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# Tennessee cities also hurt by bleak economy

BY CAROLE GRAVES

TML Communications Director

Municipalities across Tennessee are also feeling the affects of the national economic crisis and are facing the same fiscal challenges as the state – how to pay for vital services with limited revenues while balancing the budget.

"Cities are subject to the same economic and market conditions as the state," said Chad Jenkins, TML deputy director. "Municipalities rely on the same tax base and same sources of revenues, and thus, face the same challenges."

Jenkins, along with David Connor, executive director of the Tennessee Association of County Commissioners, described local governments' economic conditions to members of the General Assembly's Fiscal Review Committee who met earlier this month.

He spelled out crucial areas where city governments are being hit hard by the grim economic conditions – declines in sales tax revenues, declines in state-shared taxes, delinquent property tax payments, and declines in fuel revenues

- while at the same time are experiencing rising employee health care premiums, the impact of the stock market on local pension funds, and a weakened bond market that makes raising capital difficult.

#### Sales tax collections

Sales tax collections – both the local option sales tax collected by retailers and distributed directly to local governments and state-shared taxes, which are generated locally and collected by the state for redistribution – make up almost one-third of a city's revenue stream.

Based on the state's collections that reflect a \$200 million shortfall for the first quarter of the current fiscal year, local governments are also bracing for a decline in sales tax revenues. This is in addition to sluggish collections last year. Nearly half of the 347 cities in Tennessee are experiencing either a real reduction in collections or only a negligible increase of less than 1 percent in collections for FY08, which ended June 30.

#### Property Tax

Local governments also rely on the property tax to fund vital city See **ECONOMY** on Page 5

# Cities pass liquor referendums, provide needed revenue boost

BY CAROLE GRAVES

As local governments struggle to balance budgets in the face of the economic slowdown, legalizing alcohol sales in dry communities was on the Nov. 4 ballot in several Tennessee cities, with most of the local referendums gaining approval.

Package store sales and the sale of mixed drinks in restaurants mean new tax dollars for local governments, providing a much-needed revenue boost in the face of tough economic times.

Cities and counties only have two basic methods of raising revenue, sales or property taxes. Communities that have legalized alcohol sales can generated revenues without raising tax rates.

Aside from the increased sales tax revenues, there is also a bigger economic picture at stake — attracting restaurants and convenient stores to local communities.

"Our community has an overwhelming desire to bring full service restaurants here," said Angie Carrier, White House city administrator. "We have nine lots near the interstate and have tried in the past to recruit restaurants to the area. They have told us they would only considered it if we had liquor by the drink. So for us, it really wasn't about serving alcohol. We view it as a recruiting tool to bring restaurants here."

'The Town of Nolensville's Economic Development Committee, when researching reasons why restaurants were not locating here found it to be a factor," said Nolensville Mayor Beth Lothers. "The committee also found that restaurants that were already located here were struggling because people were going over the county line to have a glass of wine with dinner. Members of the committee got the petition signatures to place it on the ballot so that the community could decide if in fact they wanted liquor by the drink."

According to the research firm NPD Group, retailers and restaurants say the ability to sell alcohol is not a precondition for choosing a new location, but it is a factor. For casual dining chains, the average restaurant check doubles when See LIQUOR on Page 5

# Myron Lowery named to NLC Board

Myron Lowery, vice chair of the Memphis City Council, was elected to the National League of Cities' Board of Directors during NLC's annual business meeting at the Congress of Cities in Orlando, Fla. He will serve a two-year term. Lowery was endorsed unanimously by the TML Board of Directors during the League's board meeting in June 2008.

Councilman Lowery is currently in his fourth term on the council and has served as chairman and vice chairman. He currently represents more than 330,000 Memphians and he is chairman of the Education, Arts & Libraries and Planning and Zoning Committees.

Lowery describes himself as a man who cares about people. He views his public service on the city council as an extension of the community service he has provided most of his life.

For his efforts, he has been honored by the Tennessee Jaycees as one of "Three Outstanding Young Men" in the state and the United States Jaycees honored him as one of "Ten Outstanding Young Men in America." Last year, Councilman Lowery was inducted into the National Black College Alumni Hall of Fame for his community service.

In the national arena, Myron has served as Vice-President of the National Association of Black Journalists and as Secretary, Treasurer, Vice-Chairman and Chairman of the Democratic Municipal Officials. In 1996, he was a speaker at the Democratic National Convention. Lowery



Myron Lowery

is currently serving his second term as a member of the Democratic National Committee and he is a member of the National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials.

Other civic involvement includes serving on the boards of the following organizations:

- Tennessee Quality,
- Goals for Memphis,
- Leadership Memphis,Goodwill Boys Club,
- The Memphis Zoo,
- The Headstart Policy Council, and
- The Board of Trustees of LeMoyne-Owen College.

"Councilman Lowery possesses the leadership qualities that a NLC Board member should possess. His experience and knowledge of municipal issues uniquely qualify him to represent municipalities on a national level," said Tom Beehan, TML president and Oak Ridge mayor.

# Budget hearings include interactive civics lesson for state's students

BY VICTORIA SOUTH

TML Communications Coordinator

The future generation of movers and shakers had a lot to say about the direction state government is flowing communicating their concerns one-on-one with Governor Phil Bredesen and Education Commissioner Dr. Timothy Webb during an interactive civics lesson following the seventh round of open state budget hearings.

High School students from four school systems, Bradley, Bristol, Jackson-Madison and Knox Counties watched the hearings via streaming video, and then submitted a wide range of questions pertaining to the state's education budget and budget process by e-mail.

Participating schools included Bradley Central High School, Walker Valley High School, Tennessee High School, Madison Academic Magnet, and West High School.

"I am proud to be the governor who began the tradition of open hearings here in Tennessee, and hope we will continue to serve as an example of open government," said Bredesen. "I'm also pleased we're taking advantage of this



Gov. Phil Bredesen in the foreground and Education Commissioner Dr. Timothy Webb, lead an interactive Civics session with area high school students following the seventh round of open budget hearings at the state capitol.

unique opportunity to bring the "real world" of government into the class-room"

Along with a variety of questions concerning teacher training, high school curriculum, music education, and the school lunch program, Bredesen fielded student inquiries regarding future tuition increases and likely budget cuts as the

Department of Education announced a likely \$22 million cut in extended contracts, the funding that assists low performance and at-risk students in meeting national "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB) standards. President Bush signed NCLB into law January, 2002, requiring schools to meet definite *See Civics on Page 7* 

# Risk Management Pool announces change in flood policy coverage

There are numerous standard hazards that can lead to a property loss for a governmental entity, such as fire, windstorm, hail, vandalism and theft. Additionally, there is an exposure to the hazard of flood.

In most commercial insurance property policies there is no flood coverage provided at all, or only as an option, and must be purchased separately. However, the TML Pool does provide some flood coverage in our policy.

Presently, if your governmental entity has property coverage with the TML Pool, the property policy provides Coverage E – Automatic Coverage 1 for flood with a "per occurrence" and an "annual aggregate" sublimit of \$1,000,000, or policy scheduled total insured value (TIV) amount if less than \$1,000,000. Additional sublimit amounts may be requested and purchased by each member at an additional premium charge.

As of July 1, 2008, the TML Pool's Property policy was amended by the Board of Directors with respect to flood coverage to

address a gap in the TML Pool's reinsurance policy for losses that occur in the 100 year Flood Zone A. Due to potential loss of buildings, personal property and revenues that may occur because of flooding within the 100 year Flood Zone A, flood coverage will now be excess of the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) maximum available limits whether purchased from NFIP or not. NFIP limits are:

\$500,000 for each building; and\$500,000 for personal property.

Essentially, these NFIP limits become a deductible for the governmental entity under the TML Pool's Property policy that the governmental entity will either choose to self-insure or purchase the available coverage limits from the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Unless the governmental entity has financial reserves adequate to cover such a self-insured retention, the TML Pool highly recommends that the NFIP policy be purchased.

For example, if your governmental entity has a wastewater treatment plant with a scheduled building

value of \$1,500,000 and personal property value of \$600,000 that is located in the 100 year Flood Zone A, and a flood totally destroys the building and all personal property, the insurance coverage would pay as follows:

(A) If your governmental entity has not purchased a separate maximum coverage amount NFIP policy on the building and personal property and has the standard TML Pool Property policy sublimit, then -

## **Building loss**

- The First \$500,000 of building loss would not be covered;
- The Next \$1,000,000 of building loss would be covered by the TML Pool Property policy, less the deductible you selected.

## Personal property

- The First \$500,000 of personal property loss would not be covered;
- The Next \$100,000 of personal property loss would be covered by the TML Pool Property policy,

See POOL on Page 7

# New program strives to educate, keep hospital ER for emergencies only

BY VICTORIA SOUTH

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the average wait time at U.S. hospital emergency rooms has increased from 38 minutes to an hour with a substantial number of non-emergency cases among those waiting.

Now, neighborhood clinics are becoming a more convenient and sensible option for these patients thanks to a collaborative initiative between United Neighborhood Health Services and AmeriChoice by United Healthcare.

The ER Diversion Program, funded by a grant to TennCare by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, works by redirecting individuals utilizing hospital emergency rooms for non-emergency services to one of several United Neighborhood Health Services (UNHS) clinics in the Nashville area. Patients are seen regardless of insurance carrier or status — whether Tenncare, private insurance, or zero coverage. TennCare beneficiaries may also receive transportation to the clinic.

Initiated at Vanderbilt University Medical Center and Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt, plans are in the works to develop ER Diversion Programs across Tennes-



Photo by Victoria South

see, according to spokespersons for Americhoice.

Recently accepting an open invitation to join the program, the emergency room at Skyline Medical Center in Madison, a suburb of Nashville, has become the latest member.

After an evaluation at the ER, patients without medical emergencies are now rerouted to an on-site United Neighborhood staff person

who discusses non-emergency options with the patient and sets up a same-day or next day appointment at one of the non-profit group's five Nashville clinics. Preliminary data provided by UNHS indicates a high percentage referred to a UNHS Med Home Connect choose to have the primary care visit and a follow up as well.

"The medical home concept See ER on Page 4

# **NEWS ACROSS TENNESSEE**



#### **BYTML STAFF REPORTS**

#### **ATHENS**

Thomas & Betts is laying off 50 people at its Athens factory in the second round of cuts at the plant this year. The latest cuts will leave the plant with about 290 employees. Forty jobs were eliminated in September. The plant makes electrical switch boxes, outlets and fittings for commercial and industrial construction. The plant employed up to 400 people at one time and was McMinn County's seventh-largest employer. The cuts were blamed on the country's economic slump.

#### **ATHENS**

A maker of oven doors is cutting 27 jobs, leaving the plant with about 175 employees. Mills Products attributed the cuts on slowing business. The plant also manufactures appliance handles and a small amount of automotive trim. The general manager said the company had to cut its work force after running out of space to store the products it couldn't sell. Mills Products has operated in Athens since 1989.

#### **BRISTOL**

East Tennessee State University is closing its Bristol campus. Vice Provost Norma MacRae said recent budget cuts require the university to close the remote campus, but said ETSU intends to continue those classes through spring somewhere else. There are 222 students enrolled at Bristol, where it costs ETSU \$132,000 per year to rent the space for the campus. The university also conducts classes in Kingsport, where it owns a building, and Greeneville, where ETSU uses facilities of Walters State Community College

#### **CHATTANOOGA**

The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to Chattanooga for its comprehensive annual financial report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2007. This was the sixteenth consecutive year that the City has received this award. The Certificate of Achievement recognizes conformance with the highest standards for preparation of state and local government financial reports. The city also received the GFOA Award for Distinguished Budget Presentation for its annual appropriated budget for thirteen fiscal years,the most recent for Fiscal Year 2008. In order to receive this award, agovernmental unit must publish a budget document that meets program criteria as a policy document, as an operations guide, as a financial plan, and as a communication device.

