

Gov. Bredesen

Having trouble filing? Contact Ethics Commission's help desk

BY CAROLE GRAVES
TML Communications Director

Local elected officials having difficulties filing disclosure statements with the Tennessee Ethics Commission have been given the option to file paper copies with the Commission.

According to Bruce Androphy, Tennessee Ethics Commission executive director, more than 5,000 state and local officials have already filed electronically with the commission. The option to file hard copies is to accommodate those who may not have the technological resources to file electronically.

"There will be no sanctions, as long as statements are filed by Feb. 15 – whether it's electronically or in paper forms," said Androphy.

In accordance to state law, local elected officials are required to file disclosure statements of conflicts of interests with the Tennessee Ethics Commission. The Commission originally mandated that each document be filed electronically by Jan 31.

For second year, education ranks high in Governor's 2008 State of the State address

Gov. Phil Bredesen delivered his 2008 State of the State Address and Fiscal Year 2008-2009 budget proposal to the 105th Tennessee General Assembly on Jan. 28. The common sense, no growth budget, which calls for no new taxes, commits the majority of new state dollars to education and job creation.

"What I am proposing in this budget is to concentrate on the basics, putting our full attention to those things that we need to do well to keep Tennessee moving forward in education, safety, jobs and health," said Bredesen.

For the second consecutive year, the largest portion of the \$27.88 billion budget – including \$13.84 billion in state dollars – will fund Pre-K-12 education and higher education. With a combined appropriation of \$8.41 billion, education represents 30 percent of the total budget. Bredesen's proposed budget commits \$287 million in improvements for education, including:

- \$25 million to fund up to 250 new

- Pre-K classrooms;
- \$5.3 million to increase retention of HOPE Scholarships by adjusting the required GPA for scholarship recipients to 2.75; and
- \$27 million to establish an endowment to provide need-based financial aid to 15,000 more Tennesseans who want to go to college.

The total FY 2008-2009 budget is a 0.61 decrease over FY 2007-2008, with conservative budget growth of 0.38 percent in state funding. Federal funding growth also remains flat in FY 09 at less than one percent.

Other features include:

- \$12 million to expand home and community based health care services;
- \$29.3 million for an economic development jobs package;
- \$1.3 million for a new TBI lab in Knoxville;
- \$1.3 million for DNA analysis under the Johnia Berry Act of 2007;
- \$5.6 million for the UT Biofuels Center

- and \$4 million for the state's alternative fuels initiative; and
- \$10 million for the Heritage Conservation Trust Fund

Bredesen emphasized he will resist efforts to irresponsibly raid the state's reserves, which would retreat back to the fiscal policies that once threatened to bankrupt the state.

"I've made clear my commitment to running government in a competent and business-like manner," Bredesen said. "One of the legacies I would like to leave as Governor is the certainty that we can manage as responsibly through the good times as the bad. The steps we've taken over the past five years have positioned us to weather the current national economic slowdown. Tennessee is ready, prepared to live within its means, and we will make this budget work."

Bredesen's 2008 State of the State Address proposed 2008-2009 budget and other related materials can be found at www.tn.gov; click on "State of the State Address 2008."



A recent Rutherford County e-Community Leadership meeting. Pictured left to right- Larry Raybon, Middle TN e-Community Leadership project manager; Andrea Loughry of Mind Over Marketplace; and Michael Ramage, Connected Tennessee executive director.

e-Community Leadership Teams strategize broadband technology

BY VICTORIA SOUTH
TML Communications Coordinator

A diverse meeting of the minds taking place in communities all across Tennessee is destined to advance broadband technology throughout the state. Sponsored by Connected Tennessee, the eCommunity Leadership Team initiative unites local members from each sector of a community into a team that brainstorms for ways to improve technology deployment and adoption within the community.

Representative sectors include: healthcare, K-12 and higher education, business and industry, agriculture, libraries, community-based organizations, tourism and parks, and government.

Over a course of meetings, e-community teams prepare strategy by answering three principle questions: Where are we today? Where do we want to be? How do we get there?

The team ultimately compiles a Strategic Technology Report laying the foundation for the steps that need to be taken in the county to get from where the community is today to where they want to be.

A county profile featuring the eCommunity Project Manager, contact information, and general updates that allow county

citizens to remain up-to-date with the progress of their county will be posted on Connected Tennessee's website www.connectedtennessee.com.

Currently, there are more than 30 e-Community Leadership Teams across the state, with Connected Tennessee's Trail to Innovation initiative focused to organize a team in every county by the end of the year, according to Michael Ramage, executive director of Connected Tennessee.

"We want sector representatives from both the county and city," Ramage said. "Therefore, each sector may be represented by more than one person."

Three regional managers from Connected Tennessee will offer support for the teams as the foundation is laid for the strategic report, according to Ramage.

In addition to the Strategic Technology Report, Connected Tennessee promotes a county-wide inventory project encouraging communities to inventory and document all of their technology-based resources and the locations of these resources.

Connected Tennessee stresses the importance of rural communities "crossing the great digital divide" to the wired world putting rural

FCC initiates key rulemaking on pole attachment Issues

BY MARK W. SMITH
TVPPA General Counsel

On Nov. 20, 2007, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) released its Notice of Proposed Rulemaking concerning possible amendments to its rules and policies governing pole attachments.

The FCC rules and the provisions of 47 U.S.C. § 224 do not directly apply to municipal electric systems or to electric cooperatives. However, these are often the "benchmark" principles that cable television and telephone systems assert during pole attachment negotiations.

From time to time, cable and telecommunications providers also seek passage of legislation to apply the same principles to electric cooperatives and municipal electric systems as a matter of state law.

In the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, the FCC indicates that the purpose of the rulemaking is to "consider comprehensively the appropriate changes, if any, to our implementation" of the federal pole attachment statute." The FCC notes that it has been more than 10 years since the passage of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which embodied the last major statutory change to the federal pole attachment statutes.

The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking solicits comments on a wide range of pole attachment issues from all interested parties. A combination of three prior petitions to the FCC seems to have been the primary impetus for this proceeding.

In one petition, a competitive fiber optics provider asked the Commission to adopt a rulemaking to adopt seven "standard practices" for pole attachment and conduit access. In another, the United States Telecom Association asked the FCC to conduct a rulemaking to consider whether incumbent local exchange carriers should be entitled to take advantage of the FCC's pole attachment rate formula.

The Final Petition

In the final petition, Time Warner Telecom asked that the FCC adopt a single pole attachment rate for both cable television systems and telecommunications carriers. These issues, in turn, are reflected in the broadly worded Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, which solicits comments from all interested



parties on the following issues:

- Whether the existing rules governing pole attachment rates are appropriate in light of the increasing competition among cable television, incumbent telephone and competitive broadband providers;
- Whether the pole attachment rate and access provisions under the federal pole attachment statutes provide any rights to incumbent telephone providers; and
- Whether it would be appropriate to adopt standardized non-price terms and conditions for pole attachment arrangements, taking into a broad range of relevant factors, including safety and reliability.

In addition to these issues for public comment, the FCC also reaches a few tentative conclusions that, if adopted, would be significant for regulated pole owners such as investor-owned utilities. In the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, the FCC tentatively concludes that all broadband Internet-access service providers (potentially including incumbent telephone companies) should be subject to a single pole attachment rate.

The FCC also tentatively concludes that the rate for broadband Internet access service providers should be greater than the cable rate but no greater than the FCC's rate for telecom. See **FCC RULING** on Page 7

Regional development partnership to expand business in East Tenn

BY VICTORIA SOUTH

There's thunder in the valley in East Tennessee, as five economic development agencies plus the Blount County Chamber of Commerce kick off a new partnership. Innovation Valley Inc., designed to draw more regional businesses and bring successful development to the area.

