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## Mark your calendar for TML District Meetings

District 1	December 13 2 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Higher Education Center Kingsport
District 2	December 14 9:30a.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Maryville College Maryville
District 3	December 15 9:30 a.m. – noon	SE TN Conference Center Athens
District 4	December 6 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.	Warren County Chamber McMinnville
District 5	December 8 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.	Radnor Lake State Park Nashville
District 6.	December 9 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.	Municipal Complex Brentwood
District 7	January 10 Time TBA	Medina
District 8	January 11 9 - 11 a.m.	The Chamber Center Covington

A meeting notice with specific information about each meeting will be forthcoming.

## Federal board proposes new guidelines for ADA access of public rights-of-way

BY LESLIE WOLLACK  
*Nation's Cities Weekly*

A federal board has released for public comment proposed guidelines for accessible public rights-of-way that would impose new standards for new construction of and alterations to public rights-of-way covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The proposed guidelines issued by the U.S. Access Board would provide design criteria for public streets and sidewalks, including pedestrian access routes, street crossings, curb ramps and blended transitions, on-street parking, street furniture and other elements.

The guidelines will also apply to public rights-of-way built or altered with funding from the federal government under the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) and the Rehabilitation Act. Existing pedestrian networks not undergoing alteration will not be obligated to meet these requirements.

The rights-of-way guidelines

complement — and, in some areas, reference — the Board's ADA and ABA Accessibility Guidelines for buildings and facilities.

They can be found at [www.access-board.gov/prowac/nprm-guide.htm](http://www.access-board.gov/prowac/nprm-guide.htm).

A public hearing is scheduled for Nov. 9 and the deadline for comments is Nov. 23. The proposed guidelines can be accessed and comments to them submitted or viewed through the federal government's rulemaking portal at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov). They are also posted at [www.access-board.gov/prowac/nprm.htm](http://www.access-board.gov/prowac/nprm.htm). Instructions for submitting comments are included in the proposal.

Further information on the rulemaking is available on the Access Board's rights-of-way homepage, [www.access-board.gov/prowac/index.htm](http://www.access-board.gov/prowac/index.htm).

NLC will file comments on the proposal. Please provide NLC with information on the impact to your city and a copy of any comments filed.

## Reports finds state revenue gains largest in six years

News not so good for local governments

BY JOHN GRAMLICH  
*Stateline Staff Writer*

State revenues came bounding back in the second quarter of this year, notching their strongest year-over-year increase since 2005, according to a new analysis by the Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government.

The report, released Oct. 26, finds that overall state tax collection rose 10.8 percent in the second quarter, the best such performance in six years. Every state but New Hampshire reported improved collections from the same period a year ago, and tax collections in 19 states improved by 10 percent or more. The personal income tax led the way, with collections jumping by more than 16 percent.

For states, the revenue increases mark the sixth consecutive quarter of growth, though collections are still below where they were four years ago.

### Local Governments

The report's good news is tempered by bad news for local governments, which saw their property tax collections decline by 1 percent —

their third consecutive quarterly decrease.

According to the report, for most of the period during and after the last recession, local tax collections remained relatively strong. However, the trends are now shifting due in part to the lagged impact of falling housing prices on property tax collections.

For the year ending in June 2011, the 1.7 percent decline in the fourth quarter moved the average of local tax collections significantly below the rate of inflation and was very weak compared to historical averages.

The largest year-over-year growth in local tax collections in recent history was recorded in the first quarter of 2006, at 5.3 percent.

Most local governments rely heavily on property taxes, which tend to be relatively stable and respond to property value declines more slowly than income, sales, and corporate taxes respond to declines in the overall economy.

Over the last two decades, property taxes have consistently made up at least two-thirds of total local tax collections. Collections *See REVENUE on Page 9*

## COPS study shows dramatic impact of Recession on public safety services

The economic crisis that began in 2008 has changed America in many ways. Unemployment rates have increased sharply, the stability of the housing market has collapsed, consumer spending has slowed, and city revenues have lessened.

Law enforcement agencies are some of the hardest hit by the current economic climate, and they face a new reality in American policing—one that requires a shift in the methods they use to uphold levels of service while dealing with ever-shrinking budgets.

Sworn to protect and serve the public, law enforcement faces a bleak outlook. The nation's law enforcement agencies are confronting severe budget cuts and unmanageable layoffs, and they are fundamentally changing how they keep the public safe.

COPS (Community Oriented Policing Services) compiled data from a number of current surveys and data sets, which show the impact that the current economic climate has had on law enforcement agencies nationwide. *The Impact of the Economic Downturn on American Police Agencies* outlines the ways in which law enforcement agencies have been affected, and examines the ways some have responded.

Some of the more dramatic statistics include:

### Layoffs, furloughs, and unfilled jobs mean less public safety

- By the end of the year, it's expected that nearly 12,000 police officers and sheriff's deputies will



have been laid off.

- Approximately 30,000 law enforcement jobs are unfilled.
  - An estimated 28,000 officers and deputies have faced week-long furloughs in 2010.
  - An estimated 53 percent of counties are working with fewer staff today than just one year ago.
  - 2011 could produce the first national decline in law enforcement officer positions in at least the last 25 years.
- Budget cuts have a heavy impact**
- Over one-third of the agencies that applied for 2011 COPS officer hiring funding reported an operating budget drop of greater than 5 percent between 2009 and 2011.
  - Nearly a quarter of American cities surveyed have made cuts to public safety budgets.

### The delivery of law enforcement services will fundamentally change

- Some agencies have stopped responding to all motor vehicle thefts, burglar alarms, and non-injury motor vehicle accidents.
- Agencies have also reported decreases in investigations of property crimes, fugitive tracking, a variety of white collar crimes, and even low-level narcotics cases.
- Many agencies have greatly reduced training opportunities for their officers.
- Investments in technology and communications systems are being slashed in many agencies facing budget reductions.

To read the full report go to <http://cops.usdoj.gov/Default.asp?Item=2602>.

## Virtual learning: Tennessee's school systems navigating the new frontier

VICTORIA SOUTH

TML Communications Coordinator

The etchings on the old school desk may soon fade as school students, as well as public school systems in Tennessee, carve out a new niche in the world of virtual learning.

In 2010, Tennessee began sweeping strides in education reform as the winner of the \$500 million Race to the Top grant. New legislation, as well, helps facilitate the state's First to the Top projects and initiatives, targeting multiple areas of school reform and ultimately improving student performance. While the Virtual Public Schools Act, effective July 1, creates educational options for 21st century students, the law also presents challenges for public school systems in navigating this new frontier of virtual services.

Education officials see virtual learning as a viable alternative for students who, for various reasons, seek an educational experience outside the traditional classroom. The classes could help boost the performance of students whose learning lags behind others or could be a creative alternative for students who wish to move at a faster pace.

Under previous law in Tennessee, any school board could start a virtual education program for students enrolled in their public schools. This was commonly used to provide students with classes not offered at their institution or for students home bound by illness. It was provided free of charge and operated on a non-profit basis. The new bill, HB1030/SB0874, opens the door wider, allowing students to take the entire content of their primary through secondary education online and giving authority to Tennessee Public School Systems to establish online schools utilizing the services of private education vendors.

The Union County school system, for example, has established an online public school, the Tennessee Virtual Academy, for grades K-8 that is open to students from all over the state. The academy operates through a provider of online school programs, K12 Inc., touted to be the nation's largest publicly traded online learning company. With a reported enrollment of about 70,000



A new state law gives authority to Tennessee Public School Systems to establish their own online schools.

students in 21 states, the vendor is paid by the district for its products and services, while Union County will earn four percent of the per-pupil funds for administering the program, according to local news sources. With student enrollment the primary driver of funds generated by the state's Basic Education Program (BEP), the funding formula through which state education dollars are generated and distributed to Tennessee schools, the arrangement has sparked controversy in districts concerned about losing students or state funding to Union County.

Other school systems, however, are more concerned about relinquishing local control of their virtual school component to private online education companies. The concern is what's driving a grassroots effort toward self-directed virtual learning opportunities. The Metro Nashville school system in Davidson County offers a virtual high school, with the capability of teaching up to 1,000 part-time students and more than 100 full-time students. The virtual school option is also available in Hamilton County, and North East Tennessee has a consortium of school districts. "It's all done differently except the bottom line is maintaining local control," stressed Jerry Boyd, assistant director of Putnam County Schools.

Before a recent meeting of the state's House Education Committee, Boyd; Dr. Kathleen Airhart, Putnam County director of schools; and

Sharon Anderson, coordinator and principal of Putnam County Schools' Virtual Instruction to Accentuate Learning (VITAL) Network, discussed the numerous challenges and rewards of maintaining a locally controlled virtual academy.

Located in the Upper Cumberland Region, the school system's 11,045 students are dispersed between 21 schools; 53.2 percent are economically disadvantaged, while 15.6 percent have disabilities. The school system invested federal monies into online learning, opening VITAL in January 2008.

"We had a graduation rate problem in Putnam County when I inherited the district and had to reach the 10 percent mark in graduation rate in a short amount of time," Airhart said. "We used federal dollars available to us to implement the program. But at the beginning, local dollars were limited," she said.

"We had several key decisions to make when we began our work with the program and one of the most important was would this program simply be about students earning credit or would we focus on student learning?" said Anderson. According to Anderson, the Putnam County school system is concerned with providing an ultimate teacher-directed online learning experience; interaction with students, rather than computer programs alone. "We wanted a say in the curriculum that was taught, who was teaching it *See VIRTUAL on Page 6*

# NEWS ACROSS TENNESSEE



## BY TML STAFF REPORTS

### BRISTOL

The city council gave early approval to a proposal that would toughen Bristol's regulations on chaining, or "tethering," dogs without calling for a total ban on the practice. Council members expressed support for a plan that would prohibit residents from having dogs tethered outside from sunset to sunrise, a move that Bristol Police Chief Blaine Wade said would work to gradually increase awareness among owners to give their animals hours free from chains or other restraints. Councilwoman Michelle Dolan said Bristol should continue to examine the future prospect of prohibiting any dog tethering, a step that Chainfree Bristol, a nonprofit animal-rights group, has actively lobbied the Council to approve. City Manager Jeff Broughton said that according to figures collected by the police department and Chainfree Bristol, some 300 dogs are tethered on a regular basis in the city. He said the sunset-to-sunrise ordinance was a realistic compromise that would take dogs off chains for a significant period each day and would be easier for police to enforce without using massive resources, unlike enforcing a total, round-the-clock ban on tethering.