## **CHATTANOOGA**

The Mueller Water plant will cut 115 jobs. The plant employed 499 until the layoffs, reducing their number to 384. The company listed the general economic conditions, downturn in residential market, municipalities pulling back on upgrading water systems, and matching the production with the demands they have right now as the primary reasons for the cutback.

## **CHATTANOOGA**

Squeezed by the economic recession, Parkridge Medical Center has eliminated 17 management-level positions. Several of the 17 positions eliminated at Parkridge already were open, and the cuts did not affect any direct patient caregivers, according to hospital officials.

#### **CLEVELAND**

The Cleveland Career Center will be closing according to the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The date for the closure has not been established. Flattened federal funding led to the decision to close Bradley County's location and 13 other locations across the state.

#### DAYTON

The Dayton La-Z-Boy plant will lay off 240 workers. La-Z-Boy has been affected by the sluggish housing market and a drop in furniture sales nationwide. The layoffs are part of a company-wide reduction of 850 jobs. With about 1,900 workers, the Dayton plant is the largest employer in Rhea County.

#### DAYTON

The city is taking steps to keep its budget in the black through a hiring freeze and eliminating vacant jobs. Mayor Bob Vincent says unexpected expenses, the downward economy and reduced sales taxes prompted the hiring freeze.

#### **DYERSBURG**

The city recently became the first non-metropolitan area in the state to implement 311 service for its residents. Only the fourth city in Tennessee to provide the service, Dversburg takes its place alongside Chattanooga, Knoxville and Nashville/Davidson County and becomes the first city in West Tennessee to adopt the 311 calling number. The service, which connects residents to emergency personnel for non-emergency situations, saves valuable time for 911 operators and offers citizens a direct line to emergency departments.

#### **FRANKLIN**

Veterans in Middle Tennessee will no longer have to drive to Memphis to visit a veterans clinic beginning in January. The Department of Veterans Affairs Memphis VA Medical Center is opening a veteran's clinic that will be located in The Galleria Mall off Old Hickory Boulevard. The clinic will have a staff of 18 that will include physicians, nurses, and a psychiatrist or a psychologist or an addiction therapist. The clinic is scheduled to be completed in December.

## **GALLATIN**

A Los Angeles industrial inspection and repair company is moving its headquarters to Gallatin and plans to hire about 40 employees. Superior Inspections provides quality control and repair services to automotive fastener supplier ITW CIP, which recently enlarged its Gallatin plant to accommodate an expanded product line. Superior Inspections plans to begin operations this month. Applications are being accepted at the Career Center at 175 College St. in Gallatin.

## **GRAY**

Manufacturer TPI Corp. may add to its 570-strong work force. A TPI news release said the company expects to have all product lines from Fostoria, OH, transferred to Gray by the spring. The restructuring is part of an effort "to meet its long-term objective of remaining competitive in today's market."

## **JOHNSON CITY**

East Tennessee State University has expressed a willingness to establish a collaborative relationship with King College in Bristol should that school further develop its medical program and provided clinical instruction at

the James H. Quillen College of Medicine is not compromised. Startup and continuing costs for a medical school are approximately \$100,000 per student per year according to ETSU President Paul Stanton.

### KNOXVILLE

The E.W. Scripps Co., is cutting some 400 jobs company-wide. The restructuring is expected to save about \$15 million. Word of the job cuts officially came as Cincinnatibased E.W. Scripps Co. reported a third quarter loss from continuing operations of \$21 million, or 39 cents per share. That compares to earnings of \$16.6 million, or 31 cents per share, during the July-Sept. quarter a year ago. The Knoxville paper, is losing 50 spots.

#### KNOXVILLE

Green Mountain Coffee Roasters is counting on local residents to take a liking to its coffee. Green Mountain casts aside the nation's economic uncertainty when it opens a major coffee-producing facility in East Knox County. Since August, the Vermont-based company that sells the equivalent of 3 million cups of coffee a day, has been gearing up its 334,000-square-foot production plant in Forks of the River Industrial Park for a grand opening. Green Mountain has invested more than \$50 million in its new Knoxville operation, including \$10.4 million in property acquisition.

#### **MEMPHIS**

Officials at Methodist University Hospital expect to save \$550,000 a year and lessen the risk for error with a new robot that fills I.V. prescriptions in the pharmacy. The IntelliFill I.V. robot has dispensed more than 50,000 prescriptions since it went online six weeks ago. It is among 30 such robots in the nation, but other types of robots in hospital pharmacies are nothing new. Methodist University Hospital has had one since the late 1990s that packages daily doses of oral medicine for patients, removes expired drugs from shelves and performs other storage and distribution functions. However, Methodist University is the first hospital in Tennessee to have the IntelliFill I.V. robot, which fills I.V. syringes much more quickly than a human could.

## **MEMPHIS**

The Tennessee Department of Transportation launched its \$36.8 million SmartWay transportation system for the Memphis area. The system will use 115 traffic cameras, 42 message signs, monitoring stations and a new city-wide highway advisory radio station, AM 1660, to monitor and inform motorists of traffic conditions. The department will use its Transportation Management Center on Boswell Avenue to manage the system which covers 85 miles of interstate. TDOT Commissioner Gerald Nicely said in a statement SmartWay has the potential to add 15 percent capacity to the interstate system without widening the roadway.

## **PIGEONFORGE**

It's a tough job market out there, but mimes, jugglers and hundreds of other job-seekers got some good news. Belle Island Village, the new entertainment complex that's under construction in Pigeon Forge, announced that it is looking to hire more than 1,000 employees at its \$114 million project. The complex announced it will be holding a series of upcoming job fairs.

## **SHELBYVILLE**

Sanford Corp. announced a major worldwide reorganization of its facilities that will result in a net loss of 175 jobs. Shelbyville manufacturing operations, which now employs 300



Transportation Commissioner Gerald Nicely cuts the ribbon on the new TDOT SmartWay Transportation Management Center in Memphis.

people, will be moved to Maryville by the end of 2009. The company's Lewisburg facility, which employs 270, will close by the third quarter of 2009. At the same time, company spokespersons report a new packaging center will be built next to the Sanford distribution facility on Railroad Avenue, which will employ more than 125 people. That packaging center is scheduled to be open by the time the manufacturing facility closes. The distribution facility will not be affected.

#### **NASHVILLE**

Daniel Schneider, assistant secretary for the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, visited Nashville for a special visit to the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Middle Tennessee. The local community group was recently named a Top 5 Benchmark Organization for its work in mentoring the children of prisoners. For the last four years, the organization has received federal funding to match these children with adult mentors. In 2007, the agency was awarded another \$3 million to continue to serve this population through 2010.

#### **NASHVILLE**

The National Collegiate Athletic Association announced that Nashville will play host to the NCAA women's basketball Final Four tournament in 2014. The bid of the Nashville Sports Council and the Ohio Valley Conference, submitted to the NCAA in

June, sought to host to the tournament at the Sommet Center downtown sometime between 2012 and 2016. Nashville later made a shortlist of eight cities in the final running. Three finalist cities were not chosen: Columbus, Ohio; Dallas and San Antonio. A Women's Basketball Coaches Association national convention is scheduled to take place alongside the Final Four, bringing some 5,000 coaches from all levels to town.

#### **NASHVILLE**

At the request of Mayor Karl Dean, the Metro Schools libraries will be consolidated under the entire Nashville Public Library system. Dean said the 20-location Nashville Public Library "has developed into a worldclass library system" under Director Donna Nicely. Nicely has identified a timeline for consolidation, which will begin in January.

#### **SMYRNA**

Smyrna's Channel 3 placed second nationally at the 23rd Annual Government Programming Awards in the Documentary Category by The National Association of Telecommunications and Advisors (NATOA) for "Called to Lead: A History of Smyrna's Mayors" produced by LaTonya Turner. Channel 3, which launched in February 2005, is the local Government Access Channel for the town of Smyrna, and televises live and recorded public meetings as well as other programs about the town.



The city of Kingsport closes a loan with the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund for \$9.8 million to be used for utilities and meter controls. Pictured are Mayor Dennis Phillips, City Recorder Jim Demming City Attorney Mike Billingsley and TMBF Representative Joe Muscatello.





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315 WOODLAND ST. P.O. BOX 60070 NASHVILLE, TN 37206 PHONE (615) 244-8591 FAX (615) 244-6739 WWW.RAGANSMITH.COM



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# **Housing Summit** to provide tools for development

Success stories, experienced administrators and available programs to increase housing and community development opportunities highlight the 2008 Governor's Housing Summit Dec. 1 and 2 in Nashville.

The agenda and registration are available now at www.thda.org.

Commissioner Matt Kisber will talk about the Department of Economic and Community Development's successes in developing the infrastructure and resources of Tennessee communities and expanding the state's business friendly economic climate, while attracting new industries and helping existing industries grow.

U.S. Congressman Jim Cooper (5th District-TN) will explain the federal government's intervention in to the financial sector. Cooper is known for his conservative views on federal spending; he's a vocal member of the Blue Dog Demo-

The summit opens with lunch on Dec. 1. State Attorney General Robert E. Cooper, Jr. will give a short overview of the state's efforts to fight foreclosure.

'As the number of foreclosures rise in Tennessee," General Cooper said, "we are concerned homeowners may turn to risky operations that



Leading Tennessee Home

often offer only false hope."

The Summit has four tracks -Housing Finance, Best Practices, Changing Demographics and New Legislation.

The Council on Aging of Greater Nashville developed a track with Continuing Education Units approved by the Tennessee Real Estate Commission. Presentations on "Boomer Housing," "Universal Design and Visitability" and "Community Housing Support for Seniors" garner CEUs, as does "Green Building." A separate CEU track offers REALTORS and lender the A to Z information on THDA's homeownership programs.

Manufactured housing has undergone dramatic changes. One not-for-profit developer is building a subdivision with factory built homes. Retha Patton of Eastern Eight will present with Tennessee Manufactured Housing Association representatives on December 1.

The closing lunch features a "State of Housing" presentation and THDA's 35th anniversary celebration on Dec. 2. An optional bus tour of Nashville development follows.

For questions, contact Patricia M. Smith, psmith@thda.org, 615-815-2185.

# **Knoxville kicks off Solar America Cities**

Mayor Bill Haslam and the U.S. Department of Energy's Tom Kimbis officially launched Knoxville's Solar America Cities Program by unveiling a dozen brightly-colored street signs announcing that Knoxville is a Solar America City.

Knoxville was one of a dozen cities that the DOE selected earlier this year to participate in the 2008 Solar America Cities program. The cities - ranging in size from large municipalities like Houston, Denver and Boston to smaller ones like Santa Rosa, CA - were selected based on their commitment to reducing the barriers to widespread deployment of solar technology.

These 12 cities join 13 other cities that the DOE designated as Solar America Cities in 2007, bringing the current total to 25 cities. The program is part of the DOE's Solar America Initiative that aims to make solar-generated electricity cost competitive by 2015. Knoxville is one of only three Solar America Cities in the Southeast.

The selection includes a \$200,000 DOE grant to the city and another \$250,000 worth of technical assistance from DOE.

The unveiling took place during a ceremony at the Tennessee Amphitheater in World's Fair Park and the 2.5x3-foot signs will soon greet motorists on streets and highways across the city.



Knoxville was one of a dozen cities that the Department of Energy selected earlier this year to participate in the 2008 Solar America Cities program. Mayor Bill Haslam kicked off the program last month by unveiling a dozen brightly-colored street signs announcing that Knoxville is a Solar America City.

KNOXVILLE

S LAR AMERICA CITY

"The city of Knoxville is, in a lot of ways, starting from scratch in terms of solar infrastructure," Haslam said. "But because of our selection as a Solar America City, and the expert help that comes with that honor, we're off to a great start."

