

Senators hear testimony on statewide cable franchise bill

BY CAROLE GRAVES
TML Communications Director

Legislation that would eliminate local cable television franchising and replace it with a statewide franchising process was brought before the state Senate Commerce Cable Study Committee last week. The legislation, known as the Competitive Cable Services Act, was filed during the 2006 legislative session for consideration by the Tennessee General Assembly, but was referred to a summer study committee for further review.

SB 3210 by Sen. Jim Tracey and HB 3636 by Rep. Steve McDaniel replaces local authority with a statewide franchising process to be administered by the Secretary of the State and the State Comptroller. The legislation would also exempt cable television providers from any current or future local taxes or fees, effectively establishing cable providers as a special, tax-free class of business. (See Telecom Taxes below.)

As part of a two-prong approach, BellSouth wrote and is aggressively working the legislation

on the national and statewide level. The U.S. House of Representatives recently passed a national cable franchising bill, the Communications Opportunity, Promotion and Enhancement Act of 2006 (COPE). The U.S. Senate is currently gearing up for a vote on its version of the bill.

BellSouth argues the existing franchising process is burdensome, time-consuming and a barrier to competition. The purpose of the legislation is to promote competition in the cable industry and in turn lower subscriber rates by eliminating the local government cable franchising process and replacing it with a state or national process.

"Acquiring local franchises was not and is not a barrier to phone entry into the video business. The barrier to entry is the cost of construction, not the securing of franchises. It is disingenuous for BellSouth to suggest that cities and counties are the barrier," said John Howell during the cable study committee meeting. Howell, a former BellSouth tele-

See CABLE on Page 7

Telecom taxes and reform affect local governments

Local and state governments stand to lose \$8 billion a year in revenues if Congress further restricts their ability to levy taxes or fees on the telecommunications industry. According to a study released by a coalition of local government organizations, including The U.S. Conference of Mayors, the National League of Cities, the National Association of Counties, the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors, and the Government Finance Officers Association, the jobs of more than 150,000 teachers, police officers, and firefighters could be on the line if the telecom industry receives preferential treatment.

The coalition study, *The Local Government Perspective on Telecommunications Taxes*, debunks claims by the telecommunications industry that it is unfairly taxed relative to other businesses. Instead, it shows that the industry pays essentially the same level of property taxes as other businesses and, in some cases, lower corporate income taxes than many "general businesses." The telecom industry also ignores that it is taxed at rates significantly lower than some other industries such as the utility industry.

"This study is important be-

cause it points out the flaws in the telecom industry's 2004 COST Study, which significantly overstates the average state and local tax rate for the telecom industry. It would disturb me if any member of Congress would allow the COST Study to have influence over the debate to change our taxes on telecommunications," said Michael A. Guido, Dearborn (MI) mayor and president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

Currently the Senate is considering a telecommunications reform bill that includes provisions that would severely restrict the ability of local and state governments to tax certain telecom services. Although the Senate bill would restrict only two sources of revenue for local governments, these provisions could represent the first step toward eliminating all telecom-specific state and local taxes. Some policymakers appear to be basing their support for telecom tax reform on this flawed 2004 COST Study funded by the telecom industry. As a result, coalition members are actively opposing any legislation that impedes their taxing authority.

"If Congress accepts the telecom industry's claims and

See TELECOM on Page 9

TML Policy Committees to meet Nov. 2 in Nashville

TML Policy Committees will meet on Nov. 2, at 10 a.m. in the TML building located at 226 Capitol Boulevard in Nashville. This meeting will begin the process by which TML's legislative priorities are established for the first session of the 105th General Assembly that begins Jan. 9, 2007.

As in past years, there will be four policy committees: Finance and General Administration; Public Safety; Utilities, Environment and Transportation; and Economic and Community Development. The four policy committees will meet simultaneously. This will be a working session and no additional program is planned. Coffee and light refreshments will be available in the morning and a box lunch will be provided at noon.

Participation in the TML Policy Committees is open to any TML member-municipality and its employees. There is no limit on the number of officials/employees that may attend from any single municipality, and there is no limit on the number of committees in which a municipality may participate. However, a municipality is only allowed one vote per committee. For example, a city may elect to send its city manager, fire chief and chief of

police to the TML Public Safety Policy Committee. In this case, all three representatives from the municipality may participate in the discussion, but the city would only have one vote in the committee — not three.

TML is instituting a number of changes this year to encourage member participation, foster more meaningful discussion, and streamline the process. The specific changes are discussed below. Contact TML at 615-255-6416 with any questions.

Later start time from 8 to 10 a.m.

An 8 a.m. start time required those outside the Middle Tennessee area to travel to Nashville the day before the meeting and pay for an overnight stay for each participant. That may have limited full participation by those cities outside Middle Tennessee. In addition, TML has eliminated the plate lunch and afternoon program to allow participants sufficient time to complete their task and start back home before the afternoon rush commences. The League hopes that these changes will provide municipalities in East and West Tennessee the opportunity to participate more fully in this important

See POLICY on Page 6

New slate of legislators already determined for 105th Tennessee General Assembly

BY CAROLE GRAVES

As part of the 2006 election cycle, citizens will cast their votes for 116 seats in the Tennessee General Assembly. Senate elections are being held in 17 districts (odd-numbered), and all 99 seats in the Tennessee House of Representatives are up for election.

Last month's primary not only determined each party's nominees, but in many cases determined the outright winner.

In the Senate, eight seats have already been determined. Two will be new faces in the senate but not in the Tennessee General Assembly. In the House, winners of 52 districts have already been determined. Seven are new legislators.

Dewayne Bunch and **Bo Watson**, current members of the House of Representatives, are running for open Senate seats in their districts. Bunch easily won a three-person Republican primary. With no Democratic challenger in November, he is guaranteed the 9th District Senate seat. He replaces Sen. Jeff Miller, who did not run for re-election.

Watson's only potential challenger, former NTSB Chairman Jim Hall, a Democrat, withdrew from the race prior to the August primary. Watson has no opposition in the November general election, which makes him the District 11 choice for state senator. He replaces Sen. David Fowler, who did not run for re-election.

Other senators running unopposed in November include Sens. Rusty Crowe, Randy McNally, Tim Burchett, Charlotte Burks, Thelma Harper, and Doug Jackson.

In House District 4, **Kent Williams** defeated incumbent Jerome Cochran. With no Democratic candidate, Williams will be unopposed in November and is guaranteed the

Judge Dalton makes Nashville history

BY VICTORIA SOUTH
TML Communications Coordinator

Angie Blackshear Dalton rolled up the sleeves of her new judge's robe and went right to work Friday, hearing felony jail docket cases on the Metro General Sessions Bench after becoming the first elected African-American female judge in Nashville history.

Sworn in by another trailblazer, the esteemed Justice Adolpho A. Birch, a day before his retirement from the Supreme Court, Dalton, 35, was one of 30 newly-elected judges who took the oath of office recently.

Dalton garnered 68 percent of the vote in this month's general election after working as a prosecutor for eight years in the Davidson County District Attorney General's office.

"I have always known that I wanted to try my hand at it," said Dalton concerning the judgeship. "Still, I'm surprised I've made history."

Riders catch the eastern Star Music City Star celebrates Grand Opening

BY VICTORIA SOUTH

Train rides and celebrations marked the long awaited grand opening of Tennessee's first commuter rail service, The Music City Star, which opened officially Sept. 18.

Some 330 dignitaries and invited guests boarded two trains at the Lebanon rail station destined for Nashville's Riverfront Park, pausing to honor celebrations in the Mt. Juliet, Martha, Hermitage, and Donelson communities along the way.

The fruition of the Eastern Corridor comprising the Nashville-to-Lebanon line, a 32-mile alignment between Wilson and Davidson counties, is the first of seven corridors planned by The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) that will link outlying suburbs around Middle Tennessee with commuter rail and other forms of high-capacity transportation to down-



Mike Bell



Brenda Gilmore



Kevin Brooks



Dale Ford



Jim Coley



Steve McManus

legislative seat. Williams ran an aggressive campaign pledging to restore accountability, oppose any tax increase or new tax, bring more state money and projects to Carter County, and to work to properly fund education programs and schools. Williams owns and operates a restaurant in Elizabethton.

In District 6, **Dale Ford** won a six-person Republican primary. With no Democratic challenger, he will fill Rep. David Davis' seat.

See LEGISLATORS on Page 6



Kent Williams



Justice A.A. Birch administers the oath to Angie Blackshear Dalton accompanied by her husband George Dalton.

Dalton's extensive experience includes working the Juvenile Court docket for two years and has handled cases ranging from murder to domestic violence; cases she describes as often "highly sensitive" in nature.

The swearing in ceremony was especially poignant for Dalton, who interned for a summer with Justice Birch, the first African-American to be elected to a judgeship in Davidson County before subsequently sitting on the Tennessee Supreme Court.

"Ever since I was a lawyer, I have admired and looked up to him. Not just because he is a trailblazer, but his respect for the law and how he carries himself," she said.

Dalton will work on a rotating docket at the new Justice A. A. Birch building.

Her husband, George, works for the TML Risk Management Pool as a risk services consultant.



Photo by Victoria South

The Music City Star makes its grand entrance at the opening festivities at Riverfront Station.

town Nashville.

The train's whistle, a brilliant blue sky, and jazz along the riverfront by the Nashville School of the Arts provided the perfect back-

drop to the for the occasion.

Speakers included Mayor William Orange, RTA Board Chairman and Cheatham County Mayor; U.S. See RIDERS on Page 6

NEWS ACROSS TENNESSEE



BY TISH WOMACK
TML Reserach Analyst

ALEXANDRIA

A U.S. Department of Homeland Security grant of \$38,418 will allow Alexandria to buy equipment for its fire and police departments.

ASHLAND CITY

A state enhancement grant of \$649,057 will go toward restoring the beauty of Ashland City's downtown area. Sidewalk replacement, additional streetlights, new landscaping, and new crosswalks are in the plans.