### CHATTANOOGA

Lock Joint Tube/Steel Warehouse of Tennessee, a subsidiary of Lerman Enterprises, recently announced its Chattanooga plant will undergo a \$2 million expansion that will bring new jobs to the area, increase the company's customer base and allow it to better meet the demands of the market it currently serves. The company is expected to purchase an additional 1.7 acres in Hamilton County's Centre South Riverport Industrial Park to accommodate the addition of 50,000 square feet of manufacturing space. This expansion is expected to create an additional six jobs at the plant. The expansion will allow the company to increase the manufacturing and warehouse space and extend into additional marketplaces not currently served by the Chattanooga facility. The Chattanooga facility employs more than 200 workers. LJT/Steel Warehouse of Chattanooga specializes in processing steel plates used to build construction equipment, agricultural equipment, transmission towers, pressure vessels and structural fabricators. Additionally, the company produces tubular steel products used in the lawn and garden, exercise and residential and commercial climate control systems industries. The company first located in Chattanooga in 2002 by purchasing the former Huntco Steel building and investing over \$5 million in new machinery and equipment.

### CLEVELAND

Cormetech has announced plans to expand its Cleveland facility. The company will invest \$2.6 million and create 30 manufacturing, warehouse and skilled trade jobs over a three year period. The company is the leading producer of titania-based ceramic honeycomb catalyst for NOx emission control used in Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) systems for air pollution control. The Cleveland manufacturing facility specializes in SCR catalyst manufacturing for the coal power industry and refinery applications including Fluid Catalytic Cracking (FCC) applications.

### CLARKSVILLE

City employees could receive a stipend in the near future for using personal cell phones for city business. The Finance Committee approved bringing forward an ordinance that will allow city of Clarksville department heads to provide a stipend to employees who use a personal cell for work. If city-issued cell phones were to be offered in the future to elected officials, the policy would cover that as well, according to City Attorney Lance Baker. "We specifically exempted elected officials from that part of the policy because a stipend can be viewed as compensation and ... compensation cannot be changed during a term of office."

### CLEVELAND

A surge in economic development in Cleveland and Bradley County is capturing the attention of communities across America that are eager to learn what it takes to recruit a trio of giant corporations like Whirlpool, Wacker Polysilicon North America and Amazon within such a short span of time. "I don't think you're seeing this kind of economic activity anywhere else in the country," Gov. Bill Haslam declared following an hourlong tour of the new Whirlpool Cleveland Division plant on Benton Pike. The governor walked through the cavernous million-square-foot plant which is still under construction, and remains on course to begin production sometime during first quarter 2012. Haslam met with about 40 Whirlpool employees at the new site while also holding brief discussions with plant leaders. He was joined by a team of local government officials and state legislative leaders who played direct roles in piquing Whirlpool Corporation's interest in building a new facility in Cleveland, while adding another 130 new jobs to the existing 1,500-plus workforce.

### FRANKLIN

Viacom, Inc. is establishing a shared services center to support the company's finance group in the Cool Springs area of Williamson County. The project will create more than 100 new positions in the accounting, finance and other corporate support function areas. Staffing is slated to begin in the first quarter of 2012 and the new shared services center should be fully staffed and operational by summer of 2012. The Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development worked with local city and county officials, the Williamson County Office of Economic Development, the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce and the Tennessee Valley Authority on the Viacom project.

### FRANKLIN

For contractors or homeowners needing an inspection on a construction project, Franklin's Building and Neighborhood Services Department has made the process faster and easier. Customers can now schedule an inspection from their smart phones and computers. Customers will be able to schedule their inspection up to five days in advance, search all project inspections and check on progress of their inspections and permits online. The City launched a pilot test program at the beginning of the year selecting only a number of contractors to test. The contractors using the system during our testing phase have been very

pleased with the accessibility and accuracy of the program.

### GREENEVILLE

The Greeneville/Greene County Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Task Force held a ceremony to mark the graduation of 24 local law enforcement officers who completed Crisis Intervention Team training. The CIT program is the first of its kind in East Tennessee. CIT is a program designed to help officers and others de-escalate potentially dangerous encounters with the mentally ill during a crisis, and to help them to divert those individuals into treatment rather than the criminal justice system. The 24 participants include members of the Greene County Sheriff's Department, the Greeneville Police Department, the Tennessee Highway Patrol, Greene County 911 and the CCI Probation Agency.

### JACKSON

The Southwest TN Development District has received a 2011 Innovation Award from the National Association of Development Organizations Research Foundation for the REDI Digital Factory. The factory officially opened its doors in June, in Parsons. The district is based in Jackson. Through this economic development program of SWTDD about 10 people are trained each month to become a certified customer service representative. Once certified, they can go to work immediately as a customer service rep for internet-based companies.

### JACKSON

Jackson city officials led a ceremonial groundbreaking that marked the start of construction on CityWalk, a large-scale downtown development project. "The total landscape of downtown Jackson will change," said Jackson Mayor Jerry Gist. Authorities have been planning the CityWalk development for more than four years. Officials describe the development as "an integrated commercial and residential planned community" that will include a 20,000 square-foot retail center, 156 upscale apartment units, 20 single family residential lots and a state-of-the-art West Tennessee Healthcare medical wellness facility named Living Fit in Tennessee. City officials plan for construction to be completed in January 2013.

### JOHNSON CITY

Mullican Flooring will be expanding its operations creating 164 new jobs. The company, a leading U.S. hardwood floor manufacturer, will relocate all manufacturing operations to the former Superior Industries building where a new production line will be added. The move and expansion represents a \$12 million investment over the next three years. The new line will produce engineered hardwood flooring and replace a segment of the company's engineered volume that is currently sourced in Asia. The company anticipates employing close to 300 people in the Johnson city area by 2015.

### KNOXVILLE

Nearly a year after launching interstate bus service from Knoxville to Washington, D.C., Megabus is expanding its coverage area to Chattanooga and Atlanta. The bus system, which started five years ago and books passengers using an online ticket-selling system, will begin making twice-daily trips from Knoxville to Chattanooga and Atlanta on Nov. 16. The company said customers can begin booking travel at www.megabus.com. Last December, the company initiated service between Knoxville and its hub in



Photo by The Cleveland Daily Banner

Gov. Bill Haslam conducted an hourlong tour of the new Whirlpool Cleveland Division plant on Benton Pike. Pictured are: left, State Sen. Mike Bell, First Lady Crissy Haslam, Cleveland Mayor Tom Rowland, House Speaker Beth Harwell, State Rep. Kevin Brooks and State Rep. Eric Watson. Bradley County Mayor D. Gary Davis, not visible, was also in the delegation.

Washington, with three daily trips that each take about 10 hours.

### LOUISVILLE

In conjunction with Make a Difference Day, the town held its second annual Octoberfest on Oct. 22. The event was redesigned this year to give exposure to local charitable and nonprofit organizations and provide them with an opportunity to raise needed funds. At least 30 organizations benefited from the event, raising more than \$12,000 for local charities. The crowd was estimated at nearly 3,000. Louisville's first Blue Ribbon Fair was a huge success with many entries from local residents, and as a result of the generous donations of local residents and businesses, 78 children were able to participate in a kids' fishing rodeo at no cost and go home with a fishing pole to call their own. "I am glad we were able to build on last year's successful event. We'll start planning for an even bigger and better Octoberfest next year," said Mayor Tom Bickers.

### MEMPHIS

The National Civil Rights Museum announced that corporate and state donations already have raised about 77 percent of the \$27 million construction budget for renovation and redesign of the 20-year-old institution. At an event to kick off the public phase of the fundraising effort, museum president Beverly Robertson said the museum will shut down its main building at the end of 2012 for the work. Gov. Haslam joined the news conference because of the state's contribution of \$2.5 million last year and another \$2.5 million this year to help fund museum operations. The governor said \$50,000 of the state's donation will go to the Alex Haley Museum in Henning. The Haley Museum and the National Civil Rights Museum will use the donations to cross-promote common themes at the two sites.

### MURFREESBORO

The Certificate of Achievement of Excellence in Financial Reporting has once again been awarded to the city by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada. This is the 13<sup>th</sup> consecutive year the award has been presented to Murfreesboro for excellence in financial reporting. The Certificate of Achievement in Financial Reporting is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, according to GFOA, and its attainment represents the highest and best among government and management accomplishments. An Award of Financial Reporting Achievement

(AFRA) was also awarded to the individual designated by the government as primarily responsible for preparing the award-winning CAFR. Murfreesboro City Recorder Melissa Wright.

### NASHVILLE

The Nashville Convention & Visitors Bureau announced the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association has chosen the under-construction Music City Center for its International Stroke Convention in February 2015. The meeting is expected to attract more than 5,000 attendees for a total of more than 7,400 room nights. The ISC is the ASA's premier scientific meeting, providing a forum for more than 900 presentations of recent scientific work in cerebrovascular disease and stroke.

### NASHVILLE

A development group for Chicago-based Hyatt Hotels Corp. is preparing to build a 13-story, 255-room Nashville hotel south of downtown's Demonbreun Street on property two blocks from Music City Center. The planned mid-level Hyatt Place hotel — slated to front Third Avenue on the current site home to Rock City Machine Co., would be one block from the under-construction high-end Omni Hotel, designated to serve as the anchor hotel for Nashville's new Music City Center.

