

Former Lt. Governor Wilder will not run for re-election

BY CAROLE GRAVES
TML Communications Director

"I love this state and this senate. It is more a part of me than anything else I've known," said Sen. John Wilder as he announced his decision not to seek re-election.

"It is a hard thing for me to say I am not running. I've been running all my life. I feel the time I have spent serving has been worth the difference it has made. If my life has made any difference, it has been as State senator.... Service to government is among one of the most honorable things one can do."

Wilder, 86, has served 44 years in the Senate with 36 of them as Lt. Governor and speaker.

A Democrat who represents West Tennessee's rural Fayette County was first elected to serve in the Senate in 1959-1961. After a six-year break, he resumed his seat in 1967 and was elected as speaker in 1971 - a position he held until last year when he was defeated by Sen. Ron Ramsey.

Wilder is the longest-serving current member of the Tennessee General Assembly, and up until last year, was the longest serving presiding officer of any state legislative body in America.

In his remarks on the Senate floor, Wilder named roads, healthcare and education as three



Wilder

areas of focus during his tenure. "We have some of the best roads in the nation," he said. "We did it because the Senate was the Senate."

Recognized nationally for his bipartisan leadership, Wilder used what could be one of his final speeches on the Senate floor to remind his colleagues to be statesmen.

"I want to encourage those of you who will stay here and those who will newly be elected to be good state senators, to be statesmen. To do what is good and right for this state and leave partisan politics out of it. It is destructive, not constructive. Each district in this great state needs men and women who will vote their conscience and not what some partisan politician tells them to. The good of our state depends on it."

Rinks joins slate not seeking another term

BY CAROLE GRAVES

April 3 marked the qualifying deadline for the 2008 state elections and along with it came a host of announcements from legislators who have chosen not to run for another term.

The most recent announcement came from Rep. Randy Rinks, House Democratic Caucus chair, bringing the total number to 12 lawmakers who have announced they will not seek re-election next fall.

Rinks, 54, was first elected to the House in 1990 and has served as the Caucus chair for 12 years. A former mayor of Savannah, Rinks' district covers Hardin, McNairy and part of Decatur county.

As House Majority Caucus chair and a member of some of the most significant House committees, Rinks has been responsible for gathering the votes needed to pass bills or to keep legislation from derailing. He also serves as chair of the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations



Randy Rinks

(TACIR).

"It has been an honor to serve the people of Tennessee during these critical times in our state's history," Rinks said in a statement. "I am forever grateful to the citizens of District 71 for giving me the opportunity to serve and be a part of such an amazing body of government."

Rinks is said to be interested in running for secretary of state - a position held for the past 16 years by

See **ELECTION** on Page 6

TMBF has money available for qualified city projects

In view of the problems that a number of Tennessee cities have been experiencing in the issuance or remarketing of bonds, TMBF has recently mailed the following letter to all TML members:

As you may be aware, several Tennessee local governmental entities have recently been unable to issue or remarket their bonds, due to credit problems experienced by certain municipal bond insurers. We do not know how long these problems may persist, but if you need funds in the immediate future, we may be able to help.

On Feb. 14, the Clarksville Public Building Authority issued \$200 million in bonds to provide funds for the city and county loan programs administered by The Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund. Although approximately \$60 million of the proceeds of this bond issue have already been loaned, we still have approximately \$140 million available to immediately fund qualified projects for Tennessee cities and counties.

The loan programs administered by the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund have been in existence

since 1985. Since that time, more than \$2.2 billion has been loaned to Tennessee cities and counties from these programs. Historically the interest rates on our loan program have been very favorable. For instance, since its inception in August 2001, the base rate on our daily rate program has averaged 2.21 percent. For a typical borrower, this translates into a total all end interest rate of only 2.64 percent. Also our program has been relatively unaffected by the recent financial turmoil. Over the last month the average daily interest rate on the bonds issued to fund the programs which we administer has been only 2.29 percent.

Again, if you need funds immediately for any project in your city or county, please let us know by contacting me or any of our staff listed below at 615-255-1561:

- Bones Seivers, President/CEO
- Wade Morrell
Executive Vice President
- Linda Mooningham
Marketing Director
- Joe Muscatello
Marketing Representative
- Steve Walker
Marketing Representative

Compromise reached on cable bill

BY CAROLE GRAVES

After spending more than three months hammering out details, Speaker Jimmy Naifeh and a host of legislators unveiled a compromise on the Cable Franchising bill during a press conference held last week in Nashville.

"It's not a silver bullet for rising media prices, nor will Tennesseans see immediate impact in their next cable bill," said Naifeh. "But what this bill does is create a climate that levels the playing field for companies wanting to provide the best services in Tennessee for television and Internet to the people in Tennessee. The bill is designed to balance a number of competing interests with the outcome to benefit the consumer. That is what this group has been working so hard to accomplish."

Tennessee's cities and towns opposed last year's bill because it would have been a win for big corporations, See **CABLE** on Page 6

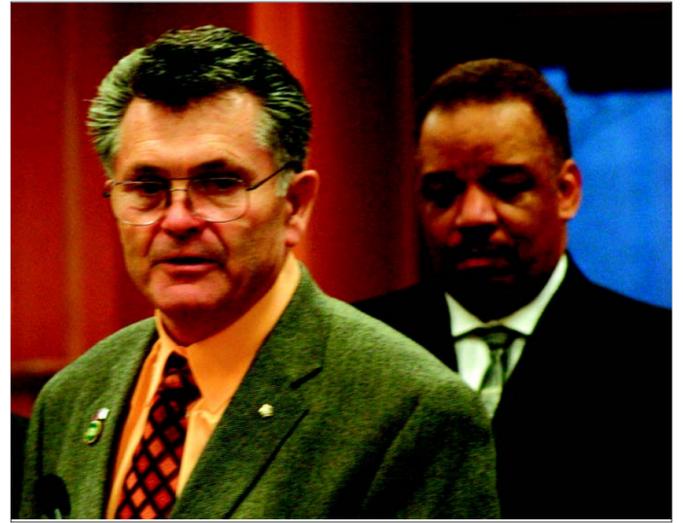


Photo By Victoria South

Chairmen Charles Curtiss and Ulysses Jones were instrumental in negotiating a compromise on the cable bill that helps provide Tennesseans with a choice in their cable provider without harming Tennessee communities.

TN Safety Coalition, laws to protect citizens

BY VICTORIA SOUTH
TML Communications Coordinator

The greatest portion of society isn't violent, according to Randy Nichols, Knox County District Attorney and Tennessee Public Safety Coalition Chairman. It's less than seven tenths of the population that keep this group of sheriffs, police chiefs and district attorneys general awake at night contemplating legislation that would provide law enforcement the legal teeth needed to protect the state's citizens.

Lobbying seven proposals before the state legislature, the group's 2008 legislative package revisits several items from last year's agenda, those against violent gun crime; longer prison terms for convicted offenders possessing guns or using them in the commission of a crime;



Tennessee is second highest in the nation among states with high rates of violent crime.

eliminating parole for individuals convicted of aggravated burglary; enhancing last year's Crooks with Guns law by adding second degree murder, aggravated robbery, rape and burglary to the list of felonies; and targeting street terrorism by

raising the classification of violent crimes committed by two or more individuals acting together.

The coalition also backs legislation curbing copper and other precious metal thefts, which was recently signed into law, and strengthening Tennessee's existing DUI laws, as part of Gov. Bredesen's initiative against drunken driving, while continuing its quest to add 32 more district attorneys across the state.

Grim statistics place Tennessee second highest in the nation among states with high rates of violent crime, falling short behind South Carolina only by a small margin.

"Tennessee is vying to be number one," Nichols said. "Everyone is against violent crime, and from the perspective of economic growth and

See **SAFETY** on Page 3

Rescinded TDOT funds spotlights cap on Tennessee's toll projects

BY VICTORIA SOUTH

After a House vote to remove limits on the number of toll roads or bridges that could be built in Tennessee, the Senate sponsor, Sen. Tommy Kilby, has withdrawn the bill for consideration this year.

The House approved the companion measure as a means to facilitate future infrastructure projects and cushion a funding shortfall after the United States Department of Transportation rescinded \$66.3 million in federal funds from the Tennessee Department of Transportation's (TDOT) federal allocation of funds for the fiscal year 2008.

"Nearly 50 percent of the department's budget comes from the federal government, so a reduction in these revenues significantly impacts the resources available to TDOT," said TDOT Commissioner Gerald Nicely.