BARTLETT

Bartlett, the 12th largest city in Tennessee in Census 2000, is battling Franklin for the bragging rights to being the ninth largest incorporated city in the state. Bartlett is rated ninth and Franklin 10th.

BRADLEY COUNTY

General Electric announced it will build a \$30 million distribution center in Hiwassee Industrial Park and plans to hire about 200 employees when fully staffed by 2008.

BRISTOL

Touchstone Wireless LP, headquartered in Bristol, a privately held wireless repair/refurbishing company, has announced plans to expand its operations and create more than 200 new jobs ranging from entry level production to experienced electronic technicians.

CARYVILLE

Camel Manufacturing Company, a tent manufacturer, let 75 employees go from its facility in Caryville, citing the non-renewal of a federal contract as the cause.

CHATTANOOGA

The first Friday of each month from May to October has been designated BIKE2WORK day. Chattanoogaans are encouraged to bike to work not only for health reasons, but also for reducing air pollution and traffic congestion. A free breakfast is offered for participants at one of the downtown parks.

CHATTANOOGA

Coolidge Park's 100-year-old slippery elm tree was struck by lightning and had to be removed, much to everyone's dismay. As a replacement for the beloved shade tree, the city decided to plant five trees representing Chattanooga's five sister cities. The trees that will be planted this fall will be representative of the species of trees found in or around each Sister City.

CHATTANOOGA

The rampant kudzu in the city will meet its match in September when a Lakesite farmer rents a herd of 30-50 goats to the city to eat the invasive vine on a steep slope near the Missionary Ridge tunnels. If successful, the goats will be hired next year to feast on the weed from April to October.

CLEVELAND

Upgraded software funded by a matched \$20,000 forestry grant will be used by the city to do a tree inventory and help manage its forestry operation. The grant is from the Tennessee Department of

Agriculture's Division of Forestry.

CLINTON

The 50-year anniversary of the "Clinton 12," the 12 black students who integrated Clinton High School, was celebrated with the premiere of a 90-minute documentary, "The Clinton 12" narrated by actor James Earl Jones and the grand opening of the Green McAdoo Cultural Center. "The Clinton 12" students were the first to desegregate a public high school in the south.

COLUMBIA

Al's Garden Art, the largest wholesale manufacturer of cast stone fountains and statuary in the country, has announced that it will open a 240,000-square-foot manufacturing and distribution facility at the Old Fedders building in Columbia, creating 50-100 jobs in the first year and up to 400 within the next five years.

CROSSVILLE

The Tennessee Kentucky Water Environment Association awarded the city with its Biosolids Beneficial reuse Award in recognition of its outstanding management of biosolids treatment and disposal process. The city also won, for the third consecutive year, the Operational Excellence Award for its efficient-violation-free year.

CROSSVILLE

The Crossville police department was recognized at the International Association Chiefs of Police's banquet for its campaign to reduce traffic injuries and deaths. The department, in its first entry in the annual National Law Enforcement Challenge, came away with third place honors for departments with 26-50 sworn officers. Third place prizes included a hand-held radar unit, a Motorola radio unit for a police cruiser, and a radar gun speed trailer.

DAYTON

The menace of the Canada geese and their guano has been resolved. The hatchlings have flown to nearby areas and shooting off bottle rockets by park officials scared the geese enough that they departed hastily, not to return again. Walkers and joggers in Washington Park along with parks and recreation personnel are appreciative.

DICKSON COUNTY

Dickson County Emergency Management Agency, local fire departments, and hazardous material teams have partnered toward a more coordinated approach to problems ranging from fuel spills to chemical leaks. The partnership means that all equipment and personnel will be on the scene of any disaster with specific areas of duty assigned when a call goes out for help.

DYERSBURG

NSK Steering Systems, a Vermont auto parts manufacturer, will open a facility in Dyersburg next year. It is anticipated that about 150 employees will be hired within three or four years as the work is phased in.

ENGLEWOOD

An \$80,240 grant from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security

plus \$4,412 in matching funds will be used to purchase a thermal imaging camera as well as eight fire packs and spare bottles for the Englewood Rural Fire Department.

FAYETTEVILLE

A skateboard park for the city got a boost with the \$42,000 from the state Local Parks and Recreation Fund.

GATLINBURG-PIGEON FORGE, MEMPHIS, MURFREESBORO, SMYRNA

The Gatlinburg-Pigeon Forge Airport Authority was named governing body of the year during Tennessee Division of Aeronautics' (TDOA) annual conference Aug. 17. Memphis International Airport was named airport of the year. Murfreesboro Municipal Airport won its 11th straight "Front Door" award and its manager Chad Gehrke named Airport Manager of the Year. Smyrna Airport was most improved airport of the year. TDOA is a division of Tennessee Department of Transportation.

HENDERSONVILLE

The old city hall will see use as the home for the police department's criminal investigation division. It will also be used as a secure place for storing evidence and case files.

JAMESTOWN

The Camel Manufacturing Co., a tent manufacturer for the U.S. military, announced it would reduce its work force by 150 employees at its Jamestown and Pioneer plants. Seventy-five will be laid off at each of the company's facilities. A decrease in orders was listed as the reason for the reduction.

JEFFERSON CITY

Development of Jefferson City's Centennial Park will be enhanced with a \$90,000 grant from the state's Parks and Recreation Fund.

KINGSPORT

The School Nutrition Association named Kingsport City Schools a District of Excellence in Child Nutrition, one of three Tennessee systems. The school system was recognized for attaining a greater than 80 percent score on SNA's Keys to Excellence covering nutrition and nutrition education, administration, communications and marketing, and operations.

KNOXVILLE/KNOX COUNTY

ADT Security Systems is joining city and county authorities in expanding to Knox County and Knoxville the AWARE (Abused Women's Active Response Emergency) program, an alarm system for women who fear imminent domestic violence. ADT pays for the home-mounted security system or pendent alarm activated by pushing a button to summon help. The AWARE system, launched nationally 14 years ago, is credited with saving many battered women's lives.

LA VERGNE

When emergency personnel are on extended service calls, their needs are taken care of by Box 100, a volunteer service that brings snacks and water. A group of volunteers converted a 1997 ambulance, filled it with sports drinks and nutrition bars, and take it to the scene of the call for police, fire and rescue units. Many of those staffing Box 100 are graduates of the La Vergne citizens Police Academy.

LAFAYETTE

Fleetwood Enterprises, a manufactured home builder, announced it will close its factory and relocate its operations to the Gallatin facility. Many of the 110 employees will relocate with the move to Gallatin.

LAKE CITY

A federal rural business enterprise grant of \$15,000 will be used in constructing a national coal-mining museum in Lake City. Anderson County Commission will provide \$50,000 for the project.

LAWRENCEBURG, MILAN AND GORDONSVILLE

DURA Automotive Systems, Inc. at its Lawrenceburg manufacturing facility announced plans to expand operations at three Tennessee facilities. The expansion will mean a \$3 million capital investment and more than 200 new jobs combined.

MANCHESTER

A Local Parks and Recreation Fund grant of \$100,000 will be used by Manchester for the development of a skate park.

MEMPHIS

Riviana Foods Inc., a large distributor of packaged rice, is expanding its facility at a cost of \$67 million and will create 121 new jobs with a median wage of \$41,362.

MEMPHIS

A \$2.02 million FEMA grant will help pay for the \$2.7 million cost of retrofitting the Sheahan pumping station to protect it from earthquake damage. Reinforcing the pumping station, expected to be finished by 2009, will mean three-fourths of the major water plants supplying Memphis will be able to withstand seismic damage.

MILLERSVILLE

Two elementary schools that serve Millersville students shared \$13,129, the total raised and matched by the city to support the "Technology Drive" initiated by a school administrator. Of the amount equal to \$1 per Millersville citizen, \$6,129, was raised in one month's time and matched with \$7,000 of city funds unanimously voted by the city council.

MILLINGTON

An error by Crimson Fire Inc. of Brandon, S.D., means that Millington's new fire engine will have a 103-foot ladder all for the same price as the 75-foot ladder the city ordered.

MORRISTOWN

Infrastructure improvements for the Colgate-Palmolive plant will be partially financed with a \$1.2 million FastTrack Infrastructure Development Program grant from the state. The grant will be in the form of cost reimbursements for such things as preparation of the site and the extension of utilities.

MURFREESBORO

The city's cable television department/Cable Channel 3 was awarded two first place awards by the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA) at its awards banquet in Lake Buena Vista, Fla. One was for Inter/Talk show *City School News* and the second for Children/Young Adults program *Adventures of Murphy's Burrow*. The channel earned a second place award in the Public Service Announcement cat-

egory *Parks and Recreation Summer PSA*.

NASHVILLE

AmerisourceBergen Corp., a pharmaceutical company based in Pennsylvania, announced it will close its warehouse and distribution center in November that will leave 78 employees without jobs. The closing is part of the company's consolidation plan.

PORTLAND

Olhausen Billiards Manufacturing Inc., a billiard-table manufacturer, will move its headquarters from San Diego, Calif. to Portland, Tenn., and expects to hire up to 200 employees within its first year of operation.

RUTHERFORD COUNTY

The U.S. Census Bureau has confirmed what most residents are very aware of, that the county is growing exponentially. It is now labeled as one of the top 20 fastest-growing counties in the country. The Census bureau based its figures on the rate at which housing is being built in the county.

SOUTH PITTSBURG

South Pittsburg will use \$268,000 parks and recreation grant money to purchase a right-of-way along the Sequatchie Valley Short-line Railroad for a cycling and hiking trail.

TOWNSEND

A business fee of \$12 per business initiated to keep track of city businesses has been added \$67,943 to the city's coffers. The money had mistakenly been dispersed to the county when businesses were sold and improperly credited to Blount County by the state, which sent sales tax revenues due to the city to the county.

TULLAHOMA

A total of \$550,000 in grant money from the Local Parks and Recreation Fund will be used for renovations to the Rock Creek Greenway and at the D.W. Wilson Community Center.

