

Among top in the Nation

## Tennessee receives high marks from *Governing*

BY CAROLE GRAVES  
TML Communications Director

Information management, strong performance audits, a well-funded pension system, and the state's ability to manage its finances responsibly and with a long-term perspective when making budget decisions were among Tennessee's management strengths recently cited in a 50-state assessment in *Governing Magazine*.

The report, "Grading the States 2008," is a joint effort of *Governing* and the Pew Center on the States that examines how well the states are managed. The study focuses on four fundamental areas of government management: Information, People,

Money, and Infrastructure. Tennessee received the highest marks for Infrastructure and Information. The state's lowest grade came in the area of people management and the lack of strategic workforce planning.

"Tennessee has made gains in several management areas and has a strong organizational structure in place for good management," the report stated. "Tennessee's strength in some areas of information management is particularly impressive. For example, performance audits conducted by the comptroller's office are among the strongest in the country and focus on ambitious, substantive policy areas."

Report findings are the result of a thorough and rigorous review by a



Despite a heavy workload that includes property assessment, debt management and policy analysis, Tennessee's comptroller office manages to do a better job of both performance auditing and financial reporting that can be found in almost any other state.

panel of the nation's leading state government management experts that paint a clear and complete picture. See **GOVERNING** on Page 5

## Legislative Conference April 14 - 15

Make plans now to attend the Tennessee Municipal League's Annual Legislative Conference, slated for April 14 -15 in Nashville at the DoubleTree Hotel Downtown Nashville.

The two-day conference provides an excellent forum for city officials to interact with their legislators and to be updated on the many legislative issues currently being addressed by the Tennessee General Assembly.

At the forefront of everyone's mind is the state's financial situation and budgeting for a tight year. With sluggish sales tax revenues underperforming and declines in the Franchise and Excise tax, the state legislature is faced with plugging funding gaps and trimming down spending to balance the 2008-09 budget. Finance Committee Chairs, Sen. Randy McNally and Rep. Craig Fitzhugh, will kick off this year's conference with a financial update and outlook.

Also on Monday afternoon's agenda, Commerce and Insurance Commissioner Leslie Newman will discuss a proposal on the Interna-



Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey



House Speaker Jimmy Naifeh

tional Building Codes and Paul Sloan with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation will update the membership on See **CONFERENCE** on Page 9

## Lawmakers propose a return to Civics Ed

BY VICTORIA SOUTH  
TML Communications Coordinator

The disparity between knowing and not knowing the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship could be resolved by a return to the basics, according to advocates for putting civics education back into Tennessee's classrooms.

Several proposed bills to reintroduce civics learning and understanding of citizenship are before the state legislature sponsored by State Sen. Rosalind Kurita.

A bill providing up to \$750 in scholarship money to one high school student in each of the 33 Senate districts and one in each of the 99 House districts by submitting a civics essay or project, passed overwhelmingly in the Senate.

In 2007, the Tennessee Commission on Civic Education, an entity created by the Tennessee State Legislature, asked all K-12 schools teachers and principals to complete a survey to find out what is being taught across the state in the area of civic education.

The commission, chaired by Kurita, is charged with examining all aspects of civic learning in the state and making recommendations for improving civic education for Tennessee's students.

Currently, Tennessee joins many other states that do not require a separate course in civics or civics curriculum as a prerequisite to graduation.

History teachers might touch on the topic while covering their main subject materials.

Reports across the U.S. reflect a society increasingly out of touch with the foundations of citizenry as researchers from the University of Connecticut's Department of Public Policy discovered when surveying 14,000 freshmen and seniors at 50 of America's colleges and universities. Students were pre-



The subject draws snickers on Jay Leno's *Tonight Show*, yet citizens' appalling lack of knowledge about government is no laughing matter in Tennessee, as several bills geared to re-introduce civics learning in the state's schools circle the legislature.

sented 60 questions on various topics in American history, government and economics. Less than half, 45.9 percent, of these students knew that See **CIVICS** on Page 8

## A new era of cooperation between sister cities promotes a united front

BY CANDACE MOONSHOWER  
Business Tennessee Magazine

From the outside looking in, the sibling-cities of Kingsport and Johnson City, widely recognized, along with Bristol, as the Tri-Cities region of East Tennessee, are united in their regionalism. Yet, individual city leaders might tell a different story—a story of regionalism, yes, but of a friendly and longstanding rivalry, too, as the cities have striven to maintain their separate and unique identities.

Last summer, the rivalry began to unravel when Kingsport Mayor Dennis Phillips, along with Kingsport's city manager, John Campbell, attended a swearing-in ceremony of city officials in Johnson City, and Johnson City officials later watched as Phillips took his oath of office in Kingsport. As the Kingsport Times-News reported at the time, it appeared that city leaders in both Kingsport and Johnson City were making efforts to usher in a new era of "communication and cooperation."

Campbell, a Kingsport native, is in a unique position to comment on previous rivalries and the current push toward teamwork. He spent a quarter of a century in positions with Johnson City, with close to 17 years of that as city manager. Why not Kingsport, his home town? "I had just finished graduate school when Johnson City called," Campbell says. "With other offers, I would have had to move five or six hours away from Neyland Stadium at UT-Knoxville, so I took Johnson City up on their offer!"

Campbell is quick to acknowledge that Kingsport was long con-

sidered the economic "star" of the region, anchored by the Eastman Chemical Co. "While I was working in Johnson City, the citizens of Kingsport had found it easy to become complacent about their town's economy because Eastman employed about 15,000 people, and there were other strong manufacturing concerns in the area, too," he says. Johnson City, without an economic anchor like Eastman, was working to maximize its potential and grow its economy.

In the 1990s, with cutbacks in manufacturing mirroring the weakening national economy, the bottom dropped out of Kingsport's economy. Eastman underwent a massive downsizing in its employee base, and a number of other manufacturers closed up shop and left the area.

"The Kingsport leaders recognized that the city needed to diversify and make its economy more broad-based," Campbell says. Johnson City, without an Eastman of its own, had been doing this all along, working, slowly and steadily, toward developing a strong economic foundation, with the medical school at East Tennessee State University as its underpinning, and the medical community as a whole—in the private sector and with the non-profit hospital—working together.

Continuity of leadership helped. "In Johnson City, I had my core professional team together for at least ten years, which really helped us strategize and do long-range planning for our town," Campbell says. Now, in his position as city manager of Kingsport, Campbell is proud to be helping his hometown implement plans and move the economic



Kingsport Mayor Dennis Phillips



Johnson City Mayor Phil Roe

growth along—plans, he says, that were already being put into place when he came on board in October 2006. "Things have stabilized with Eastman holding steady at about 7,200 employees, and Kingsport Tomorrow, a civic community-improvement organization with 17 different taskforces, working all along to build the economy, improve the See **COOPERATION** on Page 9

## Pharmaceutical drugs, cyber crime on the rise

BY VICTORIA SOUTH

At the party, bodies clash and heads bob in appreciation as a local punk band cranks it up for the night. Inside, kids grab handfuls of brightly colored candies from a big glass bowl in the kitchen. Teen parties in America are typical. The "candies" however, are pharmaceuticals, the latest price of admission.

"They're called Skittle parties," said Lt. Angie Lewis of the Germantown Police Department. "And they're continuing to grow."

With a background in chemistry and a recent promotion to Lieutenant, Lewis previously worked as a Germantown Police detective cracking down on prescription drug fraud in her community.

"The kids bring the pills from home and throw them into a big bowl," she continues. "No one knows what the medicines are, they're just eaten like candy, whatever color they like red, blue, green..."

Testifying before the state Senate Judiciary Committee, Tennessee Bureau of Investigation Director Mark Gwyn said he expects the next drug epidemic in the state will be illegal use of pharmaceutical drugs along with another threat, cyber crime.

Gwyn said TBI agents have seen a proliferation of teen parties where pharmaceutical drugs are a pre-condition for entry into an event.

"It might not be your child,"



The TBI reports a rise in prescription drug abuse and cyber crime statewide.

Lewis said. "It could be your child's friend visiting your home and raiding your medicine cabinet. They find out who's on Ritalin or Adderall (drugs to treat hyperactivity) which are considered street drugs now."

According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy's (ONDCP) *Cities without Drugs*, a "how to" manual for major cities to reduce community substance abuse, "Real progress (in the war on drugs) requires the active support and participation of key leaders, professionals, and concerned citizens at the local level."

In conjunction with President Bush's 2002 "National Drug Control Strategy," the ONDCP launched an initiative directly engaging officials and citizens in 25 of the nation's largest metropolitan areas.

One of the foremost obstacles See **DRUGS** on Page 9

## U.S. Communities offers cities purchasing power

Purchasing for local governments has never been easier and more cost effective than through the U.S. Communities Government Purchasing Alliance.

U.S. Communities, a non-profit agency, assists local and state government agencies, school districts (K-12), higher education, and nonprofits in reducing the cost of purchased goods through pooling the purchasing power of public agencies nationwide. This is accomplished through competitively solicited contracts for quality products through lead public agencies.

With sales of more than \$1.2 billion in 2007, U.S. Communities now offers 16 competitively solicited contracts, providing thousands of products and services including office supplies and furniture, parks and playground equipment, homeland security and public safety products, maintenance products, auto parts, technology products and more.

The program is easy to use.

There is no fee to participate, no minimum spending and only a simple electronic registration is required. Any city or town may register online at [www.uscommunities.org](http://www.uscommunities.org) and clicking on "Register to Participate."

Electronic registration provides a public agency with access to all contract documents and pricing, all suppliers, and substantial information on program savings and program participants. It also provides an electronic copy of the master inter-governmental cooperative purchasing agreement that serves as the legal document that authorizes a participating public agency's use of each lead public agency's contract available through U.S. Communities.

Each month more than 400 new public agencies register to participate. The continuing rapid growth of public agency participation is fueled by the program's proven track record of providing public agencies unparalleled value. For more information, visit [www.uscommunities.org](http://www.uscommunities.org).



NEWS  
ACROSS  
TENNESSEE



BY TML STAFF REPORTS

CHATTANOOGA

Westinghouse Electric Company has announced plans to invest \$9.45 million to establish a new services facility at its Chattanooga operation. The expansion will create 52 new high-value jobs for nuclear engineers and technicians. Westinghouse's Nuclear Services Business Unit will purchase the Metals USA building which has been vacant for over a year in the Centre South Riverport. The new facility is approximately 65,000 square feet and will more than double the company's square footage in the Riverfront Parkway facility. Westinghouse plans to occupy the new building by May 1.

CHATTANOOGA

Retirement Living magazine named Chattanooga among its Top 10 Healthy Places in the Southeast. The only Tennessee city listed, Chattanooga recently launched an ad campaign targeting retirees.

CLARKSVILLE

Clarksville was named the most promising real estate appreciation market in the country by Fiserve, which provides services to the financial industry. The company projected that real estate prices will rise 6.4 percent through 2009, a rosy outlook compared to other national real estate market indexes showing home prices dropping fast.