Expounding upon the "Jobs Now!" concept, a business recruitment development program managed by the cities of Knoxville and Oak Ridge, ending its five-year run this summer, Innovation Valley Inc. will foster regional partnerships among East Tennessee communities, identifying regional issues and focusing on technology-driven economic-based development along with education and workforce strategies, according to Bryan Daniels, executive vice president of the Blount County Economic Development Board.

"The majority of the program will center upon workforce development trying to address issues at new and existing companies," Daniels said.

The partnership, in addition to the Blount Chamber of Commerce, includes the Knoxville Area Chamber, the Loudon County Economic Development Agency, the Oak Ridge Economic Partnership, the Roane Alliance and the Tellico Reservoir Development Agency. The group plans to seek funding from companies currently involved in Jobs Now! along with other businesses.

A strategic five-year Economic Development Blueprint defines the program's target initiatives in the areas of: education and workforce development; technology and entrepreneurship; global marketing; business retention and expansion; public policy; and resources for living. The blueprint targets regional business sectors making specific recommendations for attracting, retaining, and growing those industries along with supplying performance measures and checkpoints quarterly.

"Future development will lean heavily upon technology and entrepreneurship," said See **REGIONAL** on Page 7

NEWS
ACROSS
TENNESSEE



BY TML STAFF REPORTS

COLLEGE DALE

State officials told the five-member Collegedale City Commission that a land-use plan would be a good start toward managing the city’s immediate and long-term growth. Stacy Morrison, regional director with the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development said the land use plan, a guide for managing growth over the next five to 10 years, might require “further studies to fill in the details.” Morrison told commissioners the city would have to pay for a door-to-door census acceptable to state officials. “I think we’ve increased at least 1,000 people in the last eight years,” observed Commissioner Harry Hodgdon.

FRANKLIN

Franklin residents want the city’s trees to fall under the same protections as historic houses. Crews sent by Middle Tennessee Electric Membership Corp. have recently trimmed back and cut down dozens of trees in some of Franklin’s oldest neighborhoods. In some cases, trees thought to be more than 100 years old were cut down or left with few large branches. Residents say the effect has been drastic, and altered the character of their streets. The electric company’s standard is to trim branches that come within 20 feet of a power line. Fallen trees and branches cause the majority of power outages, especially during storms, according to MTEMCO. City officials say tree trimming could ultimately be avoided if utility lines were run underground. Currently, Franklin requires all new developments to bury utilities.

FRANKLIN

Franklin High School students will be allowed to choose from four schedules beginning next fall. The Williamson County Board of Education unanimously approved a proposal to offer FHS students this choice of schedules: 6:30 a.m. to 1:42 p.m.; 7:30 a.m. to 2:37 p.m.; the current schedule, 8:25 a.m. to 3:42 p.m.; and 9:13 a.m. to 4:47 p.m. Board members applauded the school’s principal, Willie Dickerson, and her school’s leadership team for the innovative and flexible schedule.

JACKSON

The Safe Neighborhood Task Force is in full swing studying ways to enhance neighborhood revitalization efforts and reduce crime. The initiative is based upon the theory that neighborhood deterioration, disorder, and crime are linked in a developmental sequence. The Task Force has collected information from public officials and residents to law enforcement and conducted research on effective approaches in communities similar in size to Jackson-Madison County developing a set of 54 recommendations that are believed to be a path toward neighborhood improvement, stabilization and crime reduction. The city plans to hire 22 new officers to work in the Gang Unit, Metro Narcotics Unit, School Resource Officer Program, and Traffic Patrol and to initiate a re-entry program for ex-offenders, an environmental court, a saturation

patrol in specific neighborhoods, and neighborhood sweeps. A \$752,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office of Juvenile Crime and Delinquency Prevention will be used for projects that will deter juvenile crime.

KNOXVILLE

The Pellissippi State Foundation has completed a dollar-for-dollar challenge grant from the U.S. Department of Education to benefit students at Pellissippi State Technical Community College. To receive the funds, the foundation had to raise \$362,000 from Oct. 1, 2003, to Sept. 30, 2008. The foundation raised the money with time to spare, completing the challenge by summer 2007. The Department of Education matched every dollar raised, bringing the total to \$724,000. The funds will be used for scholarships, equipment and other areas of need.

LA VERGNE

Whirlpool Corp. will shut down its refrigerator factory in La Vergne this year, cutting 500 jobs there and moving the work to its plant in Fort Smith, Ark. Michigan-based Whirlpool said the move is part of an ongoing evaluation process of its facilities. The company also is shutting down a Mexican plant that makes side-by-side fridges and moving that work to another facility in that country. Combined, the two closures will cost between \$15 million and \$20 million, a number that includes severance packages for laid-off workers. The La Vergne plant survived a round of consolidation two years ago, following Whirlpool’s merger with Maytag, but did lay off 330 La Vergne workers last June, when dehumidifiers and air purifiers were phased out.

MEMPHIS

Affiliated Computer Services Inc. will bring its Dental Outreach Initiative for school children to Tennessee starting in Memphis. Through the program, students at Sheffield Elementary School will get free dental education and screening. The company also plans to bring the program to schools in Nashville and Knoxville. The initiative is now in six states and the District of Columbia and has reached more than 20,000 students.

MORRISTOWN

VIFAN USA Inc. broke ground on an addition to its current manufacturing facility in Morristown. The total investment for the project will reach \$72 million in new building space and new production line equipment, resulting in the creation of 55 additional jobs. VIFAN, a producer of biaxially oriented polypropylene sheet film, began operations in Morristown in 1998, and currently operates a 350,000 square foot manufacturing plant. The expansion will create an additional 120,000 square feet of space and add a second line of production. The existing site can produce as much as 75 million pounds of product per year. The privately-held, Italian-owned company employs 124 people at its facility in the Morristown Airport Industrial District.

NASHVILLE

A recent freight report states just

short of 300 million tons pass through the Nashville area annually, the vast majority of it hauled by truck. A study is looking at fixing freight bottlenecks in the immediate Nashville area. The Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization will begin work on a “freight model,” a regional plan to recognize bottlenecks caused by freight in Davidson and its neighbors to the north, east and south, and prioritize new projects to fix the problems. The agency’s mission is to make freight planning a priority on the front end of new projects and to better incorporate ways of delivering freight, bringing roads, trains, barges and airplanes into play.

NASHVILLE

Nashville’s first countywide graduation summit was held to discuss why so many students fail to graduate from high school. Locally, the graduation rate has increased to 70 percent, but is still below the state goal of 90 percent. In December, Mayor Karl Dean announced the creation of a 40-member task force to examine the issue. The summit was hosted by the mayor’s office, in conjunction with 11 other organizations at Belmont University. The event included a keynote speaker from Johns Hopkins University and sessions on the four key contributing factors to students dropping out of school.

OAK RIDGE

The first phase of an experimental project for recycling nuclear fuel has been a spectacular success, according to a top official at Oak Ridge National Laboratory. The Oak Ridge Laboratory is processing small quantities of spent reactor fuel. The lab spent about \$12 million on the project during the final six months of fiscal 2007.

OAK RIDGE

A two-day workshop could help shape Oak Ridge’s future environmentally and economically. The Integrated Facilities Disposition Project, a proposed cleanup initiative, would demolish more than 200 old nuclear facilities at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory and the Y-12 nuclear weapons plant and eliminate a slew of chemical and radiological hazards. The project would make way for modernization of these facilities and likely ensure their future missions and could cost as much as \$8 billion, take up to 15 years to complete and provide jobs directly and indirectly for thousands of workers. The workshop at Pollard Auditorium is being hosted by the Energy, Technology and Environmental Business Association in conjunction with the managing contractors at ORNL and Y-12UT-Battelle and B&W Technical Services.