WASHINGTON COUNTY

Koyo Corporation of USA and Nakatetsu Machining Technologies will build a factory in the Washington County Industrial Park located between Johnson City and Jonesborough. The Koyo facility will be the third U.S. bearing manufacturing plant and will partner with Nakatetsu in a joint venture. Nakatetsu Machining Technologies, which will employ approximately 150 in these two ventures.

WHITE BLUFF

A \$500,000 HOME grant from the Tennessee Housing Development Agency will be used to help low-income families with home improvements. The Greater Nashville Regional Council will administer the grants that can be used for rehabilitation or complete reconstruction of the home of a qualifying applicant.

WILLIAMSON COUNTY

The U.S. Census Bureau's 2005 survey measuring economic data shows Williamson County as the 15th wealthiest county of the 787 largest counties in the country with an estimated per capita income of \$39,150 over the past 12 months. The county's median family income of \$90,087 put it at the 11th spot in the nation. The survey measured economic data of areas in the nation with 65,000 and above population.

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The rebirth of sidewalks, traditional communities

BY VICTORIA SOUTH
TML Communications Coordinator

If you grew up in an older, established neighborhood or prior to World War II, chances are you traveled by sidewalk - those simple concrete paths connecting schools, parks, friends' houses, cafe, grocery store and everywhere in between to your own front door.

Sidewalks required no age limit, no driver's licenses, and were easily navigated, providing an opportunity to notice "the little things." They were great places to sing, chit chat; pull a wagon, day dream, play hopscotch, sight see and swap observations about hot summer days and egg frying. Citizens moved with purpose, childhood obesity was rare, and municipalities weren't in a constant struggle to reach EPA air quality compliance.

Sidewalks diminished shortly after World War II as cities ripped up cable car tracks and modified roadways to make way for the automotive age. Streets became synonymous with cars and the sidewalks, easements and safe crossing areas facilitating pedestrian travel were replaced by suburban sprawl.

Now, in a surprising twist, amidst fluctuating gas prices, air quality issues and health concerns, the basic elements of traditional communities are re-emerging in cities across the state with sidewalks

Omishakin, "we became focused on moving cars and buses around instead of people for a period of about 40-50 years."

Traditional neighborhoods, or New Urbanism developments, are mixed use developments characteristic of the pre-automotive age featuring pedestrian friendly amenities such as sidewalks and bike lanes, shops, neighborhood restaurants and stores within walking distance encouraging and enabling citizens to choose walking or biking as safe, practical and attractive transportation options.

Omishakin also served as a team member on Mayor Bill Purcell's Strategic Plan for Sidewalks and Bikeways for Nashville and Davidson County adopted February 2003; an ongoing 10-year plan to study and assess every aspect of future and existing pedestrian/bicycling infrastructure and develop a detailed blueprint toward implementing safe sidewalks and bikeways.

A 1995 Nationwide Personal Transportation survey reports that nearly 25 percent of trips from home in the United States average less than one mile in length and 75 percent of those trips are made in cars.

A poll among Nashville residents conducted by The Strategic Plan for Sidewalks and Bikeways committee indicates that citizens would walk or bike short distances if



Row type housing is a trend in traditional neighborhoods with sidewalks encouraging pedestrian travel to stores, schools, parks, restaurants or a stroll about the community.

sidewalks are built and how they are designed, constructed and maintained. More importantly, communities are discovering that the sidewalks of yesteryear cannot be the sidewalks of today. In 2003, the U.S.

Supreme Court ruled that sidewalks installed and maintained by local governments must be compliant with the guidelines which fall under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Clarksville city council recently approved the first of a series of loans, \$2.8 million to bring the city and its 70 miles of sidewalks into ADA compliance.

"It will be quite an undertaking and quite a bit of money," said Clarksville Director of Streets Jim Durrett. "It will cost at least \$2 million per year over a period of 8-12 years and should completely change the face of the city." Durrett said the first developments should take place in downtown Clarksville, where the heaviest pedestrian traffic occurs.

Inspections of existing sidewalks generally include measurements for width and length, obstructions such as mailboxes or telephone poles, cracks or missing segments, building materials, and slopes and easements.

Improvements, according to Durrett, may include warning placards and truncated domes, bright yellow mats with raised domes at crossing sections for citizens who are blind or sight impaired.

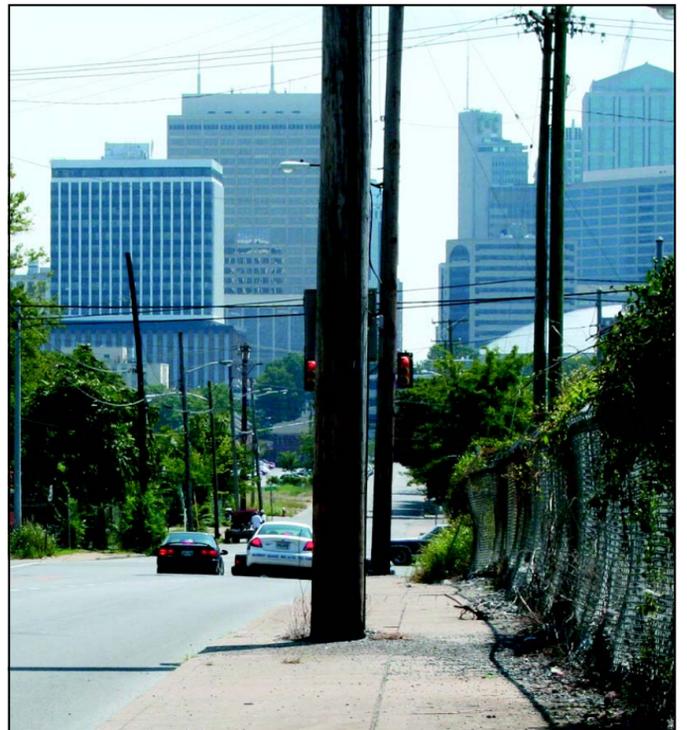
Local governments working to make their communities pedestrian friendly may apply for a federal Transportation Enhancement Grant distributed by TDOT.

In the 14 years since the program's inception, more than \$173 million has been distributed to Tennessee communities.

Local governments must apply annually for the funds, which are to be used for cultural, aesthetic and environmental aspects of the transportation system.

In 2005, TDOT received grant requests for more than \$60 million in funds with only \$17.6 million available funding.

The city of Athens is one of the proud recipients of a Transportation



A telephone pole placed in the middle of the sidewalk, large verticle or horizontal cracks, missing segments, fencing, and other obstructions prevent many existing sidewalks from meeting ADA compliancy.



The majority of Nashville's sidewalks are located in older neighborhoods such as historic 1840s era Germantown north of downtown Nashville.



Advances in medicine have created opportunities for citizens with disabilities to become more mobile than ever before. Sidewalks installed and maintained by local governments must be compliant with the guidelines falling under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

taking center stage right alongside commuter rail stations, bike racks, town centers and the corner drug-store.

"We've realized the mistakes of the past and are in the process of returning to more traditional neighborhoods," said Adetokunbo Omishakin, bicycle/pedestrian planner for the Metro Nashville

provided safe, convenient options to do so.

"The lack of sidewalks isolates people of all ages and forces us to use our cars when walking or biking would be more preferable," said one respondent. "It is difficult to reach nearby businesses due to the lack of sidewalks and crossing signals," said another.



Mayor Purcell's Strategic Plan for Sidewalks and Bikeways for Nashville and Davidson County serves as a blueprint for sidewalk maintenance and development.

Planning Department and project coordinator for *Music City Moves!*, a public/private partnership of organizations that sponsor community activities encouraging healthy living through daily use of sidewalks and bikeways.

In fiscal year 2000-2001, the Metro Council approved \$15 million for sidewalk construction, and in FY 01-02, Mayor Purcell committed an additional \$20 million to sidewalk development.

The Strategic Sidewalk Plan is intended to help guide where future

Enhancement Grant which will be used for a sidewalk development.

"This grant will make Athens a safer place to live and walk," said Shawn Lindsey, Athens public works director. "The focus is on connecting our heaviest population centers to schools, businesses, and medical facilities. The connection will allow pedestrian travel across most of Athens and our downtown more accessible to our population centers."

Music City Moves! was honored recently by the Robert Wood

Foundation's Active Living by Design program for its work in creating a Walkable Subdivisions chapter for the Nashville Subdivisions Regulations.

Music City Moves! will host the 7th annual Walk Nashville Week coming up in October.

Activities include: Titans Fans Walk to the Game Day, Oct. 2; National Walk to School Day, Oct. 5; Walk for Active Aging, Oct. 6; Walk to Work/Lunch Day, Oct. 7; and Get on Your Greenway Day, Oct. 9.

Photos by Victoria South

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PEOPLE



BY TISH WOMACK
TML Research Analyst

Gov. **Phil Bredesen** was recovered enough from an infection believed to be caused by a tick bite to officiate at the wedding of his son, **Ben Bredesen**, to **Dru Potash** on Sept. 2 and has been back in his office since the last week of August.

U.S. Senate candidates **Bob Corker** and U. S. Rep. **Harold Ford Jr.** agreed to participate in three televised debates to be held in Chattanooga, Memphis, and Nashville.

The Tennessee Ethics Commission announced the hiring of **Bruce Androphy** as executive director. Androphy currently serves as general counsel of the New York State Ethics Commission.



Androphy

York State Ethics Commission.

Chad Gehrke, Murfreesboro Municipal Airport manager, was named Airport Manager of the Year during Tennessee Division of Aeronautics' (TDOA) annual conference. Gehrke was hired as the first city airport manager in 1994. Memphis International Airport's **Ronald Fitzgerald** was honored for his lifetime contributions to aviation.



Gehrke

Bristol Mayor and TML District 1 Director **Jim Messimer** is home from rehab for the stroke he suffered in late July. He anticipates resuming his mayoral duties in the near future and was able to attend the September city council meeting.