CLEVELAND/BRADLEY COUNTY

Bradley County has been selected as one of 105 sites nationwide to participate in a study to advance child health in the 21st century. The National Children's Study will examine the effects of environmental influences on the health and development of more than 100,000 children across the United States. The research project will be the largest study of children's health and development ever to be conducted in the

U.S. It will enroll women who are either pregnant or likely to have a child during recruitment. The goal will be to attain 250 births per year in each study location during a four-year enrollment period. The study will analyze the interactions between genetic and environmental factors that affect health, including those related to obesity, diabetes, asthma, injuries, and social behavior. Although the study will span more than two decades, findings will become available within two to three years after the study is launched. Once all of the preliminary work is complete and grants are awarded, families will be recruited door-to-door while others may join through their local physicians' offices, health clinics and hospitals. For further information, contact Kristi Strode at 423-778-4566 or log on at [www.nationalchildrensstudy.gov](http://www.nationalchildrensstudy.gov).

CLEVELAND

City teachers are asking for a 5 percent salary increase in the next fiscal year. Cleveland Board of Education members said they will do what they can. "With food and fuel prices soaring, it is a challenge to live on an educator's salary," said Gloria Scott Richmond, representing the Cleveland Education Association. Richmond said the Tennessee Education Association will continue working with Gov. Bredesen to raise state funding for teacher salaries to 90 percent of the national average.

DYERSBURG

Citizen-soldiers from the 168th Military Police Battalion in Dyersburg has been alerted for possible mobilization to active duty. The battalion is the command element for six subordinate units, ranging from Ripley to Dickson. Currently of the entire unit's 683-person roster, 59 soldiers from the 130th Military Police Company in Memphis are in Kosovo; 130 soldiers from the 251st Military Police Company in Lexington, Bolivar and Savannah were mobilized in December

2007; 170 soldiers from the Dickson and Waverly units are in Iraq.

HENDERSONVILLE

The discovery of mold in a Hendersonville elementary school has led the Sumner County's schools director, Benny Bills, to propose mold tests for all of the county's 43 schools. A report presented to the County Commission Education Committee said mold was found at Walton Ferry Elementary School. "If there is a concern, they all need to be checked," Bills said.

JACKSON

State senators approved a private act allowing Jackson city officials to establish an Environmental Court. The court would have the power to fine people \$50 per day for property code violations. Failure to pay the fine could result in jail terms of up to 10 days. Residents would have a certain amount of time to fix problems before facing the court fine or jail sentence. Violations that might come before the court if it is established include housing and building code issues such as broken windows or excessive trash in the yard.

KINGSPORT

Partnering with two regional home rehabilitation charities, Kingsport has allocated \$83,000 in local dollars and another \$220,000 in federal Community Development Block Grant funds to assist low-income, disabled and/or elderly home owners in rehabilitating aging housing stock under the new Kingsport Alliance for Home Rehabilitation (KAHR) program. "This helps not only individual homeowners, but entire neighborhoods as we begin to restore deteriorating homes within those neighborhoods. And as we improve the individual housing stock of our city, we improve the competitiveness of our community," Mayor Dennis Phillips said. The program will be administered by the Kingsport Housing and Redevelopment Authority, and will work the Upper East Tennessee Human Resource Agency, First Tennessee Development District, and the Tennessee Housing Development Agency, which offers grant funds that could expand the program. Some 34 eligible homeowners have been deter-

mined to currently meet criteria necessary to receive rehabilitation assistance. Applications are need based, with services delivered on a first come, first serve basis.

LENOIR /LOUDON COUNTY

Local law officers say their fight against meth production is paying off. In fact, they're seeing a decrease in meth labs across East Tennessee. An undercover narcotics investigator with the Loudon County Sheriff's office says they've been tough on meth production, and have seen results. A new report from the Office of National Drug Control Policy shows the number of labs is going down in Tennessee and across the country which investigators say is linked to new laws of putting medicines behind the counter which has made it harder for individuals that make meth to get it without businesses notifying law enforcement.

LEWISBURG

City, county and state officials came together in Lewisburg to tour the new U.S. Tank and Cryogenics facility, located in the Lewisburg Business Park. The 500,000 square foot building represents a \$2.4 million investment that will create 75 new jobs for the community. The company is the first facility to be in operation at the Lewisburg Business Park and applications for employment are currently being accepted. U.S. Tank and Cryogenics refurbishes tanks used to store liquid forms of gases.

MURFREESBORO

Nearly two-thirds of Tennesseans favor opening the state's pre-kindergarten program to wealthier children in addition to poor ones, according to the latest MTSU Poll. Dr. Ken Blake, director of the poll, said, "Just 16 percent support leaving it limited to poorer children only, and 17 percent aren't sure. About 2 percent say the state should not offer pre-kindergarten programs at all."

NASHVILLE

Nashville's most troubled schools stand to receive an estimated \$24 million in federal dollars this year and the state will play a bigger role

than ever before in helping Metro determine how to allot the money. Metro Nashville Public Schools, as a district, won't know exactly how much it will be receiving until later this year, due to the federal government's financial calendar. But the district has long received a certain amount of federal Title I funding, and in recent years part of this funding was tied to federal No Child Left Behind legislation. The money is intended to benefit economically challenged students. The main difference from last year is that principals of Metro schools will be more closely involved in determining the needs to be funded by federal dollars, rather than the district specifying certain uses for the money. MNPS is considered to be in "corrective action" status due to repeatedly missing certain NCLB benchmarks. The district's "corrective action" status has resulted in an unprecedented level of state involvement in district governance. And if school performance doesn't improve significantly, the district could be in a position next year in which the state has legal discretion over the MNPS's use of financial resources.

OAK RIDGE

Oak Ridge National Laboratory has been designated a National Historic Chemical Landmark for its pioneering work in the production and distribution of radioisotopes for medicine and other peaceful uses. In a ceremony at ORNL, American Chemical Society president Bruce Bursten lauded the historic achievements at Oak Ridge, which grew out of the lab's wartime role in the Manhattan Project to produce and separate small amounts of plutonium. The lab's radioisotopes program grew rapidly in the postwar period, and during the 1960s, ORNL made more than 100,000 shipments annually. Ultimately, much of the isotopes work was turned over to private industry, although the High Flux Isotope Reactor and related facilities at ORNL are still used to produce an inventory of special isotopes, such as californium-252, iron-55 and tungsten-188, needed for cancer treatments, research and other important uses.

SEVIERVILLE

Lisega, Inc., announced that the Newport company will invest \$10 million in a relocation project in Sevierville creating 100 new jobs and retaining 124 current employees. Construction of a 100,000-square-foot square-foot state-of-the-art facility in the Smith-Thomas Technology Park near Interstate 40 is expected to start this summer and will take about 18 months to complete. Lisega is a world-wide leader in pipe support systems with standard products ranging from hangers, spring hangers, and heavy duty shock absorbers. Their Tennessee presence is currently the German company's only manufacturing facility in the United States.

SPRING HILL

City officials are reviewing legislation that would make conserving water a mandatory action in the near future. Plans are being made to conserve water during an ongoing drought that hit Middle Tennessee's water reserves. Every utility that draws from the Duck River has been reviewing management plans in case of an extended drought at the request of the Duck River Agency.



PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

BY TML STAFF REPORTS

UT President John Petersen announced the promotion of **Mary Jinks** to vice president of public service for the University of Tennessee. Jinks has been with the university for nearly 25 years, with more than 20 years at the statewide UT Institute for Public Service (IPS). Her history at UT includes a master's degree in public administration and an educational doctorate. Serving as associate vice president of the Institute for Public Service for the past year, and in her new role, Jinks will continue to lead and manage the institute.



Jinks

The National Insurance Producer Registry appointed Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance Commissioner **Leslie Newman** as its newest board member. Newman represents the National Association of Insurance Commissioners on the NIPR board of directors. Newman has more than 20 years of experience as a regulatory attorney and has worked as an attorney with Municipal Technical Advisory Service of the University of Tennessee, Institute for Public Service; served with the Metropolitan Nashville Department of Law as associate metropolitan attorney; and worked in private practice, focusing on land



Newman

use, zoning, urban and municipal law, and government relations.

**Paul Ney** has been named as director of the Mayor's Office of Economic and Community Development with Metro Nashville. Ney, a Nashville resident, has been serving in the U.S. Department of Defense as deputy general counsel for the past year. He also served for a year as the principal deputy general counsel and acting general counsel for the U.S. Department of the Navy. Prior to that, Ney practiced law in Nashville for 20 years in the local law firm Trauger Ney & Tuke. He joined the firm in 1985, becoming a partner in 1990.

**United States Attorney David Kustoff**, who oversaw most of the Tennessee Waltz prosecutions, announced his resignation, effective May 16. Kustoff, a Republican who

was formerly active in Shelby County politics, became United States attorney for western Tennessee in March 2006. He was appointed by President George W. Bush. He plans to join his former law firm, Kustoff and Strickland, in partnership with Memphis City Councilman Jim Strickland.

**Susan Reid**, executive director of the First Tennessee Development District, received the John D. Whisman Vision Award at the Development District Association of Appalachia Conference in Washington, D.C. The award honors outstanding service and leadership in Appalachia. The Development District Association of Appalachia is a non-profit organization of local development districts within the 13-state area served by the Appalachian Regional Commission.

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# Hooray for green! Tennesseans celebrate Arbor Day

Once again, cities across Tennessee demonstrated their affection for all things green with Arbor Day celebrations and inductions into Tree City USA.

Mayor Ron Littlefield was on hand to celebrate Chattanooga going greener at the “Take Root” program during the Arbor Day celebration at Battle Academy. Take Root allows individuals, groups and businesses to buy a tree or trees, which will be planted and maintained by the city.

“This is really a unique way to help with the greening of Chattanooga,” said City Forester Gene Hyde. “Our goal is to achieve a 15 percent canopy goal in the downtown area. Every new tree planted gets us a little closer to that goal. A healthy, growing tree is essentially a pollution-eating device and a mini-air conditioner.”

Hyde has assigned a specific species of tree to each of the nearly 1,500 initial planting spots, which are located primarily in the downtown area. During the ceremony, Chattanooga was recognized as a Tree City USA community for the 18th consecutive year.

The Tree City USA program is sponsored by the National Arbor Day Foundation and the USDA Forest Service. A city must meet four standards to become a Tree City USA community: A tree board, a tree-care ordinance, a comprehensive community forestry program, and an Arbor Day observance.

It is the first year the cities of Bartlett and Martin received this national recognition, and the 11<sup>th</sup> year for Tullahoma. Seven oak trees donated to the Oakwood Cemetery Foundation by Margaret Thoma were planted in her honor at a celebration in Tullahoma.