SMYRNA

Japanese automaker Suzuki introduced three versions of its new Equator pickup truck, a vehicle that will be built by Nissan at its Smyrna plant. Nissan has said that the truck, which goes on sale this fall, won’t bring additional jobs to the Smyrna plant, but could help ensure that the facility has enough demand for its products to keep its work force busy.

SMYRNA

Less than five years since it opened, StoneCrest Medical Center is already preparing to expand. The facility owned by Tri-Star Health Systems just off Sam Ridley Parkway near Interstate 24, is set to add 26

medical-surgical beds and four surgical suites at a cost of \$15.8 million, raising the total number of beds to 101. Besides the growing need for delivering babies, the hospital is seeing outpatient visits more than triple to a rate of 36,000 annually while surgeries are up 33 percent since 2003. In 2007, StoneCrest also introduced a Level 2A nursery bed, a neurological rehabilitation center and digital mammography capabilities.

SPRINGFIELD

A recent crackdown on illegal immigration in Springfield could have devastating consequences for the already troubled Robertson County school system. Nearly 11 percent of its Hispanic students have vanished since December, and school officials worry that if they don’t return soon, they will be too far behind to succeed on upcoming achievement tests. Of the district’s 768 Hispanic students, about 60 have formally withdrawn since before winter break, and administrators can’t account for an additional 25 to 30, school officials said.

SPRING HILL

The city is now a member of the Duck River Agency Technical Advisory Committee, but it wasn’t an easy sell. The Spring Hill Board of Mayor and Aldermen tabled its vote last month to join as the membership required contributing 5 cents of ev-

ery 1,000 gallons of water sold in the city to a trust fund to be used for projects to ensure the future availability of water. Board members were leery of passing 5 cents on to ratepayers at a time the city was contemplating a rate increase to make the water operations self-sufficient. The city is on a waiting list for an operations study by the Municipal Technical Advisory Service. At this month’s meeting, Alderman Jonathan Duda cleared the air about some additional concerns before the board cast a 6-2 vote to join the committee.

SPRING HILL

General Motors Corp.’s former Saturn auto plant, which has been on furlough since last spring, brought 2,400 workers back to their facility earlier this month for training and job selection. The entire work force will return by late June to begin building the 2009 Chevrolet Traverse crossover utility vehicle, which goes on sale in the fall. The vehicle assembly plant was closed for a \$700 million overhaul last March when production of the Saturn Ion compact car and Vue compact sport utility ended. About 1,200 workers stayed on their jobs in other areas of the plant making engines for five other GM vehicles and replacement body parts for Saturns, while the former Saturn assembly area and paint shop were gutted and rebuilt in preparation for the Traverse.



PEOPLE

BY TML STAFF REPORTS

Former U.S. Senate Majority Leader Dr. Bill Frist will serve as the grand marshal of the 2008 Mule Day Parade, scheduled for April 5. Frist, who represented Tennessee in the U.S. Senate from 1995-2007, served as majority leader during his last four years. He has a near perfect Mule Day attendance record for the past 15 years.



Frist

Pedro Garcia, who stepped down as director of Nashville schools after 6½ years, was granted a \$216,000 severance package, the equivalent of a year’s salary, by the Metro school board, which is now searching for a replacement director.



Garcia

Sen. Bob Corker was appointed to the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee. Corker said his background as a businessman and his interest in financial institutions will be helpful in his new assignment, which came as a result of Sen. Trent Lott’s retirement at the end of December.



Corker

Dr. Tim Webb has been appointed acting commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Education. He will temporarily fill the vacancy cre-

ated by the recent retirement of Lana Seivers from state service. A native of Hohenwald, Webb has been with the department since 2003 and currently serves as deputy commissioner. In this role, Webb oversees the daily operations of all divisions of the department. He previously served as assistant commissioner for the Division of Resources and Support Services, which is responsible for public school funding and facility oversight. Seivers, appointed by Bredesen in January 2003, retired from state service to lead a newly established educational foundation in Mississippi.

Chris McCartt, Kingsport development services manager, has been named assistant to the city manager, due to the recent retirement of former assistant Dave Light. McCartt, a 10-year city employee, has previously assisted in coordination and oversight of various functions within the development services group, including planning, transportation planning and mass transit. McCartt will serve as the city’s Hope VI and downtown liaison, assist the city manager in addressing citizen’s concerns and coordinate special projects.



McCartt

Former state sen. and longtime lobbyist William J. “Bill” Peeler, 80, of Waverly passed away in Nashville after an extended illness. A Democrat, he served from 1959-63 in the House and 1967-75 in the Senate, where he was majority leader. Peeler was the attorney for CSX Railroad tragic Waverly train derailment in 1978.

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Alcoa’s Wastewater Treatment Plant reins 2008 Project of the Year Award

BY KENNY WIGGINS
Public Services Director

The Project of the Year Award recognizes a project in a Tennessee city that epitomizes outstanding planning, construction, and management. This project becomes our chapter's nomination to the National Top Ten Public Works Projects of the Year.

Alcoa’s new water treatment plant was awarded the Chapter’s Project of the Year at their fall conference. This project becomes TCAPWA’s nomination to the National Top Ten Public Works Projects of the Year.

The guiding goal was to construct a water treatment plant that blended into the area, both as a “good neighbor” to the adjacent community and also for enhanced security. Quite an undertaking for what is now the largest membrane water plant in Tennessee.

In 2000, after several major repair projects and the completion of a treatability analysis of the raw water source (Little River), the city selected Smith Seckman Reid (SSR) to perform a comprehensive evaluation of the plant. SSR was directed to evaluate all options; from refurbishing the existing treatment plant to the construction of a replacement facility and provide engineering and economic evaluations of each.

In 2001 a project team composed of both SSR and city representatives evaluated the existing WTP (average/peak conditions, seasonal variations, pumps and valving, regulatory compliance, security, etc.). Also utilized was a third-party evaluation of the plant’s four circular, steel treatment units to determine their structural integrity.

SSR’s work was presented to the Alcoa City Commission Jan. 2002. The options and their respective cost estimates, in 2001 dollars, presented for consideration were:

- Rehab WTP—\$13.4 M
- Rehab Exist. Basins, Construct New Filter Bldg — \$18.2 M
- Construct New Conventional WTP — \$23.2 M
- Rehab Exist. Basins, Construct New Membrane Filter Bldg— \$22.8 M
- Construct Membrane WTP w/ Pretreatment—\$26.3 M
- Construct Direct Filtration Membrane WTP — \$23.9 M

With little difference in cost, SSR and the city staff agreed to pursue the construction of a new direct filtration membrane facility.

The city decided to locate the new WTP directly across the street from the existing WTP adjacent to a residential district and a large farm slated for development.

Architect’s International, LLC (AI) was selected to design a facility that would enhance the architectural quality of the area.

The design team consisted of city, SSR and AI personnel. The team decided on a “barn style” intrinsic to the area and then chose to use metal building technology as the skeleton, which would provide the most economical means to attain large and high clear spans. The timeless look of a brick skirt around the building and Hardiplank infill above was selected.

The city and SSR released an invitation to pilot test systems from Zenon Environmental and Pall Corporation. This pilot testing was performed from Sept. 2002 to Jan. 2003. The city issued a RFP to both in March 2003.

The city/SSR team was in the process of completing their Vulnerability Assessment and Risk Management Plan and realized that the continued usage of gaseous chlorine was not in the best interest of the citizens of Alcoa. SSR prepared a 20-year life cycle cost analysis of onsite generation of hypochlorite versus purchasing commercial strength sodium hypochlorite.

It was decided to invest in the onsite generation technology instead of dealing with the issues associated with handling this chemical. Since that time, rapid escalation of both gaseous chlorine and commercial strength sodium hypochlorite prices have confirmed the wisdom of that decision. The same analysis performed at today’s unit prices indicates that a 5-7 year payback is possible by generating rather than purchasing hypochlorite.