Messimer

East Ridge Mayor, TML District 3 Director, and state Rep. **Vince Dean** announced he will not run for reelection as mayor this fall, but will concentrate on representing Legislative District 30 in the Tennessee House.



Dean

Etowah's city commission selected **Jody Blair** mayor and **Chris James** as vice mayor at its August meeting.

Lookout Mountain commissioners elected **Greg Brown** mayor at the town's August meeting.

Elizabethton city council named **Russell "Rusty" Treadway** city manager at an early September meeting. Treadway served as city manager in Sevierville and Mauldin, S.C., and as assistant city manager of Johnson City.



Treadway

Willie Herenton, mayor of Memphis, had his lunch interrupted at a local restaurant when a man robbed the cashier. A police officer who was dining with the mayor gave chase, but lost sight of the robber who was later arrested.

Chattanooga's fire department assigned Lt. **Terri Whiteside** to the department's training division. Whiteside is the first African-American female to serve as a fire training instructor in Chattanooga's training division.

Alexandria has hired **Mark Collins** as its police chief as of late August.

Belle Meade hired **Tim Eads**, a former Dickson County lawman, as its police chief. He began his duties Sept. 5.

Coopertown tapped former Metro Nashville Police Officer **David Barrera** to be its acting police chief until a permanent chief can be hired.

Jackson Engineering Director **Mike Harris** will take on the responsibility of creating an engineering department for Brentwood. His last day with Jackson will be Sept. 22.

Franklin Planning Director **Bob Martin** retired Sept. 1 after serving the city for 29 years. Assistant Planning Director **Jaime Groche** will act as interim director until a permanent director is hired.

State Sen. **Kathryn Bowers** resigned her seat in the Tennessee Senate effective Sept. 1. She cited health reasons for resigning. Bowers won the August primary in a four-person race. The Shelby County Democratic Party selected Reginald Tate, a local architect and active Democrat, as the party's candidate for the state Senate District 33. He will face Republican challenger, Michael Floyd.



Bowers

McKenzie council members voted to combine the water and public works department and appointed Water Superintendent **Tim Waldrup** as superintendent of the combined department. Current Public Works Superintendent **Joe Curtis** will retire Sept. 29.

Smithville Police Chief **Gus Clemente** resigned his position.

Tullahoma Finance Director **Sue Wilson** resigned her position effective Sept. 15.

John Callow, former staff writer and copy editor with the Murfreesboro *Daily News Journal*, is the new Murfreesboro Community Development director. At *DNJ* he covered Rutherford County Government, did feature stories on local government topics, and was writer of the popular Newsmaker series of personal interviews with community leaders and noted citizens.



John Callow

Tennessee celebrates Imagination Library Week

Dolly Parton's free pre-K literacy program provides 1 million books to state's children

This is Imagination Library Week, a weeklong celebration from Sept. 18-24 to link Tennessean's passions and hobbies to ways of raising funds for the Governor's Books from Birth Foundation (GBBF). The GBBF is a nonpartisan, not-for-profit catalyst and resource to help Tennesseans establish and sustain countywide Imagination Libraries.

Learn more at www.governorsfoundation.org.

As of June 1, Tennessee's Imagination Library extends to all 95 counties, making Tennessee the first state in the nation to offer the free book program to each of the state's residing children under age five.

Created by Dolly Parton in 1996, the Imagination Library provides one new, age-appropriate, hardcover book each month to children from birth to age five at no cost to the family, regardless of income or any other demographic. In just 20 months, more than 1 million Imagination Library books have been mailed to more than 125,000 Tennessee preschoolers, with thousands of new Imagination Library members signing up each month.

"Two years ago, we created the Governor's Books from Birth Foundation with the charge of taking Dolly's program statewide," Bredesen said. "Today, the challenge has been met thanks to innovative partnerships throughout the state and active endorsements from groups such as the Tennessee Press Association."

In Tennessee, the Imagination Library has been adopted on a county-by-county basis and is administered and supported by local sponsors, civic groups and individuals. The total cost of the Imagination Library is \$27 per child, per year, which includes 12 hardcover books, postage, shipping and handling, reflecting no administrative overhead costs. This cost is split equally between each county sponsoring organization and the Governors Books from Birth Foundation.

Statewide contributions from private entities and individuals help the Foundation provide full-coverage distressed county grants and are used for special projects such as purchasing full sets of Imagination Library books for each of the states pre-K classrooms and local Head Start facilities.

With recent research showing that 35 percent of children arrive at school unprepared to learn, Bredesen says he believes Tennessee's adoption of the Imagination Library goes hand-in-hand



Gov. Phil Bredesen and Dolly Parton kick off a week-long celebration of books in honor of Tennessee's Imagination Library Week, a free program created by Parton in 1996 that provides free books to children from birth to age 5 regardless of income.

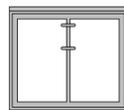
with the state's ongoing focus on voluntary pre-K efforts.

"Dolly created this program to serve as a free gift to all children and as an educational common denominator," Bredesen said. "It is fitting that the last Imagination Library book a child receives is Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come, because no matter what their family income or place of birth, on their first day of school every one of those children will have read up to 60 books, will know The Little Engine That Could, and be better prepared for a lifetime of learning."

A Tennessee native, Parton initially offered the program as a gift to

the children of her rural childhood home in Sevier County. Parton says that although she has accomplished many things as an entertainer and entrepreneur, the Imagination Library is without doubt her crowning achievement.

"My daddy told me that of all the things I've done in my life, he was most proud of the Imagination Library," Parton said. "I just wish he could be here today to help me thank all of the people in our great state who have joined together to bring the love of reading to each and every child. Governor Bredesen and our county leaders are showing us that all things are possible."



COMING UP

Sept. 16-Oct. 29: Blount County Historical Museum, 200 E. Broadway Ave., Maryville. Smithsonian traveling exhibit: "Between Fences" that looks at the physical and cultural fences that sometimes separate people. Exhibit will travel to Jonesborough, Maynardville, Livingston, Hohenwald, and Paris in Tennessee.

Sept. 23: George Dickel Distillery again sponsors "Thunder in the Hollow," a Sept. 23 motorcycle ride in the countryside to help support Tullahoma Crimestoppers. Rain date set for Sept. 30. Call 931-461-8888 for more information. Unsolved crimes are routinely featured through local media outlets with a confidential "Tips" line established

for soliciting valid tips from the public. Callers are eligible for a cash reward raised from locally donated funds.

Oct. 10-12: National Renewable Energy Conference: "Advancing Renewable Energy: An American Rural Renaissance," St. Louis, Mo., sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Energy. Contact: USDA at 202-720-4623 or DOE at 202-586-4940.

Oct. 23: Economic Summit for Women at the Marriott Nashville Airport Hotel, 600 Marriott Drive, Nashville. Cost: \$80. Contact: Yvonne Wood at yvwood@aol.com or call 615-444-9663.

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TML policy committees to focus on proactive initiatives

POLICY from Page 1
process.

Policy document overhauled

In recent years, the policy document has included TML's views, those in opposition as well as in support of all subject matter and has served as the working draft for the four separate policy committees. Consequently, the document has become little more than a running tabulation of all the specific initiatives TML has supported or opposed over the years.

As a remedy, TML staff is proposing to eliminate the policy document and the recurring updates. In its place, staff proposes to adopt Policy Principles. The Policy Principles will be more permanent and include more general philosophical principles that are broader in application and are necessarily more flexible so as to accommodate any number of initiatives on a particular subject. In addition, the shift to general guiding principles will free the policy committees of the time-consuming and tedious process of updating the policy document annually; allowing the policy committees to focus their time and attention on the specific issues to be considered by the legislature in the impending session.

Policy Committees focus on proactive initiatives

With the elimination of the annual policy document and the creation of the policy principles, the committees will no longer have to anticipate and determine all the initiatives that TML will oppose in the upcoming session. After all, once it is determined a particular piece of legislation will be detrimental to cities, the required action of staff is self-evident. Therefore, the policy committees' sole charge will be to determine which initiatives they will recommend the TML staff to pursue on behalf of cities and towns in the upcoming legislative session.

Expanded Categories for Submissions

Each committee will review submissions in three separate categories: "Non-Controversial," "Here and Now," and "Over-the-Horizon."

- **Non-controversial** – These should be simple, straightforward changes that are unlikely to garner any opposition and that will not pass on costs to the state or counties. Examples would include technical corrections, elimination of obsolete and/or duplicated laws, rules and regulations, simplifying or streamlining state and municipal processes.

- **Here and Now** – This category would include any initiative that must be pursued this year/session to provide immediate benefit, assistance, clarification and/

or relief from existing statutes or regulations or to avoid being harmed by impending statutory or regulatory action.

- **Over-the-Horizon** – Those issues that pose a future challenge or present a future threat to cities. Initiatives in this category are not intended for passage this year or next but legislation would be filed this year with the hope of initiating debate and raising the profile of such issues among TML members, the General Assembly, the press and the public.

Process for submitting legislative initiatives

Only those initiatives sponsored by a city and submitted, in writing, to TML by Oct. 6, will be considered by the policy committees. A city may either send its initiative directly to TML or submit it via an MTAS consultant. Each submission must include a summary of the problem, a description of the proposed remedy, and a statement of the anticipated benefits to municipalities of pursuing the proposed action. A proposed legislative initiative form is available on TML's web site, www.TML1.org.

Presenting initiatives to Policy Committees

Sponsoring city must attend to present initiative to policy committee, without exception. If sponsoring city is not present to explain the initiative, the committee will not consider the proposal. In such cases, the proposal will be forwarded to the Legislative Committee with the note that sponsoring city was not present and proposal was not reviewed, ranked or approved by the Policy Committee.

Process for consideration of submissions received after October 6

Proposed initiatives must be in writing and must be submitted directly to TML or to an MTAS consultant by Oct. 6. Any submissions received after that date will not be considered by the Policy Committee. This deadline is necessary to ensure there is adequate time for TML staff to analyze the proposal, gather any additional information and package the materials while leaving sufficient time to distribute the materials to the policy committee members in advance of the Nov. 2 meeting.