Kingsport’s Arbor Day celebration at John F. Kennedy Elementary School honored the city’s 22-year commitment to keeping Kingsport green and growing.

At the event, Mayor Dennis Phillips issued a proclamation in celebration of Arbor Day and five new Notable Trees of Kingsport were recognized along with three Yoshino Cherry Trees planted on the grounds of J.F.K. Elementary. Upon reaching maturity, the cherry trees will reach 20-25 feet tall.

As part of the festivities, the Tennessee Division of Forestry presented a Tree City USA flag and recognized Kingsport as a Tree City USA for the 22<sup>nd</sup> consecutive year.

“Kingsport has much to be proud of, but our continued commitment to keeping Kingsport green and beautiful is what really makes the strongest statement to visitors and residents alike,” Mayor Phillips said.

“We have an excellent staff that works long and hard to maintain healthy urban forests within Kingsport.”

Last year, the landscaping, parks and grounds maintenance staff of the city of Kingsport along with dozens of volunteers conducted an extensive survey of trees in public areas in Kingsport, cataloguing the type, size, health and exact global coordinates of hundreds of trees. The tree survey was an effort to chronicle the health and diversity of both native and non-native tree species in the public inventory.

“We continue to look for grants and other funds that will help us expand tree plantings in Kingsport,” City Manager John Campbell said. “At the same time, as we invest in new public projects, we are being sure to incorporate funds for the continued greening of Kingsport.”

“Tree City USA designation recognizes the work of elected officials, staff and citizens who plant and care for the community forest,” said John Rosenow, Chief Executive of the Arbor Day Foundation.

“Trees are a vital component of the infrastructure in our cities and towns, and provide environmental and economical benefits. A community, and its citizens, that recognize these benefits and provide needed care for its trees deserves recognition and thanks.”

Some important reasons to receive Tree City USA designation are: encourages better care of community forests; touches the lives of people within the community who benefit daily from cleaner air, shadier streets, and aesthetic beauty; builds cooperation between public and private sectors to effectively manage urban forests; helps present the kind of image that most citizens want to have for the place they live or conduct business and tells visitors that the community cares about its environment; can count when allocations of grant money are made for trees or forestry programs.



Tullahoma: Liz Kennedy, Tree Board, Alderman Jonathan James, Ruby Murphy, president Foundation for Preservation of Oakwood Cemetery, Mayor Troy Bisby, Dr. J. Randall Smith, Tree Board chairman, Steven Rogers, area forester Coffee/Moore counties, J. P. Kraft, environmental services technician, Mayor Pro-Tem Janice Bowling, Barbara Snyder and Ralph Graham, Tree Board and Alderman Sandy Lindeman.



Chattanooga school children participate in the “Take Root” project poster contest.



Stephanie Kruger, Bartlett city forester, Shawn Posey, state regional urban forester, Jim Lamb, parks advisory board, Mayor Keith McDonald, and Alan Wyatt, design review commission.



Kingsport was awarded a flag by The Tennessee Division of Forestry honoring the city's 22-year Tree City designation.



The city of Martin plants a tree in honor of their new Tree City USA designation.

## The history of Arbor Day

J. Sterling Morton, a newspaper journalist, is honored as the father of Arbor Day. He and his wife Caroline were nature lovers, and shortly after they moved to the barren plains of Nebraska they began planting trees. Sterling wrote articles encouraging local organizations to help him.

In 1872, he spoke at the Nebraska State Board of Agriculture meeting, proposing a statewide tree planting holiday for the month of April. The first Arbor Day in Nebraska was a huge success, with over a million trees planted.

Three years later Sterling Morton was honored when his birthday, April 22, was selected as the official date for Arbor Day. In 1875, Tennessee became one of the first states to adopt Arbor Day.

In 1925, the Tennessee legislature set “Bird, Flower and Arbor Day” on the first Friday in April. In 1946 it was changed to the first Friday in March. This law calls for educators, civic societies and government officials to create “a better understanding of nature and the importance of protect-



J. Sterling Morton

ing wildlife, planting and cultivating flowers, and setting and protecting trees.”

The date set for observing Arbor Day varies from state to state depending on the climate of the area. The best time to plant trees is during the dormant season — in the fall after the leaves drop, November 1 to early spring before bud-break April 1.

They have the best chance of survival when weather conditions are cool and plants are able to establish roots in the new location before spring rains and summer heat stimulate new top growth.

## Green burials an old practice, a new option

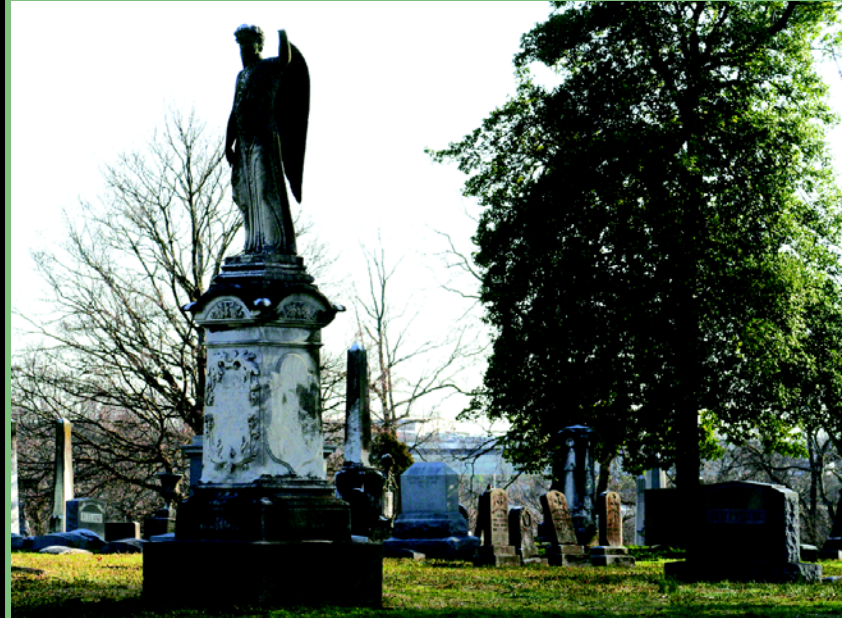


Photo by Victoria South

A tree or shrubbery often takes the place of elaborate grave markers for those that choose green burial over traditional methods.

**BY VICTORIA SOUTH**  
*TML Communications Coordinator*

The green reaper is knocking in some areas of the country as concern for the environment, changing attitudes about death, a shortage of land, and the rising cost of funerals prompt citizens to seek out more natural end of life alternatives.

Green burials, a throw back to a simpler time of the 19th century and before, when Americans buried their dead without embalming, heavy metal caskets, expensive markers or well-manicured cemeteries, are one attempt to minimize land use and resources used by cemeteries, while preserving open space.

Plot sizes for green burials are often just 15 feet by 15 feet, with one person per plot, with bio-degradable coffins, simple field stone markers or even more popular, trees or shrubbery to mark the grave site.

Those choosing the tree option, often find comfort in the thought of the decomposed body fertilizing a living tree, in a sense still living and becoming one with nature.

According to the Green Burial Council, an independent, nonprofit organization founded

to encourage ethical and environmentally sustainable death care practices, and to use the burial process as a means of facilitating the acquisition, restoration and stewardship of natural areas, embalming fluid containing formaldehyde has the potential to seep into ground water and also creates unnecessary health risks for workers who are exposed to the substance.

Currently, there are more than 200 green burial grounds across the country including California, Florida, New York, South Carolina, and Texas. However, the trend has not caught on in Tennessee.

“It will probably be a while before it catches on here,” said Robert Gribble, executive director of the Burial Services section Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance.

According to Gribble, no one has applied with his office to conduct a green burial. “Cremation is becoming popular in Tennessee,” Gribble said “but funerals are traditional in nature and people prefer their customs.”

For more information about green burials, visit the Green Burial Council website at [www.greenburialcouncil.org](http://www.greenburialcouncil.org).

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STATE BRIEFS



BY TML STAFF REPORTS

Those looking to get a license to sell real estate in Tennessee will be fingerprinted and have their backgrounds checked before the real estate exam. The rule change will take effect July 1, according to the Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance. Individuals will be fingerprinted by Cogent System and the company will electronically forward the prints to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Those agencies will conduct the background checks. The results of the check will be provided to TDCI. A license will not be issued until the background checks have been received and reviewed by TDCI.

Tennessee’s Department of Human Services is handing out a record number of food stamps this winter. In January, the most recent month for which data is available, 901,834 Tennesseans — or nearly one of every six residents — sought government help to buy groceries. Food stamp participation in the month was up 3.6 percent from a year ago. Last year, Tennessee distributed more than \$1 billion in food stamps from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. With the decline of manufacturing jobs and an increase in home foreclosures and personal bankruptcies, the number of people who receive food stamps across Tennessee has jumped by more than 75 percent since the last recession in 2001, according to Richard Dobbs, director of policy for Tennessee’s food stamp program.

Ford Motor Company Fund will provide over \$200,000 in grants to nine states, including Tennessee, and two U.S. territories as part of the Driving Skills for Life (DSFL) program. DSFL is the national, award-winning, teen driving program developed in partnership between the Governor’s Highway Safety Association and Ford Motor Company Fund. Grants were awarded based on a description of need, how teens will benefit, program goals and objectives, media outreach, metrics and implementation plan. Each highway safety office receiving a grant has designed a comprehensive outreach program for the students.

State Department of Transportation Commissioner Gerald Nicely predicted that State Route 840 will be completed in 2012, a year later than previous estimates. Nicely said a “major contract” should be awarded later this year that would finish two segments of the 76-mile highway, which begins and ends at Interstate 40 and passes through Dickson, Hickman, Williamson, Rutherford and Wilson counties.

Every year, teachers across the state violate testing procedures and jeopardize the accuracy of standardized exams, state documents show. Most violations are minor and involve misplacing an answer sheet or failing to cover up an educational poster, but at least eight Tennessee teachers had their licenses suspended in the past three years for breaking security codes. Some educators say the phenomenon of teachers helping students

cheat developed along with high-stakes testing. High-stakes testing ushered in a new level of pressure for teachers by allowing exams to determine job performance. Under No Child Left Behind, test scores also determine which schools are failing and in need of reform.

General Physics Corporation announced it has been awarded a contract from Tennessee’s Department of Safety to facilitate homeland security exercises. The Homeland Security Exercise Program contract, valued at \$1.24 million, is from Tennessee’s Department of Safety’s Office of Homeland Security. Under the deal, GP will plan, conduct and report the results of 11 homeland security exercises over a 17-month period. Officials say the full-scale exercises will focus on the preparations for, response to, and recovery from pandemic influenza occurrences; chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or explosive incidents; and catastrophic events. GP is a training and e-learning solutions management consulting company for commercial and governmental agencies. The Homeland Security Exercise Program contract marks the fourth time that GP has been contracted by the state of Tennessee for training work. Officials say GP is also working with the Tennessee Department of Health on a Hospital Pandemic Influenza Exercise program.