### ROGERSVILLE

The Sam Dong plant at the Rogersville Industrial Park has purchased an additional 32,000-square-foot building near its existing plant for an expansion and relocation that should be completed by the end of the year. The Rogersville plant will relocate two departments over the next few months to the new facility with the project expected to be completed by the end of 2011. Sam Dong Inc. produces specialty magnet wire products used in the production of transformers, motors and generators. The company currently employs 207 people from the local area.

### WOODBURY

Short Mountain Distillery in Cannon County has been licensed. The state and federal permits come 11 months after supporters changed county law by referendum to allow distilleries. It will make a Tennessee sour mash white whiskey from a family recipe handed down for generations in the county. The recipe will use locally grown corn that is stone milled on site and Tennessee spring water. The distillery, in the small county just east of Murfreesboro, will begin production in January and plans to open for tours in March. It is Tennessee's sixth whiskey maker.

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# Murfreesboro proudly celebrates Bicentennial

BY VICTORIA SOUTH  
Communications Coordinator

Born Oct. 17, 2011, little Kendall Grace Westlund has been dubbed the official baby of the Murfreesboro City Bicentennial by the area's 200-year old church, Murfreesboro's First Presbyterian. The occasion is a perfect example of what makes the driving Rutherford County community such a vital metropolitan city, its dynamic blend of future and past, innovation and progress, melded by historic charm.

Now, Murfreesboro's 110,000 residents will have a chance to commemorate everything from the city's founders and teachers to its rivers and music as Murfreesboro kicks off its year-long Bicentennial celebration throughout 2012.

At a recent Oct. 17 ceremony held at Civic Plaza, Mayor Tommy Bragg greeted an enthusiastic gathering of dignitaries: city and state leaders, legislators and local citizens. "When the Tennessee legislature agreed on Oct. 17, 1811, to establish Rutherford County's seat at the confluence of Lytle and Town creeks, who would have imagined what our great city has become?" Bragg inquired. "...I invite you to participate, as we commemorate our past, learn from our elders, and rejoice in our future."

Two hundred years ago, a community sprang from the wild, brambled territory, a former habitat for wild prey hunted by the local Indians. America's settlers, particularly, Revolutionary War veterans with land grants in hand, arrived to claim the land for their own. While local historians say the Indians did not take it lightly, friendship would ultimately seal the fate and the name of the future seat of Rutherford County; the friendship between Revolutionary War hero Col. Hardy Murfree and his subordinate officer

Capt. William Lytle.

Born and raised in Murfreesboro, NC, the city's namesake, Col. Murfree, had acquired about 70,000 acres of land in Tennessee. But although he eventually moved to the southern state, he would never actually live in Murfreesboro, according to his great, great, great grandson, local attorney Matt B. Murfree. Capt. Murfree passed away in 1809 while living at the home of his brother in Franklin. It was four of Murfree's children that would come to settle on their father's land. Three of their homes still stand today: Oaklands Historic House Museum, a house that sits on the south side of East Main Street, and a third on Bellwood Drive near the city's Bellwood-Bowdin Preschool.

In 1803, the county seat had been established in Jefferson. But two years following Murfree's death, his dear friend and war veteran, Capt. Lytle, stepped up to provide 60 acres of his own land for a new, centrally located county seat. "He served in the war with Col. Murfree," said Pam Kious, local volunteer and Lytle's distant relative. "After the Revolutionary War was over, he was given a land grant for several thousand acres. His brother, Archibald, died and William inherited even more land, all together, about 26,000 acres."

While the Tennessee General Assembly approved Lytle's request for the new county seat, they christened the community Cannonsburgh in honor of Newton Cannon, a young politician from Williamson County. However, that name was quickly changed to "Murfreesborough" at the urging of Lytle. The name underwent a slight change again by the Tennessee General Assembly in 1817, who recognized it as the official city of

Murfreesboro.

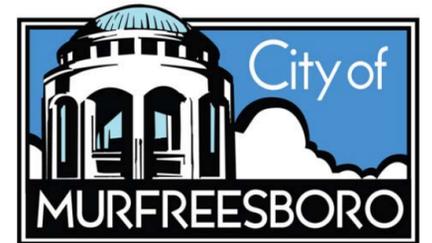
Today, Murfreesboro has grown at a pace that is more than five times the national average. It is the sixth largest and one of the fastest growing cities in the state with a vibrant and rapidly expanding retail trade base. In addition to residential growth, the city has experienced considerable commercial and industrial development during the 1990s.

Embraced by major employers such as General Mills and State Farm, Murfreesboro is home to Middle Tennessee State University, the largest undergraduate university in Tennessee. The city has also become a medical services hub through its flagship facility, the new

Middle Tennessee Medical Center (MTMC). In 2002, MTMC leadership was given approval by Ascension Health to purchase 68.5 acres of undeveloped property adjacent to Interstate 24. With the addition of 2.28 acres after opening the facility, MTMC now sits on 70 acres.

"It took 185 years for Murfreesboro to have a population of 50,000," said former U.S. Rep. Bart Gordon. "It only took 15 years to double that." Gordon urged city leaders to invest in the future while remembering its past in the development of infrastructure— roads,

200 YEARS  
1811-2011



T E N N E S S E E

broadband Internet, water and sewer and support of future growth toward continued success.

## A Bicentennial themed calendar of events

For the next 12 months, special events have been planned to recognize the community's heritage in several areas. These areas include:

- **Our Heritage**, October, a time to reflect on the naming of a county seat in Rutherford County called Cannonsburgh, a settlement that would eventually become Murfreesboro
- **Our Beginnings**, November, a time to recognize local legislation such as the official name change to Murfreesborough and finally Murfreesboro early the following year
- **Our Teachers**, December, a time to remember the history of our schools, including Middle Tennessee State University, which now boasts the largest undergraduate population in the state
- **Our Healers**, January 2012, the doctors, nurses and other medical persons who laid the groundwork for developing the medical services hub Murfreesboro has become, including its flagship facility, the new Middle Tennessee

Medical Center (MTMC).

- **Our People**, February 2012, a time to recognize the influences our multi-cultural society have had on the way of life we now enjoy.
- **Our Military**, March 2012, a recognition of the military leaders our community has produced as well as the role our own Stones River National Battlefield played in the Civil War.
- **Our Faith**, April 2012, highlighting the role our churches of all faiths played during the early, hardscrabble years and the role they continue to play in the hearts and minds of our citizens. For example, and coincidentally, Murfreesboro First Presbyterian Church was the first organized church in the town so is celebrating its Bicentennial at the same time.
- **Our Arts and Architecture**, May 2012, the architecture of our public square, our courthouse and Oaklands antebellum home are but two of many decidedly distinctive structures throughout the community.
- **Our Rivers, Roads and Rails**, June 2012, the importance of these

early transportation systems that carried vital supplies to a growing but still fragile community.

- **Our Music**, July 2012, an event-filled month showcasing the role music played in our early development and the local, but mostly unknown, talent that continues to prove second to none in the country.
- **Our Stories**, August 2012, how newcomers — we were all newcomers once — were attracted to build their homes in our area and provide the backbone that supported a growing community.
- **Our Work**, September 2012, the commerce and century businesses that helped the fledgling community build its economic engine into one of the premier development sites in the state; and
- **Our Future**, October 2012, where the community is headed and what role it will play in the region's future.

To view the full year-long calendar of Bicentennial events, visit [www.murfreesborotn.gov/](http://www.murfreesborotn.gov/) and search "Bicentennial."

## Nashville's "Data Warehouse" at center of city-school partnerships for smarter youth services

BY CHRIS KINGSLEY  
Nation's Cities Weekly

The reform of the Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) under Director of Schools Jesse Register is being meticulously recorded by one of the country's most comprehensive district-based information systems, the LEADS (Longitudinal Education Analysis and Decision Support) data warehouse. This sophisticated analytical tool is also playing a central role in facilitating city-school partnerships to better support Nashville students.

Begun in 2009, LEADS was developed in response to the Nashville schools' slipping status with regard to the benchmarks set by the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The lesson for district leaders, says LEADS Director Laura Hansen, was that "to really reform our district, Nashville needed to do a better job of analyzing data so that we could see where we could improve."

Two years later, that analysis is well underway. In May of this year, the district presented its early results to a committee of Nashville's Chamber of Commerce. The committee, CEO Champions, was impressed by the level of detail LEADS provides on individual students throughout their academic career in the city's schools.

"It's not a mystery anymore," said Hansen. "And it helps raise the bar on accountability within the school district to be able to say, 'Look, you know what's going on — you've got data broken down in various ways at the class level to provide teachers with information on which students are at risk and how their students are progressing throughout the year.'"

To move this warehouse of information into the classroom, Nashville is using federal "Race to the Top" funds to match 12 data coaches with teachers and principals in the city's approximately 140 public schools.

To further leverage this investment in student data, the city and district have begun to collaborate on projects that extend the capabilities of LEADS well beyond the school system:

- **Place-based initiatives:** The district has been an advocate for

Nashville's Promise Neighborhood and supports the planning effort being led by the non-profit Martha O'Bryan Center, with data provided from the data warehouse in aggregate form for the schools in the area. Plans for sharing more detailed information for family/student interventions by community partners, once the Promise Neighborhood is implemented, are also being developed.

- **Youth safety and support:** Police and district data managers are building capacity to compare students' home residence and neighborhood crime data, hoping to provide school principals with more detailed information on the risks faced by their students as well as guidance on the support Nashville's schools can offer.

- **Afterschool enrichment:** The Nashville After-school Zone Alliance (NAZA), a project of Nashville Mayor Karl Dean, has targeted students in high-risk areas for afterschool academic and enrichment programming, and is working to improve both the quantity and quality of these programs. City information technology staff built a software bridge between schools and providers that allows them both to track participation and plan to use the information stored in LEADS to identify which programs have good attendance and contribute to positive results for students. NAZA has doubled the number of middle school students participating in afterschool enrichment, and plans to open up additional zones in the coming years.