"We're committed to lowering the barriers to the

development of solar energy in our city and we look forward to turning the ideas we have into reality," he added.

Sustainable Solar Future

Kimbis, director of Market Transformation for the DOE's Solar Program, helped create its Solar America Initiative, which includes the Solar America Cities program.

"The Solar America City partnerships are helping our nation address two of the most pressing challenges we face," he said, "improving our energy security and combating global climate change.'

The city of Knoxville's plans

1. Installation of a 4.8 kW solar power generation system in the new LEED-certified downtown transit

2. Integration of solar hot water systems in some of the homes the city's Community Development Department and its non-profit partners build or renovate.

3. Design and installation of an educational exhibit for the existing

15 kW solar power array at Ijams Nature Center.

A Partnership Program with

the U.S. Department of Energy

4. Development of outreach aimed at identifying businesses and individuals interested in solar power and getting useful information to them. The effort would include the development of a website highlighting the technical resources and financial incentives available to those interested in installing solar technol-

5. Establishment of high quality solar installation certification courses to strengthen the local work

6. Creation of technical training programs for City, County and KUB code officials and inspectors.

More information about Knoxville's Solar Program is available at www.cityofknoxville. org/policy/solar

More information about the U.S. Department of Energy's Solar America Cities Partnership is available at www.solaramericacities. energy.gov.

# Safe Routes School Funds awarded to cities

The state of Tennessee will provide \$1.7 million in Safe Routes to School funds to 10 Tennessee municipalities for projects aimed at increasing walking and biking to school among middle and elementary school children.

Clarksville, Kingsport, Lebanon, Lexington, Medina, Memphis, Nashville, Newport, OakRidge and Rogersville city school systems have all been awarded grant money.

The Safe Routes to School program is a statewide initiative designed to make bicycling and walking to school a safer, more appealing and healthier alternative for students in kindergarten through eighth

"The Safe Routes to School program is a great opportunity for schools, communities and government officials to work together to promote a healthier lifestyle for Tennessee children," said Gov. Phil Bredesen. "The program helps create safer walking and biking environments for students and funds activities to encourage children and their parents to consider walking and biking to school for a more active lifestyle."

Safe Routes to School is a federally funded program administered by the Tennessee Department of Transportation. Tennessee's SRTS program is funded by \$10.8 million in federal dollars through 2009. The funds were provided specifically for this purpose through SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users), the federal surface transportation program. The program is 100 percent federally funded and does not permit a local match.

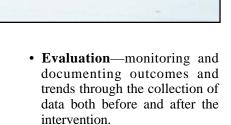
"The Safe Routes to School program is an innovative program that integrates health, safety, traffic relief and environmental awareness Commissioner Gerald Nicely. "Funds may be used for two different types of programs, infrastructure projects and non-infrastructure activities, that directly support increased safety and conveniences for kindergarten through middle school children to walk and bike to school."

The SRTS program is comprised of five elements referred to as the 5 E's. The selection process was driven by the follow-

• Engineering—creating operational and physical improvements to the infrastructure surrounding schools that reduce speeds and potential con-

flicts with motor vehicle traffic, and establishing safer and fully accessible crossings, walkways, trails and bikeways.

- Education—teaching children about the broad range of transportation choices, instructing them on important lifelong bicycling and walking safety skills and launching driver safety campaigns in the vicinity of schools.
- **Enforcement**—partnering with local law enforcement agencies to ensure traffic laws are obeyed in the vicinity of schools (including enforcement of speeds, yielding to pedestrians in crossings, and proper walking and bicycling behaviors), and to initiate community efforts such as
- crossing guard programs. • Encouragement—events and activities to promote walking and



To learn more about the Safe Routes to School program at TDOT, please visit http://www.tn.gov/tdot/ bikeped/saferoutes.htm or contact Diana Benedict, Program Coordinator, at (615) 253-2421 or diana.benedict@state.tn.us.

## nts

Cities awa	arded grar
Clarksville	\$137,142
Kingsport	\$215,298
Lebanon	\$87,516
Lexington	\$125,063
Medina	\$169,155
Memphis	\$160,771
Metro Nashville	\$234,553
Newport	\$140,510
Oak Ridge	\$239,079
Rogersville	\$229,810

# NATIONAL BRIEFS

**BYTML STAFF REPORTS** 

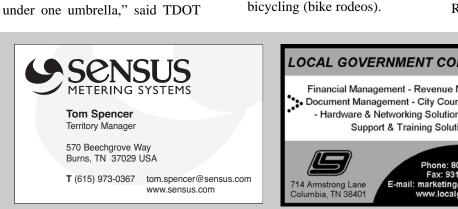
The nation's jobless ranks zoomed past 10 million last month, the most in a quartercentury, as piles of pink slips shut factory gates and office doors to 240,000 more Americans with the holidays nearing. Politicians and economists agreed on a painful bottom line: It's only going to get worse. The unemployment rate soared to a 14-year high of 6.5 percent, up from 6.1 percent just a month earlier.

The economy's deep troubles are pushing a growing number of already struggling consumers into bankruptcy, often with far more debt than those who filed in previous downturns. The number of personal bankruptcy filings jumped nearly 8 percent in October from September, after marching steadily upward for the last two years. According to Automated Access to Court Electronic Records, new economic forces are changing the calculus of who can ride out the tough times and who cannot.

1431 Kensington

Murfreesboro, TN

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# STATE BRIEFS

**BYTML STAFF REPORTS** 

More than 600 veterans and their families turned out to celebrate the dedication of the East Tennessee Veterans Memorial, to pay tribute to East Tennessee's war dead. The \$2.5 million memorial, hosted by the East Tennessee Veterans Memorial Association, honors more than 6,000 veterans from 35 area counties who died in conflicts starting with World War I. Names of the veterans are inscribed on granite pylons that stand 54 inches high, making the names accessible for touching by all visitors, including those in wheelchairs.

Tennessee has launched a new "Help for Tennessee Families" Web site designed to help citizens in these difficult economic times with information about finding a job, job training, and access to health care services, along with tips for reducing energy and transportation costs. Other sections of the new site include Food and Nutrition, Paying for College, and Affordable Activities, with information on low-cost getaways and how to sign up to receive free books for children under five through the Imagination Library. Tennesseans can access the new Web site at www.TN.gov by clicking on "Help for Tennessee Families" or at <a href="www.TN.gov/">www.TN.gov/</a> helpforfamilies.

Gov. Phil Bredesen says he'd support the issuing of \$350 million in bonds to repair or replace about 200 structurally deficient bridges in the state and create jobs for Tennesseans. Garvee (Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicles) bonds are generally used to finance critical infrastructure projects in anticipation of forthcoming federal funds that would be used to retire the debt. Bredesen notes the state has always operated on a pay-as-you-go system, and says the bond issuance would be a "one time deal" due to the special circumstances the state faces as a result of declining revenues and a budget shortfall.

Preliminary results from a study by Tennessee transportation officials indicate that the financial feasibility of a new Mississippi River toll bridge at Memphis "is a very close call." The study by the Tennessee Department of Transportation won't be finished until February, when it will be turned over to the state legislature, which must approve and fund all projects before TDOT proceeds with construction. A new Memphis bridge is one of four highway and bridge projects that TDOT is studying for what would be the state's first toll projects in decades.

Bechtel Corp. and its subcontractors have hired 1,425 workers in East Tennessee this year to resume construction of what is expected to be the first new nuclear reactor completed in America in more than 15 years. Nuclear proponents in Chattanooga said those hired to work on a second reactor at the Watts Bar Nuclear Plant could represent the first of thousands of new jobs created in the Tennessee Valley from a renaissance of nuclear power.

With layoffs and jobless claims rising in the auto industry and beyond, Tennessee's unemployment trust fund is "in serious jeopardy" of going broke within a year, according to University of Tennessee economist Bill Fox, who advises the state on the fund. "If the recession becomes more severe, the fund could end the (next) fiscal year with a negative balance," Fox said, adding that he believes there's a "50-50 chance" of that happening." If the trend continues it could lead to higher taxes on business owners to replenish the fund.

Tennessee, Virginia and four other states have agreed to cooperate in planning for rail and highway improvements along the Interstate 81 corridor. Virginia, West Virginia, Tennessee, Maryland, Pennsylvania and New York have signed a memorandum of understanding to work together to establish a seamless freight and passenger network along I-81 and its extensions. All six states are members of the Interstate 81 Regional Commerce Corridor. The agreement calls for the states to share and coordinate I-81 freight truck and rail study planning. They also will consider a joint work plan to identify long-term funding needs.

The odds of having a premature baby are highest in the nation's southern states, including Ten**nessee**, and lowest in Vermont. The March of Dimes mapped the stark state-by-state disparities in what it called a "report card" on prematurity. Tennessee received an "F" for its preterm birth rate of 14.7 percent. the 45th worst ranking in the nation. More than half of a million U.S. babies — one in eight — are born premature each year, a toll that's risen steadily for two decades. The government's goal: no more than 7.6 percent of babies born before completion of the 37th week of pregnancy.

Fifteen percent of Tennessee homeowners and 23 percent in Georgia who have a mortgage owe more than their house is worth. In Tennessee, a total of 107,506 mortgages, out of just more than 718,000, have negative equity, meaning the owners owe more on the loan than the house is worth, according to First American CoreLogic, which sells housing data to real estate professionals.

A special high-visibility "Click It or Ticket" enforcement campaign with an emphasis on rural roadways is being conducted through the Governor's Highway Safety Office and the National **Highway Traffic Safety Adminis**tration along with state and local highway safety and law enforcement leaders. This special emphasis on rural roadways will take place in addition to Tennessee's participation in the national "Click it or Ticket" seat belt enforcement mobilization planned for late May next

The State Employee Recycling Program has received the WasteWise State Government Partner of the Year Award from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for the sixth consecutive year. The program, coordinated by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, continues to expand its waste prevention and recycling efforts. With more than 22,000 state employees participating, nearly 800 tons of mixed office paper was recycled in 2007, generating more than \$16,500 in revenue and saving almost \$24,000 in landfill costs.

Tennessee has chosen Zycron Inc. as one of five primary vendors to provide information technology services for the state for a company estimate of \$30 million. Zyrcon, CIBER Inc., Cook Systems International Inc., KBM Emterprises International Inc. and TEKSystems Inc. will assist the state in IT staff augmentation and project management, such as facilitating software purchases and installation. Zycron also has partnered this year with Affiliated Computer Services Inc. on a \$156 million contract with TennCare for its management information system.

Gov. Phil Bredesen kicked off CMA Day in Nashville with a ceremonial bill signing.. Bredesen was joined by state legislators and members of the country music industry in signing Senate Bill 3974, which requires Tennessee's public and private universities and colleges to take steps to ensure that computers on their campuses are not being used to disseminate or download copyrighted material through peerto-peer file sharing programs. The legislation also requires these higher education institutions to develop and enforce a policy for computer usage, network usage and ethics, in addition to analyzing the network to determine if copyrighted works are being transmitted.

The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids ranked Tennessee 40th for the amount of money it spends on tobacco prevention. The report says the state will spend \$6.1 million in the 2009 fiscal year on prevention programs. The nonprofit group says the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends the Volunteer State should spend \$71.7 million for prevention programs and that Tennessee will generate \$419 million in tobacco-generated revenue in the 2008-09 fiscal year.

**U.S.** Department of Agriculture data shows burley tobacco produced by Tennessee farmers this vear is expected to outperform last year's crop by 22 percent. The crop once ranked among the Volunteer State's most profitable crops. Production, however, has been declining in recent years as high costs and lower profits discouraged many growers. If the forecast by the federal agency holds true, it will mark the first time the production of burley - most commonly used in cigarettes - has shown a year-overyear increase since 1999.