Gov. Bredesen is proposing giving many elderly and disabled Tennesseans the option of staying out of nursing homes by providing them with care givers in their own homes. The state currently spends about \$1.2 billion a year on long-term care services through TennCare, with about 98 percent of it directed at nursing home facilities. Officials estimate that Bredesen’s plan could direct about half of those funds to home-based care over the next decade. Darin Gordon, TennCare’s director, said there’s no reliable way to predict how many people will choose home-based care once it becomes more widely available. But based on the experience of other states, Tennessee could move to a 50 percent split between home-based and nursing home services in six to 10 years, he said. The average cost per person in home and community-based care is about \$12,000 per year, while nursing home costs for a year can range between \$45,000 and \$60,000 per person. According to

Finance Commissioner Dave Goetz, the state is trying to create a “single entry point” system for people looking for information on long-term care. The state will also work to cut the waiting time. Currently, people interested in long term care have to wait for up to 90 days while the state decides whether they qualify for services.

The Tennessee Department of Revenue is seeing an increase in online tax filings. During fiscal year 2001-2002, the first year e-filing was offered, more than 1,000 filings totaling nearly \$257,557 were filed. Filings increased to 422,000, totaling more than \$3 billion during fiscal year 2006-2007. In 2007, the department processed its 1 millionth e-file transaction and had collected \$8 billion from online filings since it began offering the service. The Department of Revenue collects approximately 92 percent of state tax revenue.

The heads of Tennessee’s public colleges and universities say they are trying to keep tuition hikes below 10 percent this fall because of tough economic conditions. The original plan had been to keep tuition hikes below 7 percent, or \$284 per student, for most four-year schools and to make no increases for community colleges and technology centers, said Rich Rhoda, executive director of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission. Rhoda told the Senate Education Committee that officials will have to bump up the tuition hikes because Gov. Bredesen’s budget didn’t adopt a request for an additional \$85 million to help cover operating expenses. “What we can tell you is that we are not considering a double-digit fee increase as we have in the past,” Rhoda said.

The SR 840 Community Center and Project Office is now open for visitors. The new center will further implement the Context Sensitive Design (CSD) process of the SR 840 project in Williamson County. TDOT is using the CSD process to develop a roadway that maintains the natural beauty, aesthetics, historical value, and environmental integrity of its surroundings. Visitors can view photographs of the project, maps, timelines and diagrams at the center. Representatives from TDOT, as well as the contractor and consultants working on the project, will be on site daily. The SR 840 Community Center and Project Office is located at 5720 Pinewood Rd (SR 46), near the Williamson County landfill.

NATIONAL BRIEFS



The national average price of a gallon of gas rose 0.7 cents to \$3.22 a gallon, 69 cents higher than one year ago, according to AAA and the Oil Price Information Service. Last May, prices peaked at \$3.22 as surging demand and a string of refinery outages raised concerns about supplies. That record will likely be left in the dust soon as gas prices accelerate toward levels that could approach \$4 a gallon, though most analysts believe prices will peak below that mark. In its last forecast, released last month, the Energy Department said prices will likely peak around \$3.40 a gallon this spring.

A vast array of pharmaceuticals – including antibiotics, anti-convulsants, mood stabilizers and sex hormones have been found in the drinking water supplies of at least 41 million Americans, an Associated Press investigation shows. To be sure, the concentrations of these pharmaceuticals are tiny, measured in quantities of parts per billion or trillion, far below the levels of a medical dose. Also, utilities insist their water is safe. But the presence of so many prescription drugs — and over-the-counter medicines like acetaminophen and ibuprofen — in so much of our drinking water is heightening worries among scientists of long-term consequences to human health. In the course of a five-month inquiry, the AP discovered that drugs have been detected in the drinking water supplies of 24 major metropolitan areas — from Southern California to Northern New Jersey, from Detroit to Louisville, Ky.

Colleges and Universities are anxiously taking steps to address a projected drop in the number of high school graduates in much of the nation starting next year and a dramatic change in the racial and ethnic makeup of the student population, a phenomenon expected to transform the country’s higher education landscape. After years of being overwhelmed with applicants, higher education institutions will over the next decade recruit from a pool of public high school graduates that will experience: a projected national decline of roughly 10 percent or more in non-Hispanic white students, a double-digit rise in the proportion of minority students — especially Hispanics — who traditionally are less likely to attend college and to obtain loans to fund education. Despite those obstacles, minority enrollment at undergraduate schools is expected to rise steadily,

from 30 percent in 2004 to about 37 percent in 2015.

Economists are cautioning that the nation’s growing dependence on corn would make for a double jolt in the event of a drought across the Midwest, soaring prices not just for food, but also for gasoline. Analysts now warn that a “corn shock” might not be far off and it could lead to \$5 gas and \$3.50 eggs as the effects reverberate across the economy. Such a scenario would occur against a backdrop of soaring prices for basic food items and other commodities that are already stressing the economy.

New college graduates this spring can count on a welcoming job market as employers seek to replace a baby boom generation reaching retirement age. Employers are planning to hire 16 percent more 2008 college graduates than they did a year ago, according to projections from a survey by the National Association of Colleges and Employers, a Bethlehem, Pa.-based group that tracks the market for new graduates. Nearly 54 percent of employers said they would use signing bonuses to sweeten the deal for potential hires, according to the NACE, up from 47 percent in 2007. In particularly high demand: majors in marketing, engineering and computer science. By recruiting college graduates, employers are dealing with the long-term drain from retirements of their oldest workers.

A couple retiring this year will need about \$225,000 in savings to cover medical costs in retirement, according to a study released by Fidelity Investments. The figure, calculated for a couple age 65, is up 4.7 percent from the \$215,000 estimate for 2007. Daunting figures reflect that longer life spans are requiring workers to increase retirement nest eggs. A separate study released last month by the Center for Retirement Research at Boston College estimated that an individual needs to go into retirement with some \$102,000 earmarked just for health care coverage, while a couple needs about \$206,000. The Fidelity study, which has been conducted annually since 2002, assumes workers do not have employer-sponsored retiree health care coverage. It includes expenses associated with Medicare premium payments as well as co-payments and deductibles, plus out-of-pocket prescription drug costs.

State revenues less than the estimate for February

Lower than projected sales tax collections brought total tax revenues below the amount budgeted for February. Finance and Administration Commissioner Dave Goetz announced that overall revenues for February were \$728.3 million or \$20.8 million less than the state budgeted.

“With sales tax collections trending down for the last two months, we are looking to see if business taxes in March and April will help support our budget,” Goetz said. “We may have to look for more savings in the current fiscal year, but we have faced tougher conditions and managed our way

through.”

On an accrual basis, February is the seventh month in the 2007-2008 fiscal year.

The general fund was under collected by \$28.2 million and the four other funds were over collected by \$7.4 million.

Sales tax collections were \$18.4 million less than the estimate for February. The February growth rate was a negative 0.92 percent. The year-to-date growth rate for seven months is 1.97 percent.

Franchise and excise taxes combined were \$5.9 million below the budgeted estimate of \$44.1 million. For seven months revenues are un-

der collected by \$41.6 million.

Gasoline and motor fuel collections for February increased by 10.96%. For seven months revenues are over collected by \$9.6 million.

Tobacco tax collections were \$2.8 million under the budgeted estimate of \$25.9 million. For seven months revenues are under collected in the amount of \$46.5 million.

Year-to-date collections for seven months were \$203.0 million less than the budgeted estimate. The general fund was under collected by \$211.5 million and the four other funds were over collected by \$8.5 million.

The budgeted revenue estimates

for 2007-2008 are based on the State Funding Board’s consensus recommendation adopted by the first session of the 105th General Assembly in June of 2007.

The revised estimates for this fiscal year as presented in the 2008-2009 budget assumes an under collection in total taxes in the amount of \$165.4 million. By tax source the assumed under collections are: Sales tax \$62.8 million; F&E taxes \$54.8 million; tobacco taxes \$30.0 million, privilege taxes \$27.6 million; and, a net over collection of \$9.8 million from all other tax sources. The General Fund under collection is projected to be \$180.0 million.

Good Risk Management is just Good Management



Municipal parks and playgrounds can contribute to a community’s overall quality of life. But they can also pose some safety hazards. Each year, emergency rooms treat more than 200,000 children ages 14 and under for playground-related injuries.

Through a comprehensive training program offered by the TML Risk Management Pool, city leaders are taught hazard identification and risk management methods.



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# Local fire departments receive \$12.9 million in 2007 FEMA grants

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) awarded \$12,954,693 in Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) to 154 fire departments across the state of Tennessee.

Nationally, the AFG awards, which will be distributed in phases, will ultimately provide approximately \$490 million to fire departments and nonaffiliated emergency medical service organizations throughout the country.

AFG awards aim to enhance response capabilities and to more effectively protect the health and safety of the public with respect to fire and other hazards. The grants enable local fire departments and emergency medical services organizations to purchase or receive training, conduct first responder health and safety programs, and buy equipment and response vehicles.

“The Assistance to Firefighters Grants program has been instrumental in building capacity and providing needed resources for our nation’s firefighters,” said FEMA Administrator R. David Paulison. “From the purchase of equipment to first responder training, the AFG program has helped improve response capabilities and saved lives and property in communities throughout the United States.”

Since 2004, AFG has provided almost \$3.1 billion in grants to fire departments and first responder organizations to purchase response equipment, personal protective equipment, vehicles and fire prevention activities. AFG is administered cooperatively by two FEMA components: the National Preparedness Directorate and the United States Fire Administration.

Listed below are municipal fire departments in Tennessee that were awarded grants.

The full list of FY 2007 AFG recipients and other information is posted on the AFG website ([www.firegrantsupport.com](http://www.firegrantsupport.com)).