"This loss of funds, coupled with the massive inflation in the cost of construction materials, further reduces our ability to address the trans-



A loss of federal funding, coupled with massive inflationary costs of construction materials, further reduces TDOT's ability to address the transportation needs of the state.

portation needs of the state."

The federal government has cut nearly a quarter-billion dollars from Tennessee's anticipated road money since 2005.

The Tennessee Tollway Act gained momentum shortly after TDOT placed an earlier freeze on new projects due to impending fed-

See **TDOT** on Page 6

Memphis hosts Annual Conference

Make plans to attend the TML's 69th Annual Conference held at the Cook Convention Center in Memphis, slated for June 22-24.

The conference will kick off Sunday, June 22, with a festive jazz brunch in the exhibit hall and conclude on Tuesday, June 24, with the annual awards breakfast.

Workshop topics will focus on a variety of issues, including:

- changes in the Open Meetings / Open Records laws;
- a panel presentation that focuses on annexations, court rulings, and pending cases;
- disaster training and lessons learned in Jackson;
- how to overcome NIMBY opposition (Not In My Back Yard) on public projects;
- leadership training and working to reflect your city's values;
- media training and techniques for ensuring a good interview;
- planning for affordable housing

Save the Date!
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Tennessee Municipal League
69th Annual Conference

projects through public/private partnerships; and

- Municipal Urban Forestry and becoming a Tree City USA. Also included in the lineup are

two member-participation workshops that will focus on small city issues and Tier 1 concerns. In addition, the Tennessee Chapter of the

See **CONFERENCE** on Page 8

NEWS ACROSS TENNESSEE



BY TML STAFF REPORTS

BARTLETT

The Allstate Foundation presented the city with an \$11,500 check in March, which will be used to purchase six defibrillators to be placed in Bartlett's social, educational, athletic and shelter facilities. The Allstate Foundation is an independent, charitable organization made possible by subsidiaries of The Allstate Corporation.

BRISTOL

Battery maker Exide Technologies has asked permission to increase air pollution from its Bristol plant. The Tennessee Division of Air Pollution is reviewing the request and taking public comments through April 20. The company's plans to modify a dust collector and filter system will increase airborne emissions, including lead, by about 3.5 tons a year. The company wants to increase its total facility emissions from 60 tons per year to 65 tons. State officials say that is well below the legal limit of 100 tons per year.

CHATTANOOGA

This fall, the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga will offer the state's only four-year degree in construction management. The degree is a bachelor's of science in engineering technology management with a concentration in construction management. The major and related courses are in the areas of engineering, engineering management, accounting, management, English and mathematics.

CLARKSVILLE

A rising number of Fort Campbell soldiers and retirees have helped make Clarksville the nation's 10th-fastest-growing metropolitan area. U.S. Census figures show the Clarksville metropolitan area grew at a rate of 3.7 percent between July 1, 2006, and the same time in 2007. Regional planning officials said Fort Campbell is the major contributor to the growth, bringing new recruits and retired soldiers to the area. According to the Census Bureau, the four counties in Tennessee and Kentucky that surround Fort Campbell grew at an average of nearly 4 percent from 2006 to 2007.

COLLEGE DALE

The airport is about to grow again, coming a long way since its early days as a landing strip in a cow pasture. The runway will be extended 300 feet, a relocation of McDonald Road, and a safety zone added at the end of the runway. The city will pay 10 percent of the \$1 million while a grant from the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Aeronautics Division will provide the remaining 90 percent.

COLUMBIA

The Columbia Police Department recently received national accreditation from The Commission on Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). The accreditation program provides law enforcement agencies an opportunity to voluntarily demonstrate that they meet an established set of professional standards.

DYERSBURG

Dyersburg High School head football coach James Counce has introduced a \$2.2 million plan to renovate the 40-year-old J.C. Sawyers Stadium and lure a national college championship to the field. The stadium renovation would set Dyersburg on the path to host a National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics game, which in turn would boost the city's stature and inject revenue into the local economy. Representatives said the group will formally ask the city to help with the project by affirming a 20-year municipal bond at the city board's April 21 meeting. The annual payment, estimated at \$135,000 over the 20-year period, will be paid through using the new stadium as an entertainment venue for concerts ranging from top Christian acts to national flag-football championships.

ESTILL SPRINGS

U.S. Air Force officials announced that the land lease to operate Morris Ferry Dock on Woods Reservoir has been extended until Sept. 30 but won't be renewed or re-competed after that date. Air Force officials say it was too expensive to manage the lease and that proposals to modernize the dock would require a long-term commitment that wouldn't be the best choice. Woods Reservoir, located primarily in Franklin County, was created to serve Arnold Engineering Development Center, but has been available for recreational use.

FAYETTEVILLE

Goodman Company, the second-largest domestic unit manufacturer of heating, ventilation and air conditioning products for residential and light commercial use, has announced an expansion of its Fayetteville plant. The expansion will add 300 new jobs to the area and represents a \$7.2 million capital investment by one of the nation's largest manufacturers of heating, ventilation and air conditioning products for residential and light commercial use. The plant is expanding its production line to include HVAC equipment for the light commercial market and will manufacture units with a cooling capacity of three tons to 25 tons.

JACKSON

Scholarship America has set up a \$270,000 emergency financial aid fund for Union University students with financial need to help them stay in school after they lost possessions and their dorm rooms in the Feb. 5 tornado. The fund comes from grant dollars from the Lumina Foundation for Education. The program is available to students who meet eligibility requirements for federal Pell Grants. Students and families seeking help may contact Union University's Office of Student Financial Planning. Scholarship America has managed scholarship and financial aid funds to help students maintain their post-secondary educations in the wake of major disasters including the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

KINGSPORT

The city of Kingsport is planning to build two new fire stations within the

next year, with plans for a third one on the horizon. The first new fire station will be nearly 7,000 square feet — the second-largest station in the city, complete with three bays, a new fire engine, exercise room, police substation and HazMat team. At a cost of \$2 million, money was allocated in the 2008 fiscal year budget. The second new fire station will feature a three-bay station with an engine truck and eventually a ladder truck. Cost for the station and equipment is estimated to be \$1.8 million. Funding has been proposed through a new five-year capital improvement plan. As for the third fire station, that project is still a couple of years away from being implemented.

MEMPHIS

The University of Memphis has received a \$1 million enhancement grant from TDOT that could be used toward the construction of the first of two proposed pedestrian tunnels underneath the Norfolk Southern Railroad tracks. Tunnels under the tracks, like overpasses over the tracks, have been discussed for years. The TDOT grant, which requires 20 percent in matching funds from the university, stipulates that the school move to the construction document development phase of the project during the calendar year.

NASHVILLE

Every Metro employee who deals with sensitive data will now go through special information security training. Nashville Mayor Karl Dean signed an executive order mandating Metro employees, contractors, temps and interns who deal with hard copy or electronic data go through the program. Dean's executive order also establishes an information security advisory board whose voting members will be appointed by the mayor but made up of industry experts.

OAKRIDGE

As part of an experiment, Oak Ridge National Laboratory is bringing back fish species that used to live there, stripetail and snubnose darters, rock bass, striped shiners, bluntnose minnows and northern hog suckers. White Oak Creek winds along the industrial backside of the ORNL campus, passing through the lab's outlying acreage once used for nuclear-waste disposal landfills.

RUTHERFORD/ WILLIAMSON COUNTIES

Rutherford and Williamson counties ranked first and second, respectively, for highest percentage of growth from 2006-07, each posting about 4.5 percent gains. The popularity is no fluke — U.S. Census Bureau figures also show the same trend since 2000. Rutherford County's 2007 population stands at 241,462, a 25.73 percent increase from 2000. Williamson County's population jumped 24.82 percent to 166,128 during the same period of time. Newcomers to Nashville's suburbs cite quick trips to the city, cheaper housing than coastal areas, a better climate than in northern states and overall better quality of life as primary reasons for moving here.

SMYRNA

Nissan has cut its workweek to four days from five, with nine-hour shifts instead of the current eight, to further help "balance inventories" amid a slowdown in U.S. car sales. The change will last two months.