In addition to membrane filtration and hypochlorite generation, the WTP design included the following technologies: SCADA, Powdered Activated Carbon, and Energy Recovery.

Unfortunately, the low bid was approximately \$3.7 million higher than estimated. SSR and city representatives met with the low bidder, W. Rogers Company (WRC) to discuss alternatives. Redesigning a few of the plant’s features for almost \$1.3M was worth the compromise.

Several other systems including the membrane reject recovery process and the emergency standby generators were delayed indefinitely until their need was demonstrated through operational experience with the plant.

WRC started construction of the plant in May 2005. The WTP was placed on line the first week of March. 2007 and the plant went into full production in March.

The total price tag for seven years of work is \$27.6 M. This includes land purchase, site investigation and preparation, extensive testing and evaluation of treatment processes, WRC’s contracts, Zenon’s membrane filter package, all A&E work including peer review, and demolition of the old WTP.

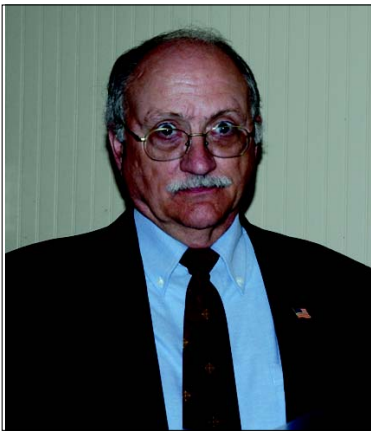


Receiving the Public Works Project of the Year Award are left to right: Houston Daugherty and Mike Bernard the consulting engineers with Smith Seckman Reid, Inc., Kenny Wiggins, Alcoa public works director, and the presenter, Rick Whaley, 2007 president of TCAPWA.

TCAPWA Award winners announced



Shawn Lindsey, Athens public works director, is presented the SWANA Golden Garbage Can Professional Development Award by Eddie Yaun.



Ronald Kirby, Memphis administrator of wastewater construction, received the Charles Walker Nichols Award.



Jim Durrett, president elect (L) presents the A.C. Lock Public Works Leader of the Year Award to Rick Whaley, 2007 TCAPWA president and retired Maryville public works administrator.



Richard Threadgill, Alcoa street sweeper operator, received the Award of Merit.



Left to Right: David Nicholson, CEO of Allen and Hoshall, Inc., Frank Kirk Meritorious Service Award; Ronnie Hammonds, Kingsport streets & sanitation manager, Roger Clark Award; and Calvin Clifton, business development manager E. Roberts Alley and Associates, Larry Eddins Award.



Ryan McReynolds, Kingsport public works director, received the Ed Archer Public Works Leader of the Year Award.

Pictured at left: The Project of the Year Award was presented to the Alcoa Membrane Water Treatment Plant.

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STATE BRIEFS



BY TML STAFF REPORTS

Gov. Phil Bredesen heralded Tennessee’s progress in education with the **passage of elevated graduation requirements and improved standards** by the State Board of Education. The board also approved new math, science and English standards, which have been revised to be more competitive at a national level. The new graduation requirements have been dubbed ‘The Ready Core’ and increase the number of credits needed to graduate to 22. The new requirements will go into effect for the graduating class of 2013 and are part of the Tennessee Diploma Project, the state’s work to align academic standards and student testing with post-secondary and workplace expectations.

The University of Tennessee Research Foundation will award **10 UT researchers and research teams grants to help push technologies to the private sector**. The research foundation, a nonprofit corporation that manages research and technology commercialization throughout the UT system, received 42 proposals from UT researchers concerning existing inventions and discoveries or to develop innovations. The awards totaled \$165,000, including a \$15,000 matching grant from Nashville-based Cumberland Emerging Technologies for one of the proposals. The research foundation expects the grants to better position the technologies for licensing to an existing company or a startup.

Tennessee ended 2007 ranked 11th for foreclosures in the nation, with close to 1 percent of its households in some stage of foreclosure during the year, according to RealtyTrac’s 2007 U.S. Foreclosure Market Report. Last year, Tennessee had 45,834 foreclosure filings, which include default notices, auction sale notices and bank repossessions. This marks a 24.6 percent increase over 2006. The U.S. had a total of 2.2 million foreclosure filings on 1.28 million properties nationwide during the year.

The American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), in its first economic ranking of the 50 states, said **Tennessee is the fifth-best state when it comes to low business and property taxes**. The ranking notes that it takes a worker in Kentucky 13 months to make the income that a Tennessee resident makes in 12 months. **The pro-business Council also noted that Tennessee’s “right-to-work” status figured into the high rating**. The winners in the ALEC ranking were “states with the lowest tax, spending and regulatory burdens,” according to the group. The report is part of a new book, “Rich States, Poor States,” written by economist Dr. Arthur Laffer and Stephen Moore of the Wall Street Journal.

Connected Tennessee released the nation’s first county-by-county reading of average Internet speeds across Tennessee. This county-based map will give providers of broadband and Tennessee policy-makers a more accurate

understanding of which Tennessee communities remain in need of higher quality service in order to utilize the latest applications that benefit local and state government as well as private industry. Through a collective effort between SpeedTest.net, the Communications Workers of America’s (CWA) Speed Matters Campaign and Connected Tennessee, the project surveyed more than 86,000 people from Tennessee’s 95 counties. Tennessee residents can continue to update the data by participating in a speed test on Connected Tennessee’s website, www.connectedtennessee.org.

Local governments that want to establish school police departments will have to determine whether the police officers will be considered school officials or law enforcement officers when it comes to searching students or disclosing their records, according to a study written by the state Department of Education. The report was commissioned by Tennessee legislators to determine the possibility of school systems having their own police forces. Student records maintained by districts are subject to a federal privacy act; therefore, school police forces would have to determine which records were education records and which were police records.

The Tennessee Department of Transportation is **one of only four states in the nation with a perfect bridge inspection record** according to an MSNBC report. MSNBC analyzed the most recent National Bridge Inventory inspections through 2006 to determine how states measure up in their efforts to inspect all bridges every 24 months. Tennessee, Georgia, Delaware, and Nevada were the only states to report all bridges inspected within two years, according to inspection records from all 50 states, the District of Columbia and the federal government. Of the four states with perfect inspection records, Tennessee has the largest number of bridges at 19,568. For the complete report, visit: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/20998261/>.

The Tennessee Department of Transportation is trying to determine **how to ease freight congestion on I-40 from Memphis to the North Carolina border**. According to Ed Cole, TDOT’s chief of environment and planning, a range of options could include truck-friendly off-ramps and a toll system incentive for truckers to drive during off-peak

travel times and getting more shippers to shift from road to rail.

Teach Tennessee is seeking mathematics, science and foreign languages professionals to help fill Tennessee’s teacher shortages in these critical subjects. Teach Tennessee trains exceptional mid-career professionals to teach in grades 7-12, where research indicates a teacher’s subject knowledge is critical to student learning. Former engineers, nurses, researchers, lawyers and chemists are just a few of the past professions of Teach Tennessee Fellows. The Teach Tennessee program is accepting applications through March 3 for the summer institute June 9-14 and June 23-28.

The two organizations that promote tourism in East Tennessee, the Middle East Tennessee Tourism Council and the East Tennessee Marketing Partnership, have merged. **The new Middle East Tennessee Tourism Council now represents 16 counties**. The organization has unveiled a new marketing campaign and revamped web site, www.vacationeasttennessee.org, that tourism officials say does a better job of advertising for all the counties it represents equally.