Entrepreneurs have generated as much as \$23 billion in revenue in Tennessee, according to new research by the University of Tennessee. The revenue accounted for more than 12 percent of total personal income in the state according to the study based on 2006 data. The study also found that firms with

Gov. Phil Bredesen, joined by state legislators and members of the country music industry, kicked off CMA Day in Nashville with a ceremonial bill signing. Senate Bill 3974 requires Tennessee's public and private universities and colleges to take steps to ensure that computers on their campuses are not being used to disseminate or download copyrighted material through peer-to-peer file sharing programs.

fewer than 20 employees made up 84 percent of all firms in Tennessee. Those firms were also responsible for about 20 percent of the state's 3.7 million-plus total jobs.

Tennessee's Adoption Support and Preservation Program has been awarded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services the 2008 Adoption Excellence Award in the category of Support for Adoptive Families. ASAP was recognized for serving nearly 5,000 adopted youths and their families since 2004, as well as for the leadership of Michael McDonald, the West Tennessee coordinator for The University of Tennessee is streamlining its admissions process as lottery-funded scholarships continue to expand the number of students applying for admission to the state's flagship university. UT also is adding a new grant program for fall 2009 that aims to help families that make too much money to qualify for need-based financial aid. The one deadline to apply for the fall 2009 semester is Dec. 1. The regular admissions deadline had been Feb. 1, with an early admissions deadline Nov. 1. creating an even playing field for all students, according to Richard Bayer, assistant provost and director of enrollment services at UT.



# PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

**BYTML STAFF REPORTS** 

U.S. Sen. Lamar Alexander will continue on in the third ranking position in Senate

Republican

leadership af- Alexander

ter being reelected as chairman of the Senate Republican Conference. The Chairman convenes meetings of GOP senators and leads efforts to communicate the Senate Republican message to the American people. He will oversee an operation that provides Republican senators a full range of communications services including graphics, radio, television, and Internet. Alexander was elected to the U.S. Senate in 2002 and served as Deputy Whip from 2003 to 2006.

**James G. Martin** of Franklin has been appointed to fill the vacancy on the Tennessee Circuit Court, 21st Judicial District, Division II. The 21st Judicial District is composed of Williamson, Hickman, Perry and Lewis counties. The vacancy was created by the resignation of Judge R.E. Lee Davies, which was effective October 1. Martin has been a partner with the law firm of Stites & Harbison, PLLC in Nashville since

Sen. Jim Kyle and Rep. Janis **Sontany** have been honored as the 2008 Legislators of the Year by the

Tennessee Recreation and Parks Association for their continued support of Tennessee's park system. The awards were presented at the association's annual conference in Memphis. The awards were primarily based on the efforts of Kyle and Sontany to financially support Tennessee parks during difficult economic

Sontany times and their oppo-

Charles R. "Charlie" Burchett Sr., 85, father of state Sen. Tim Burchett, longtime chairman of the old Knoxville school board and a retired dean at the University of Tennessee, died at the Ben Atchley State Veteran's Nursing Home from complications following a stroke he suffered in June.

Retired Nashville chancellor C. Allen High, 83, has died. High's most famous ruling was made in 1991, when he held





sition to legislation that would have allowed Tennesseans with handgun permits to carry their firearms in parks and community centers. One senator and one representative were chosen for this award by a vote of the 1,500 members of the associa-



that the state's system of financing education was unconstitutional which led to creation of the Basic Education Program funding equalization formula.

Rep. John Tan**ner**, was elected president of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly during its meeting in Valencia, Spain. The assembly,



Tanner

made up of 248 legislators from the 26 North Atlantic Treaty Organization members, discusses major security issues and concerns of alliance members.

Ron Townsend has resigned as president of Oak Ridge Associated Universities to assume a new role as Battelle's executive vice president for global laboratory operations. Townsend will oversee and help coordinate Battelle's management of seven premier research labs in the United States - including Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

Chris Williams, a 20-year member of the Johnson City Fire Department, was promoted to assistant fire chief. As the new assistant chief of administration, Williams will be responsible for training, medical/rescue operations, financial management and data research.

Dwight Robert Wade Sr. of Sevierville, father of Justice Gary Wade, has died at age 101.

# New program strives to educate, keep hospital ER for emergencies only

**ER** from page 1 reaches more than the patient," according to Pamela Brillhart, ER Diversion Program director.

"Educated participants will not only seek routine medical treatment outside ERs for themselves, but will encourage friends, family members

and neighbors to do the same." According to UNHS, beside the obvious cost savings of providing routine treatment to patients in an outpatient setting, benefits to patients include: medical home to prevent medical emergencies, especially for those with chronic condi-

tions; and opportunities for patients to develop medical relationships with providers for continuity of care and more comprehensive preventive

When asked why they chose to go to the ER for routine care rather than their primary care provider, 54 percent reported having no insurance, while 32 percent cite difficulty using their primary care provider, including limited appointment times, hours of operation or dissatisfaction with services.

The five UNHS clinics are Northeast Family Clinic, Madison



Family Clinic, Cayce Family Clinic, Waverly Family Clinic and Southside Family Clinic. The Madison clinic, 601 Due West Ave. and the Waverly clinic, 1501 12th Ave. S. have extended hours to 10 p.m. every night including Saturdays and Sundays.

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# Tennessee cities also hurt by dire economy

**ECONOMY** from Page 1 services. Some 30 percent of their budgets come from the local property tax

Last quarter, Tennessee ranked 15 in foreclosures with another 15 percent of Tennessee homeowners with mortgages that have negative equity – they owe more than the house is worth. Considering the current trends and indicators, Jenkins said city governments expect to see an increase in delinquent property tax collections.

"If we continue to experience a worsening of general economic conditions with reduced wages, reduced services, layoffs and closures, as is forecast, then an increasing number of folks will have to decide how to spend their paycheck," said Jenkins. "Most likely they will choose to pay their mortgage, put gas in their car, and food on their table. Paying their property tax is not high on a hierarchy of needs.

"If folks don't pay their property tax or delay their payment," Jenkins continued, "then this creates huge cash flow problems for local governments."

#### **Fuel Revenues**

Cities and counties also share in fuel revenues collected in the state. These revenues are source for road and street construction and maintenance. Reduction in federal and state funding over the years has created backlog of projects.

"Reduction in local resources means badly needed construction and maintenance will not happen in a timely manner," said Jenkins. "This is especially problematic in areas of the state that have experienced tremendous growth over last five years."

In addition to shrinking fuel revenues, there has been a marked increased in the cost of asphalt and other raw material used in road construction. Cost of road building and infrastructure improvements have increased while funding sources have been cut and revenues have fallen.

Other revenue areas affected by the economy include adequate facilities fees due to a decline in new home starts and commercial development projects being put on hold; declines in local business taxes due to business and plant closures; and less revenue from the Hall Income Tax due to the turmoil in the stock market.

"Like the state, local governments have cut and trimmed budgets, as part of an ongoing effort since 2003 to handle reduced revenues and funding," said Jenkins. "The cumulative effect of cutting services and delaying projects and purchases is taking a toll."

#### **State Fiscal Conditions**

Tax collections for October for the general fund were \$72 million below projections, bringing the total for the current fiscal year to more than \$200 million under projections. Sales tax collections, franchise and excise tax collections, gas tax collections, and inheritance and estate taxes were all below expectations.

October is the third consecutive month this fiscal year and the eleventh consecutive month beginning November 2007 that revenue collections have come in under the budgeted estimate.

State officials are now anticipating that revenues for the current budget year are expected to be about \$800 million less than anticipated. Gov. Bredesen has previously said that the state will need to look at a combination of measures to help balance the budget – cutting department spending, dipping into some of the state's reserves, and possibly laying off state employees.

This is in addition to the more than \$468 million in spending cuts, \$287 million in state reserves, and 1,500 voluntary layoffs of state employees implemented last year in order to close the books June 30.

Fiscal conditions are not expected to improve anytime soon. State economists are projecting sales and tax revenues to be down in both 2008 and 2009.

"The path forward for the national and state economies will be nothing but downright ugly," said Matt Murray, with University of Tennessee Center for Business and Economic Research.

Murray said the earliest the state might expect an economic turnaround is mid-2009, and that would be based on a recovery of the housing market.

Department hearings for the FY 2010 budget began last week. In anticipation of another grim financial situation, Gov. Bredesen has asked state commissioners to submit department budgets that reflect 10-15 percent cuts in spending.

# Cities pass liquor referendums

**LIQUOR** from Page 1 someone orders an alcoholic bever-

age. **Election results**:

White House approved both off-premise sales and liquor by the

**Nolensville** approved liquor by

Goodletsville approved liquor

by the drink.

Pleasant View approved liquor

by the drink.

**Smyrna** voted to allow off-premise sales.

**Dunlap** passed both liquor by the drink and retail package sales

Humboldt voters approved liquor by the drink.

Crossville passed off-premise

**Rockwood** approved both offpremise sales and liquor by the drink. **Baxter** passed package stores

Local referendums that did not pass include: **Hartsville** did not allow liquor by the drink; **Kimball** did not approve liquor by the drink; and **Whitwell** did not approve retail package sales.

According to AP reports, Tennessee's last surge in liquor votes was in 2002 when seven cities - Cleveland, Jasper, Signal Mountain, Jonesborough, Union City, McMinnville and Martin — passed liquor referendums.

# **MTAS** Consultants receive awards

Several Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) employees were honored recently at an agency dinner. Ray Crouch Sr., Randy Gustafson, Sarah Holley and Elaine Morrisey each received recognition for their outstanding service.

#### 2008 Hobday Award

MTAS honored Ray Crouch for innovation and excellence in consulting and for providing in-depth and lasting impact on fire service and safety in Tennessee cities. He also was recognized for his work to establish the Tennessee Fire Service and Codes Enforcement Academy.

2008 TrailblazerAward

MTAS honored Randy Gustafson for developing the MTAS research program by developing new financial databases, working with and assisting consultants with research questions and developing positive relationships with other research units within UT and state

#### CustomerServiceAwards

MTAS honored Elaine Morrisey for consistently going above and beyond what is required as the first point of contact for MTAS, for taking on additional administrative duties and for being positive and professional at all times.

Sarah Holley demonstrates im-



Ray Crouch



Sarah Holley

pressive professionalism, a willingness to lead on many of MTAS' customer service-based initiatives



**Randy Gustafson** 



**Elaine Morrisey** 

such as the new learning management system, and does an exceptional job marketing MTAS.

# New council promotes renewable resources

Several city mayors, along with UT consultants with the Institute for Public Service, have come together to form the Tennessee Renewable Energy and Economic Development Council, a non-profit organization that promotes renewable energy opportunities for rural economic development in Tennessee.

The council represents local governments, farmers, energy and service providers, businesses, resource agencies and universities and aims to aggressively develop Tennessee's abundant natural renewable resources.

Goals of the council are to spur sustainable economic development, address environmental concerns, diversify the state's energy supply and provide long-term energy security to Tennessee. The council also will seek and distribute public and private funding for renewable energy programs and help communities recruit and develop renewable energy producers.

Interest in forming the council originated in June 2007 following the Governor's Conference on Biofuels. Pikeville Mayor Greg Johnson, McBee/Bailey & Associates President Emanuel Bailey, several city mayors, and Warren Nevad, municipal management consultant with the UT Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS), set out to create a coalition of mayors to help industrialize cellulosic ethanol production in Tennessee.

The council was chartered by the state of Tennessee Aug. 21, 2008, and met in September. Council officers are Johnson, president; Gainesboro Mayor John Fox, vice president; Graysville Mayor Andy Beene, second vice president; and Crossville Mayor J.H. Graham, secretary

Consultants from UT Institute

for Public Service (IPS) agencies were helpful in organizing the council. Nevad helped the council develop its bylaws. Ron Woody and Ben Rodgers at the UT County Technical Assistance Service (CTAS) and Beth Phillips of IPS have also supported the council's development.

Mayor Johnson praised state officials, UT, Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) and the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) for proactively helping communities reach energy self-sufficiency, particularly in transportation fuel and electricity.