PEOPLE



BY TML STAFF REPORTS

Mayor Willie Herenton, just beginning his fifth term in office, announced plans to pursue the position of schools superintendent, a position he held for 12 years before becoming the city's first black mayor in 1991. Herenton, 67, is in his 17th year in the post, serving longer than any other mayor. Should he not be offered a position by the Memphis school board, Herenton said he plans to fulfill his mayoral term. Herenton originally announced plans to resign in July in which City Council Chairman Scott McCormick would become mayor for 20 days, under the Memphis city charter. Afterward, the council would choose an interim mayor to serve until the next election, in November.



Herenton

Gov. Bredesen honored Assistant Chief **Mike Williams** of the Chattanooga Police Department with the Honorary Tennessee Award. Williams was recognized for his career achievements and dedication to law enforcement, having been in law enforcement for more than 25 years. Williams gained credibility as a trainer early in his career after developing the Chattanooga SWAT Team to a level that's received regional and national recognition while providing training to adjoining counties in other areas of law enforcement and investigation.



Williams

Knoxville Police Department Deputy Chief **Don Green** joined the University of Tennessee Law Enforcement Innovation Center (LEIC) as program manager of the National Forensic Science Institute April 1. Green has been with the KPD since 1979 and last served as division commander for the department's Criminal Investigative Division. At LEIC, Green will oversee the National Forensic Academy, a 10-week, hands-on training program for crime scene investigators.



Green

The town of Bell Buckle has hired **Bill Haywood** as judge. Haywood formerly served as Chapel Hill's municipal judge and city attorney for Lewisburg. Greg Perry of Manchester will become Bell Buckle's new city attorney.

Keith Curlin is the newest member of the South Fulton City Commission filling a vacancy created by the recent resignation of Commissioner William "R.K." Kane. Curlin, 48, has been employed with the Regional Health Department for 15 years.

Kim R. Helper of Franklin has been appointed as the district attorney general in the 21st Judicial District. The vacancy was created by the death of District Attorney General Ron L. Davis last month. Helper will serve as district attorney general until the office is permanently filled by the August 7 election.

Nashville attorney **Joe P. Binkley Jr.** has been appointed to the Davidson County Circuit Court, Division V, and **Russell Perkins** of Whites Creek, has been appointed to a position on the Davidson County Chancery Court, Part IV. Binkley will fill the vacancy created when Judge Walter C. Kurtz retired from the Circuit Court post in March to become a Senior Judge. Perkins' appointment fills the vacancy created by the appointment of Richard H. Dinkins to the Tennessee Court of Appeals in January.



Binkley



Perkins

The Elizabethton City Council voted unanimously to hire **Fred Ray Edens** of Johnson City to be the next city manager. Edens served in the Army for 15 years as an officer and noncommissioned officer in a wide variety of managerial assignments. He has no previous experience as a city manager but holds a master's degree in city management from East Tennessee State University. He also has worked six years with the state of Tennessee in the Department of Children's Services and the Department of Human Services.

Karen Camper replaces Gary Rowe in General Assembly

Karen D. Camper, a teacher and retired military officer, was elected by the Shelby County Commission to serve as state representative for District 87. Camper, 50, will be the interim representative for the district that includes Whitehaven and the Hickory Hill area. She replaces Gary Rowe, a Democrat, who died in February.

Rowe was first elected in 2005 to fill the House District 87 seat vacated by former representative Kathryn Bowers when she was elected to the state Senate. Rowe was re-elected to a full two-



Camper

year term in 2006. Camper said she intends to run for the seat in the November election.

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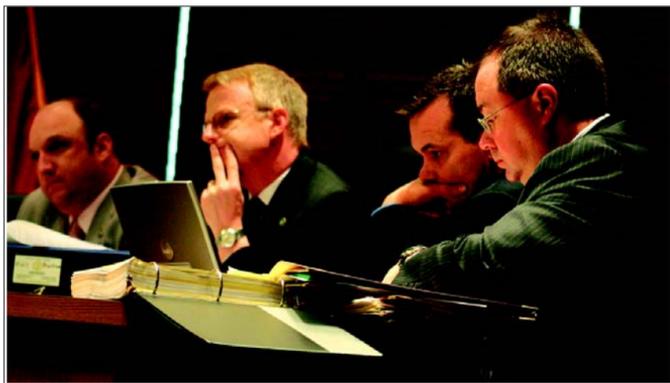
Safety Coalition presents legislative proposals designed to protect state's citizens from crime

SAFETY from Page 1
 impact; competition's tough. People don't want to locate in high crime areas; they'll just take their businesses somewhere else."

Among the group's concerns is the high rate of repeat offenders in Tennessee, with crime a way of life for some individuals. Recent statistics in Nashville indicate about a third of those convicted on charges of armed robbery three years ago have been arrested again. According to the district attorney's estimates, subjects incarcerated for armed robbery (aggravated robbery) would receive an 8-12 year sentence for the first offense pared down more than 30 percent through parole and other measures, returning the person to society within 2 years at the most.

"That's not sufficient," said Nichols. "Once a person has put a gun to a citizen's head over a purse, we've lost that person. They are no longer a functioning member of society."

"We need to think of the deterrent effect," Nichols continues.



The House considers The Administrative License Revocation Act of 2008 which provides for the immediate seizure of a drivers license of anyone driving under the influence or refusing to take a sobriety test.

of Commerce and Insurance by Oct. 1, facing criminal penalties if they do not.

A valid state or federal photo ID is required of those selling to dealers along with a thumbprint and dealer purchases of copper or catalytic converters may only be made by check.

Thieves recently stole two tons of copper wiring from a Nashville Electric substation off Allied Drive.

While the coalition concedes

broaden Tennessee's handgun carry laws, which include:

- Allowing handguns to be carried in restaurants and state parks;
- Authorizing faculty and staff at public schools and universities to carry firearms on campus; and
- Giving people voluntarily hospitalized in mental institutions the right to obtain handgun permits after seven years.

"We are in a defensive mode

"Crime in Tennessee is taking a toll on our communities. We understand the financial crisis the state is faced with this year, but many feel their communities are in a crisis with crime the victor and citizens the victim."
 — Kim Wallace, TACP president and Dover police chief

"People might think twice about committing a crime if they knew they'd get eight years minimum."

"Crime in Tennessee is taking a toll on our communities," said Kim Wallace, Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police president and Dover police chief.

"Do we wait until we are No. 1 in the nation for our violent crime or do work with our legislative bodies to pass legislation that will keep the criminals off the streets? The citizens deserve to live in a safe community. We understand the financial crisis the state is faced with this year, but many feel their communities are in a crisis with crime the victor and citizens the victim."

Nichols notes that crime perpetually crosses generational lines. "At one point, Shelby County Sheriff Mark Luttrell had a son, his father, and grandfather locked up at the same time," he said.

On the bright side, a bill to curb Tennessee's out of control metal theft epidemic, sponsored by Rep. Mike McDonald, was approved and signed by the Governor. The bill requires dealers buying scrap metal to register with the state Department

lawmakers are concerned about crime, their nemesis has always been lack of funding, this time in the form of an estimated \$74 million fiscal note.

"We take strong exception to that estimate," Nichols said, citing that to his knowledge, the figure was determined by calculating the number of people incarcerated annually at the cost of \$60 per day times the number of years before parole.

"Look at 2007," said Nichols. "There's only 142 people the law would have applied to. In Memphis, it was 400. We're talking 600-700 people, and that's not \$73 million."

According to Nichols, the coalition has an expert with the University of Memphis that has prepared a report proving the note to be an over-estimate.

"I'll never understand how they came up with that figure," agrees Norman Lewis, Montgomery County sheriff and coalition member.

"It's like some magic number they pulled out of the sky."

Lewis said he was relieved when the House subcommittee killed several proposals designed to

most of the time, having to head them off at the pass," Lewis said. "I like guns myself and I'm a hunter, but some of this legislation, if passed, would cause a great deal of trouble. It concerns me that we have legislators who want to allow mentally ill people to obtain gun permits. Every time you hear of these mass shootings, it's always by someone who is mentally disturbed."

Both men refer to the success of best practice states, primarily, New York. After eliminating parole for all violent offenders in the state, the number of arrests in New York decreased dramatically, saving millions of dollars in annual revenues by decreasing the flow of criminals into the state prisons and jails, according to a 2005 *City Journal* report. With recidivism on the decrease, the city closed correctional facilities in Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx along with portions of wings in other facilities.

Increasing budget cuts have ignited financial distress at law enforcement units all across the nation. Alarmed state and local officials, including 50 governors and 50 state attorneys general, members of the National Association of Counties and National Sheriff's Association are urging Congress to restore the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program to its original 2007 level after last year's crippling funding cuts reduced the amount from \$520 million to \$170 million, according to John Gramlich, Stalene.org.