- Atwood Fire Department: Equipment (\$8,620); Personal Protective Equipment (\$38,480)
- Bradford Fire Department: Equipment (\$29,203); Personal Protective Equipment (\$9,025); Training (\$22,210)
- Cleveland Fire Department: Personal Protective Equipment (\$51,851)
- Collierville Fire & Rescue: Personal Protective Equipment (\$147,539)
- Dover Fire Department: Equipment (\$11,733)
- East Ridge Fire & Rescue: Equipment (\$53,550)
- Elizabethton Fire Department: Training (\$11,780)
- Gatlinburg Fire Department: Protective Equipment (\$120,555)
- Goodlettsville Fire Department: Equipment (\$28,500)
- Gordonsville Fire Department: Vehicle Acquisition (\$142,500)
- Huntsville Fire Department: Personal Protective Equipment (\$71,458)
- Jamestown Fire Department: Vehicle Acquisition (\$213,750)
- Kimball Fire and Rescue Department: Equipment (\$48,739) Personal Protective Equipment (\$30,500)
- LaFollette Fire Department: Modify Facilities (\$56,050)
- Lawrenceburg Fire Department: Personal Protective Equipment

- (\$51,870)
- Loretto Fire Department: Personal Protective Equipment (\$42,636)
- Martin Fire Department: Equipment (\$46,598)
- Maryville Fire Department: Equipment (\$20,000) Personal Protective Equipment (\$154,334)
- Millersville Fire Department: Personal Protective Equipment (\$57,000)
- Soddy-Daisy Fire Department: Equipment (\$84,983)
- MetroLynchburg/Moore County Fire Department: Equipment (\$9,750) Personal Protective Equipment (\$80,000)
- Millington Fire Department: Equipment (\$32,329)
- Morristown Fire Department: Personal Protective Equipment (\$63,000)
- Oneida Fire Department: Equipment (\$37,987) Personal Protective Equipment (\$7,650) Training (\$1,530)
- Shelbyville Fire Department: Vehicle Acquisition (\$475,000)
- St. Joseph Fire Department: Equipment (\$30,115)
- Tazewell / New Tazewell Fire Department: Equipment (\$73,532)
- Washington County / Johnson City E.M.S.: Personal Protective Equipment (\$186,625) EMS Equipment (\$5,700)

## Awards for the 2007 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Announced

The Federal Emergency Management Agency also announced awards for the Fiscal Year 2007 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant (SAFER) awarding 14 grants to fire departments in the United States, including to three Tennessee municipalities.

- Bristol Fire Department: Hiring (\$605,811)
- Hendersonville Fire Department: Hiring (\$737,975)
- Kingston Fire Department: Hiring (\$592,635)

The SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response) Grant was created to provide funding directly to fire departments and volunteer firefighter interest organizations in order to help them increase the number of trained, “front-line” firefighters available in their communities.

The goal of SAFER is to enhance the local fire departments’ abilities to comply with staffing, response and operational standards established by NFPA and OSHA. Specifically, SAFER funds should assist local fire departments to increase their staffing and deployment capabilities in order to respond to emergencies whenever they may occur. As a result of the enhanced staffing, response times should be sufficiently reduced with an appropriate number of personnel assembled at the incident scene. Also, the enhanced staffing should provide that all front-line/first-due apparatus of SAFER grantees have a minimum of four trained personnel to meet the OSHA standards referenced above. Ultimately, a faster, safer and more efficient incident scene will be established and communities will have more adequate protection from fire and fire-related hazards.

# Tennessee receives grade from Governing Magazine

**GOVERNING** from Page 1  
ture of states’ performance. State-level managers and opinion leaders provided more than 12,000 pieces of data. States are not ranked, or graded against each other; they are graded based on a set of criteria.

Overall state performance in 2008 ranged from A- (Utah, Virginia, and Washington) to D+ (New Hampshire). The national average among the 50 states was B-, which 18 states received, including Tennessee. Thirteen states earned grades above the national average and 19 states’ grades were below the national average.

The report and 50 state summaries are available online at [www.pewcenteronthestates.org](http://www.pewcenteronthestates.org)

The report demonstrates the importance of state governments that work better and cost less, particularly in the wake of widespread budget deficits and a weakening na-

tional economy.  
“Fostering meaningful change through fact-based research provides all states with useful knowledge to pursue innovative solutions that will strengthen performance and service to the public,” said Susan Urahn, managing director of The Pew Center on the States.

“State leaders and managers should look beyond the grade and pursue the opportunity that the report provides: to operate more efficiently and effectively, improve transparency, and be more accountable for results.”

In the coming months, Pew will work with states to ensure that they benefit from this new research and draw on best practices, identify areas for improvement, and explore additional partnerships with policy-makers and private sector leaders to pursue problem-solving strategies to improve service to the public.

# TML associates bring home ACEC honors for engineering excellence

The Tennessee Municipal League is proud to announce several associate members were presented with awards at the annual statewide awards competition sponsored by the American Council of Engineering Companies of Tennessee (ACEC).

Wilbur Smith Associates, Franklin, received the top prize, the 2008 Grand Award for Engineering Excellence recognized for its work on the Mack Hatcher Parkway Context Sensitive Design Project in Franklin, a project completed for the Tennessee Department of Transportation.

Wilbur Smith Associates listened to all stakeholders and then developed design recommendations for the Mack Hatcher Parkway western extension and improvement to the existing parkway to correspond to the team’s vision for a fully integrated transportation facility.

Honor Awards were presented to the following:

EnSafe Inc., Memphis for the Metal Management: Engineering Revitalization project in Nashville. Ensafe provided expertise in environmental and engineering services to convert an industrial Brownfield site for an environmentally beneficial reuse. The site was impacted with lead and arsenic from historical operations. EnSafe recycled the contaminated site so that paper goods and metals could be recycled there.

EnSafe, Inc. Memphis the Wetlands Investigation: A Study in Cost Avoidance in Pensacola, Fl. EnSafe helped the U.S. Navy save \$1.3 million by completing a wetlands investigation using less than half the amount budgeted. EnSafe’s innovations resulted in a projected cost-avoidance of approximately \$99 million by eliminating additional investigations, remediation planning, and remedial actions.

Gresham, Smith & Partners for the McEwen Drive Single Point Urban Interchange in Franklin. This interchange was designed to minimize impact on existing buildings and efficiently handle increasing traffic volume along the Interstate 65 corridor through the Cool Springs area in Franklin.

Hart Freeland Roberts, Inc. for the Laurel Snow Boundary Survey in Dayton. In 2006, the Tennessee purchased more than 12,500 acres on the Cumberland Plateau, including the 1,800 acre Laurel Snow tract in Rhea County, which will be preserved as a natural area. Hart Freeland Roberts conducted the land survey which was instrumental in the state’s quest to develop an almost unbroken corridor of public land and assisted the state in further development of the Cumberland Trail.

PBS&J, Inc. for the Nashville International Airport Master Drainage Study. To keep up with the growth demand and in anticipation of future infrastructure needs, the Metropolitan Nashville Airport Authority (MNA) commissioned PBS&J to design and conduct a master drainage study that developed hydrologic models and constructed a vital database of information for the MNA. The database and hydrologic models have been used as a tool in land-use planning decisions as well as guiding the operational use and maintenance of the airport’s storm water infrastructure.

Smith, Seckman Reid, Inc. for the Vanderbilt TVC Highbay Generator Project. Vanderbilt Medical Center needed a plan to provide emergency power for two significant projects: the Medical Research Building IV (MRB IV) and the Critical Care Tower. Smith Seckman Reid (SSR) proposed a plan that would provide the needed emergency power while enabling Vanderbilt to consolidate and decommission some of its older generators. The new generators, totaling six (6) megawatts, serve the existing hospital and clinic loads and the new Critical Care Tower loads. This made the existing hospital generators available to serve the MRB IV project.

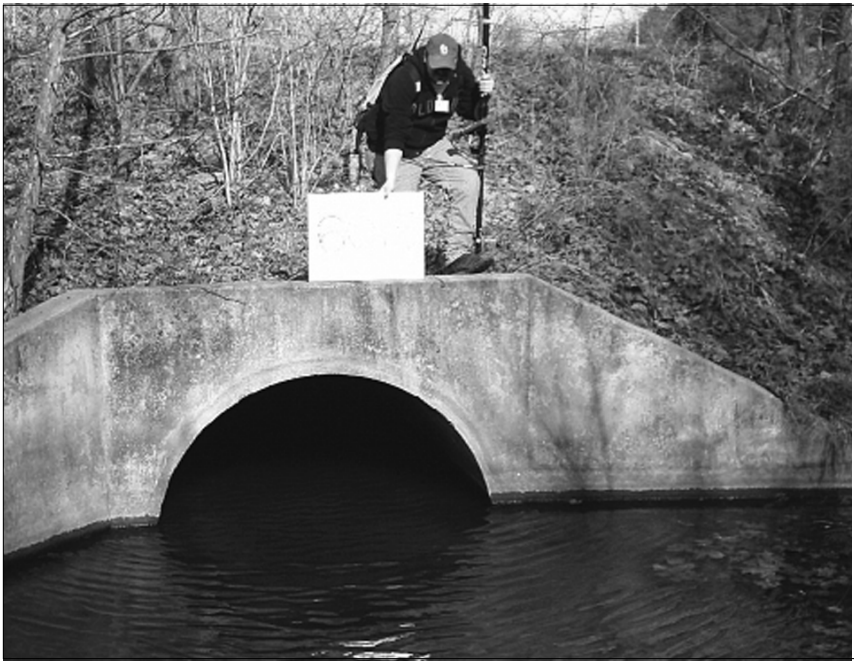
Smith, Seckman Reid, Inc. for the Alcoa Water Treatment Plant. The Plant is a state of the art membrane filtration water plant that includes the latest technology for the effective treatment, distribution and monitoring of the finished water provided to city customers. Smith Seckman Reid (SSR) led a team of professionals in the planning, design, bidding and construction administration of this project. SSR worked with Alcoa city officials so that customers receive the best possible drinking water for a reasonable price.



The 2008 Grand Award went to Wilber Smith Associates for its work on the Mack Hatcher Parkway Context Sensitive Design Project in Franklin, completed for the Tennessee Department of Transportation.



EnSafe Inc., Memphis won honor awards for the Wetlands Investigation: A Study in Cost Avoidance in Pensacola, Fl. and the Metal Management: Engineering Revitalization Project in Nashville.



PBS&J, Inc. was presented the Honor Award for the Nashville International Airport Master Drainage Study in Nashville.



Honor Awards were presented to Smith, Seckman, and Reid, Inc. for the state of the art Alcoa Water treatment Plant in Alcoa and the Vanderbilt TVC Highbay Generator Project in Nashville.



An Honor Award was presented to Hart Freeland Roberts, Inc. for the Laurel Snow Boundary Survey in Dayton, which will be preserved as a natural area.





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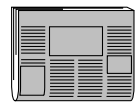
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**CLARKSVILLE.**The city has an immediate opening for a Deputy Commissioner of Finance and Revenue. The position will work directly under the supervision of the Commissioner of Finance and Revenue. Responsibilities include: maintenance of the City's accounting and financial system in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, supervision and review of accounting internal controls, preparation of financial reports and schedules, including the City's annual audited financial report, financial analysis and budgetary work in preparation of the annual City's budget, and special projects as necessary. Will assume departmental responsibility in the absence of the Commissioner of Finance and Revenue. Qualified applicants should possess knowledge and understanding of: public financial administration, government fund accounting (modified and accrual basis), audit principles and procedures, internal controls, relevant federal and state laws, rules, and regulations and management principles and practices. Must be a Certified Public Accountant with an active license status. Must have six (6) years of professional level accounting experience; experience in governmental accounting and auditing preferred. Must have at time of employment or must within 18 months of employment comply with the requirements of the Municipal Finance Officer Certification and Education Act of 2007. The salary range for this position is \$50,000 - \$78,000, and starting salary will be based on experience and overall job qualifications. Apply to: Clarksville Montgomery County Career Center. ATTN: Ms. Ruth McPherson, 350 Pageant Lane Suite 40, Clarksville, TN 37040 E-mail: [Ruth.McPherson@state.tn.us](mailto:Ruth.McPherson@state.tn.us)

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 posi-

tion 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 March 24.