"These critical public service providers need support from local community leaders such as city and county mayors, private businesses and civic organizations. With local support, they can help meet our country's goal of producing more cellulosic ethanol, biodiesel and wind and solar energy," Johnson said.

Mayor Johnson said the council would promote the efforts of the city of Pikeville and other communities to bring more income to area farmers via UT's switchgrass initiative. "Every community can benefit with the development of cellulosic ethanol by growing the switchgrass, pre-treating the feedstock, producing the fuel, storing the fuel or distributing the fuels," Johnson said. "This council will help coordinate renewable energy issues and logistics among our local governments and attract private investment."

There was a good turnout at the council's September meeting, including representatives from the Upper Cumberland Development District, Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund, Rockwood Economic Development Council and the city of Harriman.

Attendees heard from Biodiesel Logic, which has established biodiesel recycling programs in Hoover and Gadsden, Ala. The cities make their own biodiesel by collecting used cooking oil from various collection sites and mixing the oil with methanol and lye to produce biodiesel and a glycerin co-product. MTAS is scheduling a tour for Tennessee city officials to observe the recycling operations in Hoover.

The East Tennessee Clean Fuels Coalition shared information about Nu-Energie, which recently opened a 5-million-gallons-per-year biodiesel plant in Surgoinsville. Cities interested in using biodiesel for vehicle fleets may tour the Nu-Energie plant to learn of its capabilities.

The work of the council will be carried out by a network of regional caucuses and an advisory board. The caucuses will be established as membership develops and will cluster cities, counties, communities and resources together.

The advisory board will include mayors, caucus representatives, and representatives from UT, TVA, ORNL, the governor's office, and state departments such as Agriculture, Transportation and Economic and Community Development. Local development districts, power distributors, public power associations, and clean fuels associations also will be represented on the board, which will be chaired by UT President Emeritus Joe Johnson.

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PAST PRESIDENTS

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Feds, states, and cities in one fiscal boat

**BY NEAL PEARCE** Washington Post Writers Group

For many years, official Washington — its own "echo chamber," as some say — has been ignoring the financial needs and prospects of state and local governments. That era is now coming to a crashing end.

The headline event is Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's appeal to the U.S. Treasury for an emergency \$7 billion loan to cover California's immediate operating expenses. Massachusetts has submitted a request too.

The Wall Street fiscal crisis effectively shut the state-local government sector out of borrowing either for long-term bonds or, of more immediate gravity, bridge loans to keep them afloat awaiting sales tax and April income-tax receipts.

But the stage for a "perfect fiscal storm" was already set by the seriously weakened fiscal condition of so many state and local governments. On top of the stunning \$43 billion in prospective deficits that 29 states had to cover with spending cuts or tax hikes for the fiscal year starting July 1, at least 15 of the states have already seen serious new budget gaps emerge, reports the Center on Budget and Policy Priori-

Indeed, versions of California's budget crisis are being registered from Georgia to Arizona, Florida to New Jersey to Ohio. In New York, epicenter of the financial earthquake triggered by Wall Street's complicity in the mortgage foreclosure mess, fears of massive layoffs by financial houses are expected to add \$1 billion or more to the \$5.4 billion deficit the state already faced.

State-local taxes will surely have to rise: by global standards, we're in fact a relatively low-tax

nation. And the financial wizardry that helped trim bond-sale costs in recent years is likely toast — we'll see a return to plain-vanilla bonds with fixed rates of interest.

Then there's the impact of the stock market plunge on state and local pension systems with their estimated \$3 trillion in long-term liabilities. The funds' expected investment returns of roughly 8 percent are now wildly unrealistic. Unfunded liabilities, notes John Petersen of George Mason University, a senior analyst of state-local fiscal systems, "will probably grow exponentially."

The often-ignored reality, says Petersen, is that state and local budgets are 12 percent to 13 percent of the entire national economy. "In the last (2000-01) recession, they held up because property taxes were doing well. But now it's the fatal storm — everything is going down. It's a 9/11 for government finance."

Yet there may be something of a silver lining, Petersen suggests: "This financial — and now fiscal crisis means we're all in this together. We will need strong government — federal and state-local to lead us."

Nationally, that's already clear. The federal bailout of major banks, insurance companies and mortgage lenders proves free-market fundamentalism doesn't work, that careful and thorough government regulation and oversight are imperative. But to fashion a full recovery policy, official Washington will be obliged to work more closely with state and local governments, devising major fiscal recovery plans, shared agendas and reasonable regulation.

An immediate example: We're seeing 10,000 foreclosures a day. In the next year, about 1 million to 2 million adjustable-rate mortgages

are due to adjust upward. The local impacts may be devastating, requiring fast federal action (perhaps fast revisions of the bankruptcy code).

An active debate is already necessary: Should Congress approve billions of dollars in revenue sharing for states and localities hard hit by the decline in tax revenues caused by the foreclosures federal inattention triggered, and falling property val-

The shaken national economy and depression of state and local tax bases may indeed last several years. How could we *not* plan a serious federal-state dialogue — starting in weeks, as soon as a new president is elected — on remedial steps?

The opportunity for frank and realistic discussions, a new intergovernmental compact, is strengthened by the emergence in recent years of "a really strong generation of governors, bottom-line managers, who watch their agencies week by week and hold their managers accountable."

In every field from road and transit funding to Medicaid, says Johnson, "we need to open a frank dialogue on who's responsible for what, recognizing we are all in the same boat together."

Actually, before Ronald Reagan killed it, we had a national Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, focused on just such issues. Its top fiscal analyst, John Shannon, often told me: "It's an ill wind that doesn't bring some good." Maybe — just maybe — today's ferocious fiscal hurricane could restore a breeze of dialogue and rationality. It's high time to get America's governments — and the metro regions so critical to our economy — onto the same page, thinking through, planning survival strategies for perilous times.

Dec. 29: Andrew Johnson National Cemetery, Greenville. Presidential wreath laying at the grave of President Andrew Johnson honoring his 200th birthday. Celebration features entertainment and birthday cake, culminating with fireworks. For more information, call Jim Small at 423-639-3711.

Jan. 5-6: Memphis Police Training Academy and Grant Writing USA will present a two-day grant writing workshop in Memphis. Beginning and experienced grant writers from city, county and state agencies are encouraged to attend. Tuition \$425 including all materials. Seating is limited, online reservations are necessary. For more information, call 800.814.8191 or visit: <u>http://</u> grantwritingusa.com/events/write/ mete0109.html.

March 23-24: TML Legislative Conference at the Downtown Nashville DoubleTree Hotel, 315 4th Ave. N.

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Edna Holland, Government Relations, TML/RMP John Holloway, Government Relations Debbie Kluth, Dir. Marketing & Member Services Mona Lawrence, Administrative Assistant Denise Paige, Government Relations Victoria South, Communications Coordinator Sylvia Trice, Director of Conference Planning

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# **NLC** calls for Hometown Economic Stimulus Package to address city needs

In an address at the Congress of Cities in Orlando, Fla., NLC President Kathleen Novak, mayor of Northglenn, Colo., called on local officials to urge their members of Congress to partner with local governments on a hometown economic stimulus package.

"I call on each of you to take this call for economic stimulus endorsed by the NLC Board of Directors and share it with your members of Congress," Novak said . "Tell them why a hometown stimulus package is important for your community

NLC has released an issue brief on recovery, detailing the request for a hometown economic stimulus package.

A hometown stimulus package would include funding for ready-togo infrastructure projects, support to individuals and adequate access to the financial markets for cities and towns. This would help create jobs and restore economic stability to America's hometowns and the

"Funding for airports, highways, transit, trains, clean water, sewers, school facilities and housing creates jobs and enhances the safety and competitiveness of our nation," Novak said. "As city leaders, we know we've got capital projects that are and have been ready to go but for the resources to move forward. As city leaders, we also know that we've got individuals ready to go to work. With additional funding in a stimulus package, we can make much needed investments in our aging infrastructure, and we can help put our residents back to work."

The Congress of Cities general session also included an address by former White House Chief of Staff Ken Duberstein, who saluted NLC's

call for economic recovery. "I think it is a significant blueprint for action," Duberstein said. "It is timely and it is important. Get to it now with your members of Congress."

Duberstein's speech to the conference focused on Presidential transitions. He said he is impressed with President-elect Barack Obama's quick start on a transition and that it appears Obama took a page from former President Ronald Reagan's transition process.

## Agenda for the Nation

Novak also spoke of NLC's Agenda for the Nation, a series of briefs on issues important to cities and towns as the country moves toward a new presidential adminis-

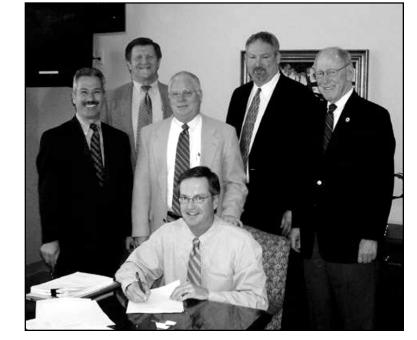
Speaking on the importance of a partnership among all levels of government, Noval stressed in particular issues of: housing; infrastructure; health care; sustainability; reducing poverty and providing economic opportunity; safety and crime prevention; and immigration.

For a copy of NLC's national agenda or an issue brief for economic recovery, go www.NLC.org



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The city of Murfreesboro closes a \$103 million loan, the largest in TMBF history.



The town of Nolensville closes a \$21,000 loan.



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#### CITYADMINISTRATOR

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

#### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR** ASSISTANTEXECUTIVE **DIRECTOR**

NEWPORT. The Newport Housing Authority is seeking a full-time, qualified, and experienced individual to administer 400 units of conventional public housing. Responsibilities include managing a staff of over 20 employees, procurement, overseeing the maintenance department and a force account construction crew, preparing CFP and operating budgets, supervising the accounting department, public relations,

and future (5-year) planning, and secretary to a five member board of commissioners. Qualifications include a minimum of a four (4) year degree (BA, BS) from an accredited college or university, a master's degree desirable, preferably in business or public administration or related field. Supervisory experience and through knowledge of HUD regulations are preferable. Candidate should have or be able to obtain a PHM certification within the first year of employment. Salary commensurate with qualifications and experience. Excellent fringe benefits package includes health insurance, retirement plan, etc. EEOA. Submit resume and a written application for employment to: Search Committee, Board of Commissioners, Newport Housing Authority, 375 Alex Street, Newport, TN 37821.

#### **FIRERESCUETRUCK**

ORLINDA. The city will receive sealed and read aloud. Bids should be addressed to the City Manager and deliv-HP pump with 375 gpm with pump and upon request. Bids shall be clearly identified on the exterior of the sealed name and address. Each bidder, by bid. No bonds shall be required. Paytions and other bidding information

# New grant to support nontraditional use of libraries

Once an institution devoted to book circulation, the public library is evolving. A recent study of the members of ICMA, the premier local government leadership and management organization, found some communities are using their public libraries for compelling new projects, such as providing services for teens, immigrant residents, recycling, health, and public safety.

During the next two years, with the help of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, ICMA plans to encourage adoption of more such leading practices among local governments and demonstrate the value of public libraries as a vital tool in supporting community sustainability through the ICMA Public Library Innovation Grant. Local governments can employ these grants to develop new and creative ways of using their public library to deliver services in areas such as public safety, disaster preparedness, sustainability, health, immigration, civic engagement, and economic development.

Recognizing the importance of the manager/librarian relationship to create and sustain change, each Public Library Innovation Grant will be anchored by a partnership between the office of the chief administrative officer (city, town, and county managers) and the public library. A series of leadership workshops and project coaching will help grantees solidify the partnership, ensure the short-term success of the project, and secure new resources to support the long-term use of libraries in addressing community goals.

Through the program, ICMA will provide a total of \$500,000 in Public Library Innovation Grants.