The Tennessee Department of Safety is working to continue to **reduce the number of traffic fatalities** in 2008 by participating in three enforcement initiatives aimed at saving lives on Tennessee roadways. Preliminary figures show that traffic fatalities declined by nearly nine percent last year, from 1,284 in 2006, to 1,169 in 2007. Funding provided by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and distributed through the Governor’s Highway’s Safety Office is allowing the Tennessee Highway Patrol to continue its commitment to provide increased enforcement and public awareness and reduce the loss of life and property on Tennessee roadways.

The Army Corps of Engineers is gearing up to **begin repairs in the leaking Center Hill Dam**. The 57-year-old DeKalb County dam is at risk of failing. If that happens it could flood thousands of homes along the Caney Fork and Cumberland rivers. The Corps will fill cracks in the limestone rock around the dam with concrete and shore up earthen banks on either side. The repairs are expected to take six years and cost \$263 million. Project manager Linda Adcock says they could start in a few weeks.

TACIR reports state’s voting system needs a paper trail

According to a report by the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR), 93 of Tennessee’s 95 counties use Direct Recording Electronic (DRE) voting machines that do not produce a paper record that can be recounted and audited independent of the voting machine’s software.

The report is based on a study of DRE use in Tennessee and other states, the problems that have arisen, methods for securing voting machines, and the ways that Tennessee and other states verify election results. Tennessee is one of only 12 states that does not have a paper record of all votes.

Dr. Harry Green, TACIR’s executive director, noted, “DREs offer some definite advantages, especially in avoiding pre-printing paper ballots, but the inability to recount or audit the election without relying on the same computer that counted it in the first place is a serious flaw.”

The report makes several recommendations, including implementing voter-verified paper audit trails (VVPAT) statewide within a reasonable time frame and adopting VVPAT systems that can be counted by hand, as well as by machine—machine tallies to support prompt reporting of results with hand counting for audit and recount purposes. Current VVPAT alternatives include optical scan machines and supplementing DRE machines with DRE printers.

Optical scan voting systems, such as those currently used in Hamilton and Pickett counties, use a paper ballot marked by the voter that is counted by a computer. It offers both the rapid tally of votes



93 of Tennessee's 95 counties use DRE voting machines.

that voters, candidates and the media have grown used to and a voter-marked paper record that can be audited and recounted. Optical scan systems are the only ones that currently meet federal guidelines under consideration.

Other Recommendations from the report:

- Adopt a standard for VVPAT that would meet federal guidelines.
- Require voting machine vendors to subject proprietary software to review by experts.
- Strengthen audit requirements of voting processes so that a random sample of machines is routinely tested by comparing hand counts to machine totals.
- Test a Vote by Mail pilot program.
- Strengthen security and pre-test requirements.

NATIONAL BRIEFS



State governments, facing leaner budgets this year as the national economy struggles, are **exploring strategies to contain surging prison populations without building costly new correctional facilities**. At least 18 states took steps last year to free up space at overcrowded prisons, prevent recidivism and otherwise stem the rising costs of corrections, according to “The State of Sentencing 2007.” Actions included amending or agreeing to study sentencing or parole policies, expanding inmate rehabilitation programs and tweaking other criminal justice practices. The study was conducted by The Sentencing Project, a Washington, D.C.-based advocacy orga-

nization that pushes for the elimination of mandatory minimum sentences and other changes to state and federal criminal justice policies.

Nuclear reactors across the **South-east could be forced to throttle back** or temporarily shut down later this year because drought is drying up the rivers and lakes that supply power plants with the amounts of cooling water they need to operate. Utility officials say such shutdowns probably wouldn’t result in blackouts. But they could lead to shockingly higher electric bills because the region’s utilities may be forced to buy expensive replacement power from other energy companies.

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Under new plan, FEMA back in charge of emergency response

BY LESLIE WOLLACK
Nation's Cities Weekly

Lawmakers and state and local officials welcomed a new federal plan outlining coordinated intergov-ernmental response to emergencies with the Federal Emergncy Man-agement Agency (FEMA) at the helm as a good first step toward correcting the problems exposed by the federal response to Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

House Homeland Security Committee Chairman Bennie Thomp-son (D-Miss.) said the plan “ap-ears to be a solid building block,” emphasizing that reauthorizing FEMA to take charge of national emergency response corrects a prob-lem that will allow the agency to thrive as a part of the Homeland Security Department.

The National Response Frame-work (NRF) updates the widely criti-cized National Response Plan put into place shortly before Hurricane Katrina hit. That plan downplayed natural disasters and was widely criticized for being dense and hard to understand. Congress called on the Department of Homeland Security to update the plan in the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PL 109-295), including a resto-ration of FEMA’s authority to man-age a natural disaster. A draft ver-sion of the plan released in Septem-ber did not contain provisions to restore FEMA’s authority.

In a joint statement, Senate Homeland Security and Govern-ment Affairs Committee leaders Sens. Joseph Lieberman (I-Conn.),

Susan Collins (R-Maine) and Mary Landrieu (D-La.), praised the new framework, but emphasized that it is only the beginning of reforming the nation’s disaster response capabil-ity.

“I am particularly pleased the final national response framework, unlike an earlier draft, recognizes the larger role the post-Katrina act gave to the FEMA administrator,” said Lieberman. “But this is still just a framework. The success of the plan will depend on the operational plans FEMA develops. We still have a long way to go.”

The ranking Republican on the House Homeland Security Commit-tee, Peter T. King (R-N.Y.), said the plan is complementary of “the prin-ciples put forth by the FEMA Re-form Act, and therefore an important step in the right direction.”

“We still have a lot of work left to do before the federal government moves beyond the planning stage and can respond quickly and effec-tively to a catastrophic disaster on the scale of hurricanes Katrina and Rita,” said Landrieu, chairwoman of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Commit-tee’s panel on disaster response.

The plan outlines roles and re-sponsibilities for local governments, states, the federal government and the private sector when coordinating disaster responses.

Most important, the plan em-powers the FEMA administrator to appoint the top emergency response coordinating officer, effectively shifting this authority away from the Homeland Security secretary. The

document affirms the FEMA adminis-trator’s role as the president’s principal adviser on emergency management and clari-fies the roles of the principal federal official, the federal coordinating of-ficer and the state coordinating of-ficer.

Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff described the plan as a “simple, straightforward guide” for restoring authority to state and local officials, emphasizing pre-paredness and strengthening the FEMA.

“Unlike past plans, the national response framework is always ac-tive, emphasizing and implementing lessons learned every single day,” Chertoff said at a news conference. “This is a living document.”

Department officials also said NRF will better incorporate Na-tional Incident Management System (NIMS) procedures — the government’s unified approach to incident management and standard command and management struc-tures. NIMS documents will also be available at the NRF Resource Cen-ter at www.fema.gov.

“This is not a federal response framework; it is a national response framework designed to operate at all levels of emergency management and to deal with the smallest local-ized disaster, scalable all the way up to a major national catastrophe,” said Chertoff.

On Feb. 5, FEMA began train-ing on the framework and by mid-April will have 24 separate courses on its website focused on key ele-ments of emergency response.

USCM urges mayors to support energy block grant

BY CHERIE DUVALL
Nation's Cities Weekly

After a successful collaboration with Congress to pass the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant, the U.S. Conference of May-ors (USCM) is encouraging mayors to engage members of Congress to help secure the initial \$2 billion in appropriations to promptly fund the new program.

“Of course this was a tremen-dous victory, but our job certainly is not done,” said USCM President Douglas H. Palmer, mayor of Tren-ton, N.J., during the USCM Winter Meeting in Washington, D.C. “With passage of the bill, we now have the authorizing language, but we now need Congress to fund the program.”

The \$10 billion block grant was created to support efforts to increase energy efficiency, reduce energy use and accelerate progress on climate protection goals. The initiative was enacted last month as part of the new federal energy law, following a suc-cessful campaign by USCM and other organizations, including NLC.