POLICE OFFICER LATERAL ENTRY PROGRAM

**JACKSON.** The Jackson Police Department is now accepting applications for its Lateral Entry Program. Minimum qualifications include: current P.O.S.T. certification or out-of-state certification acceptable to the Tennessee P.O.S.T. Commission (minimum of 400 hours). Starting salary 1 year as a certified officer - \$15.50/hr., \$32,240; 2 years as a certified officer - \$15.99/hr., \$33,259; 3 years as a certified officer - \$16.36/hr., \$34,029; 4 or more years as a certified officer - \$16.72/hr.; \$34,770. Career police patrol officers receive annual step increases on our P-Program, up to a maximum of \$43,276 with fourteen years of service topped out patrol officer pay, in addition to any annual cost of living increase. Required documents to be submitted with application include: Application, High School diploma or GED, valid driver's license, Social Security card, birth certificate, DD-214 (If applicable), photo (full face), basic Police Academy certificate, Tennessee P.O.S.T. certificate. Out-of-state candidates must submit basic Police Academy curriculum. Requirements: Entrance exam score of at least 70; In-depth background investigation; physical exam (must satisfactorily pass after offer of employment); drug screen (must satisfactorily pass after offer of employment); psychological exam (must satisfactorily pass after offer of employment). Apply at the city of Jackson Personnel Department, City Hall or applications may be downloaded from [www.cityofjackson.net](http://www.cityofjackson.net).

MANAGEMENT INTERN

**UT-MTAS.** The University of Tennessee Municipal Technical Advisory Service has an opening for a Management Intern located within the Nashville area. Will work for four Tennessee cities serving as a member of the managerial staff providing support for each city manager and each city's department head. In addition, will work with the Tennessee Municipal League providing staff support to the Director and Deputy Director. Intern will rotate among each participating city and the Tennessee Municipal League performing jobs as directed by the respective city manager or the Tennessee Municipal League executive director. This position is designed for new MPA graduates. Any previous experience would be considered but is not a factor. The intern must also possess the following skills: managerial, analytical, conceptual, and interpersonal skills that enable them to work in multiple environments and conditions. These skills will be used on a daily basis as the intern works with various department heads balancing their concerns, issues and managerial approaches with those of the city manager. A high level of cognitive or intuitive skills are necessary to fully understand, design and implement successful solutions to municipal problems. Send resume to: Management Intern Search; 600 Henley Street, Suite 120; Knoxville, TN 37996-4105. The University of Tennessee is an EEO/AA/Title IX/Section 504/ADA/ADEA institution in the provision of its education and employment programs and services.

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](http://www.lakelandtn.gov) or call 901.867.2717. To e-mail resumes and applications send to [cityhall@lakelandtn.org](mailto:cityhall@lakelandtn.org); or fax to 901.867.2063. By mail, send to City of Lakeland, 10001 Highway 70, Lakeland, Tennessee 38002. EOE

# SECLA graduates law enforcement officials



Law enforcement executives from across the region have completed the Southeastern Command and Leadership Academy (SECLA) at the University of Tennessee. Applications are being accepted now for the next session, which will begin in July and graduate in January 2009. Registration is open to all law enforcement agencies. The state of Tennessee, Office of Criminal Justice Programs, and the University of Tennessee will provide funding for SECLA 2009.

## Municipal Administration Program April Schedule

### Customer Service (6175)

This course is designed to assist participants in developing effective customer service skills.

Highlights include identification of internal and external customers, defining elements of positive customer service, and addressing barriers to delivering positive customer service.

**Instructor**  
MTAS Training Consultants.

**Who Should Attend**  
This course is designed for all municipal employees who deal with the public on a daily basis and would like to improve their customer service skills.

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



MUNICIPAL TECHNICAL ADVISORY SERVICE

Dates and locations

April 1	Bartlett
April 2	Jackson
April 9	Johnson City
April 10	Knoxville
April 22	Franklin
Mar. 28	Cookeville
April 23	Collegedale

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](http://www.mtas.tennessee.edu) or contact Elaine Morrissey at [Elaine.morrissey@tennessee.edu](mailto:Elaine.morrissey@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](mailto:kurt.frederick@tennessee.edu). Fees are \$25 per person per class for municipal employees and \$55 per person per class for all other participants.

## TML Board to meet April 14 in Nashville

Notice is hereby given that the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Municipal League will meet in regular public session on Monday, April 14, at 10:00 a.m. in the Tennessee Ballroom (Lobby Level) of the Doubletree Hotel, 315 4th Avenue North, Nashville, TN., for the purpose of considering and transacting all business that may properly come before said board. If reasonably possible, an agenda will be available on Monday, April 7 at the offices of the Tennessee Municipal League, 226 Capitol Blvd., Suite 710, Nashville. Additional information concerning the above may be obtained from Mona Lawrence at 615-255-6416.

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# NLC launches project to determine what cities want from Presidential candidates

BY AMY ELSBREE & MITCHEL HERCKIS  
*Nation’s Cities Weekly*

Raising the voice of cities and towns in the national elections is the goal of NLC’s new multi-media project, American Cities ’08. Launched in Washington, D.C., at the Congressional City Conference, the project asks a series of tough questions of the candidates and identifies seven broad policy areas where cities will seek a partnership with the federal government.

Central to the American Cities ’08 project is the website, [www.AmericanCities08.org](http://www.AmericanCities08.org), which serves as the source for information on the 2008 election and its local impact, including the latest news and resources — what the candidates are saying and what cities need to hear.

“As local elected officials, we have a rich history and significant experience in developing effective policies for our communities,” said NLC President Cynthia McCollum, council member, Madison, Ala.

“We understand the need for a renewed partnership with the federal government, and we are uniquely positioned to influence and shape the new Administration’s thinking about the future direction of the federal government’s role in cities and towns.

“I urge all city officials to join the conversation during this year’s elections for President and Congress,” added McCollum. “The resources that NLC is providing as part of the American Cities ’08 project should be used in candidate forums, in town hall meetings, with local media or in any session with the candidates to be sure they’ve heard the voice of America’s hometowns.”



The seven core concerns for America’s hometowns highlighted in the American Cities ’08 project include:

- Governments Working Together
- A Sustainable Future
- Support for Infrastructure
- Public Safety
- Poverty Reduction and Economic Opportunity
- Community Revitalization and Affordable Housing
- Immigration Reform

A brochure highlighting the concerns and listing questions for the candidates will be introduced today at the conference and will be sent to all NLC member cities to encourage them to raise the concerns directly with all candidates for national office who visit their communities.

The brochure is available online at [www.AmericanCities08.org](http://www.AmericanCities08.org).

A companion video including clips of mayors and council members posing questions to the candidates will be debated at the conference; it is also available for viewing on the website and will be posted to YouTube and sent to each of the Presidential campaigns.

The website was built to provide information to all audiences — from Presidential candidates, to local elected officials, to citizens who want to know more about how national policies affect cities.

The “What Cities Want” section of the website provides summaries

of the seven issues that impact America’s hometowns most in the upcoming election, as well as the questions the candidates need to answer for local officials. There is also an easy-to-use Candidate Issue Matrix that tells what statements each candidate has — and hasn’t — made on the hometown issues that matter most.

The “Cities Speaking Out” section highlights the voices of local leaders and experts on local government as they speak about city needs and issues on the national level. These op-ed pieces and analyses discuss how hometowns and the problems they face every day are often ignored in national elections in return for themes that divide voters. Visitors can also find the latest campaign news that relates to the election and hometowns, and videos with highlights from the campaign trail and local officials.

The homepage of the website provides tool kits with links to resources for cities and the national candidates who hope to have their votes. The site will be updated frequently with fresh news and resources. NLC will also be seeking input from visitors through opinion polls offered on the site.

For more information and to view the brochure and video, visit [www.AmericanCities08.org](http://www.AmericanCities08.org).



**April 5: Giles County Gobbler’s Gala,** Historic Downtown Pulaski from 8 am-4p.m. Community event includes delicious turkey, entertainment, games, crafts, concessions. The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Turkey Roll sponsored by the tourism foundation costs \$5 per roll. Heat begins at 10:00 am, 1st place wins t-shirt and Grand Prize winner receives a ticket to the 4<sup>th</sup> annual Governor’s One-Shot Turkey Hunt Banquet. For more information, call 931-363-4666.

**April 17-19: Rivers and Spires Festival,** Clarksville. Five stages with more than 100 entertainers, Kidz Zone, arts and crafts, International Streetfest, car shows and more. For more information, contact Doug Barber at 931-552-9006, Ext. 233 or [www.riversandspires.com](http://www.riversandspires.com).

**April 18-20:Fiddler’s Grove Storytelling Festival,** Lebanon. Come enjoy great storytelling and storytelling workshops. Contact the Festival Committee at 423-272-8549 or [www.tnstorytelling.org](http://www.tnstorytelling.org).

**April 23-28: World’s Biggest Fish Fry,** Paris. More than 12,500 pounds of catfish are served at the Bobby Cox Memorial Fish Tent. For more information, call 731.644.1612 or visit [www.worldsbiggestfishfry.com](http://www.worldsbiggestfishfry.com).



**April 3-4:** Green Business Summit at Lipscomb University, Nashville. Paul Hawken will be the keynote speaker at 7 p.m. April 3. The summit is designed to provide entrepreneurs and business people with opportunities to learn about the rapidly growing field of green business.

**April 14-15:**The TML 2008 Legislative Conference at the DoubleTree Hotel in Nashville.

**April 23:** The Association Tennessee Valley Governments Spring meeting held at Paris Landing State Park Inn. Membership requests may be sent to [membership@atvg.org](mailto:membership@atvg.org).

## Lawmakers examine a return to Civics Ed

**CIVICS** *from Page 1*  
the words “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal” are found in the Declaration of Independence.

The average freshman filling out the survey scored just 50.4 percent with the average senior scoring not much higher at 54.2 percent, according data released by the Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI).

The International City/County Management Association’s 20-member Task Force on Civics Education prepared a number of compelling arguments in favor of increased civics education after a study revealed an appalling lack of knowl-

edge among everyday citizens about local government; a large percentage of states without established civics education programs; and concerns about the large number of impending retirements on the horizon in local government countered with a proposal to use civics education to rejuvenate interest in the profession.

As more states examine the value of civics education, some are filing measures similar to those currently being considered in Tennessee.

The University of Tennessee Knoxville’s Howard Baker Center for Public Policy currently partners with different national, state, and

local organizations to encourage civic education and political knowledge among K-12 and college students.