"When the economy lags, crime often spikes," Arizona Gov. Janet Napolitano told the U.S. Senate Finance Committee, Gramlich notes. The law enforcement organizations warn that reduced funding usually precedes an increasing drug trafficking problem across the nation.

"We're not giving up on any of this," Nichols said. "The Constitution says to provide for the peace and safety of its citizens, and we need to appropriate an efficient amount of dollars to do it."

Reflections on crime bill proposals

BY CHIEF RONAL SERPAS
 Metro Nashville Chief of Police



Chief Serpas

It's 9 p.m. on a Friday night. You are walking to your car from a restaurant and a gunman suddenly jumps into your path, points his pistol at your head, and demands your wallet.

You provide police officers a good description of the fleeing suspect. He is arrested, eventually convicted, and sentenced to a prison term of eight years.

How much time do you think this gunman, who made your life flash before your eyes, is actually going to serve? Would you believe as little as 18 months? It's true.

Persons convicted of first time armed robbery in Tennessee achieve parole eligibility after serving just 30 percent of their sentences. Take into consideration time off granted by the prison system for good behavior and the sentence served is even less. Is 18 months time enough to rehabilitate a dangerous gunman who, absent a slight trigger pull, would have left you dead on a sidewalk?

I expect most of you are saying absolutely not. Tennessee's Public Safety Coalition, consisting of police chiefs, sheriffs and district attorneys general from across our great state, strongly agree with you and is asking the General Assembly to change the law this session.

Thanks to the support of Gov. Bredesen, Speaker Naifeh, Lt. Gov. Ramsey and lawmakers from across the state, the Crooks with Guns law was enacted last legislative session. It mandates that convicted repeat armed robbers serve 85 percent of their sentences before being considered for release. We, in the Public Safety Coalition, believe first time armed robbers are also deserving of that 85 percent designation.

During calendar year 2005, 142 persons were convicted of first offense armed robbery in Nashville. All but eight of them received sentences with 30 percent parole eligibility. Of those convicted of first offense armed robbery in 2005, one third has already been rearrested for many crimes, to include violent and dangerous offenses; 21 percent of those persons have already been convicted of another criminal offense.

My friends, it is only the beginning of 2008. To make our communities truly safe, we must address the issue of repeat vio-

lent offenders. This legislation does that in a very specific, laser-like approach.

By the time a criminal decides to put a gun to your head and rob you, he or she in all likelihood is not new to the justice system, in fact, many are quite experienced. The persons convicted of first time armed robbery in 2005 had already been arrested 1,406 times on 2,723 charges.

We need to lose the romantic notion that these people somehow went astray only once in their lifetimes. Armed robbery is one of the most serious violent offenses and is a crime that can put our families in real fear.

It is high time that armed robbers in our state know that if they do the crime, they can expect to serve 85 percent of their sentences behind the walls of a penitentiary. This change in sentencing will make you safer as well as deter would-be robbers.

A state analyst has estimated that the cost of making first time armed robbers serve 85 percent of their sentences would total \$74 million. We, in the Public Safety Coalition, believe that number is grossly inflated. We estimate the cost to be more like \$15 million. The legislative leadership has also expressed concern over the \$74 million estimate.

Yes, Tennessee is facing a tight financial year. Even so, the cost of strengthening the sentences for first time robbers is equal to a very, very small percentage of the state's total spending.

Our constitution says one of state government's primary responsibilities is public safety. We believe our proposal is reasonable and affordable.

Think of your safety and that of your family the next time you go to dinner on a Friday night. Can Tennessee afford not to make this change?



Photos by Victoria South

TN Highway Patrol officers await a House vote on the Administrative License Revocation Act. Under existing law, it can take 45 days or longer before a DUI suspect appears in court.

Tennessee law and no parole

Current Tennessee law says that persons convicted on the following charges must serve 100 percent of the sentence, or 85 percent along with credits for good behavior or jail-sponsored programs:

- First or second degree murder,
- Aggravated or especially aggravated kidnapping,
- Second or third offense of aggravated or especially aggravated robbery,
- Rape or aggravated rape of a child,
- Aggravated sexual battery,
- Aggravated arson,
- Aggravated child abuse,
- Sexual exploitation of a minor involving more than 100 images,
- Aggravated or especially aggravated sexual exploitation of a minor

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STATE BRIEFS



BY TML STAFF REPORTS

Home foreclosures in Tennessee increased 29 percent in February from a year ago, according to RealtyTrac Inc. The California company reported 4,959 foreclosure filings, default notices, auction sale notices or bank repossessions, in the state last month. That's up 29.28 percent from Feb. 2007 and 16.99 percent from January. Tennessee had one foreclosure filing for every 532 households last month, placing it 10th among the states in the rate of foreclosure. Nevada was first, with one filing for every 165 households. Nationwide, foreclosure filings increased 60 percent.

The Tennessee Housing Development Agency has received \$1.3 million to support the state's foreclosure prevention counseling efforts. The federal grant will enable foreclosure prevention counselors to advise the state's homeowners in danger of foreclosure. In the second quarter of 2008, THDA expects to see 2,769 adjustable-rate mortgages reset in Tennessee. THDA recently partnered with NeighborWorks America to certify 23 counseling agencies as foreclosure prevention counselors.

Since 2004, Tennessee has seen a 59 percent decrease in meth labs, according to the Office of National Drug Control Policy in Washington, D.C. The decline in labs statewide bolsters a national report stating that meth use continued to decline in nearly every part of the country last year. Overall, the number of workplace employees who tested positive for meth dropped 22 percent last year, according to the study by New Jersey-based Quest Diagnostics Inc., the nation's largest drug-testing company. The national decrease in meth use occurred as the government sharpened its crackdown on precursor chemicals used to make the illegal drug. Laws restricting the sale of cold medicines containing pseudoephedrine, a key ingredient used to cook meth, and efforts to thwart drug trafficking from Mexico have disrupted the market for meth. According to the TBI, the state's decrease in meth labs can be attributed, in part, to the passage of anti-meth laws in 2005.

A Middle Tennessee State University poll shows that the economy will be an important factor in how Tennesseans vote in the presidential election. The poll shows that 34 percent say the economy will be the most important issue to them when they decide on whom to vote for president. Nineteen percent choose the Iraq war and 16 percent cited health care. Another 10 percent choose illegal immigration, 8 percent terrorism, and 10 percent named some other issue including abortion, gay marriage and morality. The rest were undecided. Wealthier, more-educated Tennesseans see education as the state's top problem, but poorer, less educated Tennesseans see the economy, health care and crime as more problematic. "Life is good for those standing on the top rung of the state's economy," Robert Wyatt, director of communication research at MTSU, said in a released

statement. "On the lower rungs, though, the climate is turning rapidly grim for many, with issues like health care, financial hard times and crime posing more significant problems. Unlike most ladders, this one is shakiest and scariest at the bottom rather than the top."

The Tennessee House of Representatives unanimously passed a bill designed to prevent scalpers from jumping in front of others waiting to buy tickets online. It would also prevent scalpers from purchasing more tickets than vendor rules permit an individual to buy. The measure comes after frustrated parents saw tickets to last year's Hannah Montana tour, featuring teen star Miley Cyrus, snapped up within minutes by scalpers who later sold them for prices that reached more than \$2,500.

Tuberculosis cases in the state are up by more than 50 percent compared with this time last year, with black and Hispanic residents disproportionately affected. There were 27 confirmed cases of tuberculosis in Tennessee at this time last year compared with 41 this year, according to the state Health Department. Tuberculosis is a contagious disease caused by bacteria that can attack the lungs, kidney, spine and brain. Without proper treatment, it can be fatal. People who move to America from a country where there is a higher rate of TB are at greater risk of developing the disease. Of the 41 confirmed TB cases in Tennessee this year, 13 involve foreign-born people.

Tennessee's felon population is projected to grow by 12 percent over the next eleven years. The Oversight Committee on Corrections received that figure from the state Corrections Department. The department commissioned a research company to analyze growth between 2007 and 2019. In 2007, the felon population was 26,849. By 2019, it's projected to be 29,983, an increase of about 3,000 inmates. Projections are based on previous trends in admissions and length-of-stay data, among other things.