- **Postsecondary success:** Nashville and the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce are working to improve the alignment among Nashville's public schools, local career academies and the regional job market. By the end of the year, LEADS will be able to utilize data from the National Student Clearinghouse to do additional analyses on information about which graduates of the Nashville public schools enroll in postsecondary programs, which students earn their degree and which students need more targeted support.

- **Reduced truancy:** The Metro Student Attendance Center, implemented by the Mayor's Office, was an early information-sharing part-

nership among the schools, police and juvenile courts that reduced the MNPS truancy rate by 17.2 percent and contributed to the district's successful effort to achieve "safe harbor" status in 2009 under NCLB. These projects have developed out of a very close working relationship between Mayor Karl Dean and Director of Schools Register.

Mayor Dean has been a strong advocate for MNPS and the city's youth. His administration has fully funded Nashville's public schools each year, shielding the district from cuts faced by other city agencies. The Education First Fund, established by the mayor at the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee, introduced Teach for America to Nashville and built a well-regarded charter school incubator. In 2009, Mayor Dean convened a Child and Youth Master Plan task force, informed by NLC best practices, to pursue comprehensive improvement in services for children.

Fundamental to both the LEADS data warehouse and the Child and Youth Master Plan is the "regular use of data to be able to look at our young people holistically and find out how we could improve," according to Laura Hansen, who moved from MNPS to the Mayor's Office and then back to the district, playing a key role in directing both projects. With early successes in education, out-of-school time and truancy reduction as validation for its efforts, Nashville is now evaluating how to link information on early childhood education and student health to what it already knows.

The goal, says Hansen, is a "true citywide system" to support improved outcomes for children and youth.

Details: NLC's Institute of Youth Education and Families is expanding its work on city data initiatives to highlight the crucial role of local information in driving better outcomes for youth, families and communities. For more information on Nashville's LEADS system and similar initiatives underway across the country, join a roundtable discussion at NLC's Congress of Cities in Phoenix that will be held Saturday, Nov. 12, 9:00-10:30 a.m., and will be led by Chris Kingsley, who can be reached at (202) 626-3160 or [kingsley@nlc.org](mailto:kingsley@nlc.org).



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# STATE BRIEFS

## BY TML STAFF REPORTS

### Report names TN 6th most improved in energy efficiency

Tennessee has been named one of the six most improved states for energy efficiency, according to the fifth annual State Energy Efficiency Scorecard released by the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy. Tennessee is ranked 30 in the U.S., but the council said significant gains were made in the state score. Out of a possible overall maximum score of 50, Tennessee scored 18.5 points. Last year, the state's score was 11, ranking 35th. Points are given in six policy areas: utility and public benefits programs and policies; transportation policies; building energy codes; combined heat and power; state government initiatives; and appliance efficiency standards Tennessee was emerging as a leader in energy efficiency, due to programs initiated by the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development and the Tennessee Valley Authority.

### UT center named after former Gov. Bredesen

The state's flagship university has named a new energy sciences graduate center after former Gov. Phil Bredesen. The University of Tennessee board adopted the name the Bredesen Center for Interdisciplinary Research and Graduate Education for the joint project between UT and the Oak Ridge National Laboratory. Bredesen pushed to strengthen the partnership between the university and the lab. The center admitted its first class of 19 doctoral candidates in August. It has attracted top students in science and engineering and plans to recruit another 20 to 30 doctoral students each year. Chancellor Jimmy Cheek made the request to name the center after Bredesen, noting the former governor's creation of the governor's chair program to recruit for research faculty.

### Obesity task force seeks change

The statewide group in charge of slimming Tennesseans' waistlines hopes the legislature will agree to a slate of new laws that could help. The Tennessee Obesity Task Force wants to ensure that all schools are complying with the state's 90-minute-a-week mandate for physical education, enact a tax on sugar-sweetened soft drinks, and increase fines for speeding in school zones. What task force leaders say has the best chance of passage is recurring funding for Coordinated School Health, a state Department of Education office that places a student health monitor in every school district. The program, launched as a pilot in 2006, has required legislative approval for funding each year. The plan mirrors a national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention initiative in targeting and reducing childhood obesity. Tennessee is the only state with a fully funded mandate to pay for coordinated school health.

### State's unemployment rate rises

Tennessee's unemployment rate rose slightly in September to 9.8 percent from 9.7 percent in August. The state's unemployment rate remains higher than the national rate,

which stood at 9.1 percent in September. The rate, released by the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development, was hurt by losses in leisure and hospitality, according to Commissioner Karla Davis. University of Tennessee economist Bill Fox said there are positive indicators despite the increase in the unemployment rate, including the 1,400-job increase in durable goods manufacturing. Tennessee's rate still is lower than local jobless rates, which topped 10 percent in August, the latest month for which data is available. Shelby County's unemployment rate was 10.5 percent in August while the Memphis MSA's rate was 10.3 percent.

### Training underway in response to human sex trafficking

Law enforcement and nonprofits will receive training from the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation on human sex trafficking. Mark Gwyn, director of the TBI, said there has been little training on this topic. He said 80 percent of Tennessee counties reported a human sex trafficking case in the last 24 months and called it "a huge problem." Gwyn said the goal is to train every law officer across the state.

### Bicentennial Mall recognized as one of Top 10 Public Spaces

State, city and private sector leaders gathered at Bicentennial Capitol Mall State Park to celebrate the American Planning Association's recognition of the park as one of the Top 10 Great Public Spaces for 2011. "This park was created to commemorate the 200th anniversary of Tennessee statehood, and has turned a swampy area in the shadow of our state Capitol into an extension of what the Capitol stands for — a place to represent the people of Tennessee," Gov. Haslam said. "Bicentennial Capitol Mall State Park is a tribute to the power of partnerships and planning at the local, state and federal levels," said Department of Environment and Conservation Commissioner Bob Martineau.

### TN water study complete

The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, in partnership with the University of Tennessee, has completed a study in response to a growing national concern about the presence of pharmaceuticals and personal-care products (PPCP) in public water supplies. This research reflects a proactive effort to gain a statewide snapshot into certain PPCP levels across the state — whether they are present, where they are present and at what levels. Trace amounts of some chemicals were found in some places, which is consistent with findings in other parts of the United States. The good news is that none of the results in Tennessee exceeded any hazard index or health-based guidance, and there have been no cases where we've found evidence of environmental impacts. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has not set drinking water standards for most of these substances at this time, and it will be EPA that will ultimately determine whether and how PPCPs are regulated in drinking-water supplies across the nation.

### Study sought on state wages

Gov. Bill Haslam said that he wants a study of state employee salaries with an eye toward revisions that would prevent workers from going elsewhere once the economy improves. A "market comparable wage comparison," such as one he had conducted on Knoxville city employee salaries as mayor in 2008, would show positions where salaries should be changed. Haslam said he thought the state salary study should be done by an outside organization and perhaps undertaken in "a year, year and a half." The Tennessee State Employees Association Executive Director Robert O'Connell said a salary study was a good idea and he believes it will show that state workers are substantially underpaid compared to counterparts in the private sector as well as in the federal government and many local governments.

### TSLA forges partnership with Ancestry.com

Millions of historical records from the State Library and Archives will be available for genealogy research online under a new agreement with Ancestry.com, an online family history resource. Secretary of State Tre Hargett said that Tennessee will start by sharing death records from 1908 through 1959 with the website and its paid subscribers. The database includes 1.2 million digital images and 3.4 million names. The death records also include notable figures in Tennessee history, such as presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan who died after the Scopes Trial, former governor Austin Peay, Grand Ole Opry star Uncle Dave Macon and Gladys Presley, the mother of Elvis Presley.

### State regulates pain clinics

The state will formally begin regulating pain clinics on Jan. 1 in an effort to rein in the state's out-of-control illegal prescription medication industry. While the new regulations, which will be overseen by the Tennessee Department of Health, are officially aimed at pain clinics, they're really designed to curb the explosion of so-called pill mills, where addicts and dealers can get prescriptions written by unscrupulous doctors. The National Office of Drug Control recently named prescription drug abuse as the nation's fastest growing drug problem. Tennessee ranks second in the nation in the number of prescription medications dispensed. The new law requires pain clinics to register with the Department of Health for a two-year certification and outlaws cash payments for medications. Similarly, any clinic that fails to register with the state will be subject to \$1,000 a day fines. Each clinic must have a medical director on site at least 20 percent of its weekly operating hours. Under the new regulations, patient and billing records are subject to inspections by the Health Department if a pain clinic is suspected to be operating illegally. Any doctor, osteopath, nurse practitioner or physician's assistant found working at an unlicensed clinic will be subject to the \$1,000 fines.

### Low income students find hope

Low-income adults in Appalachian counties across three states will



Park Manager Mike Cole receives the American Planning Association's recognition of Bicentennial Capitol Mall State Park as one of the United States' Top 10 Great Public Spaces for 2011 from APA representative Lisa Milligan during a celebration at Bicentennial Capitol Mall State Park.

continue to receive help enrolling in college thanks to a \$2.3 million federal grant awarded to the state's flagship school, the University of Tennessee. The Educational Opportunity Center, which has been operating since 1991 on the same renewing five-year grant from the Department of Education, helped about 1,500 students in East Tennessee, Western North Carolina and North Georgia go to college last year. "It seems out of reach for families who are first-generation (college students). We try to remove as many of

those barriers as possible through education and advising and counseling," said Vee McGahey, project director of the Educational Opportunity Center at UT. The center, based in the College of Education, Health and Human Sciences, has five full-time education specialists and operates satellite offices in various communities across the region. There, they help potential students navigate the complexities of applying for college, applying for federal aid and taking tests needed for admissions.

