I do know it's unlikely we'll escape it. People think the flu kills just the elderly and the vulnerable, but it occasionally kills people who are otherwise in the healthy population, including children.

So far we've had two Ebola cases in the United States that were imported, two cases that were a result of contact, and one case that died — four cases in the United States so far.

Unless you've been living in a cave somewhere, you've at least heard about Ebola. People understandably got very concerned about it because they saw that as a great risk. Depending on the outbreak, the mortality rate ranges from 40 percent to 70 percent. The mortality rate here in the United States has not been as high. You probably can improve survival rates for Ebola if you can provide simple, supportive care, especially fluid management and to some degree oxygenation.

Flu is always a concern, and it affects many. An individual can be sick with flu for about 24 hours and spread it before they know they are sick. They don't think as much about the risk flu presents to other people. I recently told my own kids to get their flu shots, not because I was worried about them, but they were going to be with their grandparents over the holidays, and I didn't want the grandparents getting sick.

TT & C: What are some of your biggest ongoing concerns about preparing for a public health crisis?

JD: It's not just about preparing for a tornado, flood, earthquake or pandemic. It's about building relationships and knowledge of systems. How are you going to do that? Who are you going to call when things get beyond any one agency's or entity's ability to handle it? That is a big focus for us.

TT & C: What is the most important message you'd like to get out to local communities across the state?

JD: We need your help. The Department of Health and the healthcare sector are not going to solve the problems that ail us in Tennessee. The crux of the matter is that we have to recognize that we are shortening our lives and the lives our children because our culture makes it very difficult for us to make better choices about our health. It makes it easy for us to avoid physical activity, so we have to build environments that encourage physical activity.