The rising price of crude oil has entrepreneurial oil companies drilling and prospecting the Tennessee mountains for black gold. A Canadian oil company in recent months dug a new \$8 million well in the Highpoint community of Morgan County near Wartburg and Oak Ridge. "This was a science project, but with oil at the price it is, oil

companies are willing to take a bigger risk," said Dwayne Tyrkalo, president of Montello Resources Ltd. USA and the leader of the company's Tennessee project. "Fifteen years ago, a barrel of oil brought \$12. Now it brings \$100," Tyrkalo said. Neither Tyrkalo nor Montello CEO Bill Cawker specified what the new well, one of the state's deepest at more than 9,500 feet, has yielded. But said the findings are promising.

Seven Tennessee hospitals are among this year's "100 Top Hospitals" according to Modern Healthcare magazine and several are located in the Nashville area. Maury Regional Hospital in Columbia and Centennial Medical Center in Nashville made the list in the magazine's large community hospitals category. Vanderbilt University Medical Center was listed in the major teaching hospitals category.

Tornado victims in Tennessee began receiving the mobile homes that have been tested for formaldehyde after concerns over unsafe levels. Tennessee has accepted 37 homes that tested at or below 40 parts per billion of formaldehyde. Average indoor air levels of formaldehyde measure between 10 and 20 parts per billion, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Because there are no federal standards set for formaldehyde exposure, state officials in Tennessee and elsewhere must determine the levels they find acceptable. Jeremy Heidt, a spokesman for Tennessee Emergency Management Agency, said the state decided to cap the formaldehyde level based on consultation with the state health and environmental departments, along with Gov. Phil Bredesen's office.

The State Funding Board is delaying its projections for state revenues until after the April 15 tax filing deadline, officials announced. The postponement makes plans championed by Senate Republicans to adjourn by the end of April unlikely. The Legislature uses the board's estimates to prepare the annual state spending plan. The General Assembly's only responsibility under the state constitution is to pass a balanced budget before adjourning. House Finance Chairman Craig Fitzhugh said the administration and lawmakers will work on an accelerated schedule to try to quickly wrap up the budget after the revenue estimates are released. Fitzhugh said May 9 could be a realistic ending date for the 105th General Assembly.

Texting, most wanted video assisting Oak Ridge Police

Citizens of Oak Ridge can now text a message to the Oak Ridge Police Department Emergency Communications Center.

Police anticipate receiving crime tips, witness observations, and other information from anonymous senders. This new capability is made possible by locating a cellular phone in the City's dispatch center that is dedicated to receive text messages. The text phone, 865-755-ORPD (6773), will be monitored by the public safety dispatchers.

"We know there are many 'texters' that possess information we would like to have and we are trying to provide an easy, any-

mous way for them to share with us," said Oak Ridge Police Chief David Beams.

"The Police Department is taking advantage of technology that is readily available to make it easy for the public to help enhance the safety and security of Oak Ridge."

Chief Beams is proud of another recent innovation; the "You Tube" most wanted video featuring suspects wanted by the Oak Ridge Police Department.

Thanks to this technology, several individuals have either been arrested or surrendered to authorities after being placed on "You Tube" and a local cable TV station.



NATIONAL BRIEFS

As states prepare for the predicted record-breaking turnout on Election Day this year, many are paying special attention to the elderly — the nation's most avid voters. **In the last presidential election, at least 79 percent of those 65 and older cast ballots**, compared to an overall voter turnout of 52 percent, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. And as the 70.3 million-strong baby boomers begin to retire, the number of senior voters will soar, putting new pressures on traditional voting systems. Of greatest concern are older voters, many of whom have some degree of mental impairment or who are under the care of a guardian or nursing staff.

In a move that has alarmed the toy industry, **lawmakers in Washington have overwhelmingly passed a bill that would set the toughest restrictions in the nation on the lead content of children's products.** The bill would reduce the allowable level of lead in toys and other goods to 90 parts per million — and possibly as low as 40 parts per million, the recommended limit of the American Academy of Pediatrics, and far below the current federal standard of 600 parts per million. It would also set tough limits on cadmium, a metal used in paints and plastics, and on plastic-softening chemicals called phthalates that have been linked to childhood developmental problems. Washington accounts for about 2 percent of total U.S. toy sales, which last year equaled \$23.5 billion in annually.

The Federal Education Department proposed new regulations to clarify when universities may release confidential student information and, after the Virginia Tech

shootings last year, reassure college officials that they will not face penalties for reporting fears about mentally ill students. The proposed regulations were prompted by concerns that colleges were overemphasizing the students' privacy rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act to not intercede with young people who appear troubled. Although the law has always had a health and safety exception that allows releasing confidential information in emergency situations, many college officials have been wary of invoking it, fearful of being found to violate the federal privacy law.

Driven by a painful mix of layoffs and rising food and fuel prices, **the number of Americans receiving food stamps is projected to reach 28 million** in the coming year, the highest level since the aid program began in the 1960s. The number of recipients, who must have near-poverty incomes to qualify for benefits averaging \$100 a month per family member, has fluctuated over the years along with economic conditions, eligibility rules, enlistment drives and natural disasters like Hurricane Katrina, which led to a spike in the South. But recent rises in many states appear to be resulting mainly from the economic slowdown, as well as inflation in prices of basic goods that leave more families feeling pinched.

U.S. Housing and Urban Development Secretary Alphonso Jackson announced he will be stepping down as the nation's chief housing officer. Jackson will conclude his government service as the nation's 13th HUD Secretary on April 18. Jackson oversaw HUD's \$37 billion budget and 9,200 employees.

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Presented by: **THE TML RISK MANAGEMENT POOL**

The TML Risk Management Pool is sponsoring regional workshops for its members in May and June titled "Maximizing Your Risk and Insurance Knowledge."

The workshops are designed to give TML Pool municipal government partners the opportunity to better understand TML Pool liability, property and workers compensation policies and coverage. The last review and substantive policy changes were implemented in 2002. Beginning with the July 1, 2008, policy year, there will be a few policy changes to be implemented that will be explained at the workshops.

The workshops will also focus on ways a strong risk management program in your entity will help reduce your risk exposures, improve safety for your employees and citizens, and help reduce your premiums. The Pool is offering a great incentive for every member to send representatives to a workshop. A 5 percent credit will be applied to each member's Errors or Omissions Liability coverage if you have representation in full attendance at any one of the workshops. Your entity's administrative staff that work in your risk and insurance program, especially risk managers, are encouraged to attend.

Time
The workshops will begin at 9:00 a.m. and conclude at 3:30 p.m. Lunch will be provided. There will be door prizes and, of course, the infamous *TML Pool Risk Game* will wrap up the workshop.

Dates and Locations
May 6 Knoxville
May 7 Kingsport
May 8 Chattanooga
May 13 Cookeville
May 22 Montgomery Bell
May 29 Henry Horton
June 10 Jackson
June 11 Bartlett

Training Facilities
Knoxville: Holiday Inn Select, Cedar Bluff, 304 Cedar Bluff Road, Knoxville, 37923 (865-693-1011) www.cedarbluff.hiselect.com
Kingsport: Meadowview Conference Center, 1901 Meadowview Parkway, Kingsport, 37660 (423-578-6600) www.meadowviewresort.com

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May 7 Bartlett
May 8 Jackson
May 13 Collegedale
May 14 Cookeville
May 21 Johnson City
May 27 Knoxville

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
Knoxville University of Tennessee Conference Center, 600 Henley Street

To register for this municipal administration program class, please visit the MTAS web site at www.mtas.tennessee.edu or contact Elaine Morrisey at Elaine.morrisey@tennessee.edu, or 865.974.0411.

For program information, contact Kurt Frederick, MTAS Training Consultant, at 615.253.6385 or e-mail kurt.frederick@tennessee.edu. Fees are \$25 per person per class for municipal employees and \$55 per person per class for all other participants.



TENNESSEE FESTIVALS

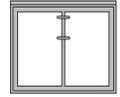
April 17: Ribfest & Wings
Gatlinburg. Enjoy live entertainment, children's activities, and hot wing eating contests throughout the event, 5a.m. to 8 p.m. A \$10 armband buys all you can eat hot wing samples. For more information, visit www.gatlinburg.com or call 800-568-4748.