## TDEC recognized for state employee recycling efforts

The Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) has been inducted into the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's WasteWise Hall of Fame for its efforts to reduce waste through the State Employee Recycling Program. EPA presented the award to Deputy Commissioner Brock Hill at the Symposium on Recycling and the Economy in Memphis. The symposium was organized by TDEC, EPA, the Southeast Recycling Development Council and the Tennessee Recycling Coalition.

For six consecutive years, TDEC and the State Employee Recycling Program have been recognized with EPA's WasteWise State Government Partner of the Year Award, recognizing Tennessee state employees for their commitment to waste reduction and responsible recycling. The Hall of Fame is the highest honor awarded to WasteWise Partners and indicates a continued commitment to progressive waste reduction activities. WasteWise created the Hall of Fame in 2003 to recognize partners that continually excel in waste reduction efforts, provide ongoing support for the WasteWise program and to serve as role models for other partners.

TDEC joins a prestigious roster of previous WasteWise Hall of Fame inductees, including Anheuser-Busch, General Motors, Pitney Bowes, Inc., Verizon Communications and The Walt Disney Company.

The State Employee Recycling

Program continues to expand its waste prevention and recycling efforts. With more than 32,000 state employees participating, nearly 800 tons of mixed office paper was recycled in 2010, generating more than \$28,000 in revenue and saving almost \$23,000 in landfill costs.

Since the program's inception in 1990, state employees have recycled 17,618 tons of mixed office paper, saving \$525,000 in landfill disposal costs while generating nearly \$195,000 in recycling revenue. These recycling revenues are deposited in the Solid Waste Management Fund, which is used to help assist local communities in their solid waste reduction efforts.

The program also targets plastic and aluminum recycling, as well as non-traditional items, such as clothing, coat hangers, eyeglasses and greeting cards, for reuse, donation and recycling.

For more information about Tennessee's State Employee Recycling Program, visit the website at [www.tn.gov/environment/ea/serp](http://www.tn.gov/environment/ea/serp).

WasteWise is a free and voluntary partnership program that was launched by EPA in 1994. The program provides guidance and recognition to nearly 1,900 participating organizations that are working to find practical methods to reduce municipal solid waste and to improve financial performance. For more information about EPA's WasteWise program contact the WasteWise Helpline at (800) EPA-WISE (372-9473).

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## PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

### BY TML STAFF REPORTS

State Sen. **Mike Faulk** has been appointed to serve as a member of the National Conference of State Legislatures' (NCSL) standing Committee on Labor and Economic Development. Sen. Faulk has served as Tennessee Senate Calendar Committee Chairman for the past three years and is Vice-Chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee. The Labor and Economic Development Committee cover state and federal issues related to labor, employment, workforce and economic development, international trade and cultural affairs.



Faulk

**Juan J. Flores, Jr.**, has been appointed as the new Director of the Multimodal Transportation Resources. In his new post, Flores will oversee the Office of Passenger Transportation and the Office of Rail and Waterway Freight Transportation. Flores joins TDOT from the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), where he served as the Director of the Multimodal Division. Prior to that post, Juan was the Freight Program Manager for the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO).



Flores

State Rep. **Kevin Brooks**, representing the 24th Legislative District,

was named 2011 "Legislator of the Year" by Tennessee Community Organizers. TNCO is a statewide trade association for community organizations that provide services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Tennessee. Elected to the state Legislature in 2007, Brooks also serves as assistant majority leader of the House of Representatives in support of House Speaker Beth Harwell. Brooks has spent countless hours in support of organizations that provide community services to residents with these types of disabilities.



Brooks

**Lyndsay Thurston Botts** has been named as the new Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) Chief of Staff. Botts is currently the Director of Communications and Community Relations for TDOT. As Chief of Staff, Botts will serve as a top aide and advisor to the Commissioner and will have oversight responsibilities for the department in areas of communications, policy, and government relations. Botts joined TDOT in March of this year and previously served as the Field Director and Assistant Press Secretary to U.S. Senator Lamar Alexander. Prior to that post,



Botts



Doughty

Botts was a news anchor and reporter for the FOX affiliate in Chattanooga. Botts will be replaced by **B.J. Doughty** as the department's Director of Communications and Community Relations. Doughty served as TDOT's Community Relations Officer in Middle Tennessee since 2006, prior to serving as TDOT's Public Information Manager. In her new role, Doughty will have management responsibilities of TDOT's Community Relations Division, which oversees and directs the areas of media relations, public involvement and constituent services.

**Jon Hartman** is Elizabethton's new director of planning, following 28-year veteran David Ornduff's retirement Sept. 30. A student of the master of public administration program at East Tennessee State University, Hartman was considering a law career, but decided to apply for an summer internship at Elizabethton City Hall. Upon graduation, he learned the city was looking for a community planner. In addition to his work in the planning department, including developing a new parks and recreation plan, Hartman assisted the Finance Director by preparing the city budget. He will also be working to complete some major projects, including the final stage of the Riverfront Linear Path and renovations to the Covered Bridge.

After more than a decade as Brentwood's police chief, **Ricky Watson** announced his retirement. Watson has been the city's police chief since 2000.

## New director named to Fiscal Review

Lucian D. Geise has been appointed Executive Director for the Tennessee General Assembly's Fiscal Review Committee effective Nov. 1. Geise, who was unanimously confirmed by the committee, is currently a senior legislative attorney in the Legislature's Office of Legal Services.

"As lead counsel for the Senate Finance, Ways and Means Committee, Mr. Geise brings a wealth of knowledge about the budgeting process to this position," said Sen. Bill Ketron, who is chairman of the Committee. "I am very confident in his ability to provide accurate information regarding the financial impact of legislation to our state budget, as well as providing wise counsel regarding the other financial matters that come before our Committee."

Geise graduated cum laude from the University of Memphis and received his Juris Doctor from the Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law. Before coming to the legislature, he served as an Assistant Attorney General in the Tennessee Attorney General's Office.

The Fiscal Review Committee is composed of six senators and nine members of the House of Representatives. The speaker of each house and the chairman of the Finance, Ways and Means Committee of each house serve as ex officio members.



Geise

"The Director of Fiscal Review also provides key information regarding our state's contracts," added Representative Curtis Johnson, who is Vice-Chairman of the Committee. "It is critical that we have a director who has the experience and qualifications to carry out these duties. Mr. Geise fulfills all of these qualifications."

The Fiscal Review Committee was created by statute in 1967 as a special continuing committee of the General Assembly. The Committee is responsible for preparing fiscal notes for all general bills or resolutions which are introduced in the General Assembly that have a fiscal effect on state or local government. In addition, the Committee conducts a continuing review of the fiscal operations of state departments and agencies.

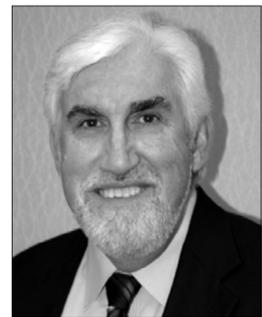
## Mike Talent to retire after 32 years of public service

After 32 years of building solid relationships and dedicated service to the cities and towns of Tennessee, Mike Tallent, Institute of Public Service (IPS) assistant director, has announced his decision to retire, effective Dec. 31.

Tallent joined the Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) in 1979 as a municipal management consultant covering West and Southeast Tennessee, advising cities that ranged in size from Englewood to Chattanooga. After a stint as MTAS assistant director, and then interim executive director in 2007, he was named MTAS executive director September 2008. Two years later, IPS came calling where he stepped into the role of assistant vice president.

"Mike is a valuable member of the IPS leadership team," said IPS Vice President, Dr. Mary Jinks. "He has a solid grasp of our public service mission and is dedicated to seeing IPS and its agencies fulfill that mission."

"I want to thank Dr. Jinks and my colleagues at IPS for the opportunity to serve and work with them over the past two years," said Tallent. "Although, I have thoroughly enjoyed my career with the



Tallent

University of Tennessee in the service for MTAS and the Institute for Public Service, I believe it is time to move to the next phase of my life."

Tallent says that phase will consist of working on his farm, fishing, traveling and above all spending more quality time with his wife and family.

"I especially want to thank the current and former employees and directors of MTAS and the cities of Tennessee for a job and career that has been one of the major blessings of my life. I wish you the best and applaud you for the very positive difference you make in the quality of life for the citizens of Tennessee."

## NATIONAL BRIEFS



### BY TML STAFF REPORTS

**Starting in 2014, virtually all state prison inmates could be eligible for Medicaid coverage of hospital stays—at the expense of the federal government.** In most states, Medicaid is not an option for prison inmates. But a little known federal rule allows coverage for Medicaid-eligible inmates who leave a prison and check into a private or community hospital. Technically, those who stay in the hospital for 24 hours or more are no longer considered prison inmates for the duration of their stay. Under the 1965 law that created Medicaid, anyone entering a state prison lost Medicaid eligibility. The same went for people who entered local jails, juvenile lock-ups and state mental institutions. The reasoning was that states and local governments had historically taken responsibility for inmate health care so the federal-state Medicaid plan was not needed. But an exception to that general rule opened up in 1997 when the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services wrote to state Medicaid directors saying inmates who leave state or local facilities for treatment in local hospitals can get their bills paid by Medicaid, if they are otherwise eligible. In addition to the incarcerated, those on probation or parole or under house arrest were among those who could participate. In 2014, however, when Medicaid is slated to cover some 16 million more Americans, anyone with an income below 133 percent of the federal poverty line will become eligible. Since most people have little or no income once they are incar-

cerated, virtually all of the nation's 1.4 million state inmates would qualify for Medicaid. As a bonus to state corrections agencies, most inmates would be considered new to Medicaid, making them eligible for 100 percent coverage by the federal government between 2014 and 2019. After that, states would be responsible for only 10 percent of their coverage. In addition, state health insurance exchanges—which are required to be functioning by 2014—would make it easier for corrections departments to sign inmates up for the program.