TML's intent is not to limit participation or preclude any city from submitting proposals. Therefore, submissions received after October 6 will be forwarded to the TML Legislative Committee with the note that the submission was received after the deadline and was not considered, ranked, or approved by the Policy Committee.

New slate of legislators in 105th Assembly

LEGISLATORS from Page 1
Davis won the GOP primary for Congressional District 1, currently held by U.S. Rep. Bill Jenkins, who is retiring. Ford's campaign platform included: no state income tax, control state spending, improve health care services, initiate an immigrant program, improve education, improve quality of life for senior citizens, improve economic development for area farmers, preserve traditional family values, bring jobs and secure existing jobs in the 6th District, and to be tough on crime. Ford is a Washington County native. He currently serves as the athletic coordinator of Jonesborough Parks and Recreation department and is a farmer in Jonesborough.

Mike Bell, a Republican, defeated 16-year veteran Rep. Bob McKee for the District 23 seat. No Democrat qualified for the election, giving Bell an automatic victory.

Bell campaigned for smaller, more-fiscally conservative government with more accountability and no state income tax. An avid marksman and hunter, he strongly supports the Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms. He campaigned to protect private property rights and to fight against seizure by eminent domain. He is pro-life and will work to see that SJR127 is passed so that the legislature's authority to regulate abortion is restored by a constitutional amendment. Bell said he also supports increased local control and responsibility in public classrooms, while working to protect parental choice in education. Bell has previous experience with the legislative process, having worked as a lobbyist for a home school association. He is a

small business owner and beef cattle farmer.

Kevin Brooks won a race among five Republicans to become District 24's next state representative. Brooks will replace Bunch, who will now serve in the Tennessee Senate. Brooks, who is the public relations and conference manager for the Church of God International, based his campaign on conservative family values. He serves as commissioner on Cleveland Planning Commission and supports careful planning for continued growth and progress. He serves as chairman of the Blue Ribbon Advisory Council on city school redistricting and supporter of K-12 schools. He is a board member for Main Street Cleveland. He campaigned for less government, lower taxes, and ethics in politics.

Brenda Gilmore, director of mail services for Vanderbilt University and a Metro Nashville council member, defeated six-term incumbent Rep. Edith Langster for the Democratic nomination in District 54. No Republican qualified for the election, giving Gilmore the legislative seat. Gilmore, who has served on the Metro council since 1999, is a former chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, vice chair of Planning and Zoning, chair of the Parks and Recreation Committee, member of the Solid Waste Subcommittee, Hospital and Social Services committee, and is chair of the Tourism and Convention Committee. As a legislator, she pledges to focus her attention on education, economic and community development, and health care.

Stephen McManus, an investment advisor, ran unopposed for the House seat in District 96, currently held by Rep. Paul Stanely. Stanely is

Music City Star celebrates Grand Opening

RIDERS from Page 1
Congressman Jim Cooper; Yvette Taylor, Regional Administrator, Federal Transit Authority; TDOT Commissioner Gerald Nicely; Kent Sylar, representing U.S. Congressman Bart Gordon; Paul Ballard, CEO of the Metro Transit Authority and Bob Clement, former U.S. Congressman.

"We are standing next to history today," said Congressman Cooper in his opening remarks. "The new symphony center is to my right and LP Field, home of the Tennessee Titans, and the Music City Star is on my left. Nashville is truly becoming a world class city."

Cooper, along with other dignitaries, praised the project as a cooperative effort and strongly suggested that the entire future of commuter rail in Middle Tennessee could hinge upon the success of the \$40 million line.

"This simply must work," Cooper stressed. "Please take the train."

Since its inception in 1994, the 10 year project has been plagued by financial set backs, including rising insurance premiums and unforeseen operating cost increases which are shared by federal, state, and local governments.

Rail officials optimistically project nearly 1,500 passengers will ride the commuter rail daily its first year of operation increasing by 400 passengers over the next six years.

Currently, the service is geared for work day passengers operating at peak travel times. However, if demand for commuter rail increases, more trains could be added and special event trains are currently planned for the enjoyment and convenience of the community, according to rail authorities.

Running at speeds up to 60 miles per hour, the ride from Lebanon to Nashville takes approximately 52 minutes at a cost of \$5 one-way.

Free shuttle service is provided from Riverfront Station to Capitol Hill or to the West End/Vanderbilt area included in the price of the fare.

The RTA will offer an emergency ride-home program for taxi or rental car service to its regular customers who ride the train at least 15 times per month.

The Eastern Corridor is a cooperative of RTA along with Wilson and Davidson counties, the Cities of Lebanon, Mt. Juliet, and Metropolitan Nashville, the Metro Transit Authority, Tennessee Department of Transportation, the Federal Transit Administration, the Federal Highway Administration, the Nashville and Eastern Railroad Authority and the Nashville Eastern Railroad Corporation.

For more information, ticket

prices and train schedules, visit the www.musiccitystar.org or call 615-Music City Star web site at 862-8833.

ving for the open Senate seat in District 31, currently held by Sen. Curtis Person. Person opted not to run for re-election in the Tennessee General Assembly where he has served for 40 years, to run for the Shelby County Juvenile Court judge. McManus is chairman of the Shelby County Republican Party Finance Committee. He serves as co-chairman of the Cordova Leadership Council, board chairman of the Germantown Community Theatre, and is a graduate of the Leadership Memphis class. He campaigned for tougher legislation dealing with violent crimes, state mandated cap on higher education tuition increases, tort reform, reduction of the sales tax on food, homestead exemption for seniors, and supports pro-life.

Jim Coley won the Republican nomination in a three-person race in District 97. With no Democratic contender, he automatically wins the House seat vacated by House Minority Leader Tre' Hargett, who did not run for re-election. Coley, a civics teacher at the University of Memphis and at Bolton High School in Arlington, campaigned against consolidation, a state income tax, and providing driver's licenses to illegal immigrants.



Pictured left to right: U.S. Congressman Jim Cooper; Emory C. McClinton, Georgia Transportation Board Member; Yvette Taylor, FTA Regional Administrator; TDOT Commissioner Gerald Nicely; former U.S. Congressman Bob Clement; Kent Sylar, representative for Congressman Bart Gordon; and RTA Board Chairman/Cheatham Co. Mayor William Orange.



Ambassadors from the Tennessee Central Railway Museum assist passengers at the Grand opening ceremony.



Pictured left to right, Lebanon Mayor Don Fox, Metro Nashville Mayor Bill Purcell, and Mt. Juliet City Manager Rob Shearer on opening day.

prices and train schedules, visit the www.musiccitystar.org or call 615-Music City Star web site at 862-8833.



Passengers talk and enjoy the scenery on their first morning commute aboard the Music City Star.

NATIONAL BRIEFS

BY TISH WOMACK
TML Research Analyst

In about two years, a Florida county will be vaporizing garbage using a plasma arc gasification system by Geoplasma. The company will build a \$425 million plant that will be able to convert 3,000 tons of garbage a day into synthetic gas and steam to create electricity for St. Lucie County. The system works much like the way lightning is formed – an arc between two electrodes will be created and high pres-

sure air will form plasma. Not only will landfills become obsolete, but the synthetic gas generated will power up to 43,000 homes yearly as well as run the plant without using outside electricity.

The Outdoor Industry Foundation reports that recreation contributes \$730 billion to the national economy and provides sustainable growth in rural communities. The report states that outdoor recreation creates nearly 6.5 million jobs and \$88 billion in federal and state tax receipts.

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Proposed cable franchise bill harms cities

CABLE from Page 1
communications director, currently works as a telecommunication specialist who negotiates cable television franchises and rights-of-way agreements for cities and counties throughout Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.

Alan Bozeman, cable television coordinator for the city of Murfreesboro, echoed Howell's sentiment testifying that BellSouth has never applied for a local franchise agreement. "We welcome BellSouth to sign a local franchise agreement and begin offering cable television in Murfreesboro. The only thing preventing BellSouth from entering the cable market is BellSouth."

Telecommunications companies use public streets to install new services or enhance existing services. Cutting open sections of street pavement often leads to potholes, requiring additional public street maintenance. Street cuts also cause congestion and traffic problems and disrupt private business. Franchise fees are intended to compensate municipalities for private use of public rights of ways and mitigate costs incurred by cities as a result of private actions on public property. This bill strips cities abilities to regulate public rights of way and significantly reduces compensation.

"Allowing BellSouth or any other phone company to utilize the rights of ways without proper local oversight, management, and compensation is simply wrong," said Howell. "Local governments are charged with entering into fair and similar franchises with all operators and cannot and should not be taken

out of the process. Who will regulate the local operations? The FCC certainly will not and the state does not have the manpower, resources, or knowledge to do so."

In California, where a new telecommunication reform bill passed the legislature in August, more than 200 new state employees will need to be hired to implement and regulate the cable operations. The League of California Cities is currently lobbying for the governor to veto the legislation. In Louisiana, where similar legislation recently passed, Gov. Blanco vetoed the bill, sending it back to the state House of Representatives with a request that lawmakers find a way to speed technology deployment without depleting municipalities' coffers.

Texas, Virginia, Indiana, Kansas, North Carolina and South Carolina have all recently adopted telecom reforms. There are 15 other states (including Tennessee) considering state franchising.

"The Tennessee bill is much worse for customers and local government than the national bill," said Bozeman. "If the national cable franchising bill being debated becomes law, it could in fact make the local and/or state cable franchising process null and void."

Other proposed changes that concern to local governments are:

Franchise Fees

A maximum 5 percent franchise fee is retained but the franchise fees from the cable provider with a state franchise no longer goes directly to the local governments, but instead are diverted to the state Comptroller to redistribute. The definition of gross revenue, which determines

what all is included as part of the franchise fees, is also greatly narrowed, significantly reducing the revenue base.