During a special session on the block grant, USCM Executive Di-rector Tom Cochran explained key features of the program, including eligible activities as well as the allo-cation system to distribute annual formula grants to qualifying cities.

Cochran explained that the pro-gram was made to be flexible, such as that of the Community Develop-ment Block Grant program.

“From day one, we have to re-mind the governors and others, when

we designed this program, we said it’s got to have a breakdown very much like the Community Develop-ment Block Grant program,” he said. “I was very pleased to hear a senator say, ‘One day I hope to see the [en-ergy block grant] program sitting up as a sister to that program.’”

The USCM Climate Protection Task Force also met during the an-nual meeting to discuss how to build upon and strengthen the network of the USCM Climate Protection Agreement, which is a pledge for mayors to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 7 percent below 1990 levels by 2012.

As of *Nation’s Cities Weekly* press time, 780 mayors have signed the agreement.Members of the task force, which is co-chaired by May-ors Greg Nickels of Seattle and

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Feb. 22-23: International Festival Oak Ridge, 461 West Outer Dr. from 10 a.m.- 4 p.m. More than two dozen booths highlighting coun-tries and regions of the world. Ad-mission \$8 adults, \$7 seniors, \$6 for children 3-18. Kids 3 and under free.

Feb. 22-24: 30th annual Dogwood Arts Festival House & Garden Show at the Knoxville Convention Center. For more information, call 865-637-4561.

March 13-16: A Mountain Quiltfest at the Smoky Mountain Convention Center. Pays tribute to the art of quilting showcasing more than 200 quilted pieces, a large ven-dor area, and classes taught by the nation’s top quilting experts. Call the Office of Special Events in Pi-geon Forge at 800-251-9100.

March 15- Irish Day Celebration in Erin. In the small town of Erin, ev-eryone is Irish. Join us for our Grand Parade, golf tournament, pageants, variety show and more. For more information, call 931-289-5100

James Brainard of Carmel, Ind., discussed measuring the agreement’s progress with a local government emissions protocol; leveraging existing technical resources, such as Energy Star and the 2030 Challenge; and building a support system for participating cities.

Updates on federal climate policy were also given. Task force members talked about the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant, the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, transportation and climate, and the Lieberman-Warner Climate Security Act of 2007.

NLC will be holding sessions discussing the block grant, which is a legislative priority for NLC in 2008, during the Congressional City Conference in March. For more information, visit www.nlc.org.

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(ISSN. No. 0040-3415) Publication No. 539420

— Official publication of the Tennessee Municipal League. **Publisher:** Margaret Mahery (mmahery@TML1.org); **News briefs:** Carole Graves (cgraves@tml1.org); **Phone:** 615-255-6416. **Advertising:** Publisher reserves the right to reject any advertising deemed unacceptable. Fax classified ads to *TT&C*: Attention Mona Lawrence at 615-255-4752, or e-mail mlawrence@TML1.org. 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.

105th General Assembly awaits delivery of 2008 State of the State address



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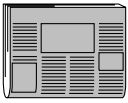
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OWASSO, OK. The city of Owasso Public Works Department seeks a civil engineer to work under the direction of the Engineering projects manager and the Public Works director, and will be responsible for reviewing subdivision submittals, generating documents for city authorities, and working with other engineers for the design and construction of small capital improvement projects. Requirements: Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with major study in civil, environmental or transportation engineering, construction management or a related field; two to three years of experience in professional civil engineering work, preferably in the area of design and/or construction of streets and roadways; possession of an Engineer-In-Training (EIT) certificate preferred; and all education requirements must be verifiable from records of satisfactory completion of courses. Join a team dedicated to improving the lives' of its citizens through innovative engineering and public works concepts. Visit www.cityofowasso.com. Send resumes to: employment@cityofowasso.com or Human Resources, P.O. Box 180, Owasso, OK 74055. Position open until filled.

DIRECTOR OF BUILDING & HOUSING CODES

JACKSON. The city of Jackson is accepting applications now through Feb. 22, 2008 for The Director of Building & Housing Codes responsible for the overall planning, organizing and direction of all activities of the Building and Housing Codes Department, including the effective and efficient operation of a Construction Codes Enforcement Program. Specific job include: plan, design, organize, direct and provide overall supervision, programs and activities for the Building and Housing Codes Department; direct the preparation of the annual departmental budget, and control the expenditures; responsible for the enforcement of construction and zoning codes; responsible for ensuring that all construction, alteration and repairs to houses and commercial buildings conform to structural safety regulations and requirements; meet with contractors and the public to discuss complaints/problems/suggestions and criticisms. College Degree from an accredited college in the area of Codes Enforcement/Construction/Architectural systems or a related area. Experience may be substituted for education. Generous benefit package; beginning salary \$56,950.00. EOE/M/F/V/D. Minorities are encouraged to apply! Job description on city website:

www.cityofjackson.net. Please contact the City of Jackson, Personnel Department, 127 E. Main Street, Suite 303, Jackson, TN 38301. Phone 731-425-8252 or Fax 731-425-8673.

FINANCE DIRECTOR/ASSISTANT TO THE MANAGER

BLACK MOUNTAIN, NC. The Town of Black Mountain seeks an experienced financial professional who has experience or is interested in expanding their skills into other administrative areas. Position reports to Manager and is responsible for administration of the departments of Finance and Water Administration. Duties include: supervising the financial activities of the town; oversight of preparation of three-year financial plan and five-year CIP; contract administration (including IT oversight); and, performing various projects for the Manager. Salary: DOQ/E. A combination of education and experience equivalent to graduation from an accredited college or university with major course work in finance, public administration or related field and extensive experience in municipal government desired. Salary range: \$50,565-\$75,837. Job description and application available at www.townofblackmountain.org. Return to: Town Clerk, Town of Black Mountain, 102 Montreat Road, Black Mountain, NC 28711. Position open until filled. EOE

PLANNING ADMINISTRATOR

MEMPHIS/SHELBY COUNTY. The city of Memphis and Shelby County is seeking applicants for the position of Planning Administrator. Requirements include Master's Degree in City/County or Regional Planning plus 7 years experience in urban planning or Bachelor's Degree in planning, engineering, public administration, architectural, or the social sciences plus 10 years professional experience in the field of planning. Five years in Executive/Planning Director capacity is required. Submit resume by visiting www.watersconsulting.com/recruitment or for more details on the position. Position open until filled.

POLICE OFFICER

OWASSO, OK. The City of Owasso Police Department seeks candidates for the position of Police Officer. Applicants must be between the ages of 21 and 45 years of age, and have a minimum of 60 college credit hours. Up to \$5,000 incentive pay is provided upon completion of probationary period for those applicants who are currently certified. Applicants must successfully complete a series of pre-employment steps which include a physical agility exam, written exam, Oral Review Board, chief's interview, pension physical, and background investigation. Details and requirements at the "Employment Opportunities" link at www.cityofowasso.com. Resumes can be submitted online or sent to Human Resources, P.O. Box 180, Owasso, OK 74055. Deadline for application is Feb. 22, 2008. Recognized certifications must be approved by the Chief of Police.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

OWASSO, OK. City of Owasso, Ok is seeking resumes for Public Works Director; position is responsible for planning, organizing, directing, and coordinating the activities of the Public Works Department. Requirements: Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university, Masters of Science in Civil Engineering or related field preferred; P.E. certification a plus; Five years increasingly responsible experience in a broad range of municipal services including engineering/architectural design or operations, refuse system operations, water/wastewater and/or street maintenance; Oklahoma Class "A" license as Wastewater Operator and Oklahoma Class "A" license as Water Operator or ability to obtain; other combinations of experience and education that meet the minimum requirements may be substituted. For more information, visit www.cityofowasso.com. Position open until filled.