**Americans are staying put more than at any time since World War II as the housing bust and unemployment keep young adults at home and thwart older people's plans for a beachfront or lakeside retirement.** New information from the Census Bureau is the latest indicator of economic trouble after earlier signs that mobil-

ity was back on the upswing. Families are stuck in devalued homes and young adults are living with parents or staying put in the towns where they went to college. About 11.6 percent of the nation's population, or 35.1 million, moved to a new home in the past year, down from 12.5 percent in the previous year. It is the lowest in the 60-plus years that the Census Bureau has tracked information on moves, dating to 1948. The rate had leveled off at around 13 percent before falling off notably in 2008 during the recession. Longer-distance moves remained largely flat at 3.4 percent. The biggest drop-off occurred in local moves, down to 15.4 percent from 17.7 percent in 2010. A LifeGoesStrong.com poll found that more than half of baby boomers born between 1946 and 1964 say they are unlikely to move somewhere new in retirement; about 4 in 10 say they are very likely to stay in their current home throughout all of their retirement.

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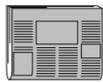
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### CITY ADMINISTRATOR

**GREENEVILLE.** The city of Greenville is seeking qualified applicants for the new position of city administrator. Salary up to mid-\$80's DOQ plus benefits. Change in form of government passed unanimously by Resolution, but final charter change can't be completed until the legislature is in session, around March of 2012. Desire to bring first Administrator on board ASAP. Administrator responsible for all Town operations. No utilities. Position answers to five-member Board. Mayor chosen at large. Excellent community located in beautiful Northeast Tennessee. Desire a manager with solid communication and team-building skills, success in public administration and finance, and strong leadership ability. At least two years' experience as City Administrator/Assistant or equivalent. Bachelor's degree required, Master's preferred. Application is a public record. Send resume by November 18, 2011 to Mayor W.T. Daniels, 200 North College St., Greeneville, TN 37745. Fax: 423-639-0093. Phone: 423-639-7105. Email: wtdaniels.tog@comcast.net

### CITY MANAGER

**MOUNT PLEASANT.** The city is seeking qualified applicants for the position of City Manager. The position is responsible to a five member board of mayor and commissioners for the administration of all city services and departments, including, but not limited to, finance and administration, public works, budgeting, code enforcement, sanitation, streets, industrial development, recreation, planning and zoning, personnel, water and wastewater, and general management of the Mount Pleasant Gas system. The ideal candidate will have a Bachelor's Degree in public administration, business, or related field and will have some experience as city manager/assistant city manager or equivalent. Experience in budgeting, control of revenues and expenditures, management of multiple departments, legislative issues, economic development,

wastewater operations and planning are high priorities. The city has an annual budget in excess of \$9,000,000 and 63 employees. Resumes are public record. Salary range from \$65,000-\$85,000 (dependent upon qualifications) plus excellent benefits. Resumes may be emailed to: tgoetz@mtpleasant-tn.com, mailed to: City Manager, City of Mt. Pleasant, PO Box 426, Mt. Pleasant, TN 38474, faxed to: 931-379-5418. Inquiries may be made at 931-379-7717. Resumes will be accepted until November 24, 2011.

### CITY ADMINISTRATOR/RECORDER

**ROCKWOOD.** The city is accepting applications for the position of Municipal Administrator/ City Recorder. Minimum Qualifications include: a college degree and experience in municipal management, public administration, business administration, planning, or comparable experience. Must possess good written and verbal communications skills, computer proficiency, management skills, and grant administrator experience. Responsibilities include: budgets, personnel, oversight of daily city operations, liaison officer, Council agendas and minutes, public records, collection of taxes and revenues, city court, audits and managerial reports, compliance with state and local regulations duties of the Administrator and Recorder as listed in the Rockwood Municipal Code and Charter, and other duties as assigned. Salary dependent upon qualifications. Open until filled. Send letter of interest, salary requirements, and resume to: Tennessee Career Center, Job Order #: TN 5697800, 1802 N. Gateway Avenue, Rockwood, TN 37854.

### EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

**KINGSPORT.** The city is seeking a highly qualified individual to serve as Emergency Communications Director. This position reports to and assists the Chief of Police (or designee) in the day to day operations of the Communications Department for Kingsport and surrounding geographical areas. The Communications Department includes a Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP), and/or 911 Center. The director will assist with supervising and administering a budget of \$1.3 million

dollars annually; additionally they will supervise twenty-one employees including Communications Specialists, and Communications Technicians. Other responsibilities include all radio, telephone and technical aspects of communications city wide and administrative support to the Kingsport Emergency Communications Board, with additional support as requested by the Board Chairman. Minimum qualifications: Bachelor's Degree from a known and accredited university in business or public administration, emergency communications, administration of justice or related field and 10 years of experience in emergency communications with five (5) years in a responsible supervisory/management capacity. The successful candidate shall possess the following skills: a solid understanding and knowledge in all areas of responsibility, a strong finance and budgeting background, a team player, team builder, excellent communicator, effective decision maker and a strategic thinker with an ability to effect change, and lead the department to successful Next Generation 911 implementation. Resume with a city application should be submitted no later than 5 p.m., Nov. 18, 2011 to the City of Kingsport, Human Resources Department, 225 W. Center St., Kingsport, TN 37660. For more information on Kingsport, a full job description and to access our application, visit us at <http://kingsporttn.gov>. EOE

### WASTEWATER PLANT OPERATOR/SUPERVISOR

**SPRING CITY.** The town is accepting applications for a full-time, operator/supervisory position available at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Qualified applicants must have a Grade 3 Wastewater Treatment and Grade 2 Collection Certifications. Five (5) or more years supervisory experience highly desirable. This is a salaried position and reports to the City Manager. The city offers a comprehensive benefit package, including TCRS pension. Proof of high school diploma or equivalent must be provided with application. An application and job description may be obtained at [www.townofspringcitytn.org](http://www.townofspringcitytn.org) or from City Hall, 229 Front Street, Spring City, TN 37381, Mon. thru Fri., 8am-4:30pm. Applicants will be considered on the basis of qualification and suitability regardless of race, color, religion, sex or national origin. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled, with interviews beginning in early Dec. 2011.

## New legislation brings new challenges in virtual learning for Tennessee's school systems

*VIRTUAL from Page 1*

and the management of the virtual program," she said

While the online school partners with vendors to provide different elements of the program, such as courses that might be currently unavailable in the county's school system, Anderson stressed to lawmakers that Putnam County's VITAL program is not vendor-based. "We wanted to retain quality of content," she said.

With limited funding available, keeping student costs manageable and maintaining quality courseware remains a significant challenge, according to the three educators. "We don't want students to have to pay tuition to take online classes, but the state funding formula does not take in account online learning," Anderson said. Currently, VITAL charges students \$180 for a half credit, and \$360 for a full class. Courses requiring vendor teachers, which the group say are more expensive to the school system, are \$300 per half credit. "In our system, BEP is a muddled water formula where there is no clarity that even mentions virtual schools, much less the technology," Airhart said, adding that the average amount of funding from the state for Putnam County is \$5,000 per student and some local funding. "We fit somewhere around 78th in the state in local funding," she said.

The school system has been further stymied by the recent loss of E4TN courses, which it relied upon to run the program. A state initiative that received a federal grant in the fall of 2006 and began operating in spring 2007, E4TN was charged with developing online courses that were available across Tennessee.

"We were under the impression it would be an ongoing initiative, then notified in May they would no longer be funded after July," said Anderson.

The three explained that the school networks with programs across the country and relies upon fellow educators to evaluate potential courseware. "As a school system, we don't have the resources, either the technical expertise or the finances, to develop great courseware," said Anderson, who gave E4TN courses a ranking of "not top, but good quality." "We were cautiously excited about the new legislation," she continued. "It gave us an opportunity to establish the upper Cumberland e-network. However, funding did not follow."

In spite of its difficulties, in five years of operation, VITAL has accumulated 2,100 enrollments and an 80 percent success rate," according to Boyd. There is currently no elementary education option, but high school students have the opportunity to take one or two courses or a full load. "Our largest high school with more than 2,000 students, was identified as a need for improved graduation rate school," Boyd explained. "Our online program has played a huge role in getting us off that list."

Two years ago, Tennessee mandated that all students take a class in Personal Finance, so Putnam County adapted the course as an online-learning graduation requirement for its high school students. The course is offered free of charge. The school has also expanded its course offerings to the surrounding 21 counties, and offers dual credit as well. "What we would

love to see, is the network growing with us as the hub," said Anderson. "We are open to sharing our expertise. And I would love to see a network of teachers across the state teaching students in an online format and sharing resources." There are currently pockets of public sponsored virtual schools, Anderson notes, and she has received calls from as far away as Memphis, Lauderdale County and Loudon County about the program. "We're open to talking to any district that is interested in working with us," she said.

The Putnam County school system recently provided feedback to the State Board of Education, which is reviewing possible changes governing virtual school opportunities. Areas including student mastery of subject matter and provision of internet and computer access to students are among the topics under consideration. It is standard practice, for example, that for-profit operators of virtual schools ship computers and printers to students' homes. "If we provide learning areas in school or the community, must the access be at home?" asked Boyd. "As a school system with our budget, that would simply be impossible," adds Anderson. "It would be a death knell for us."

"I'm anxious to see how Union County and the K12 folks compare to this," said Rep. Craig Fitzhugh, who suggested that virtual learning be combined with actual classroom attendance for the best student outcomes. "I hope that we can give them (Putnam County) the legislative educational tools that they need to expand this program." For more information about VITAL, visit [www.vitalk12.net](http://www.vitalk12.net).

## FEMA plans nationwide emergency alert test

BY LAURA BONAVIDA

*Nations Cities Weekly*

On Nov. 9, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will conduct the first-ever nationwide test of the Emergency Alert System (EAS) at 2 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST), a test that will last for approximately three minutes.

The EAS is a system designed to transmit emergency alerts and warnings to the public at the national, state, and local levels.