No-Build Out Requirements

The bill does not contain an effective or meaningful 'build-out' provision and will allow companies to cherry-pick and red-line 'low-value' residents, thus deepening the digital divide. Most rural areas and urban centers will be left without real choices in service.

PEG Channels

The bill does not allow local governments to obtain support funding for public educational and governmental (PEG) channels. It also changes capacity and allocation requirements that may have been negotiated through a local franchise agreement as part of the compensation for the use of the local public rights-of-way and based on the community's needs and interests.

"Although the local franchising system protects important goals, this does not mean it cannot be streamlined," said Howell. "Local governments stand ready to engage with state and federal legislators as they consider changes and reforms to the existing system consistent with our mutual goals of promoting competition for all our citizens. This legislation, however, is premature and only benefits BellSouth."

Chaired by Sen. Steve Southerland, the Senate Commerce Cable Study Committee includes Sens. Tim Burchett and Tommy Kilby. Only Southerland and Burchett were present and agreed to defer any action on this bill, as well as three other pieces of legislation that were considered, until next year.

City University: HR Workshop

To assess what job is getting done and how well it is getting done, almost all organizations require supervisors to formally evaluate their employees at least once a year. However, the appraisal systems that are used differ in purpose, scope, and approach. This module provides an opportunity for participants to discuss the various appraisal instruments and approaches that are used today, focusing particular attention on the advantages and disadvantages of each. Activities also focus on making written comments for the review.

Instructor

Richard Stokes, MTAS consultant
Who Should Attend?
Municipal elected officials and municipal staff who have supervisory and/or human resource responsibilities

ties

Dates and Locations

October 3 Cookeville
October 4 Smyrna
October 17 Bartlett
October 18 Jackson
October 24 Knoxville
October 25 Johnson City
October 26 Collegedale

Time

Public administration courses begin at 8:30 a.m. and conclude at 12:30.

Training Facilities

Bartlett Bartlett Performing Arts and Conference Center, 3663 Appling Road
Collegedale Collegedale City Hall, 4910 Swinyar Drive
Cookeville Town Center, One West First Street
Franklin Williamson County Exposition Center, 4215 Long Lane

Jackson West Tennessee Center for Agricultural Research, Extension, and Public Service, 605 Airways Boulevard

Johnson City Johnson City Public Library, 100 West Millard Street
Knoxville UT Conference Center, 600 Henley Street
Smyrna Smyrna Town Centre, 100 Sam Ridley Parkway

To register for this municipal administration program class, please visit the MTAS web site at www.mtas.tennessee.edu or contact Yana Truman at yana.truman@tennessee.edu or 865.974.9833. For program information, contact Kurt Frederick, MTAS Training Consultant, at 615.253.6385 or e-mail kurt.frederick@tennessee.edu. Fees are \$20 per person per class for municipal employees and \$50 per person per class for all others.

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TENNESSEE FESTIVALS

BY TISH WOMACK

Let us know the particulars about your most important festivals at least six weeks in advance of the event. E-mail Tish Womack at twomack@TML1.org or fax to 615-255-4752.

Sept. 15-Oct. 31: Smoky Mountain Harvest Festival – a countywide celebration. Call 800-568-4748 for more information.

Sept. 22-23: Columbia's Southern Fried Fall Festival in the downtown area with funnel cakes, barbecue, kettle corn and southern fried chicken. Call Brenda Pierce at 931-381-7176 for more information.

Sept. 23: The 14th annual Huntingdon Heritage Festival. Contact: Jeal Atwood at 731-986-2900 or huntingdoncityhall@chargerinternet.com.

Sept. 30-Oct. 8: The 5th Annual Gatlinburg Heritage Days featuring Appalachian heritage in the arts and crafts community. Visit more than 100 unique shops on the historic 8-mile loop. Go to www.gatlinburg.com for information.

Oct. 6-8: Jonesborough's 34th Annual National Storytelling Festival with renowned storytellers. Contact: International Storytelling Center 800-952-8392 or visit www.storytellingcenter.net for more information.

Oct. 7: Spring Hill's Country Ham Festival featuring country ham and biscuits, a hog calling contest, pig tales trivia, a ham curing competition and "the ham walk" and lots more. Call Greg Menza at 931-388-6464 ext. 3054 for more information.

Oct 13-15: 2006 Foothills Fall Festival in Greenbelt Park, downtown Maryville featuring music artists Sister Hazel, Deanna Carter, The Wreckers, Randy Travis, and more. Tickets: \$45 through Sept. 30; at the gate \$55. Visit www.foothillsfallfestival.com or call 865-981-1325 for more information.

Oct. 13-14: Lewisburg's Goats, Music & More Festival at Rock Creek Park featuring the famous fainting goats. Visit www.goatsmusicandmore.com or call 800-96-GOATS for more information.

Oct. 13-14: Spring Hill's Tractor Show at Rippavilla Plantation sponsored by the Tennessee Museum of Farm Life featuring plowing and barrel rolling contests, skillet throwing contest and other unique events. Admission: \$5, children under 12 are free. More information at 931-381-3686.

Oct. 14: Athens' Pumpkintown, a festival of history, harvest and heritage in downtown Athens from 11:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. East Tennessee crafts, music, food and history will be featured along with children's crafts, heritage craftsmen, storytellers and music. Admission free. Contact: Laura LeNoir at 423-746-0699 or visit www.athensdba.org.

Oct. 14: Rockwood Family Fall Festival in downtown Rockwood from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. with rock climbing, mechanical bull, cow milking contest, speed pitch cage & radar, silent auction, food, and more. Contact: Lisa Collett at 865-354-9629.

Oct. 14: Sparta's Liberty Square Celebration featuring Marty Stewart along with an antique car show, craft fair, games, food and lots of giveaways. Contact: Lorie Spivey at 931-836-3248.

Oct. 20-22: Native American Indian Association of Tennessee's 25th Annual Fall Festival and Pow Wow at Long Hunter State Park, 2910 Hobson Pike, Nashville. Indian food, arts & crafts, live music and dances are featured. Cost: \$5 for adults, \$3 for children 6-12, free for children under 5.

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TENNESSEE TOWN & CITY
(ISSN No. 0040-3415) Publication No. 539420 — Official publication of the Tennessee Municipal League. **Publisher:** Margaret Mahery (mmahery@TML1.org). **Editor:** Gael Stahl (gstahl@TML1.org). **Classified ads and news briefs:** Tish Womack (twomack@TML1.org). **Phone:** 615-255-6416. **Advertising:** Publisher reserves the right to reject any advertising deemed unacceptable. Fax advertising copy to *TT&C*: Attention Debbie Kluth at 615-255-4752, or e-mail to dkluth@TML1.org. Opinions expressed non League officials or staff do not necessarily reflect policies of TML. *Tennessee Town & City* is published, semi-monthly, 20 times per year at 226 Capitol Blvd., Suite 710, Nashville, TN 37219-1894. Periodicals postage paid at Nashville, TN. Subscription rates: \$6 per year to members, \$15 to nonmembers, \$1 a copy. **Postmaster:** Send changes of address to *Tennessee Town & City*, 226 Capitol Blvd., Suite 710, Nashville, TN 37219-1894.

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 (price)
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4. **Repair expense** for five years or 5,000 hours, whichever occurs first, SHALL NOT EXCEED (repairs as described in attached conditions of sale) + \$8,000 \$9,500 \$11,000
5. **Scheduled maintenance** costs for 5,000 hours SHALL NOT EXCEED (from attached conditions of sale) + \$3,000 \$6,000 \$9,000
 = \$111,000 \$108,000 \$105,000
6. **Guaranteed minimum repurchase** in five years (covered by performance bond for amount of bid figure in this item) - \$75,000 \$60,000 \$50,000
7. **Life Cycle Cost Total:** = \$36,000 \$48,000 \$55,000
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CITY ENGINEER

DYERSBURG. The city of Dyersburg is accepting resumes for the position of city engineer whose duties and responsibilities will include managing construction and engineering contracts, communicating with federal regulatory officials, responding to citizen inquiries, developing strategic plans for municipal operations, and providing technical support to regional planning committees. The qualified candidate will have a bachelor's degree in engineering or related field with six to nine years of engineering experience, preferably within a local government (or related), or any equivalent combination of education, training and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities for this job. The person hired must be registered professional engineer and possess a valid Tennessee driver's license. Salary: negotiable, DOE, plus standard benefits. Send resume to: James Baltimore, HR Director, Human Resources Department, Dyersburg City Hall, 425 West Court Street, P.O. Box 1358, Dyersburg, TN 38025. Fax: 731-286-7603. Deadline: Oct. 31. EOE.

ENGINEER II - TRANSPORTATION

GERMANTOWN. The city of Germantown is seeking qualified applicants for the position of engineer II in transportation who will perform a variety of complex engineering functions related to the planning and design of municipal projects such as subdivisions and commercial development, transportation, and water and sewer systems. The person hired will be responsible for overseeing the city's traffic engineering operations including monitoring traffic control devices and traffic study analysis. A Tennessee PE license is required. Prior experience in transportation engineering strongly preferred. Ideal applicant should have the ability to work with considerable independence, manage multi-project workloads, prepare project reports and utilize engineering software. Individual will represent the city and must have good public relations skills. Send resume to: City of Germantown, ATTN: Personnel, 1930 S. Germantown Road, Germantown, TN 38138. EOE.

ENGINEER II - WATER RESOURCE

GERMANTOWN. The city of Germantown is seeking qualified applicants for the position of Engineer II in water resource who will be responsible for performing a variety of complex engineering functions related to the planning and design of municipal projects such as subdivisions and commercial development, storm water management, and water and sewer systems. The person hired will be also be responsible for overseeing the city's stormwater management activities including stormwater analysis, control and monitoring. A Tennessee PE license is required. Prior experience in water resources in engineering and NPDES Phase II Program strongly preferred. Ideal applicant should have the ability to work with considerable independence, manage multi-project workloads, prepare project reports and utilize engineering software. Individual will represent the city and must have good public relations skills. Send resume to: City of Germantown, ATTN: Personnel, 1930 S. Germantown Road, Germantown, TN 38138. EOE.