WASTE WATER TREATMENT PLANT SUPERVISOR

OWASSO, OK. The Public Works Department seeks a Wastewater Treatment Plant Supervisor to service a population of 33,858. The hired professional will work under the direction of the Public Works Director, and will be responsible for coordinating, supervising, and reviewing the activities relating to the operations and maintenance of the City of Owasso wastewater treatment facilities as well as monitoring projects, providing technical expertise, and responding to after hour problems and emergencies. Requirements: Associate's Degree in biology, chemistry, engineering, or a related field; five years of increasingly responsible supervisory experience in wastewater treatment operation and maintenance; minimum of three years experience must be at the Class A level; possession of an Oklahoma Class A wastewater works operator certification; possession of an Oklahoma Class B wastewater laboratory certification. See www.cityofowasso.com for more information. Send resume to employment@cityofowasso.com or Human Resources, P.O. Box 180, Owasso, OK 74055. Position open until filled.

Official Elvis license plate unveiled in Memphis

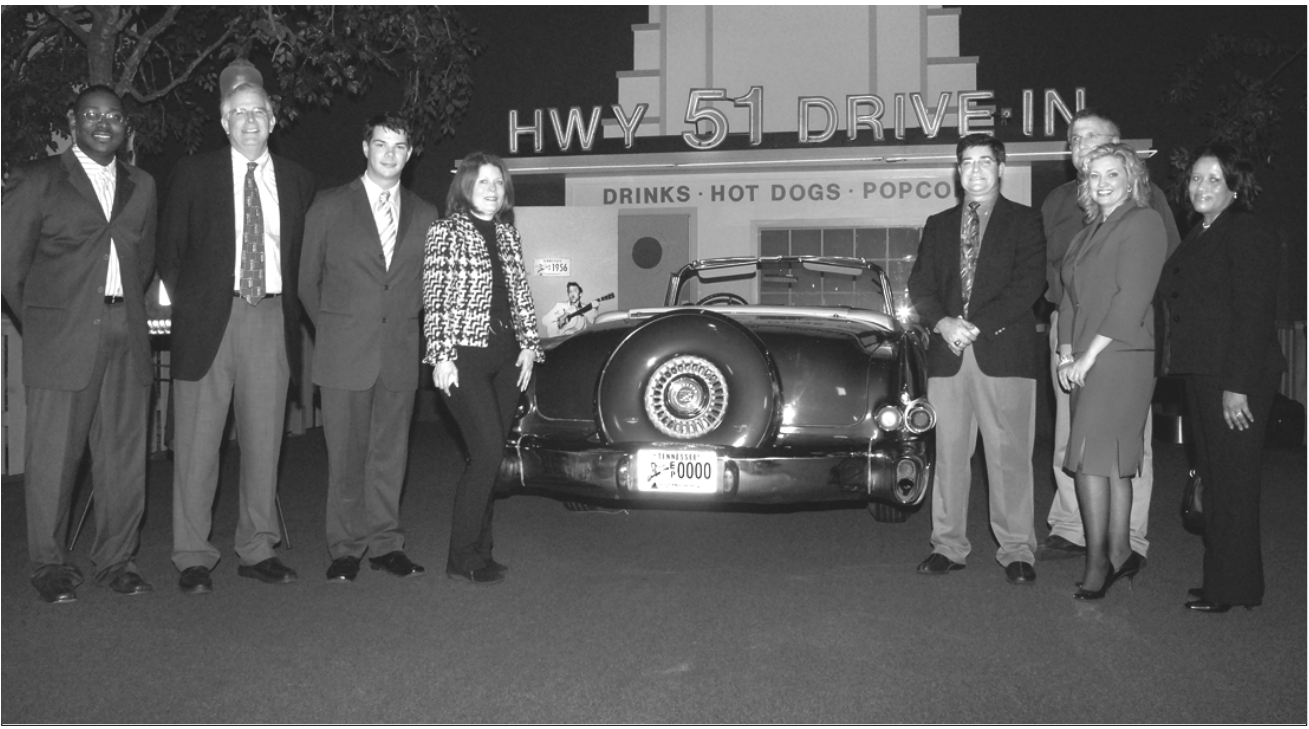


Photo by A. Mukkaram

The official Elvis Presley state license plate was unveiled at a ceremony in Memphis. License plate proceeds will benefit the Elvis Presley Memorial Trama Center and the MED Foundation. L-R: Michael Scruggs, Phil Shannon, Kevin Kern, Sandy Snell, Dr. Martin Croce, Mark Lindstrom, Tammy Ritchey and Marsha Evans.

Key rulemaking on pole attachment

FCC RULING from Page 1
munications attachments. That rate, as a general rule of thumb, would allow investor owned utilities to charge approximately 16.9 percent of its annual cost of pole ownership, assuming an average of three attachments per pole on such a system.

The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking provides an aggressive timeline for comments and reply comments. Initial comments are due within 30 days of the publication of

the Notice in the Federal Register. Reply comments are due 30 days later. The ultimate resolution of this proceeding will likely take several months and could extend more than a year.

The FCC will undoubtedly receive a wide range of views from pole owners and pole users in this proceeding. While municipal electric systems or electric cooperatives will not be directly impacted by the rules adopted in this proceeding, as a

practical matter, the outcome of this proceeding will impact the negotiating position of pole users in their attachment negotiations with electric systems. As such, municipal electric systems and their legal counsel would be well advised to closely monitor the FCC proceedings as part of handling pole attachment matters for their respective systems.

Article reprinted with permission from the *Tennessee Valley Public Power Association Magazine*.

Partnership to expand business in East Tenn

REGIONAL from Page 1

Daniels, adding that Innovation Valley plans to supply a skilled workforce by combing regional colleges for graduates at the University of Tennessee, Maryville College, and Pellissippi State Community College in addition to global marketing efforts. Daniels also predicts meatier technology courses will be offered at regional colleges and in area schools, particularly K-12.

"Two major employers approached us about skill sets not being met," Daniels said. "Our sister counties have also described the same issues. Innovation Valley plans to attack these issues as a region."

With the expansion of new businesses and technology, Daniels envisions a broader regional tax base and a boom in the housing industry as population swells in East Tennessee.

see.

Daniels cited the new 450-acre high tech park, Pellissippi Research Centre in Alcoa where 230 acres of the park will be used for research and development and corporate office space, while the other 125 acres will be used for mixed use development. The park is expected to create more than \$1 billion in economic impact.

e-Community Leadership Teams brainstorming to further technology

BROADBAND from Page 1

digital divide" to the wired world putting rural areas on equal footing with urban areas.

"Too many rural areas of our nation are being overlooked by broadband providers," report Connected Tennessee officials. "But you can change that by creating the de-

mand that is necessary to drive a broadband movement in your neck of the woods."

Membership with the leadership teams are entirely voluntary and include citizens who are concerned about developing technology within the region they live in and the desire to become involved in the process.

"We need people with passion, people who want to make things happen," Ramage said.

Those interested in technology growth within their communities and in Tennessee may learn how to become involved by contacting Michael Ramage at mramage@connectedtn.org.

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TML requests e-mail addresses

The quickest way to keep city officials apprised of legislative happenings is through e-mail or fax. Each Friday during the legislative session, TML prepares and distributes a weekly bulletin .

To receive the *TML Legislative Bulletin* by e-mail or fax, please send your contact information to Mona Lawrence, by fax at 615-255-4752, by e-mail to mlawrence@TML1.org, or call 615-255-6416.