EAS participants broadcast alerts and warnings regarding severe weather, child abductions and other types of emergencies. EAS alerts are transmitted over radio and television broadcast stations, cable television and other media services.

Although local and state components of the EAS are tested on a

weekly and monthly basis, there has never been a nationwide test or a national activation of the system.

Unlike the monthly tests, the national test will occur almost simultaneously on almost all TV and radio stations.

The purpose of the test is to assess the reliability and effectiveness of the system as a way to alert the public during nationwide emergencies.

Although the EAS test will be initiated by FEMA, the FCC is telling local governments they can use the test as an opportunity to work with local broadcasters and cable providers to educate appropriate government officials and staff about the EAS, such as how it works and when it should be activated.

Finally, the FCC is asking local government officials to help inform residents in advance of the test, so that they will know what to expect.

## Administrative Hearing Officer Training set for Nov. 30 & Dec. 1

The Administrative Hearing Officer training is a means for municipalities to acquire training for designated officials who are seeking to become administrative hearing officers. After this training, these officers will have jurisdiction to hear violations of certain locally-adopted codes, including building and property maintenance.

Successful completion of this training authorizes participants to serve as municipal administrative hearing officers pursuant to Public Chapter No. 1128 of the 2010 Public Acts. Pursuant to this law, a city can, via ordinance, create an administrative hearing office with jurisdiction to hear violations of certain locally-adopted codes, including building code and property maintenance ordinances. The law also allows a city, through its administrative hearing officer, to levy fines for such violations in excess of \$50.

Training topics include:

- The statutory authorization
- Mechanics of Public Chapter No. 1128
- Overview of Building, Housing and Property
- Maintenance Codes
- The Administrative Hearing Process
- Open Meetings, Open Records and Other Governmental Concerns

To register for the Administrative Hearing Officer Training course, go to [www.mtas.tennessee.edu](http://www.mtas.tennessee.edu) and click on "Register for a Class" under the training tab.

The cost to attend the training class is \$350 and does not include meals or hotel accommodations. You may pay with a credit card when registering for a class or request an invoice. If you need class registration assistance, call (865) 974-0411.

## Five Tennessee airports receive TDOT grants

The Tennessee Department of Transportation announced that federal and state aeronautics grants totaling \$10,154,989 have been approved for five Tennessee airports.

Airports receiving grants are:

- Cleveland Municipal Airport
- Gatlinburg-Pigeon Forge Airport
- McGhee Tyson Airport (Knoxville)
- Springfield-Robertson County Airport
- Tullahoma Municipal Airport

For more details on each of these grants visit: <http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/news/2011/GrantDetails102111.pdf>

The grants are made available through the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Aeronautics Division.

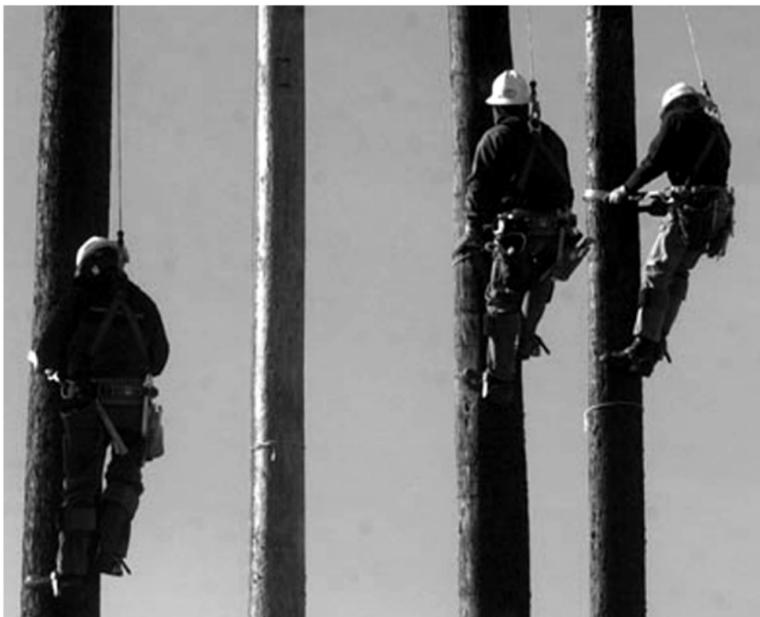
The division administers federal and state funding to assist in the

location, design, construction and maintenance of Tennessee's diverse public aviation system.

Except for routine expenditures, grant applications are reviewed by the Tennessee Aeronautics Commission (TAC), which is a five member board charged with policy planning and with regulating changes in the state Airport System Plan. The board reviews all applications for grants to ensure that the proper state and local matching funds are in place and that the grants will be used for needed improvements.

The TDOT Aeronautics Division has the responsibility of inspecting and licensing the state's 126 heliports and 75 public/general aviation airports. The Division also provides aircraft and related services for state government and the staffing of TAC.

## Good Risk Management is just Good Management



The TML Risk Management Pool is one of the largest providers of workers' compensation coverage in Tennessee. The Pool insures more than 40,500 of Tennessee municipal employees, including those who perform some of the most dangerous jobs like utility line workers, firefighters and law enforcement officers.

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# Summary of 2011 TN Public Acts

BY JOSH JONES

MTAS Legal Consultant

**Crimes and Criminal Procedure**

**Chapter No. 401** (HB0375/SB0476). Aggravated assault broadened to include strangulation. Amends T.C.A. § 39-13-102 by broadening the offense of aggravated assault to include strangulation or attempted strangulation. *Effective July 1, 2011*

**Chapter No. 406** (HB0685/SB0567). GPS monitoring of domestic violence respondents authorized. Amends Tennessee Code Annotated Title 40, Chapter 11, Part 1 by authorizing a court to require, as part of a domestic violence order, a defendant to wear or carry a global positioning monitoring system. Monitoring to be provided by local law enforcement. *Effective July 1, 2011*

**Chapter No. 408** (HB0498/SB0633). Fetus considered legal person. Amends Tennessee Code Annotated Title 39, Chapter 13 by including a fetus, regardless of viability, a person for purposes of assault and homicide statutes. *Effective July 1, 2011*

**Chapter No. 409** (HB1068/SB0690). Penalties for discharging a firearm into a habitation increased. Amends T.C.A. § 39-13-103 by enhancing the penalties for discharging a firearm into a habitation. *Effective January 1, 2012*

**Chapter No. 459** (HB1565/SB1740). Gambling devices for out-of-state use allowed. Amends T.C.A. § 39-17-505(a)(5) by authorizing a manufacturer of gambling devices to own, manufacture, sell, or transport any gambling device solely intended for out-of-state use and in compliance with federal law. Does not restrict the use of gambling devices by a manufacturer that is ancillary or accessory to its business. *Effective June 10, 2011*

**Chapter No. 460** (HB1624/SB1400). Parental monitoring of minor child's internet usage not an offense. Amends T.C.A. § 39-13-601 by clarifying that when a parent or guardian installs software on a computer that the person owns solely for the purposes of monitoring the minor child of whom such person is a parent or guardian it is not an offense. *Effective June 10, 2011*

**Chapter No. 493** (HB1066/SB1456). Wiretapping authorized upon evidence of gang activity by gang member. Amends Tennessee Code Annotated Title 40 by authorizing a district attorney to seek a wiretap upon presentation of reasonable evidence of criminal gang activity by a gang member. *Effective July 1, 2011*

**Chapter No. 497** (HB1353/SB1028). Offense of material support of terrorism created. Amends Tennessee Code Annotated Title 39 by enacting the Material Support of Designated Entities Act. Creates the felony offense of supplying material support to a designated entity as defined by federal law. States that religious justification for such acts is

not a defense. *Effective July 1, 2011*

**Chapter No. 501** (HB1729/SB0910). Sale of electronic cigarettes to minors illegal. Amends Tennessee Code Annotated Title 39, Chapter 17, Part 15 by enacting the Prevention of Youth Access to Tobacco and Electronic Cigarettes Act that prohibits the sale of electronic cigarettes to any person under the age of 18 years of age. *Effective July 1, 2011*

**Chapter No. 504** (HB1877/SB1798). Department of Safety authorized to revoke drivers license for non-payment of fines and court costs. Amends T.C.A. § 40-24-105 by authorizing the Department of Safety to revoke the license of any operator who has not paid all litigation taxes, court costs and fines assessed as the result of any offense under the criminal laws of the state. *Effective July 1, 2011 and applicable to offenses committed on or after July 2, 2011*

**Economic Development**

**Chapter No. 196** (0588/SB0602). Megasite board composition amended. Amends T.C.A. § 64-6-110(c) by adding the executive director of the development district in which the megasite is located to the megasite board of directors. The West Tennessee Megasite is the state's only megasite. *Effective May 12, 2011*

**Chapter No. 239** (HB1509/SB1416). Economic impact plan in Davidson County must be submitted to mayor. Amends T.C.A. § 7-53-314 by requiring an economic impact plan to be submitted to the mayor prior to approval by the governing body. Only applicable in Metro Nashville-Davidson County. *Effective May 23, 2011*

**Chapter No. 277** (HB2134/SB2095). Bonds authorized for grants to build infrastructure for Wacker Chemie AG facility. Authorizes the issuance of more than \$100 million in bonds for the purpose of grants to Southeast Tennessee Development District and the City of Memphis Industrial Board. Grants are to be applied to costs of building infrastructure related to Wacker Chemie facility in West Tennessee. *Effective May 23, 2011*

**Chapter No. 384** (HB1554/SB1334). Tax increment financing for IDC in brownfield areas authorized. Amends Tennessee Code Annotated Title 7, Chapter 53, Part 3 by authorizing a municipality with a brownfield redevelopment project to approve an economic impact plan allocating property tax revenue and shared sales tax revenue to an industrial development corporation (IDC) to fund the project, including for the issuance of bonds. *Effective June 1, 2011*