QUALITY CONTROL INSPECTOR/ENGINEERING

GALLATIN. The city of Gallatin is accepting applications for a quality control inspector whose duties include performing construction inspections of public roadway and stormwater infrastructure. Applicants must have a high school diploma or GED and four years of experience in construction inspection, surveying, or related field; or a four-year civil engineering technology degree. Salary: \$33,613+ DOQ. requirements to: Personnel Office, City of Gallatin, 132 W. Main Street, Room 101, Gallatin, TN 37066. Phone: 615-452-5400; Fax: 615-451-5918. M/F/D/V EOE.

PLANNER

COLLIERVILLE. The town of Collierville is seeking qualified applicants for the position of planner whose duties will be performing responsible, complex professional work in a variety of current and long-range planning studies. This position requires a bachelor's degree in urban planning, landscape architecture, or a closely related field from an accredited college or university with major course work in urban planning, and two years experience in a municipal planning office. A master's degree in urban planning and one year experience in a municipal planning office, or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience are acceptable. The person hired must maintain a valid operator's license. Salary range: \$33,871-\$51,568 DOQ plus full benefits package. Applications may be obtained at and returned to the Human Resources Department, 500 Poplar View Parkway, Collierville, TN 38017. Applicants must fill out the official town of Collierville application to be considered for this position. Applications and resumes are subject to disclosure. Position open until filled. EOE.

PLANNER

GERMANTOWN. The city of Germantown is seeking a planner to provide complex professional work relating to the regulation of land use within an urban planning context. Completes land use, zoning, annexation, and other planning studies; reviews developers' plans; and prepared illustrations and exhibits for presentation at public or committee meetings. The person hired must be knowledgeable of municipal planning principles and practices, research methodology, statistical procedures, and laws and regulations pertaining to municipal planning and development. Strong communication and presentation skills required along with the ability to work effectively with others, to work independently, and to handle multiple projects. Some evening hours required. The person hired must have any equivalent to a bachelor's degree in urban planning or related field and a minimum of two years of urban planning experience. Send resume to: City of Germantown, ATTN: Personnel, 1930 S. Germantown Road, Germantown, TN 38138. EOE.

PROJECT MANAGER I OR II ENGINEERING

GALLATIN. The city of Gallatin's engineering division is accepting applications for a Project Manager I or II position. The person hired will be performing professional engineering-related duties for Gallatin. Project Manager I requires a bachelor's degree in civil engineering and the successful completion of the Engineer in Training examination. Salary: 44,453+ DOQ. Project Manager requires a bachelor's degree in civil engineering and PE license. Salary: \$46,862+ DOQ. Send completed application, available at www.gallatin-tn.gov, resume, and cover letter with three reference and detailed salary requirements to: Personnel Office, City of Gallatin, 132 W. Main Street, Room 101, Gallatin, TN 37066. Phone: 615-452-5400; Fax: 615-451-5918. M/F/D/V EOE.

SENIOR PLANNER

COOKEVILLE. The city of Cookeville is seeking qualified applicants for a senior planner who will be responsible for providing staff support to planning commission, board of zoning appeals, and historic zoning commission along with reviewing subdivision plats and site plans for compliance with applicable city codes. Other duties include assisting director in development of comprehensive long range plans, collecting data, completing research, keeping records and making reports, attending meetings of the city council, planning commission, board of appeals and historic zoning commission when assigned by the director. Preparing maps and other materials for presentation at meetings and performing other duties as assigned are part of the job description. Salary: beginning at \$38,204. Send application and resume to: HR Department, City of Cookeville, P.O. Box 998, Cookeville, TN 38503-0998. E-mail: jobs@cookeville-tn.org. Deadline: Oct. 6. EOE.

Higher Ed civil rights lawsuit ends after 38 years

BY GAEL STAHL
Editor

Gov. Phil Bredesen, representing the state, and Rita Sanders Geier along with Nashville attorney George Barrett, representing the plaintiffs, have filed a motion this month for dismissal of an historic 38-year civil rights suit.

In 1968, Geier was a 23-year old black law student and college instructor when she sued the state for racial segregation in Tennessee's higher education system. At the time, she was Barrett's law clerk.

As a result of the successful suit, the state's colleges are much more integrated, the former University of Tennessee at downtown Nashville became a part of Tennessee State University in 1979, and Tennessee spent \$77 million over four decades to increase equality and diversity at state colleges and universities.

The downtown campus in Nashville was named after former state Sen. Avon Williams, a famous civil rights lawyer in Nashville who joined Barrett in arguing the case over the years.



From left to right, George Barrett, attorney; Rita Sanders Geier, lead plaintiff; Gov. Phil Bredesen; and Rev. James Thomas

Geier is a Vanderbilt Law graduate and former instructor at TSU.

The governor gave credit to his predecessor, Gov. Don Sundquist, for laying the ground work to bringing the protracted and too-long divi-

sive suit to a settlement agreeable to all parties.

Bredesen praised Geier's action as a call to conscience for the entire state and said the state would continue funding scholarships for minorities.

STATE BRIEFS

BY TISH WOMACK
TML Research Analyst

Gov. Phil Bredesen, Adjutant General Gus Hargett and TEMA Director James Bassham opened Tennessee Emergency Management Agency's newly renovated state-of-the-art State Emergency Operations Center declaring it capable of handling any disasters that Tennessee might face with its state-of-the-art communications system greatly expanding the ability of TEMA to coordinate the state's response during an emergency. The center is located inside the National Guard State Headquarters on Sidco Drive in Nashville.

Tennessee's unemployment rate reached 5.9 percent in July, the highest it's been since 2003, according to the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

The Tennessee Department of Transportation is reviving the Local Sign Grant Program aimed at helping communities with road safety signs. Counties with less than 30,000 population and cities with less than 5,000 are eligible for the grants that were discontinued late last year due to funding issues.

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce and Insurance, Tennessee's exports have grown at twice the U.S. rate with more than

\$19.1 billion in goods and services having been exported by more than 5,000 Tennessee companies.

The Tennessee Department of Human Services released \$40.8 million in federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funds to 19 community services agencies across the state. The funds are to be used for energy assistance year-round to qualified families who have signed up with their local programs. Priority is given to individuals with disabilities, the elderly and low income families with children under age 6. Eligible clients may receive up to two payments a year.

The Tennessee Arts Commission announced 850 grants to local organizations totaling more than \$5.8 million for FY 2007. More information on the lengthy list of grants is

available at www.arts.state.tn.us.

Tennessee Rehabilitation Center in Smyrna graduated 75 students from its program on Aug. 25. The Center, part of the state Department of Human Services and one of nine in the nation, trains men and women with significant disabilities in programs like building maintenance, business education training, food service, custodial training, and warehouse training that enable them to better their lives.

An anti-tobacco telephone hotline for the state, 1-800-QUIT-NOW, has been launched, geared to aiding those who wish to quit smoking and chewing tobacco. The hotline connects callers with a "quit coach" and offers free access to relapse prevention techniques. Tennessee is among the last states to establish a tobacco hotline.

Telecom and tax reform affect local governments

TELECOM from Page 1 changes its tax rates based on the industry's figures alone, the revenue loss to state and local governments would be significant," said Marilyn Praisner, Montgomery County (MD) council member and a member of the National Association of Counties Board of Directors and Chair of NACo's Telecommunications Steering Committee.

The coalition's study reveals that the estimated annual loss to state and local governments would be approximately \$8 billion every year. Eighty-one percent of all cities with populations more than 50,000 would see their tax revenues decline. As a result, they would either be forced to cut services to local residents or raise taxes.

Among other glaring flaws, the COST Study omits essential information and improperly lumps taxes together with various kinds of user fees, including right-of-way fees - which pay for the industry's use of public streets and sidewalks. The COST Study also ignores other special benefits the telecom industry receives under state and local law that other businesses do not. The Coalition believes that it would be foolhardy to enact federal laws based upon the weak and incomplete

information in the COST Study.

"We stand for fairness for all industries involved in providing telecommunications services. There should be no favoritism to any one competitor so that we can have TRUE competition," said Arvada (CO) Mayor Ken Fellman, former head of NLC's Information Technology and Communications Committee and a member of NATOA's Board of Directors. "In addition, we are elected to be the watchdogs for our communities and have a responsibility to ensure that our local economic futures are secure. Any restriction on local authority to levy fees or taxes will have serious and negative long-term impacts."

The coalition maintains that local governments are open to simplifying telecom taxes for the 21st century. Local governments do not, however, accept the notion that 'reform' should be a disguise for federal preemption of state and local government taxing authority.

The coalition also believes that the telecom industry's plea for federally mandated tax favoritism opens the door to other industries asking Congress for similar special exemptions from state and local tax authority, and poses a dire threat to state and local tax revenues.

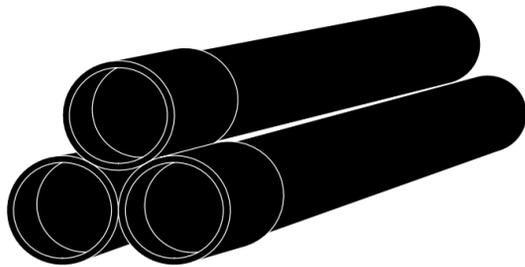
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Ron Littlefield, as planner, facilitated much of Chattanooga's revival

Now, as mayor, he sets the city's goals even higher

BY GAEL STAHL
Editor

Chattanooga Mayor Ron Littlefield, born in LaGrange, Ga., in 1946, has lived practically his whole life in or near Chattanooga. When he was eight, his father, a carpet-dyer, moved the family to LaFayette, Ga., on the southern outskirts of Chattanooga. There he attended the same elementary school as his future wife, Lanis Johnson and he dated in high school, and both went to Auburn University where they married during Ron's senior year in August 1967. After graduation, the Littlefields moved to Chattanooga and still live in the Brainerd area home they moved into in 1968.