Cleveland depot reborn as historic transit station

BY VICTORIA SOUTH
TML Communications Coordinator

The Cleveland Southern Railway Depot in Cleveland, Bradley County at Five Points, was recently approved by the Tennessee Historical Commission to appear on the National Register of Historic Places. With the transfer of the property from Norfolk Southern to SETHRA (Southeast Tennessee Human Resources Agency) the depot will be restored to its former glory and once again become a vibrant transportation center for municipal bus service allowing citizens to move within the region.

The boarded up dilapidated old train depot on Edwards Street stands as a silent ode to American history. The Cleveland Southern Railway Depot was once a hub of activity, serving as a bustling passenger station from 1911 until 1970. A remnant of the evolving transportation and industrial needs of the 19th and 20th century, historians account that at least six sitting U.S. presidents stopped there on their way across East Tennessee.

“President Roosevelt made two visits in one day to and from the Chickamauga Dam,” said Cleveland Mayor Tom Rowland, a member of the Tennessee-Virginia Amtrak Initiative and the Tennessee Railroad Advisory Commission.

It was at the depot where brave men and women of the service bid farewell and returned home from World War I, World War II and later, Vietnam. Tennessee author Alex Haley visited the site in 1986 during the Tennessee Homecoming celebration.

“Yep, there was always somebody stopping by to talk and watch the trains go by,” said former councilman and Cleveland resident



The rear entrance to the Cleveland depot built in the early 1900s and once a hub for passenger and freight activity.

In addition to several lumber yards, copper mining was another big industry in neighboring Polk County. Five Points, near the depot, is the western end of old Copper Road, where copper was transported from Copper Hill to Cleveland in the 1800s and 1900s. It is known as the earliest market center for the Ocoee region. Coal, also a big industry, was transported by the Southern Railway to the iron and steel manufacturers in Chattanooga.

The Historical Commission reports that when passenger service began to increase in the early 1900s,

hopes to refurbish the Cleveland Depot to its former glory.

“We at SETHRA are very excited at the plan to restore the Depot as close to the original state as possible,” said SETHRA spokesperson, Nancy Sutherland. “We feel it is vital for this building to be utilized for original purposes.”

Sutherland explained that the facility will not be used as a regional transportation center, but will afford citizens the opportunity to access public transportation as a transfer station or for originating or final destinations. *The Cleveland Bureau*



Intricate glass windows once graced the now boarded up front entrance to the Depot

Mitchell Lyle, 82, a retired freight agent who worked at the depot from 1946 to 1986. Lyle’s fondest memory of the depot is the camaraderie there, where folks from all walks of life, whether business people, engineers, or the wanderer hoping to hitch a ride gathered around to talk a spell.

“All the old timers wanted to go home after the war was over,” continued Lyle. “They had to hire new people, so I guess I was in the right place at the right time to be hired.”

As a young man, Lyle began his railroad career as a telegraph operator using Morse code, actually the International code, as he remembers it. “There are some differences between the two,” he explains. “It was the same as a fax only it was human to human. In those times we had phones, but the operator in Knoxville would have to ring Chattanooga, and then they’d ring Birmingham, and then New Orleans to make reservations.”

Research by the Tennessee Historical Commission reveals the Southern Railway began as a freight carrier in the late 1800s due in part to the skyrocketing freight needs associated with the new Hardwick Woolen Mills in Cleveland, which became one of the largest manufacturers of wool fabric and men’s clothing in the world between 1900 and 1950. Christopher Hardwick had also established Hardwick Stove Co. in 1879, which continued successfully in the area for 100 years.

Cleveland’s old combination depot, an indoor facility built for passengers, freight, and baggage became inadequate.

With greater emphasis placed on railroad improvements between 1907 and 1911, funding became available to build an elaborate brick passenger station for the times, featuring a ticket office, baggage room, segregated passenger waiting rooms, (customary in the south during the period), and an outdoor pavilion. The project cost a whopping \$19,100 and was completed in 1911, according to the Historical Commission.

The depot’s staff included an agent, station attendant, cashier, six clerks, ticket clerk, three operators, four truckers, coal chute foreman, and four coalers. A typical passenger schedule at the depot in 1911 would include 10 trains, five westbound and five eastbound.

With the rise of the diesel engine in the 1930s and 1940s, the Southern Railway managed one of the largest passenger fleets in the country. Yet, passenger service began to decline sharply in the 1950s and 1960s, due to increased air travel and interstate highways, until Southern finally discontinued passenger service merging with Norfolk & Western to focus on freight. The Cleveland Depot’s last day of passenger service was Aug. 11, 1970. It became a freight office until 2004.

Purchasing the property in 2007, the Southeast Tennessee Human Resource Agency (SETHRA)

reported in December that SETHRA is seeking federal funding for the project.

“We also hope to add an opportunity for the Cleveland Southern Railway Depot to exhibit historical photos and railway mementoes as a means to preserve and share with others the Bradley County area’s rich railroad history,” said Sutherland. “This will attract more people to our facilities, and encourage donations necessary for our depot to succeed long into the future.”

According to Rowland, the site’s recent approval by the Tennessee Historical Commission to appear on the National Register of Historic Places means an automatic listing on the Tennessee register as well.

The listing will provide recognition of the community’s importance and assures protective review of Federal projects that might adversely affect the character of the property and that means a lot to Cleveland’s residents.

“I’m very happy,” said Rowland. “It’s become an eyesore and there’s a lot of history there.”

Currently living in a Cleveland nursing home, Lyle still reflects upon the days when he’d throw a penny on the tracks to teach youngsters the danger of getting too close to the trains. He says he’s looking forward to seeing the restored depot.

He muses, “I’m not that excited about the bus station, but you know, when you get old, you tend to think of things as they were. I wish them good luck.”



Original doors lead to the baggage room on the west side of the depot

Depot Trivia



- Cleveland required a new passenger depot because of increased travel volume and a population of approximately 7,000 people.

- The Cleveland Depot property was purchased north of an original combination depot in order to construct a new, larger passenger depot. Expenses included: \$9,300 (Depot), \$2,300 (Brick Platforms), \$3,600 (filling), \$525 (fencing), \$2,025 (macadam paving), and \$125 (labor removing tracks and post. An additional cost of \$1,700 was added to the total cost in March 1910 for the expansion of the white waiting room and to include a cellar with a heating plant.

- The “separate but equal” clause from the Plessy v. Ferguson (1896) United States Supreme Court decision created the need for two waiting rooms in all of the passenger stations in the South. The Cleveland Depot’s white waiting room was twice the size of the African American waiting room as customary of the times. Both rooms were divided by the ticket office.

- The Southern Railway played a major role in the transport of troops, military equipment, and construction materials for training camps, aviation schools, supply bases, and defense plants.

- According to the Railroad Station Historical Society, a number of different types of depots existed. Depots accommodated passengers, held freight or both. **Shelters** are the simplest type of

passenger depot, consisting of a platform of compacted dirt, cinders, gravel, wood, brick, concrete, or asphalt along with some type of covering to protect passengers from the elements. Sometimes it was just a roof, while others had walls or were built as lean-tos. **Combination depots** have indoor facilities for passengers, baggage, and freight plus an office agent. **Union Depots** or **stations** were sometimes built where two or more railroad lines served the same community.

Electric railways, trolleys had similar depots including a large number of **storefront depots**, where tickets were sold out of an already existing building, a portion leased by the railway line. Some **interurban depots** were combined with substations, which helped provide a constant electric current from one end of the line to the next, between powerhouses.

The word “**station**” is often used interchangeably with “depot,” but refers to either much more than or much less than an actual depot. The word “depot” describes a structure serving the public at a station.

The Federal Transportation Enhancement Program began providing funds to local communities in 1991. More than \$200 million in grants has been distributed by The Tennessee Department of Transportation to 180 communities across the state where some local officials have used the funding to renovate historic train depots and other transportation related structures.

Photos and research materials courtesy of
The Tennessee Historical Commission