Should the civics bills pass into law, teachers are likely to learn a lesson as well, as Kurita proposes an “outside the box” educational approach to teaching the subject with less emphasis on the mechanics of government and more about civic awareness and obligation.

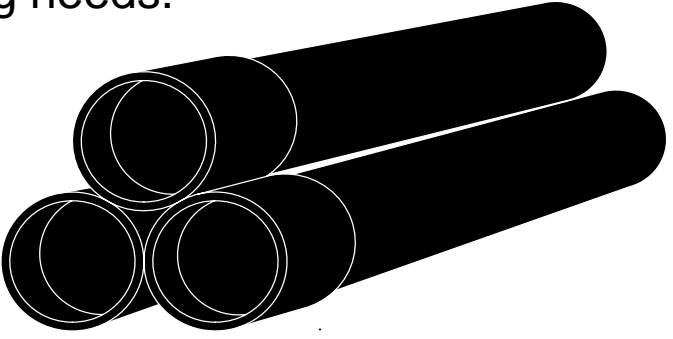
“I don’t want to hear about the three branches of government,” Kurita is quoted in [Knoxnews.com](http://Knoxnews.com).

“I want us to teach speaking up when you see injustice.”

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# Johnson City, Kingsport pledge regional cooperation

**COOPERATION** *from Page 1*  
quality of life, and make Kingsport more diverse and more attractive to business,” Campbell says.

Kingsport’s Mayor Phillips agrees that it is a plus that Campbell has worked in Johnson City and sees the pitfalls inherent in any kind of rivalry between the two cities. “He realizes more than anyone what co-operation really means,” Phillips says. “I give him a lot of credit for helping Kingsport and Johnson City move forward for the good of the region.”

In the global marketplace of the new millennium, it is important for cities and their regions to put forth the idea of a “brand”—and banish any resistance to change that inhibits forward-thinking. At a recent annual meeting of the Tri-Cities Regional Business Alliance, featured speaker Dennis J. Donovan, responsible for worldwide site selection with Wadley-Donovan-Gutshaw Consulting, offered a comprehensive look at the basics for future economic development in the region. Among his points was a reiteration of why it is imperative to adopt a regional approach to marketing, pointing out how corporate prospects often identify a region first, and prefer to deal with one entity as they consider an area for startup or relocation.

In keeping with that, Phillips and Johnson City’s mayor, David P. Roe, have been meeting regularly to discuss things the two city leaders can do together. “Mayor Roe is a man that reaches out to do the right thing,” Phillips says, “and we both agree that while we have individual cities with individual personalities—and we should have—that what is good for this area, industry-wise, is good for everyone.”

## TML Legislative Conference

**CONFERENCE** *from Page 1*  
new water and air regulations.

The TML staff will also provide a legislative update on the League’s 2008 legislative priorities and other issues that affect municipal governments.

City officials are encouraged to use the remainder of the day on Monday to attend Monday evening floor sessions and to schedule time to visit with their legislators.

On Tuesday, a full breakfast will be served beginning at 7:30 a.m., followed by briefings from Lt. Gov Ron Ramsey, House Speaker Jimmy Naifeh, and Rep. Charlie Curtiss on key issues facing the state and local governments.

The remainder of the day is set aside for city officials to attend committee meetings in the Legislative Plaza.

The voice of Tennessee’s municipal governments must be heard in the legislative process, and the

In early January, key people involved in government relations in Kingsport, Johnson City and Bristol gathered for an annual legislative luncheon, during which a common legislative package was developed for the upcoming legislative session. “We’ve been doing this for years,” Campbell says, “but this year, we really focused on more common issues for the region that would help our legislators feel they aren’t pitted against or competing with each other.”

The key issue this year is the Tri-Cities Regional Airport, owned by Kingsport, Johnson City, and Sullivan and Washington counties (20 percent each) and Bristol and Bristol, Va. (10 percent each). The airport has been run by a commission since the 1930s, and not surprisingly, there have been inefficiencies from having to consult with each of the owners individually to get anything accomplished. According to Campbell, all the owners want the airport to have “airport authority” status, which will make the airport more efficient and progressive.

Other common regional issues include the need to correct design flaws at the I-81 and I-26 interchange in Sullivan County; the need to finish State Route 75 from I-26 through Johnson City and to the airport; and the implementation of standardized building codes for the region.

“It’s a 20-minute drive from Kingsport to Johnson City, but we’re closer than we realize,” Phillips says. “Together, we can do more than we ever could individually—for our towns and for the region as a whole.”

**Editor’s Note:** *Reprinted with permission from Business Tennessee Magazine.*

TML Legislative Conference is a key opportunity to communicate that message.

To register on line, go to TML’s web site at [www.TML1.org](http://www.TML1.org). Contact the TML offices at 615-255-6416 for more information.

**Schedule At-A-Glance**  
**Monday, April 14**  
11 am Registration  
Noon Lunch Buffet  
1 pm Legislative Briefings  
Sen. Randy McNally  
Rep. Craig Fitzhugh  
Comm. Leslie Newman  
TDEC Paul Sloan  
TML Legislative Update  
4 pm Adjourn  
5 pm Attend Floor sessions  
**Tuesday, April 15**  
7:30 Breakfast  
8:15 Legislative Briefings  
Lt. Gov. Ramsey  
Speaker Naifeh  
Rep. Charles Curtiss  
9:30 Attend Committee Meetings

## Bond Fund Board to meet April 14

Notice is hereby given that the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund Board of Directors will meet in regular public session on Monday, April 14, at 9:00 a.m., local time, in the Vanderbilt Room on the lobby level of the Doubletree Hotel at 315 Fourth Avenue North, Nashville, Tenn., for the purpose of considering and transacting all business that may properly come before said board. Some members of the board may participate in such meeting by telephonic means, which will be audible to any member of the public attending such meeting.

If reasonably possible, an agenda will be available on Monday, April 7, at the offices of TMBF, 226 Capitol Boulevard, Suite 502, in Nashville. Additional information concerning the above may be obtained from Tiffany Graham at 615-255-1561.

# Pharmaceutical drugs, cyber crime on the rise

**DRUGS** *from Page 1*  
observed by project leaders was a general lack of effective collaboration and coordination among the various entities involved in community anti-drug efforts, as the guide notes “states, counties, cities, and neighborhood associations generally do not communicate with each other about substance abuse on a regular basis.”

In response, The Major Cities initiative strives to spark dialog, foster partnerships on all levels, and create local area-wide networks linking the various sectors of the community in order to foster a greater and common understanding of the problem through open channels of communication and a free flow of information, ideas and resources.

The *Cities without Drugs* guide breaks down the processes of implementing a city-wide anti-substance abuse program by the following key measures: A Blueprint for Action, Planning the Work, Working the Plan, and Resources.

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, prescription drug use remains unacceptably high with virtually no drop in non-medical use of most individual prescription drugs. Researchers pulled together national data for all prescription drugs as a measurable group and found that 15.4 percent of high school seniors reported non-medical use of at least one prescription medication within the past year.

“Prescription drug abuse is an increasing threat in Tennessee,” agrees Pam White, executive director of Community Anti-Drug Coalitions Across Tennessee (CADCAT).

“In 2005, seven million Americans abused prescription drugs compared to 2.8 million in 2000. The Society for Addiction Medicine is proactive in reducing prescription drug abuse,” White says. “There’s a protocol that everybody knows. Doctor’s offices require a photo ID at the registration desk, if the patient is not seen there frequently and information is given to parents and grandparents explaining safe storage of prescription medications.”

“We have to change community laws and norms,” White continues.



Lt. Angie Lewis has worked with the local drug stores to crack down on prescription drug fraud in Germantown.

“Create a new connectedness between youth and families and the community. Kids always look to adults to set the limits and now there are fewer minutes and hours spent with adults. Work and time constraints leave parents and grandparents stressed out.”

“Parents don’t think about these issues because they didn’t grow up with these problems or with the internet,” said Lewis.

“Parents are unaware, for example, that certain words and letters within internet correspondence have meanings other than what is implied. Parents need to learn how to decipher these codes and to enforce rules for their children about using the Internet.”

Lewis suggests parents be keepers of the passwords to gain access to the Net and that the computer be kept in a main area of the home where children using the internet can be monitored.

“Not all social networks are bad, but it’s a matter of safety,” Lewis said.

Parents and concerned citizens will have the opportunity to learn

more about the topic of internet crime and how to address the issue by attending an open forum hosted by the Germantown Police Department April 17 at 6 p.m. at the Germantown Courthouse, 1930 S. Germantown Road.

The forum will feature many informative guests such as Dan Newsom, prosecutor for the U.S. Attorney’s Office, representatives from the U.S. Office of Postal Inspectors, Captain Len Edwards with the Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Detective Darrell LaRiviera, the Germantown Police Department, John Simi, Shelby County Schools, and Jeff Barker with the Secret Service.

The event is open to the public and will provide opportunities for citizens to ask questions and address concerns. For more information about the forum, contact Lt. Angie Lewis at 901-751-5646 or [alewis@germantown-tn.gov](mailto:alewis@germantown-tn.gov).

The *Cities without Drugs* booklet is available online at [www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov](http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov). Hardcopy publications may be ordered by calling 1-800-666-3332.

# Tennessee Youth Conservation Corps accepting applications for 2008 projects

The Tennessee Youth Conservation Corps is accepting applications from young people ages 16 to 24 for positions working in Tennessee State Parks and Natural Areas in June and July.

Proposed by Gov. Bredesen and approved by the General Assembly in 2006, the program is designed to engage young people with a hands-on conservation experience at State Parks and Natural Areas.

“The program provides young people with on-the-job experience doing meaningful work in a variety of natural resource management and restoration projects on state-owned lands,” said Bredesen.

Students who have an interest in protecting the natural resources of Tennessee and a desire to learn about resource management in State Parks and Natural Areas are encouraged to apply.

The program is open to Tennessee residents who are high school or college students ages 16 to 24. Ap-


plicants should have dependable transportation, work well with others as part of a team and be able to participate in projects often conducted outdoors that may require manual labor or considerable physical activity.

Projects have been identified at parks and natural areas located in both urban and rural settings across the state. Typical projects will include native plant restoration and invasive plant removal, trail construction and maintenance and restoration of structures in historic areas. Educational programming will be included as part of the program. The work timeframe varies for each program project. TYCC project sites for 2008 will include:

- Fall Creek Falls State Park near Spencer
- Pickett State Park near Jamestown
- Tims Ford State Park near Tullahoma

- T.O Fuller State Park in Memphis
- South Cumberland Recreational Area near Tracy City
- Cedars of Lebanon State Park in Lebanon
- Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail in North Chickamauga Gorge near Soddy Daisy
- Montgomery Bell State Park near Dickson
- Pickwick Landing State Park near Savannah and Big Hill Pond near Selmer
- Booker T. Washington State Park in Chattanooga and Red Clay State Historic Area near Cleveland
- Warriors Path State Park near Kingsport and Roan Mountain State Park near Roan Mountain

The application deadline is April 18. To apply or to learn more about the program, visit the Web site at [www.tnstateparks.com](http://www.tnstateparks.com) or call the TYCC Program Manager at (615) 574-5176.