Individual grants will range from \$20,000 to \$60,000. Only U.S. local governments and libraries are eligible to apply.

The Public Library Innovation Grant program is the result of an ongoing partnership between ICMA and the Gates Foundation that began more than a year ago, when ICMA and the Gates Foundation partnered on the Local Government and Public Libraries Initiative to engage local government managers as leaders in support of public libraries. A study conducted as part of the initiative revealed that the chief librarian/library director was a member of the

#### **INVITATION TO BID**

bids for a Ford F-550 or equivalent make and model Fire Rescue Truck until 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 2, at which time they will be publicly opened ered to the City of Orlinda, City Hall, P.O. Box 95, Orlinda, TN 37141. The Fire Rescue Truck shall be a Ford F-550 or equivalent 4-door crew cab with all specified equipment and attachments in place, including an approximate 6.4 liter diesel engine, automatic transmission, 4 wheel-drive, approximately 18 roll capability and a 300 gallon or larger poly tank. Details specs are available envelope as "ORLINDA FIRE RESCUE TRUCK BID" with all the information required by law, including the bidders submission of bid, agrees to have vehicle fully functional and ready for delivery within 90 days of the awarding of ment shall be for the full amount of awarded bid and shall be made within 30 days of delivery. Detailed specificamay be obtained from City Manager Kevin Breeding at Orlinda City Hall, P.O. Box 95, Orlinda, TN 37141. Phone

#### local government management team in less than half of responding local governments, and that the chief librarian/library director participated in weekly meetings with the manager in only 41 percent of communi-

"These statistics suggest that for many local governments, libraries are not being used to strategically address community needs," says Susan Benton, director of domestic programs at ICMA.

For more information about the ICMA Public Library Innovation Grants, contact Molly Donelan at mdonelan@icma.org. Applications, guidelines, and a budget template are available at <a href="http://icma.org/">http://icma.org/</a> publiclibrarygrants.

# Budget hearings include interactive civics lesson for state's students

**CIVICS** from Page 1

criteria before receiving federal education funding. Extended contracts assist students with particular learn-

Noting an anticipated \$800 million shortfall in the next budget cycle, Gov. Bredesen added that he would not be able to protect higher education from substantial budget

Tennessee High School senior Lorelei Barlow elicited an immediate compliment from Bredesen in response to her suggestion to scale back state mandated testing such as the ACT and Gateway exams as a method of conserving funding.

"Lorelei, I like the way you think," the governor said, as Webb responded that while the testing situation has been deliberated on the national scene, the current accountability process is "the best system that we have" in Tennessee and closely intertwined with NCLB stan-

While Webb said he expects to reduce the state's \$4.91 billion education budget by 3 percent, affecting 136 school districts, the cuts would not affect funding for the Basic Education program (BEP), originally designed to distribute funding equally among urban and rural school districts.

"Why isn't high school education more career oriented, and could extra funding be devoted to developing a program that would still be more student friendly?" asked Michael Balaban, 17.



Photo courtesy of Tennessee High School

Students from Tennessee High School in Bristol watch the state budget hearings via streaming video before participating in an interactive question and answer session with Gov. Bredesen.

"I really think a general prep course is more valuable than a specific course path," said Bredesen, citing changes initiated during his 2007 overhaul of education funding, the BEP 2.0 process.

While Bredesen noted a broad consensus exists within the General Assembly to fully fund BEP, he could not verify that same consensus carries over to pre-K programs, which he hopes to continue funding.

The unique interactive civics lesson coincides with several proposed bills to re-introduce civics

learning and understanding of citizenship in Tennessee as more states examine the value of civics education. In 2007, the Tennessee Commission on Civic Education, an entity created by the Tennessee State Legislature and charged with examining all aspects of civic learning in the state and making recommendations for improving civic education for Tennessee's students, asked all K-12 school teachers and principals to complete a survey to find out what is being taught across the state in the area of civics' education.

# Changes to Risk Pool's flood policy coverage

POOL from Page 1

less any applicable deductible. Combined

• The First \$250,000 of combined loss of revenue and extra expense would not be covered. Any additional amount of loss of revenue and/or extra expense would be covered by the TML Pool Property policy up to the sublimit selected by you for each of the two respective automatic coverages.

(B) If your governmental entity has purchased a maximum coverage amount NFIP policy on the building and personal property and you have the standard TML Pool Property policy sublimit, then:

## **Building loss**

- The First \$500,000 for building loss would be paid by NFIP;
- The Next \$1,000,000 for building loss would be paid by the TML Pool Property policy, less the deductible you selected;

## **Personal property**

- The First \$500,000 for personal property loss would be paid by NFIP;
- The Next \$100,000 for personal property loss would be paid by the TML Pool Property policy;

### RISK · MANAGEMENT · POOL

## Combined

• The First \$250,000 of combined loss of revenue and extra expense would not be paid by NFIP or the TML Pool. Additional loss of revenue and/or extra expense greater than \$250,000 would be paid by the TML Pool Property policy up to the sublimit selected by you for each of the two respective automatic coverages.

First, your entity must identify buildings and personal property that are located in the 100 year Flood Zone A, and decide if you want to cover them under the NFIP. The NFIP policy coverage may be purchased by one of the following methods:

(A) By going through your insurance agent of record (if the agent (B) By going through a local

insurance agent in your community certified to write direct with NFIP (to obtain list of agents in your zip code see website, www.flood smart.gov/floodsmart/pages/ agentsearch/searchform.jsp); or

(C) By going to www.ajg.com/ TMLRMP to complete NFIP applications for coverage per building. Please complete the NFIP (pdf) application (bottom of application tab) and the summary data information contained in the website and push save. The completed pdf application will have to be printed and faxed, or scanned and emailed to the contacts.

If you have questions or need further assistance please call Randy Williams at 800-624-9698.

# CLICK2ENTER, INC. MANUFACTURER OF THE CLICK2ENTER-I EMERGENCY ACCESS CONTROL SYSTEM

On May 22, 2008 Governor Bredesen signed House Bill Number 649. This new law addresses the issue of gates and emergency access control. Public Chapter Number 1008 went into effect on July 1, 2008. The Click2Enter-I emergency access control system exceeds all of the mandated operational specifications addressed in this important legislation.

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- \* Costs Are Shifted To Property Owners, Not Public Safety Agencies

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# **ELECTION ROUNDUP**

Elections of city council positions were on local ballots Nov. 4 in 147 municipalities across the state. This list is not complete, however, but represents information that TML has collected as of Nov. 20. If your city held elections and is not listed below, please provide Mona Lawrence with your new information by fax at 615-255-4752, by e-mail to



White, Ken		Fairview	
Williams, George	Council Council	Bissell, Allen Sutton, Toney R.	Coun
Bledsoe, Clayton  Athens	Council	Johnson, Stuart L.  Forest Hills	Coun
Alvey, Shannon Davis, Ann Scott	Council Council	Coke, William G. Douglas, Timothy J.	Mayo
Atoka		Lovell, John	Coun
Hutchison, Bobby Giannini, Brett	Council Council	Gallatin Garrott, Tom	Coun
McConnell, Chris	Council	Bennett, Dale Kemp, Anne	Coun Coun
Halford, Jimmy Long, Ricky	Council Council	Germantown Palazzolo, Mike	Coun
Auburntown		Ulhorn, Frank Chism, Ernest	Coun
Turney, Roger Hancock, Beth	Mayor Council	Gibson	
Davis, Rita Davenport, Ruby Jo	Council Council	Ellis, Eddie Frye, Clyde	Mayo Coun
Bartlett Barzano, John	Council	Caraway, Jim Meals, Phil	Coun Coun
Simmons, Bobby Young, Jack	Council Council	Gilt Edge Sloan, Wayne	Coun
McCrary, George  Belle Meade	City Judge	Fletcher, W. Stephen Gleason	Coun
Altenbern, C.	Council	Dunning, Jack	Mayo
Hunt, J.V. Sr. Crook, George	Council Council	Poole, Diane Morris, Michael	Coun Coun
Bethel Springs Graham, Bob	Council	Connell, Jerry Dunn, Jerry A. Jr.	Coun
Gray, Bobby R. BradenVanstory, Mike	Council Council	Goodlettsville Manning, Gary	Coun
Bradford		Finch, John	Coun
Taylor, Larry Thomas, Carolyn Jean	Mayor Council	Bloodworth, D.A. <b>Gordonsville</b>	Coun
Veasey, Tommy McAlister, Earl	Council Council	Baker, Jim Geldreich, Martha	May
Brighton		Vantrease, Barbara	Coun
Scott, Jeff Wyatt, James	Mayor Council	Graysville Doss, Ted	Coun
Davis, Houston Blalack, W.E.	Council Council	Davenport, Robbie Dennis, Charles	Coun
BrucetonYoung, Tonya Ford, Renee	Council Council	Greenback Peeler, Tom	May
Furhman, Camion	Council	Harris, Christopher Allen Jackson, Samuel	Coun
Bulls Gap Horner, Michael R.	Mayor	Evans, Polly	Coun
Williams, Susan Shipley, Ricky "Pete"	Council Council	Greenfield McAdams, Cindy	Coun
Johnson, Charles Sexton, Jimmy	Council Council	Jones, Troy R. Richmond, Paul D.	Coun
Calhoun		Hendersonville	
Coleman, Clifton Liner, Carlos	Council Council	Hoback, Jim Gallaher, Chris	Coun
Nichols, Billy Carthage	Council	Sprouse, Scott Elsten, Tommy	Coun
Grisham, L.C. Futrell, Jerry	Council Council	Hollow Rock Crocker, Maria	Coun
Waggoner, Charles E.	Council	Woods, Rob	Coun
Caryville Stooksbury, Robert	Mayor	Smith, Michael <b>Hornbeak</b>	Coun
Cedar Hill Richards, Tom	Mayor	Burpo, Pete Jerden, Debi	May Coun
Arrington, Martha Bigsbee, Jimmy	Council Council	Gray, Christina McGuire, Grant	Coun
Centertown		Orr, John R.	Coun
Underhill, J.W. Boissonneault, Robert	Mayor Council	Parker, Paula Seals  Hornsby	Coun
Crumbley, Collene Clarksville	Council	Johnson, Billy G. Johnson, Anita	May Coun
Johnson, Candy Lewis, James	Council Council	Plunk, Patricia Farris, Eva B.	Coun
Redd, Wallace Smith, Charles	Council City Judge	Cox, Raymond Vandiver, Curtis	Coun
Collierville		Huntingdon	
Joyner, Stan Lott, Jimmy	Mayor Council	Kelley, Dale Norman, Clarence	May Coun
Palazzolo, Mike Sarwar, Tony	Council Council	Smothers, Nina Tucker, Tim	Coun
Coopertown Childs, Sam	Mayor	Hatch, Gary  Huntsville	Coun
Lee, Linda	Council	Potter, George W.	May
Ruth, Peggy Copperhill	Council	Jasper Simpson, Billy	May
Arp, Cecil F. Jr. Covington	Mayor	Wampler, Chip Looney, Steve	Coun
Hatcher, Tommy Rose, Shelvie	Council Council	Jonesborough Wolfe, Kelly	Coun
Timberlake, Wm. Ed	Council	Countermine, Terry	Coun
Crab Orchard	Mayor	Fitzgerald, Jerome <b>Kimball</b>	Coun
Sherrill, Willard	•		
	Council	Jackson, David Case, Jerry Don	
Cross Plains Swann, Carl Stark, James	Council Council	Case, Jerry Don Castle, Rance	Coun
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Lewis, Wm. "Brushy"

Bailey, Lester, Jr.