April 17: Taste of Spring 2008
Nashville. Great wine, food and jazz benefiting Prevent Child Abuse TN. For more information, call 615-383-0994

April 25 - 26: Brimstock Bluegrass Festival
Moss, TN. Features a pig roast with Bluegrass music. For more information, call 931-258-4499

May 3-24: Tennessee Strawberry Festival 2008
Dayton. A10-day extravaganza, jam-packed with a myriad variety of events and activities sponsored by the Dayton Chamber of Commerce. For more information, contact the Dayton Chamber of Commerce at 423-775-0361 or visit www.tnstrawberryfestival.com.

COMING UP



April 23 -25:TCMA and KCCMA (Tennessee City Managers and Kentucky City Managers) Joint Spring Conference at the Embassy Suites, Airport in Nashville. For more information and to register, contact Margaret Norris at 865-974-9063.

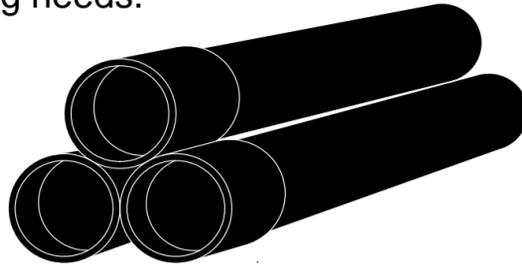
April 25: 2008 Child Abuse Prevention Conference. "Child Exploitation on the Internet" presented by the Children's Advocacy Center (CAC), from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the Tennessee Room of the UTC University Center. Key note speaker will be Gregg Sullivan, U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Tennessee. The conference is designed for child protective services workers, attorneys, law enforcement personnel, educators, parents and others interested in the healthy development of children. For more information and to register call the CAC at 423-266-6918 or email kdownby@cachc.org.

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ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER/ ADMINISTRATION
KINGSPORT. The city is seeking a highly qualified individual to serve as Assistant City Manager for Administration. The selected candidate will report to and assist the city manager in the day to day operations of the administrative departments (purchasing, human resources, fleet maintenance, facilities maintenance, and special projects) of the city, will act on behalf of the city manager in his/her absences and serve as one of nine highly motivated professional leadership team members. We expect the successful candidate to have a Bachelor's degree in Public or Business Administration or related field (a Master's degree is desired) and experience as a city manager or assistant city manager; possess a solid understanding and knowledge in areas of responsibility with a strong finance and budgeting background; be a team player, team builder, excellent communicator, effective decision maker and a strategic thinker with an ability to effect change. Salary will depend on qualifications & experience. Resume with a city application should be submitted no later than 5 p.m., April 25, 2008 to the City of Kingsport, Human Resources Department, 225 W. Center St., Kingsport, TN 37660. For more information on Kingsport and to access our application, visit us at www.ci.kingsport.tn.us. EOE

CITY ADMINISTRATOR
BOLIVAR. The city is seeking applications for the position of City Administrator. Salary is market competitive and negotiable. DOQ. Mayor and 8 member council with 110-115 full-time employees. Strongly prefer degree in public administration and demonstrated success as chief administrative officer in full-service municipal government. Require minimum bachelor's degree in business/public administration/political science/closely related field. Looking for accomplished, assertive, and forward thinking; strong emphasis on current knowledge of municipal finance, economic development, growth management, and transportation issues; strong interpersonal and communication skills. Prefer experience managing in city council/manager form of government; served as city manager of similar size organization, or as deputy director in larger organization. Reports directly to council and responsible for oversight of departments, administration, finance, planning and community development, utility, public works, police, fire, parks and recreation and library. Equivalent educational qualifications or experience will be considered. For more information, call 731-658-2020. Send cover letter, detailed resume and references to City of Bolivar, Attn: Mayor Bobby Sain, 211 N. Washington Street, Bolivar, TN 38008. EOE. Tennessee Drug Free Workplace.

DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF
JACKSON. Will serve as principal assistant to the chief in organizing, directing, supervising, disciplining and coordinating activities associated with the department, ensuring effective and efficient daily operational practices, firefighting techniques and procedures. Specific job duties include: supervising, directing, and evaluating fire prevention officers, training officers, and emergency medical services officer; handle employee concerns and problems; direct work; counsel; discipline and complete employee performance evaluations; direct personnel, apparatus, equipment and property of the department at emergency scenes, ensuring strict compliance with rules and regulations of the department, as designated by the fire chief; assist the chief in the development, implementations, and monitoring of operational and administrative procedures and policies; assist fire chief with the preparation and presentation of annual budgetary evaluations and related analysis to appropriate individuals; review the financial operations of the department and make recommendations on annual operating budget and capital improvements. Associate's degree in Fire Science preferred, with a minimum of three years' experience as a Captain. Must have State of Tennessee or National certification as a Firefighter II, Fire Instructor, Fire Officer I and II. Must possess a minimum of medical First Responder's certification from a Department of Public Health. Generous benefit package; salary is \$61,000.00. EOE/M/F/V/D. Minorities are encouraged to apply. Job description on city web site: www.cityofjackson.net. Contact the City of Jackson, Personnel Department, 127 E. Main Street, Suite 303, Jackson, TN 38301; phone 731-425-8252; Fax: 731-425-8673.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST HAYWOOD/TIPTON COUNTY. The Southwest Community Development Authority is seeking applicants for the position of Economic Development Specialist to lead the agency. The duties of this position include coordinating regional efforts to assist with the creation, retention, and expansion of high quality job opportunities for the people of southwest Tennessee. The position will be based in Haywood or Tipton Counties. Haywood County is located 50 miles north of Memphis on Interstate 40; the county seat is Brownsville. Tipton County is located 25 miles north of Memphis; the county seat is Covington located on Highway 51. A minimum of five years professional work experience in an economic development environment is required.

Work experience in a range of economic development issues including community development, leadership development, entrepreneurship development, or technology development is preferred. Demonstrated experience in seeking and successfully securing grant funds is preferred. This person must be familiar with the latest economic development trends; have demonstrated experience and knowledge of the industrial site selection process including recruitment, proposal development, and working with industrial prospects or site selection consultants. Strong verbal and written communication skills and strong listening skills are required. This position also requires the applicant to possess a B.A. or B.S. degree. The completion of IEDC (International Economic Development Council) basic core curricula or additional economic development related course-work is preferred. This position requires a person that is highly motivated with a high level of integrity. Current priorities of the Southwest Community Development Authority include building relationships with economic development partner organizations, developing strategies to position our region for future growth, building the skill level of the workforce, retaining and assisting existing industry to expand, and building awareness for economic development within the general public and enhancing tourism opportunities. Salary: DOQ & Exp. plus excellent benefits. Deadline is May 1, 2008.

GENERAL MANAGER
LEXINGTON. Lexington Electric System is seeking applicants for General Manager. Ideal candidates will have bachelors and master's degrees; in engineering, management, administration or related technical area is required combined with experience in computer, staff development, finance/budgeting, organizational planning and development. Interested applicants may pick up applications at: Job Service, 67 W Church Street, Lexington, TN 38351. Submit Resumes to: Lexington Electric System, Attn: Ronnie Davis, P O Box 219, Lexington, TN 38351. Applications must be received by April 11, 2008. Applicants will be notified of interview schedule. EOE.

STAFF ENGINEER
LAKELAND. The Staff Engineer has a key role in assisting and working closely with a licensed City Engineer in providing professional engineering advice and assistance on matters pertaining to the growth of Lakeland in the development of commercial and residential subdivisions; implementation of Lakeland's storm water phase II program; and the design, construction, and maintenance of its street, storm water, and sanitary sewer systems. The position is responsible for planning, reviewing, designing, and inspecting a variety of municipal civil engineering projects of moderate complexity. In performing these duties, the Staff Engineer confers with a wide range of individuals and groups including engineers, contractors, developers, and public officials in addition to coordinating projects with the City of Lakeland's staff. Salary Range \$41,414 to \$49,689. The position's requirements include a Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering and an Engineer-In-

Training (EIT) license. We offer excellent salaries and benefits, including insurance (medical, dental, life, short- and long-term disability), a retirement plan, paid sick leave and vacation, educational reimbursement, training opportunities, and a merit pay system. For a detailed job description and information, see www.lakelandtn.gov or call 901.867.2717. E-mail resumes or applications to: cityhall@lakelandtn.org; or fax to 901.867.2063; mail to: City of Lakeland, 10001 Highway 70, Lakeland, TN 38002. EOE

WASTEWATER SPECIALIST
LAKELAND. The city of Lakeland, located in the metropolitan Memphis area, is seeking applicants for the position of Wastewater Specialist. The Wastewater Specialist will assist in the maintenance, operations, and/or repair of the recently built wastewater treatment plant and the City's collection system. The position's requirements include a high school degree or G.E.D.; minimum of two-years related experience; the ability to use hand and power tools and operate equipment; a valid driver's license and CDL with tanker endorsement within time frame determined upon entry into the position; mechanical and construction knowledge; the ability to respond to emergency call-out on a 24/7 basis; and wastewater certification within two years after entering the position. Salary range is \$27,278 to \$32,730 negotiable based on experience. We offer excellent salaries and benefits, including insurance (medical, dental, life, short- and long-term disability), a retirement plan, paid sick leave and vacation, educational reimbursement, training opportunities, and a merit pay system. For job description and additional information, visit www.lakelandtn.gov or call 901.867.2717. E-mail resumes and applications to cityhall@lakelandtn.org; or fax, 901.867.2063 or mail to: City of Lakeland, 10001 Highway 70, Lakeland, TN 38002. EOE

Rescinded TDOT funds spotlights cap on Tennessee's toll projects

TDOT from Page 1
 eral funding deficits and predictions of an accumulated shortfall of \$2 billion by 2015.