Littlefield's childhood ambition to be an imaginative inventor had led him to major in engineering in college, but he found that field not imaginative enough, so he switched to commercial art. At the time, it seemed unfortunate that his draftsmanship skills couldn't keep up with his wild imagination. Fortunately for his future work, that reality nudged him into deciding to graduate with a degree in business with the aim of going into city planning where he could meld imagination, an engineering mindset, and a business background into a public service career.

The résumé of Littlefield's professional life as planner, council member, and consultant since 1969 overflows with a series of urban/regional projects that involved imagination and change. The same can be said of his political career as an elected official. His solid work habits and prudent ability to see far ahead resulted in being chosen early on to lead his city's more adventure-some projects and initiatives.

For 37 years, Littlefield has worked with regional planning commissions in southeast Tennessee. In the 1970s he was named the senior planner, then director, of the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission. He was Chattanooga's first economic development coordinator and with Partners for Economic Progress (PEP) in 1981 initiated the annual ritual of leadership visits to dynamic cities such as Indianapolis, Baltimore and Charlotte that inspired major Chattanooga projects and translated into the city's transformation.

In 1984, he was an incorporator and initial executive director of Chattanooga Venture where he led the successful Vision 2000 planning program credited with shaping the community's grand scale ideas for riverfront and downtown redevelopment. The results put Chattanooga on the national map. It's been on a roll ever since.

After Vision 2000, he staged an uphill campaign to be elected Chattanooga Commissioner of Public Works in 1987. He won against a 12-year incumbent with energetic help from young reformers and old-guard volunteers alike who worked as a team to initiate change in Chattanooga. As commissioner, Littlefield had opportunities to implement plans for restoration of the Walnut Street Bridge and nearby construction of streets, sewers and other infrastructure associated with the Tennessee Aquarium and related riverfront and downtown projects.

He also supported the federal court-mandated change of Chattanooga's 78-year form of commission government from an at-large system of representation to single member districts in 1990. He ran for the council seat in his district, and after his election, was elected by the new Chattanooga City Council to serve as its first chairman to help lead the city through a successful transition to a council-mayor form of government.

After serving his council term, Littlefield ran unsuccessfully for mayor in 1993 and for several years pursued a variety of successful enterprises in several states, including a stint as acting director of Planning and Development for Walker County, Ga., from 1997-2000. He played a role in helping the new public officials there face transitional problems and issues following upon an administration that had been in office for 32 years.

In 1998, Chattanooga Mayor Jon Kinsey recruited him to assist with proposals for a high-speed passenger rail connection between Chattanooga and Atlanta. Littlefield was re-elected to the Chattanooga City Council in April



Ron Littlefield

2001 and again served as its chairman during the 2002-2003 term. He ran for mayor in 2005 and won in April by beating a strong opponent who had finished first in the March 1 general election. He won the runoff with 54 percent of the vote in a race expected to be neck and neck.

Littlefield was sworn into office as Chattanooga's 57th mayor on April 18, 2005. He brought to that office years of experience in city government and urban planning. He was also a licensed realtor specializing in commercial and industrial development in Tennessee and Georgia (from 2000 to 2002), and had been an instructor at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga teaching a summer postgraduate course on metropolitan politics and policies.

As mayor of one of the four largest cities in the state, Littlefield is a Tennessee Municipal League Board Director.

Ron and Lanis Littlefield have two sons. Derek, the oldest, born in December 1968, is an advertising writer in Birmingham. Zack, born in April 1974, is a drummer and percussionist and residential remodeling contractor. He is currently working in a Boulder, Colo., public relations firm. Neither son followed their "War Eagle" parents to Auburn. Both graduated from the University of Alabama, thus setting up an "Iron Bowl" football rivalry every autumn. Former real estate agent Lanis retired her license and is now a full-time master gardener.

TT&C: Your three decades of public-involved projects involved imagination, research, protracted hearings and much negotiation. One would get the idea you didn't waste a lot of time stopping to smell the roses. Yet, as mayor while applying your business background and formal approach to municipal governance, you've let your imaginative, arty, and fun side flourish more, too?

RL: There's nothing wrong in staying in touch with the poetry and human side of urban life. The people seem to like to see their mayor suggest new ideas to add a little richness to their daily life. At the beginning of every month since May, for example, I've invited citizen cyclists and all city employees to "Bike2Work" on the first Friday of the month. Bikers are encouraged to meet at Coolidge Park, Tennessee Riverpark or the Incline Railway and gather at downtown Miller Park for a free breakfast and prizes. We try to give Casual Friday a new start in Chattanooga, start the day getting some fresh air, see the city in a different way, and enjoy each other's company.

TT&C: I know that after this interview you are off to participate in a Habitat for Humanity project?

RL: Yes. I've promoted affordable housing for decades. It's good to practice what you preach once in awhile. At the same time, I was happy, on the second Saturday of April this year, to welcome a group of semi-serious scholars from six nearby states to a Sherlock Holmes convention at historic Sheraton

nooga back in the 1980s. He had a concept and an ability to build families out of poverty by giving them access to home ownership. We put CNE's focus on home ownership and to provide gap financing and counseling to get people into homes of their own so they could build equity. The idea is not for them to merely experience the pride of home ownership but to build an equity fund that they could use as a financial means to educate their children and create a retirement for themselves like everybody else. It's worked for them. It's like Habitat Humanity, but one step above that.

TT&C: What motivated your return to Chattanooga government in 2001?

RL: When the person who had taken my seat on the city council decided to run for mayor, people in the district encouraged me to run again even though I had no serious intention of getting back into politics at the time. I was elected and subsequently recruited by the council to serve as vice chairman of the council the first year I was back. In 2002, I became council chairman again, and when Bob Corker decided not to run for re-election as mayor in 2005 so he could devote his time to running for the US Senate, it just seemed the planets were in alignment for me to run for mayor again. I was successful and sworn into office April 18, 2005.

TT&C: What goals did you set to accomplish as mayor?

RL: My focus has been to improve the job picture in Chattanooga and carry forward the emphasis on neighborhoods. We've done that, and have given attention to economic development, education, environment, and technology issues.

TT&C: Is it too early to ask if any improvements have been registered?

RL: Last year, we had our first net gain in manufacturing jobs in decades after the city had been losing those jobs for years. It wasn't big, but we have been losing net jobs for a long time. We seem to have turned the corner on that.

I have been spending a lot of time with the Chattanooga Area Chamber of Commerce and with the county mayor presenting the great possibilities we have in Chattanooga. We have been promoting our Enterprise South Industrial Park in particular. The site of the former U.S. Army Ammunition Plant Reservation has been converted into perhaps the finest industrial park in southeastern United States.

TT&C: What makes Enterprise South Industrial park so attractive?

RL: The site is served by two interstate interchanges, including a new \$30 million interchange that is nearly completed. Two competing railroads, the CSX and Norfolk Southern, have service to the site. We presently have 1,600 acres ready in what we call the mega site and another 1,400 acres that will be coming on line in about 12 months making roughly 3,000 acres available. There are also a number of other smaller sites scattered throughout the entire complex.

Two buffer areas of roughly 3,000 acres in total acreage when combined make it one of the largest urban city parks in all of Tennessee. That natural green space park will serve not only to buffer the industrial site but also serve the community at large for recreational enjoyment.

TT&C: You were a special consultant to the city of Chattanooga for the Chattanooga-Atlanta high speed train in 1999. Has that been a victim of the economy of the last five years, or is it still breathing?

RL: The Chattanooga-Atlanta MagLev High Speed Rail Proposal idea is still alive and well. We're presently pursuing it and have used \$5 million plus in federal funds in engineering and environmental work on that.

TT&C: When you were first elected to municipal office in 1990, the aquarium was just coming out of the ground, and you were already envisioning things to make any mayor proud. With Chattanooga zooming forward in the intervening 16 years, it's hard to think of any city that came so far so fast, isn't it?

RL: I believe – this is not just hype – we are the most transformed city in America. In 1969, we were recognized ignominiously on the national news by Walter Cronkite as the most polluted city in America. We've certainly cleaned up our act on that score, and we've become a city that everyone is proud to call their home. I'm proud to travel around the country and find people are familiar with Chattanooga. Its success story has become almost legendary. I feel blessed just to be a part of it. Just a part. The effort involved dozens of leaders and hundreds and thousands of participating citizens. One of the things that really got the ball rolling was back in the 1980s when Chattanooga reached out to its citizens, and citizens responded. They helped put plans into action [via the Chattanooga Venture and the Vision 2000 planning program].

TT&C: City officials attending the TML Annual Conference in Chattanooga in 2004 enthusiastically acclaimed your new conference center as being one of the best in the state. Has it helped attract more conventions?

RL: We've always been a tourist city and the new Chattanooga-Hamilton County Convention and Trade Center has added to our ability to attract major meetings. Also, Chattanooga is fortunate to benefit from the fact that Atlanta has become kind of a crowded and expensive place to be. Because we have a first-class convention center and so much to offer and so much happening down on the riverfront now, we have meetings being held here all the time that might have been held in Atlanta two years ago. Just think. That area was really just a slum 25 years ago.

TT&C: Are there any other issues your administration is focusing on that we didn't ask about?

RL: We're trying to do something innovative and effective for the homeless situation, which is a common problem in any city. We believe Chattanooga can set a standard and accomplish things where other cities, including ours, have fallen short.

We have a unique coordination of agencies. The city purchased the former Farmer's Market, a 9-plus acre site to consolidate and focus our attention on to ultimately help the homeless. The real issue is helping the homeless – helping those that have no means to help themselves.

I believe the hallmark of my administration will be to find ways to enhance educational opportunities by promoting creative and entrepreneurial activity both in our schools and in our recreation centers.



Chattanooga Mayor Ron Littlefield participated in a Habitat for Humanity construction last month.