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Mayor

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Edwards, Randy

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3.6 '11		DL 1. J. J. J. J.	
Maryville Swan, Joe	Council	<b>Philadelphia</b> Stallings, Paul	Mayor
Taylor, Tom	Council	Booher, William	Counc
McKenzie	Country	McGinnis, Michael	Counc
Winchester, Walter	Mayor	Piperton	
Huffman, Willie	Council	Chambers, Whitney Jo	Mayor
Thompson, Shaun	Council	Snider, Kevin	Counc
Broadbent, Debbie <b>McMinnville</b>	Council	Thomas, Scott  Plainview	Counc
Rone, Norman, Dr.	Mayor	Phillips, Richard	Counc
Barnes, Rick	Council	Chandler, Gary	Counc
Brock, Everett C.	Council	Pleasant Hill	
Cochran, Clair G.	Council	Olds, James	Mayor
Medina		Patrick, Elizabeth "Lisa"	Counc
Coleman, Vance	Mayor	Dwenger, Al	Counc
Sheehan, Wayne Baker, Frank	Council Council	Carrell, William D. Savage, Robert	Counc Counc
Memphis	Council	Pleasant View	Counc
Collins, Harold	Council	Carver, Kerry	Mayor
Morrison, Bill	Council	Breen, Barry	Counc
Boyd, William C.	Council	Walsh, Teresa	Counc
Ford, Edmund	Council	Puryear	1.6
Millington Hodges, Richard	Mayor	Paschall, James Hall, Bryan	Mayor Counc
Ford, Chris	Council	Sykes, Bryan	Counc
McGee, Thomas, Sr.	Council	Dunning, Gordon	Counc
Morrison		Gallimore, Tellus	Counc
Gulick, Shannon	Council	Ramer	
Battles, Travis	Council	Armstrong, George	Counc
Anderson, Sue	Council	Summers, Kendall	Counc
Moscow Kercheval, Gladys	Mayor	Red Bank Jones, Greg	Counc
Parker, Sean	Council	Millard, Monty	Counc
Mooneyham, Harold	Council	Jeno, Ruth	Counc
Rhea, Jerry	Council	Ridgetop	
Howell, Gary	Council	Denton, Darrell	Mayor
Mount Carmel		Osborne, Rory	Counc
Lawson, Gary	Mayor	Eddings, Danny Zimmerle, Susan Polen	Counc
Roberts, Kathy Blakely, William	Council Council	Thomas, Jim	Counc Counc
Mawk, Tresa	Council	Rossville	Counc
Gabriel, Richard	Council	Gaither, James C.	Mayor
Wolfe, Carl	Council	Murray, Steve	Counc
Mount Juliet		Lenderman, Daniel	Counc
Elam, Linda	Mayor	Rutherford	Maria
Hagerty, Ed Floyd, Winston "Ted"	Council Council	Harris, Kasey White, Robert H.	Mayor Counc
Sellers, Will	Council	Keith, Kathy	Counc
Bradshaw, Jim	Council	Greer, Van Don	Counc
Munford		Emerson, Jeff	Counc
Cole, Dwayne	Mayor	Cardwell, Keith	Counc
Durham, Michael	Council	Rutledge	C
Forbes, Bob Craig, Stacy M.	Council Council	Munsey, Jacky Nicholson, Mark	Counc Counc
Colin, Teresa	Council	Saltillo	Counc
New Market	Council	Lowery, Larry Darnell	Mayor
Guinn, Charles	Mayor	Mooney, Danny C.	Counc
Solomon, Frank	Council	Savage, Josephine	Counc
Cunningham, Ross	Council	Emmons, Janet	Counc
Williams, Carolyn	Council	Hopper, James	Counc
Solomon, Maurice Newbern	Council	Saulsbury Wells, Ann	Mayor
Dennison, K.W.	Mayor	Reece, Lillie	Counc
Green, Bennie	Council	Emerson, Robert	Counc
Odem, Chris	Council	Ward, Jan	Counc
Fesmire, Larry	Council	Bynum, Robert	Counc
Hart, Robert	Council	Johns, Patricia Sharon	Counc
Clements, Kathy <b>Niota</b>	Council	Gardner, Robert A.	Mayor
Rutledge, Brenda	Council	Freeman, Gerald	Counc
Watkins, Allen	Council	Ary, Monroe	Counc
Boggess, James	Council	Jones, WM. T.	Counc
Nolensville		Hamlin, David	Counc
Felts, Larry	Council	Signal Mountain	C
Alexander, Jimmy	Council	Lusk, Bill	Counc
Oakland Mullins, William C.	Mayor	Allen, Annette Robertson, Susan	Counc Counc
Chambliss, Karl	Council	Soddy Daisy	South
Powers, Maggie	Council	Shipley, Geno	Mayor
Evans, John	Council	Harmon, Shane	Counc
Wombough, Maurice	Council	Adams, Jim	Counc
Obion Miller Wes	Max	Skates, Patti	Counc
Miller, Wes Barker, Patsy	Mayor Council	Somerville Feathers, Alton	Mayor
Bloxom, Donald	Council	Neill, Ronnie	Counc
Carver, Jerry	Council	Middlecoff, Land	Counc
Gloaer, Polk	Council	,	. <del>.</del>
Foggie, Tammy	Council		

8-TENNE	SSEE TOV	WN & CITY/NOVEMB
Philadelphia		South Fulton
Stallings, Paul	Mayor	Crocker, David
Booher, William	Council	Curlin, Keith
McGinnis, Michael Piperton	Council	Moody, Charles South Pittsburg
Chambers, Whitney Jo	Mayor	Killian, Mike
Snider, Kevin	Council	Spring City
Thomas, Scott Plainview	Council	Garrison, Mary Sue Gilliam, Howard
Phillips, Richard	Council	Jolley, Mike
Chandler, Gary	Council	Stanton
Pleasant Hill		Sterbinsky, Allen
Olds, James Patrick, Elizabeth "Lisa"	Mayor Council	Fawcett, Frank Miller, A.D.
Dwenger, Al	Council	Delk, Emma
Carrell, William D.	Council	Jones, Ruffie
Savage, Robert Pleasant View	Council	Surgoinsville Borghetti, March
Carver, Kerry	Mayor	McLain, Joe
Breen, Barry	Council	Thurman, Don
Walsh, Teresa <b>Yuryear</b>	Council	Thompsons Station Napier, Corey
Paschall, James	Mayor	Three Way
Hall, Bryan	Council	Wade, Danny
Sykes, Bryan	Council	Toone
Dunning, Gordon Gallimore, Tellus	Council Council	Jones, Joseph Ellison, Charles Ed.
Ramer	Council	Blankenship, Sandi
Armstrong, George	Council	Macon, Thomas
Summers, Kendall  Red Bank	Council	Keller, Albert Blevins, Mickey
Jones, Greg	Council	Trezevant
Millard, Monty	Council	Argo, Bobby
Jeno, Ruth	Council	Curtis, Phyllis
Ridgetop Denton, Darrell	Mayor	Bateman, Lloyd Walker, Billy
Osborne, Rory	Council	Blaylock, Bobby J.
Eddings, Danny	Council	Trimble
Zimmerle, Susan Polen Thomas, Jim	Council Council	Davis, James R. Ballard, Raymond
Rossville	Council	Biggers, Darlene
Gaither, James C.	Mayor	Parker, Steven
Murray, Steve	Council	Hinson, Jody Stafford, Matt
Lenderman, Daniel Rutherford	Council	Unicoi
Harris, Kasey	Mayor	Lynch, Johnny
White, Robert H.	Council	Union City
Keith, Kathy Greer, Van Don	Council Council	Bacon, Johnny Harrison, Bill
Emerson, Jeff	Council	Eskew, Dianne
Cardwell, Keith	Council	Cranford, Billy Jack
Rutledge Munsey, Jacky	Council	Nohsey,Allen <b>Viola</b>
Nicholson, Mark	Council	Lawrence, Kevin
altillo		Ramsey, William
Lowery, Larry Darnell	Mayor Council	Bouldin, Carl Terry, Bruce
Mooney, Danny C. Savage, Josephine	Council	Walden
Emmons, Janet	Council	Hetzler, Peter
Hopper, James	Council	Akins, Elizabeth
aulsbury Wells, Ann	Mayor	Epperson, David <b>Wartrace</b>
Reece, Lillie	Council	Gallagher, Donald
Emerson, Robert	Council	Claxton, Scott Hurst, Thomas
Ward, Jan Bynum, Robert	Council Council	Simpson, Ed
Johns, Patricia	Council	Gregory, Patsy
haron		Gallagher, Jean
Gardner, Robert A. Freeman, Gerald	Mayor Council	Westmoreland Carter, Michael
Ary, Monroe	Council	Holmes, Wendell
Jones, WM. T.	Council	Smalling, Brian
Hamlin, David	Council	White House Arnold, Mike
l <b>ignal Mountain</b> Lusk, Bill	Council	White Pine
Allen, Annette	Council	Wilder, Stanley
Robertson, Susan	Council	Evans, Curt
<b>Soddy Daisy</b> Shipley, Geno	Mayor	Smith, Mickey Cavanah, Ryan
Harmon, Shane	Council	Taylor, Fred
Adams, Jim	Council	Strom, Ann
Skates, Patti Somerville	Council	Williston Tate, Jeffery
Feathers, Alton	Mayor	Woodland Mills
Neill, Ronnie	Council	Carrington, Wade
Middlecoff, Land	Council	Snead, Kirk
		Reagan, Waymon

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# Mayor David Gordon on path to further enliven atypical Covington

**BY GAEL STAHL** 

David Gordon was born in Huntingdon, Tenn., lived briefly in Parsons, and moved permanently to a farm in Tipton County just outside of Covington during third grade. His father was a County Extension agent of the University of Tennessee and his mother a teacher. She was one of 10 growing up west of Knoxville on the Tennessee River. The family farm, most of which is now part of Watts Bar Lake, was covered by 1,100 acres of water. The old home place survived. It's where Gordon's granddad had a river port, a mill, and docking facilities for boats. After the lake was built, he served as the postal carrier working out of a little country

Gordon's father grew up in Lexington, Tenn., went to UT, and became a county agent. His paternal grandmother rode a horse to school, went to a teacher's college, got her teacher's certificate, and became a teacher.

At Covington High, Gordon played basketball, did well in his studies, and graduated in 1971. At UT-Martin, he majored in pre-med. Having raised horses and pigs since boyhood – raising pigs paid his way through school – he decided to switch from pre-med to pre-veterinary near the end of his junior year. All the courses he needed for pre-vet fell in line during his senior year and he graduated on schedule in 1975.

He worked for a year in Nashville, first at a pest control company, then at Dr. Dan Fitzpatrick's Nolens-ville Road clinic the year Fitzpatrick was the president of the Tennessee Veterinary Medical Association. That would prove helpful when it came time for Fitzpatrick to write a recommendation for Gordon to get into veterinary school.

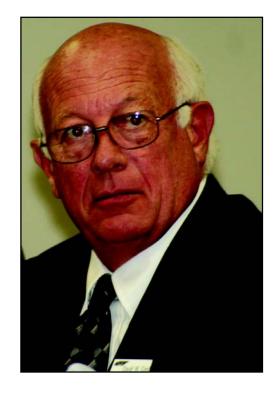
In 1979, Gordon was in the first class to graduate from the new University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine. There being only 40 students in the class, more faculty than students the first two years, he had received specialized hands-on training and especially from a mentor, Dr. John Henton, an equine professor who introduced him to some topnotch horse farms.

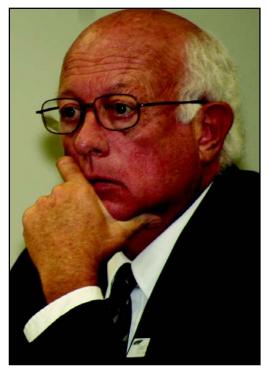
Gordon returned to Covington to start a mixed animal practice with an emphasis on horses. He took out a start-up loan with interest rates of 8 percent the first year, 21 percent the second – a bit of a challenge during his first 10 years in private practice. He now services small animals only.