Under current law, TDOT is authorized to pursue only two pilot projects, a toll bridge and roadway toll project as a test of the success of toll roads in Tennessee, however, TDOT spokesperson Julie Oaks confirmed in 2007 that several local governments have expressed interest in toll projects. The three bridge project proposals by local leaders are:

- The Hadley Bend Connector, a toll bridge over the Cumberland River near the Old Hickory Dam providing Hendersonville commuters a quicker alternative route to Nashville proposed by Sen. Diane Black;

Cable bill compromise

CABLE from Page 1 but at the expense of consumers and communities. Cities have remained steadfast in the belief that the local franchising process has worked for nearly three decades and that the opportunity to compete is available to any cable or telephone provider.

However, TML realized that the General Assembly was intent on bringing the debate surrounding local franchising versus state franchising to an end this year. And, therefore, the League is appreciative of having been afforded a seat at the table and a voice in shaping this compromise legislation.

"Cities and counties didn't get everything that they wanted," said Chairman Curtiss. "But the main thing they were fighting for was to make sure that the people back home were being protected. As legislators, that's our responsibility also."

For local governments and the citizens they serve, some of the major changes came in the areas of build-out requirements and consumer protections that will prohibit "cherry-picking" or discrimination based on income or race. In addition, the revisions made in the areas of customer service protections; local control of the public rights of way; public, education and government

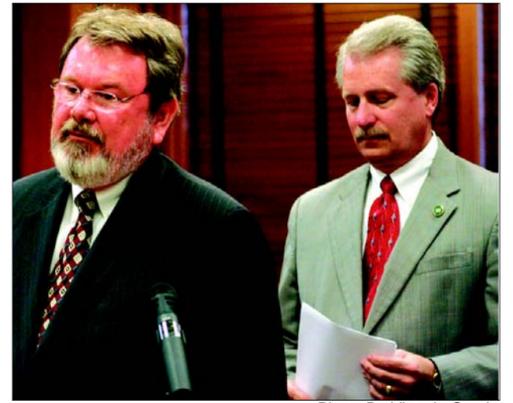


Photo By Victoria South

Bill Sponsors Rep. Steve McDaniel and Sen. Bill Ketron support the compromise for the benefit of the consumers.

channels; and the preservation of local revenues have dramatically improved the bill.

"Through the efforts of Chairman Charles Curtiss, Chairman Ulysses Jones and the process provided by Speaker Naifeh, the compromise provides a fair resolution that ensures that consumers and communities are protected," said Margaret Mahery, TML executive director. "However, this bill is a compromise and any compromise is, by its very nature, imperfect. Cities won our share of arguments but we also lost some arguments. Left to our own devices, this is not the bill cities would have written, but the compromise offered represents a victory for Tennessee's consumers. We will continue to work with the General Assembly to ensure a positive outcome for all those involved."

For a summary of the proposed changes, see the chart on Page 7.

these areas, especially those programs which receive a majority of funds from the federal government."

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act, a Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) signed into law in 2005 by President George W. Bush, authorizes the Federal surface transportation programs for highways, highway safety, and transit for the five-year period 2005 to 2009.

SAFETEA-LU put into place the levels of annual federal funds each state transportation department receives. However, in the past several years authorized funding levels have been significantly reduced by rescissions.

Legislators not running for election

ELECTION from Page 1

Riley Darnell. As stipulated in the Tennessee Constitution, the General Assembly elects all three constitutional officers during a joint session of the legislature. The secretary of state is elected every four years, whereas the comptroller and the treasurer are elected every two years.

Rinks' announcement makes the eleventh member in the House opting not run for another term. Two of the Representatives have their sights on the Senate. Rep. Doug Overbey, R-Maryville, plans to run against Sen. Raymond Finney. Rep. Delores Gresham, R-Somerville, is running for Sen. Wilder's open seat.

Also noteworthy, three former legislatures are wagering a comeback. Former Rep. Jim Vincent, R-Soddy-Daisy, plans to run for his old seat, now held by Rep. Jim Cobb, R-Spring City; former Rep. Bob Patton, Johnson City, who lost in 2004 to Rep. Matthew Hill, R-Jonesborough, plans to challenge Hill; and Jerome Cochran, who lost in 2006 to Kent Williams, plans to challenge Williams for the District 4 seat in Carter County. The state primary is scheduled for Aug. 7.

House Members Not Running for Re-Election:

Rep. William Baird, R-Jacksboro
 Rep. Rob Briley, D-Nashville
 Rep. Frank Buck, D-Dowelltown
 Rep. Chris Crider, R-Milan
 Rep. Delores Gresham, R-Somerville

Rep. John Hood, D-Murfreesboro
 Rep. Doug Overbey, R-Maryville
 Rep. Phillip Pinion, D-Union City
 Rep. Randy Rinks, D-Savannah
 Rep. Gary Rowe, D-Memphis
 Rep. Parkey Strader, R-Knoxville

Senate:
 Sen. Tommy Kilbey, D-Wartburg
 Sen. John Wilder, D-Mason

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National Civil Rights Museum keeping the dream alive

BY VICTORIA SOUTH
TML Communications Coordinator

It's been 40 years since the man who had a dream large enough to change a nation was cut down by an assassin's bullet, yet at the vintage motel in Memphis where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s life abruptly ended, every day is April 4, 1968.

Now, the site of the National Civil Rights Museum, commemorative events in Memphis, "The Man, The Mission, The Movement," not only drew national attention to the anniversary of King's death but ignited a pilgrimage to the place where he was mortally wounded by James Earl Ray.

A rainbow of marchers of all ages, creeds and colors, along with local and national political leaders and prominent members of the civil rights movement, converged upon the Lorraine Motel to pay their respects to the slain civil rights leader.

"The great stain on our dream in my lifetime has been racism," said Gov. Phil Bredesen. "And yet, just when we seem unable to ever start clearing the stain, along comes a Martin Luther King. Along come all those who worked with him, along come all those who followed him. And he taught us. And the world changed."

Actor Samuel L. Jackson and the Hampton Hotels "Save-A-Landmark Program" brought more than 100 volunteers together to build, paint, landscape, and clean the museum, which attracts more than 200,000 visitors a year, and where original exhibits such as Rosa Parks' bus and the historic Woolworth's lunch counter publically document America's struggle for civil rights.

A current exhibit of artifacts and photos "From Memphis to Atlanta: The Drum Major Returns Home" chronicles the final days and hours leading up to King's death. A 1968 photograph of a mule-drawn wagon surrounded by thousands of mourners transporting King's casket to his alma mater, Morehouse College, forms the centerpiece of the exhibit, and reinforces his dedication to the poor of all races.

The week before his death, Dr. King was in Memphis to support striking sanitation workers striving for equal rights and better pay in what he called, "The Poor People's campaign," calling for a bill of rights for poor people that would offer massive government job programs and guaranteed livable wages.

Yet, through the years, the Civil Rights Museum has suffered its share of struggles as well. King's assassination plunged the Lorraine, a small minority-owned business in the south-end of downtown Memphis, into a long and steep decline before a group of prominent citizens, concerned that the historic site would be destroyed through neglect and indifference, formed the Martin Luther King Memorial Foundation to save the building.