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# Forensics, government finance experience pay off for Rep. Harry Brooks

BY GAEL STAHL

Rep. Harry Brooks’ great-grandfather was the first Brooks to filter through the ridge and valley system from Virginia into Tennessee. They settled south of Cumberland Gap near Tazewell. Brooks’ grandfather also raised a family there.

First to leave mountain life behind was Brooks’ father who moved to Maryville where he taught chemistry and physics in the Blount County School system. Every Brooks since has made post secondary education a feature of their lives.

The Brookses found a home in the middle of town within walking distance of the high school, junior high and elementary school. Brooks and his two younger siblings benefited from Maryville’s strong academic municipal school system. Born in 1946, Brooks’ kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Alexander, was one of the best he ever had. She was a Maryville legend long before her son, Lamar, became governor and U.S. senator.

Maryville Middle School is one of the nation’s best, but Brooks’ own toughest educational experience was Maryville High School. It was so “hard, hard, hard” that undergraduate and graduate school were a breather. After classes and paper route, he was up until 11 o’clock doing homework.

At Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, he excelled in the debate and forensics program, one of the best in the nation. The constant challenge to do better through competition was his biggest life-changing event. Like high school, it required endless hours of preparation, reading, studying, and research; then writing, practice, and critiquing by faculty and team members. Debate coach Dr. Forrest Conklin, is one of his closest friends today.

In the debate program, Brooks met Mary Harrell. They married in 1968, the same year he graduated with a major in communications. He taught three years at Joppa Elementary School in Grainger County and served as basketball coach. He then worked in Carson-Newman’s Admissions Office, and, in the mid-1970s, worked two years toward a master’s in speech and communications at UT-Knoxville. He worked in the UT debate program under Dr. Cook as a graduate assistant with a stipend. He never finished his thesis but published parts of it. When funds ran out, he took a job.

Mary, who has a graduate degree from UT-Knoxville, taught school for 33 years. She and Harry took early retirement in 2001. Mary is currently a part time travel agent specializing in cruises. After grad school, Brooks was hired to work for the Knox County Sheriff’s Department to put together an education program. Twenty-four years later, he retired and in 2002, ran for an open seat in the General Assembly. He was elected, and has represented House District 19 ever since. He’s served on House Education Committee from day one and began on the Finance Committee January 2007. That year, he was also elected House Minority Assistant Leader.

**TT&C: You found high school harder than college?**

**HB:** It was. English courses were easier in college than in high school. You just tried to learn to survive. Peer pressure was the secret to survive Maryville High School because it meant you were going to do well in post secondary. There was no question that you were going. Practically every graduate did. Of my class, 97 percent went with about 40 percent going on some kind of academic scholarship.

As a result, I’m an education person and strong supporter of kindergarten and pre-K classes. I support the voluntary approach with the priority being on at-risk students. I’ll not support mandatory pre-K. I think pre-K is essential and critical whether it’s being taught by parents or in a school environment.

**TT&C: Business and chamber of commerce officials back it, but don’t some legislators seem to want home schooling for pre-K?**

**HB:** The pre-K evaluation results showed some objectives weren’t being accomplished. At the same time, the report said we haven’t been doing it long enough to get a good measure. The thinking behind expanding the pre-K program is that once you have covered at-risk



“I was always a competitive type – a quiet kind of competitive person.”



“Pre-K is essential and critical whether taught by parents or in a school environment.”



Photos by Gael Stahl

“Preparing legislation is just like writing a first affirmative case in debate.”

students, why not let any open spaces go to other folks?

It is the parents’ responsibility to provide pre-K. If their child can do better in an organized environment, the parent should have that option. Parents have told me they wanted to prepare their child for kindergarten and first grade but didn’t now how to. When parents move into the system they learn how to provide quality education better at home, also.

**TT&C: What was it like being raised by teachers?**

**JB:** Teaching high school chemistry, physics and general science, Dad could never understand why I didn’t understand chemistry as well as he thought I should. He was a good teacher who taught science hands-on in a lab. My mother taught school until the three kids came along. Then she became a full-time mom. Later, she went to work at Penny’s to help pay for the postsecondary education of all three of us.

**TTC: How did Carson-Newman’s debate program change your life?**

*In 1996, I chose not to run again [school board] because I was my younger son’s tutor. Adam had some learning disabilities. It took time to approach learning in a different manner. I related with Adam best.*

*Leaving the board when I did, proved a wise decision. In 2000, when Adam was 18, he died of sudden cardiac arrest. I would never have forgiven myself had I not made that decision. Adam is one of the reasons I’ve been interested in placing defibrillators in schools.*

**HB:** Forrest Conklin didn’t believe in holding back freshmen. He put you with upperclassmen and in the toughest tournaments until you learned to survive. You grew quickly. My first year, our seniors won the national tournament so we faced the best of the best in the practice rounds. I wasn’t about to let somebody embarrass me or outwork me. I grew academically.

I was always a competitive type – a quiet kind of competitive person. I liked going to tournaments across the country. I like the House of Representatives. I like campaigning. During my freshman year, I was out about 16 weekends doing state tournaments against Alabama, Georgia, Miami, Georgetown, Harvard, Vanderbilt, and did the Air Force Academy Tournament in Colorado. What I did as a college debater is what I basically do now in the legislature. Both require you to develop a policy concept with your associates and do the prep work. Preparing legislation is just like writing a first affirmative case in debate.

**TT&C: You left grad school early to take on a career job?**

**HB:** In January 1977, the Knox County Sheriff’s Department recruited me to set up educational programs for deputies, some executives, and safety programs for kids – especially fire prevention. We

were national forerunners and leaders with regard to drug education. That later became standard for a lot of agencies. After two years, they added to my plate the management of the department’s budget and finance, which I managed until I retired at the end of 2000.

That job gave me the opportunity to learn government finance. For the last two years, I’ve served on the House Finance Committee.

While at the sheriff’s department, a partner and I had a security company, but I learned this part-time legislature job eats up full-time hours, so the company was sold.

**TT&C: What was your entry into political service?**

**HB:** At Carson-Newman, I was heavily involved in the Goldwater campaign and was introduced to the new conservatism. When I was in grad school, I ran for the Knox County Commission. Two of seven candidates were elected. I came in third with 890 votes. The two that won had like 920 votes. My thesis in grad school at that time was a com-

parative analysis of a typical state representative candidate vs. a typical presidential candidate. We interviewed folks and got 90 percent participation. That was so high, we published the techniques that got such high numbers.

which allowed us to do it. Since my wife and I are RVers, we planned to roam and, in fact, did a lot of it including seven weeks through Canada.

When a friend of mine with a leadership role in the legislature, Rep. Jim Boyer, announced in 2002 he wasn’t going to run for re-election, I looked into it. My wife, just a super partner, not expecting we would win, said, “All right, let’s go do it.” Once we got going, I knew we were going to win, even though I was the last of many to join the race. Mary, I, and other folks knocked on more than 10,000 doors. I knocked on the doors of 8,500 priority voters. We sat down and divided up the number of doors we needed to do a day. That made it a doable process. I have been representing east Knox County and a small section of south Knoxville ever since.

**TT&C: What’s your role as assistant leader?**

**HB:** Jason Mumpower is house minority leader. I assist him as programs are developed – and I am available to assist members when necessary. It is Jason’s task to repre-

would be designed for med tech, computer tech, and building trades courses in high schools. The student gets both high school and college credit for that one class. We’re already paying for the classes in high school. It doesn’t cost us any more to get double benefits. It saves parents money. More children will go to post secondary. We modeled our program after North Carolina where the numbers skyrocketed for those finishing high school and it added to post secondary enrollment.

During my first term, I wrote a policy that made it a state goal for state parks to become self-supporting. During the upcoming budget year, revenue-based parks including parks with campgrounds, hotels, motels, and golf courses need to begin to be self-supporting collectively, not individually. That gives latitude to the folks who run the parks to do whatever trade-offs are necessary to accomplish the objective. It enhances the park system when you operate parks on the basis of a service for someone who wants to buy that service. We provide entertainment, recreation, and a vacation to customers of the state and we are doing it in a cost effective manner.

Last year, our parks system was rated the best in the nation. Before, taxpayers subsidized people’s vacations. Now, those who use the service pay for it.

**TT&C: Your election to the House cut into your love for roaming in the RV. How did you compensate?**

**JB:** Mary and I love to travel and enjoy being with each other. Her job as a travel agent has also enabled us to do some traveling other than RVing.

During that first month or two in the legislature in 2003, we did the hotel/ motel bit and got tired of that in a hurry. We brought our RV down here, and ever since have parked it in a campsite January through the end of session. From Sunday afternoon through Thursday noon, it’s our Nashville home just like when we were out roaming the country.

**TT&C: Your RVing was featured in a Nashville television broadcast this session. They asked if the cost of having your own motor home works out?**

**JB:** With our per diem and salaries we just about break even. The payment, maintenance, insurance, etc., of the motor home is separate. Counting rent, utilities, taxes and everything, it costs about \$575 a month to park at our KOA spot near the Cumberland River in the Opry Mills area

We still go out to eat at times. It’s just relaxing to go back to our motor home when the legislative day ends at 8 o’clock or later. Our home away from home just happens to have a diesel engine in the back and several wheels underneath it.

Legislators come out during session. We pull out the awning, set up the campfire, heat the grill, bring over another picnic table or two, and fix hamburgers or hotdogs, or whatever. They like the relaxing change from hotel/motel food, too.

**TT&C: Did you have any hobbies before RVing?**

**HB:** I’ve been a stamp collector since I was about eight and like figuring out those early stamps with the magic marks. Whenever the government hired a new printer to print the same stamp, there would be something different about it. There might be three or four more lines in the hairline or some dots around the chin. They’re not misprints but a kind of signature separating one printer from another. It means spending a lot of time looking through a magnifying glass. I enjoyed that and the history of stamps.

My boyhood paper route and work in a grocery helped me start that hobby.

One of the luxuries Mary and I’ve enjoyed since the 1970s is season tickets for UT basketball games. We were at the games when the ‘Ernie and Bernie Show’ [Ernie Grunfeld and Bernard King] was being played in 1973-77. Our sons grew up fanatic fans. My father was a huge UT fan and at his funeral we played ‘Rocky Top’ for the closing song.

Mary and I are also actively involved in our church. I serve on the Board of Deacons and Mary and I together teach a Sunday School class of Young Married Adults.

My faith defines what I am and what I think. It’s what determines how I look at issues and how I vote.

— Rep. Harry Brooks