More than 20 years into his career, Gordon found an interest in local politics. It was partly due to prodding from his wife, Ruth. He had met her in 1986 at her parents' horse farm in Somerville. Gordon was their veterinarian. Ruth's parents invited him to an open house horse event and enticed their daughter, then working in St. Louis, to attend. As they hoped, Gordon and Ruth began dating long distance. Months later, she moved to Covington, and they married in 1987.

In 2000, Ruth was participating in the WestStar Leadership Program at UT-Martin and coming home nights fired up to tell Gordon how exciting it was. The weary pet doctor, tired and not really wanting to hear it, just wanted to watch the game. But he accompanied her to a WestStar reunion featuring WestStar founder Bob Smith who returned to speak at the event. Smith was by then president of Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania. The event motivated Gordon to see WestStar as something helpful for someone with a growing interest in serving the larger community. On graduating from WestStar in June 2002, Gordon ran for a county commission seat and won.

A couple of years later, Ruth invited him to look at a house inside Covington city limits she was interested in buying. Once they moved from the Gordon farm into that house in Covington, Ruth mused that since he now lived in town, he could channel his community interests by running for city mayor. Gordon wasn't interested. The county commission suited him just fine. But he thought about it and about how nice it would be to see some changes in city government. He announced in spring 2004 that he would run for Covington mayor against a six-term incumbent. Forty-five days later, the board of mayor and aldermen changed the mayor's position from a manageable part-time, two-year commitment to a full-time, fouryear position. But, Gordon didn't drop out. He ran harder. For a solid







Photos by: Victoria South

year, he campaigned door to door covering the city twice. He won by 52 votes on March 1, 2005, and took office in April.

Gordon had another incentive to run for city office. He and a fellow county commissioner had taken a couple of kids he was mentoring to an NBA Grizzlies' basketball game in Memphis. While driving through Frayser along River Road, the kids spotted big water and asked what it was. "Why that's the Mississippi," Gordon said. They said they had never seen the Mississippi. To this day, Gordon can't tell the story without struggling to keep from welling up.

"This gets to me," he says. "These are our third and sixth grade children living 19 miles from the Mississippi River, yet have never seen it. If the totality of their universe is smaller than a 19-mile radius, how do we expect them to be successful adults in our wide world? Some in our society blame the kids for not trying, but they don't get it. Those kids never had the opportunity." The experience went to his heart and then it started working on his will to act. He decided to try to make a change.

Now three and a half years into his first term, Gordon has helped make some changes. He plans to run for a second term. Last year, he moved to a statewide level of service by becoming a board member of the Tennessee Municipal League.

Gordon has a son by a previous marriage. He is 27, a mechanical engineer who went to UT Knoxville and got his master's at Stanford University. He and Ruth have two daughters, the first, born in 1989, is a sophomore at UT-Martin and the younger is a senior in high school. Ruth is currently the medical benefits person for the Tipton County school system, responsible for making sure all the paperwork is in order for people to get their dental and medical insurance coverage when they need it.

TT&C: Did that experience with the kids and the Mississippi River lead to any specific actions to enhance opportunities for children? DG: We are establishing a Boys and Girls Club in Covington to give kids more opportunities to expand their lives and experience at first hand what is available if they deeply want something. I didn't think it would take this long to get that done. I discovered I had to get the city on a much firmer financial foundation before we could do other things like this

#### TT&C: Were city finances one of the issues you ran on, that you thought needed changing?

**DC:** Yes. We were experiencing a lot of leakage of sales tax revenue. Tipton County borders Shelby County, so a lot of our residents who work in Memphis and Shelby tended to spend their money down there. We began encouraging people to shop at home and providing them with opportunities to do that by recruiting retail businesses to Covington. We now have more options to find what we need here. While a lot of communities are experiencing a sales tax revenue downturn in this economy, we are still experiencing growth. The high price of gas a few months back helped that, too. Before, folks thought nothing of driving to a mall in Memphis or Shelby County 45 minutes away. Now, they shop here.

# TT&C: What other issues did you run on?

**DG:** I campaigned to change the drug problem in our community. It

was denied that we had one. If you deny it and don't look for it, you won't find it. I knew from my kids and my wife's contacts from working with the Board of Education that we did have a problem. It's still a problem, but we try to work on it.

Once we had increased our sales tax revenue by about 30 percent, we could afford to do other things. Working as a team, we made a complete revision of the mayor/ aldermen city charter, added more police officers, and got additional equipment for the police and fire departments. We got increased training for all city employees, improved our drinking water and sewers, and upgraded our waste water treatment system. Some folks had been annexed into the city for 15 years and still didn't have full city services. They do, now.

Improving water capacity is a major deal because Covington is the Charms Blow Pop and Lollipop Capital of the World. Charms was the No. 1 maker of lollipops in 1988 when it was sold to No. 2 Tootsie Roll Industries. Our improved water quality also made a difference for Unilever, the parent company of Slim Fast. All liquid Slim Fast is produced in Covington. They had a plant in Arizona but couldn't get the product right since the water there didn't match the quality we have. During my term, the Arizona plant shut down and moved to the Covington Unilever plant.

A big achievement was getting a partial grant to purchase 84 acres that adjoin Covington next to our largest city park. It was a once-in-alifetime opportunity, an estate to be sold as a block. The three principals agreed to sell to the city for park use, and we've developed a long-range master plan to use it for a park in the future. It will eventually become a major park attraction with soccer and baseball fields. It has wooded acreage for a walking trail. We have to purchase the property now or never and hope to close soon – a major accomplishment that we are acting on it while we still can.

# TT&C: Does Covington have any post-secondary education facilities?

**DG:** Covington has the Technology Center headed by Bill Ray that provides courses and gives excellent job training for people to become productive players in our work force. The Jimmy Naifeh Center is the Covington campus of Dyersburg State Community College. That's a big plus and a money saver. People can start their college career while living at home. The Naifeh Center also partners with the University of Memphis so you can get a four-year degree in education or nursing here in town. Third, Covington High School has a distance-learning set up that enables UT-Martin professors to teach via video conferencing. Students can get dual high school and college credits. Each of these options saves one-way drives of about 35 miles to Dyersburg, 70 to Martin, and 40 to the University of Memphis main campus.

#### TT&C: Most of the counties in northwestern Tennessee have been losing population for years. How badly has Covington/Tipton County been hit since the 2000 census?

**DG:** We are growing. We're close to 60,000 people now – probably a 40 percent increase since 2000. When I was on the county commission, we faced building a new school every two to four years. That's due partly to suburbanites moving in from Shelby County and partly because

we have a really good school system that attracts families with kids. Tipton County school system is the 12th largest in the state with 20 percent of our 60,000 attending K-12 schools every morning. You like that enthusiasm, but it also challenges the county to figure out how to pay for those schools and additional teachers. County Executive Jeff Huffman does a tremendous job meeting that challenge. He's the best at what he does in Tennessee.

TT&C: Does Covington work well with the county and other cities to promote economic development? DG: Since coming into office, I've tried to make sure we work with the seven incorporated towns of Atoka, Brighton, Burlison, Garland, Gilt Edge, Munford, and Mason by taking a county and regional approach. What's good for them should be good for Covington and vice versa.

You hear a lot about taking a regional approach to economic community development (ECD) in leadership classes, from the state Department of ECD and from the governor. A year ago, we decided to quit talking about it and do it. We formed a Southwest Tennessee Economic Development Authority (STEDA), an interlocal agreement. It started when Tipton County Executive Jeff Huffman invited mayors Webb Banks of Brownsville, Franklin Smith of Haywood County, and me to join him for lunch to discuss a regional partnership. We hammered out a deal to form STEDA, and Ripley Mayor John Pavletic and Lauderdale County Mayor Rod Shuh came on board this fall. Four electric utilities also committed money to fund the budget: Covington Electric, Brownsville Electric, Ripley Power and Electric, and South West Tennessee Electric Co-op with each governmental entity committing \$50,000 a year toward budget.

# TT&C: Has STEDA done anything?

**DG:** On Sept. 1, we brought on board Duane Lavery, an economic and community development specialist, from Texarkana. His last two work experiences were redeveloping two closed military bases into industrial parks and setting up the process for recruiting industry. So he knows industrial recruiters, knows firms, and other significant people. He is marketing our three-county region to industry. We aren't waiting for TVA or ECD or other agencies to bring industry to us.

Haywood County has a TVA-certified mega site industrial park. Lauderdale County has several spots of land including some with existing buildings. Covington has a 1,000-acre site the city and county are promoting together. It is across from our current industrial park.

# TT&C: What are STEDA's main challenges?

DG: Lauderdale County has the second highest unemployment rate in Tennessee. Haywood County has the third highest unemployment rate at 13.8 percent, the last figure I have. Ours has gone up from the fives to 8 percent. We believe our combined efforts can get the attention of industries. It got the attention of the people in Nashville. We didn't ask the state or anybody else for a penny. The whole deal is self-funded. By the second week of October we had received a bunch of RFIs (requests for information) from interested industries. We can see that a company looking ahead to when they can get loans again might see how they can take advantage of the lower costs for construction, land, development, and equipment in our region.

TT&C: Has it gotten tough for cities to borrow, too?
DG: We have not had to deal with that since this graph.

with that since this crunch started up. We did make some loans earlier this year. USDA Rural Development, one of our big partners and supporters, stepped up to help us with low-interest, long-term loans loan/grant combinations for a lot of projects. We did one just about

every year I've been in office. We've had no trouble with them as of Sept. 10 when we closed the last one. We started that process for it a year before. [Note, *The Tennessee Journal* reports that in October, for the first time ever, the state was unable to find buyers for a \$21 million issue of short-term commercial paper.]

#### TT&C: Covington's web site makes a viewer want to stroll around the downtown square, enjoy the atmosphere, and find a café with biscuits and gravy, doesn't it?

DG: We feel we have the best courthouse square in the state. It's been totally redone with flowers, beautifully constructed pavers, and attractive lighting. We have live music coming from the courthouse all the time – including classical, rock 'n' roll, and country. Citizens like having a place to walk and relax. Since I've been in, we have staged Music on the Square, an eight-week series of live concerts on the square during May and June. People bring lawn chairs and blankets to enjoy the live concerts.

The county spearheaded this effort starting about 2004 using a TEA-21 flow-through grant from the Department of Transportation. All the construction was done in one phase. The economic development downturn has hurt the next phase of the revitalization. The city will do the third phase with a grant from the state to extend the renewal out a little more.

#### TT&C: Covington is home to House Speaker Jimmy Naifeh and Houston Gordon, former chairman of the Tennessee State Democratic Party and state attorney general.

DG: Houston is my older brother. He practices law in Covington. Speaker Naifeh has represented his district well. I think that sometimes he is under appreciated here and on the state level. A lot of folks said last session he couldn't broker the deal with AT&T, the cable industry, and cities, and counties. But he had the foresight and tenacity to sit people down and work it out. I can depend on his help for our community. I hope he serves several more terms.

#### TT&C: When did you get active in the Tennessee Municipal League?

DG: I started attending TML conferences immediately after taking office in April 2005. During the 2006 June Conference I mentioned to TML President Alamo Mayor Tommy Green that I was interested in being active in TML. He was encouraging. He said TML was always looking for people to get involved. I continued to attend conferences and legislative committee meetings and in 2007 I was asked to complete an unexpired term of a director-at-large. I was elected to a full term during the 2008 Annual Conference in Memphis. I have been extremely impressed with the hard work, dedication, and tenacity of the TML staff. They accomplish a lot with limited numbers and resources. TML is one of the smoothest functioning organizations of its size with which I have worked. Conflicting positions are dealt with professionally, and that is a big reason the League is able to accomplish what it does and keep the good reputation it has. Tennessee cities could not deal so effectively with many of the problems they face were it not for TML. That is certainly the case for Covington and cities our size.