After coming up short of the full contract price of \$250,000 in their earlier fundraising efforts, the Foundation was able to purchase the Lorraine at auction for \$144,000 in 1982. With vital support from the city of Memphis, Shelby County, and the state, nearly \$9 million was raised to create and construct the civil rights center, yet the motel's last resident had to be forcibly evicted in order for the project to move ahead. Protesting the decision for several years, the resident maintained a constant vigil near the museum.

In the meantime, public criticism about the manner in which the museum is managed and operated prompted the museum's owner, the state of Tennessee, to mandate a

board membership that's 60 percent African-American and to emphasize educational objectives along with more communication between citizens and museum membership.

Complaints include that the museum's board of directors favored corporate-linked membership over individuals with civil rights movement experience and was unresponsive to the concerns of the community.

"I'm not discontented," said state Rep. Barbara Cooper, chair of the Black Caucus, after the recent museum board nominations and selection process.

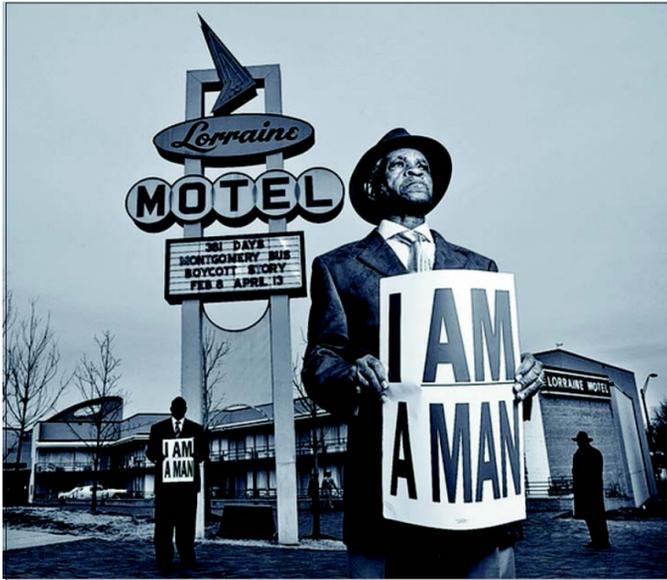
Cooper helped facilitate the Lorraine Civil Rights Museum Community Oversight Committee, a grassroots group of concerned citizens unaffiliated with the museum, after she became aware of management concerns.

"There is no rotation on and off the board with fresh board members with fresh new perspectives; young people," Cooper added.

Two persons from the Over-



Martin Luther King delivers his famous "I Have a Dream" speech during the 1963 March on Washington.



Standing in front of the former Lorraine Motel, sanitation workers Elmore Nickelberry, 76, center, and his son, Terrence hold a replica of the placard used by strikers in Memphis. Photo by Carl Justel/ Miami Herald



Actor Samuel L. Jackson paints the railing at the National Civil Rights Museum outside the room at the Lorraine Hotel, where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated. Photo by Greg Campbell / AP

sight Committee were selected to help fill the museum's eight board vacancies.

Cooper is currently sponsoring legislation requesting that the museum board report back to the General Assembly in 2009 concerning compliance of the new general operations mandates rather than in 2012.

"We're not trying to change the people who have already been picked for the board," Cooper said. "It's just a matter of monitoring progress."

The National Civil Rights Museum's eight new board mem-

bers and categories are: State Rep. Johnnie Shaw; Dorothy Crook, AFSCME; Clarence Jones, civil rights historian; Kenya Bradshaw, civil rights community activist; Pastor Dwight Montgomery; Dr. Darryl Tukufu, associate professor; Cathy Ross, financial officer; and Rev. Gina Stewart.

Memphis hosts TML Annual Conference

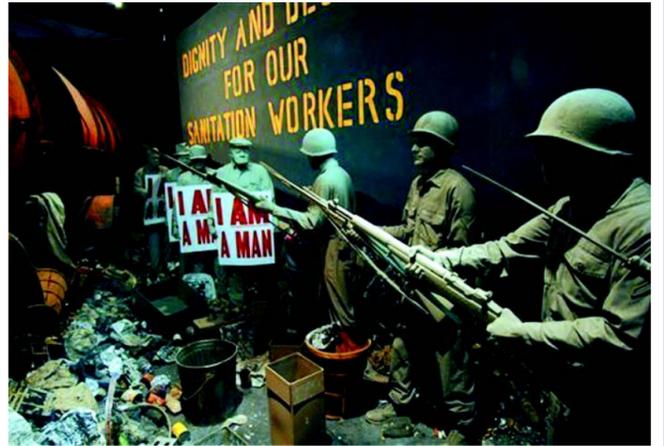
CONFERENCE from Page 1
American Public Works Association (TCAPWA) will present two workshops – topics to be announced.

In addition, several exhibitors

will present vendor presentations on Sunday, focussing on topics that range from automated utility metering services, occupational dog bite safety, and banking/financial services.

Other conference highlights include: a 5K walk / run scheduled for Sunday morning; a special spouse's program that includes a guest speaker, lunch and a trip to Memphis' Botanic Gardens; the host city

The National Civil Rights Museum presents interactive audiovisual displays, life-sized replicas, and actual artifacts that present an emotionally charged history of the American civil rights movement.



The museum display depicts the 1968 sanitation workers' strike – one of the reasons why King was in Memphis.



In 1955, the Montgomery bus boycott began with the act of one woman, Rosa Parks, but it grew into more than that.



On Feb. 1, 1960, four North Carolina college students sat down at a Woolworth's lunch counter in Greensboro. They read books until closing time and returned the next day to do the same. Their protest received media attention and sparked sit-ins across the South.

If You Go....

The Lorraine Civil Rights Foundation held an official groundbreaking in 1987 and on September 28, 1991, the National Civil Rights Museum opened its doors to visitors.

In February 2001, the Museum broke ground for an \$11 million expansion project entitled, Exploring the Legacy which adds 12,800 square feet of exhibition space and connects the main campus of the Museum to the Young and Morrow building and the Main Street Rooming House where James Earl Ray allegedly fired the fatal shot resulting in the death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Both buildings were donated to the Museum by the Hyde Family Foundation.

The exhibit, "From Memphis to Atlanta: The Drum Major

Returns Home" runs through Aug. 31 and incorporates the Aug. 28 anniversary of King's "I Have a Dream" speech during the 1963 March on Washington.

The exhibit title is taken from a sermon King preached at Ebenezer Baptist Church two months before his assassination.

"Tell them I was a drum major for peace and a drum major for justice," he said.

Other photographs at the exhibit include:

- The Memphis garbage workers strike;
- King, Hosea Williams, Jesse Jackson and Ralph Abernathy on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel where King would lose his life one day later; and
- King mortally wounded on the balcony with his aides by his side.

2008 Annual Conference At-A-Glance

Saturday, June 21

9 am – 5pm MTAS' EOA
3 – 5 pm TML Board Meeting

Sunday, June 22

6:30 – 9:30 am 5K Walk / Run
9:30 am Exhibit Hall / Registration
10 – 10:45 am Vendor Workshop
10:45 – Noon Jazz Brunch
12 – 3:30 pm Vendor Workshops
3:30 – 5 pm Opening General Session
6 – 8 pm Host City Reception

Monday, June 23

7:30 – 8:15 am Continental Breakfast
8:30 – 9 am District Meetings
9 am Exhibit Hall Opens
9:15 – 11 am Concurrent Workshops
1) Annexations
2) Small Cities Track
3) Tier 1 Cities
4) TCAPWA

11:15 – 12:30 Second General Session
Annual Business Meeting

Legislative Overview
12:30–1:30 pm Lunch in Exhibit Hall
1:30 – 2 pm Door Prizes
2:15 – 3:15 pm Concurrent Workshops
5) Open Records
6) Leadership Training
7) NIMBY opposition
8) Tree City USA
9) Disaster Training
3:30 – 4:30 pm Concurrent Workshops
10) Public Meetings
11) Leadership Training
12) Media Relations
13) Public Partnerships

Pool Party

Tuesday – June 24

8 – 10 am Third General Session
Awards Breakfast
• TML Achievement Awards
• Spouse of the Year
• City Manager
• Mayor of the Year

reception; the annual TML Risk Management Pool Party; door prizes; awards; plus much more.

Be sure to come early or stay after the conference concludes to take in all the different activities that Memphis has to offer. The Civil Rights Museum featured above is not to be missed.

For more information and to register online, go to TML's web site at www.TML1.org. Deadline for advanced registration is May 30.