**Chapter No. 385** (HB1653/SB1348). Municipality in tier three county may loan electric and gas funds to IDC for economic development. Amends T.C.A. § 6-54-118 by authorizing a municipality in a tier three enhancement county to loan funds from its electric or gas depart-

ments to an industrial development corporation (IDC) for purposes of industrial or economic development. Maximum loan principal may not exceed \$500,000. Requires Comptroller approval. *Effective June 1, 2011*

**Education**

**Chapter No. 1** (HB0051/SB0025). Comprehensive school system transition plans required. Amends T.C.A. § 49-2-502 by requiring a comprehensive transition plan when the transfer of administration of a special school district to a county school board would result in an increase in student enrollment is one 100 percent or more and a majority of the voters in the referendum voted in favor of the transfer. Transfer must take effect at the beginning of the third, full school year immediately following certification of election results. Comprehensive planning commission consisting of state and local appointees shall create plan. *Effective February 11, 2011 and applicable to any transition pending on or after that date.*

**Chapter No. 70** (HB2012/SB1258). Teacher tenure, retention and assignment provisions revised. Amends Tennessee Code Annotated Title 49, Chapter 5 by extending the date by which a local board of education must notify a teacher of assignments for the following school year or termination to June 15. Also changes the tenure-eligibility period to five years or not less than 45 months within the last seven years. Makes other various changes to tenure-related provisions. *Effective July 1, 2011*

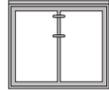
**Chapter No. 138** (HB0735/SB0717). Notice for termination of director of schools required. Amends T.C.A. § 49-2-203(a)(14) (C) by requiring that a school board must give notice no less than 15 days prior to the scheduled meeting where the board intends to terminate a director of schools. Exception for cases of criminal or professional misconduct. *Effective May 2, 2011*

**Chapter No. 155** (HB1479/SB1153). Special school district must notice intent to exceed certified tax rate. Amends T.C.A. § 67-5-1704 by requiring the board of education of a special school district to publish notice of its intent to exceed the certified tax rate. Makes provision applicable in all counties. *Effective January 1, 2012*

**Chapter No. 179** (HB1633/SB1443). School's first AED to be placed in area used for physical activity. Amends T.C.A. § 49-2-122 by requiring that the first automated defibrillator system (AED) received by a school be placed in an area used for physical activity. *Effective May 5, 2011*

**Chapter No. 202** (HB1829/SB1674). Substitute teachers may be employed by third party. Amends T.C.A. § 49-5-709 by allowing substitute teachers to be employed by a third party through an agreement between the third party and the local education agency (LEA). *Effective May 20, 2011*

## COMING UP



**Nov. 15**  
**Improving Public Service: Application of Lean Principles,** Nashville. Hosted by the Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence, the Lean Conference will focus on business practices that can add value, effectiveness and efficiency to any government organization. Participants will learn about successful approaches to optimizing production that have been applied in the public sector. Speakers include Chuck Parke from the UT Knoxville College of Business; Mark Emkes, Tennessee Commissioner of Finance and Administration; Consultant Keith Groves from the UT Center for Industrial Services; and Walt Matwijec, assistant vice president, continuous improvement for the Nashville Airport Authority. The seminar will be held at the One Century Place Conference Center in Nashville from 8:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. The registration fee is \$65. Those interested in attending can register at [www.leadership.tennessee.edu/leanconference](http://www.leadership.tennessee.edu/leanconference).

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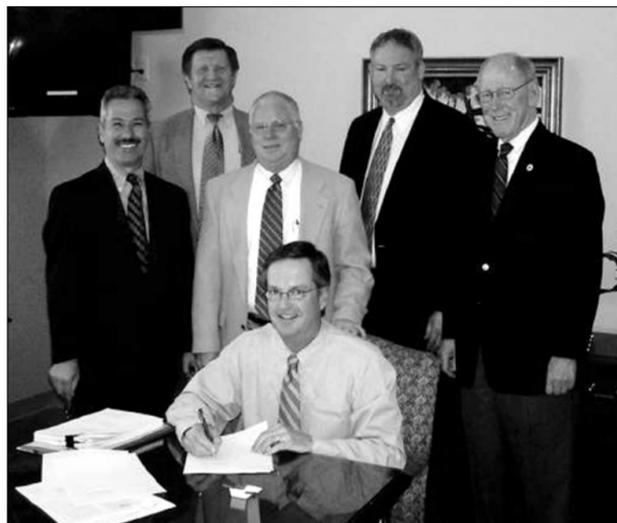
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The city of Murfreesboro closes a \$103 million loan, the largest in TMBF history.



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



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TENNESSEE MUNICIPAL BOND FUND

# Municipal League Board discuss 2012 legislative policies



Kay Senter, TML president and Morristown mayor pro tem



Cleveland Mayor Tom Rowland and Murfreesboro Mayor Tommy Bragg



Portland Mayor Ken Wilber and Crossville Mayor J.H. Graham, III



Dyersburg Mayor John Holden



Kevin Helms, Oak Hill city manager; Betsy Crossley, Brentwood councilmember; and Bob Kirk, Dyersburg Alderman



Alamo Mayor Tommy Green, Huntingdon Mayor Dale Kelley, and Bill Hammon, Alcoa assistant city manager



Kingston Mayor Troy Beets



Above: McMinnville Mayor Norman Rone  
At left: David May, Cleveland councilmember, and Dot LaMarche, Farragut vice mayor



## East TN Clean Fuels Coalition provides update on EV project

Grant deadline Dec. 31

BY KRISTY KEEL

Tennessee currently has an opportunity that is exclusive to only six states and Washington, DC: the EV Project. The EV Project is a large-scale deployment of electric vehicles and charging equipment.

Tennessee was chosen to participate in this project because of our conveniently-located major cities. The distances between Memphis, Nashville, Knoxville, and Chattanooga are perfect for connecting the different areas of the state with electricity.

The EV Project is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Energy. Through the grant, the electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE) is completely free, and there is even an installation credit of \$2,250 per unit installed.

This provides a unique opportunity for business and property owners to provide an important service for their patrons with the benefit of it being no- or low-cost. Along with the free EVSE and installation credit, there are also benefits for individuals who wish to participate in the project by purchasing an electric vehicle (EV). A \$7,500 federal tax credit is offered in addition to a \$2,500 state tax credit to the first 1,000 who purchase an EV in Tennessee. That is a fairly significant portion of the cost for the two most popular EVs out on the market at this time: the Nissan Leaf and Chevrolet Volt.

Unfortunately the grant ceases at the end of this year: Dec. 31, 2011.

Those who are interested in becoming a host site must be signed on to the project before that time to participate and to receive the grant funding. If you are interested in becoming a host site, please contact Kristy Keel directly at 865-974-9665 or by email at [kristyak@utk.edu](mailto:kristyak@utk.edu).

## State revenue gains largest in six years

REVENUE from Page 1

from local property taxes made up 72.8 percent of such collections during the second quarter of 2011. Property tax revenues fell by 1.0 percent in nominal terms, likely driven primarily by falling housing prices. This is the third consecutive quarter that local property tax collections showed a decline.

Local sales tax collections made up 15 percent of total local taxes and reported growth of 10.1 percent in the second quarter of 2011 in nominal terms. This is the fifth consecutive quarter that local sales tax revenues showed growth, after six consecutive quarters of decline. Collections from local individual income taxes, a much smaller contributor to overall local revenues, showed an increase of 31.7 percent.

The picture is not entirely positive for states, either. The report's authors warn that continuing uncertainty in the national and global economies is likely to be reflected in weaker revenue growth in the future.

"In recent months, growth in tax revenues has been significantly and unsustainably stronger than growth in the economy," the report cautions.

For a full copy of the report, visit [www.rockinst.org](http://www.rockinst.org).

EcoCAR2 at UT  
BY LEAH MOORE

Students in UT Knoxville's Engineering Department are entering their first year in the three-year-long EcoCar2: Plugging into the Future competition. A total of fifteen universities are participating, and student teams at each school are given a Chevrolet Malibu for modification.

Goals for the teams include increasing fuel efficiency, reducing greenhouse gas and tailpipe emissions, and maintaining consumer acceptability in performance, utility, and safety.

Year one of the competition is the planning phase, so engineering students on the EcoCar2 team are busy selecting an advanced vehicle powertrain that meets the goals of the competition. For information, visit [www.ecocar2.org](http://www.ecocar2.org).

ETCleanFuels makes classroom visits: teaches value of clean environment

BY GRACE LOY

I work as the environmental educator at East Tennessee Clean Fuels Coalition (ETCleanFuels) in Knoxville. I visit classrooms all around East Tennessee, from kindergarten to 12th grade, and teach students about the variety of alternative fuels available today.



Photo courtesy of ECoTality, Inc.

The first rapid charger in Tennessee that works with Nissan's Leaf electric car opened at Lebanon's Cracker Barrel Old Country Store.

Our presentations include everything from a Clean Fuels Jeopardy game, edamame tastings, conversations about the benefits of various fuels, and even the simple ways the youngest of students can help reduce fossil fuel consumption.

Our educational outreach program goes hand in hand with our Idle Free School Zone and Clean Fuels Schools programs in order to provide an interactive and engaging way for East Tennessee youth to become aware of alternative fuels and how they can affect our health, economy, and the beautiful environment we call home. 2011 marks the fifth year of our program, and last year alone we reached over 10,000 students in East Tennessee.

If you are interested in having an ETCleanFuels presentation in your classroom, please contact Grace Loy by phone at 865-974-1880 or by email at [gl.cleanfuels@gmail.com](mailto:gl.cleanfuels@gmail.com)

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**Nov. 11 - 12: Manchester**  
*Foothills Craft Fair*  
Held at the Manchester/Coffee County Conference Center. For more information, call 931-728-9236.

**Nov. 11- 13: Fayetteville**  
*Host of Christmas Past*  
Great family fun, craft booths, food, kid zone with snow, music and so much more. For more details visit or call 888-433-1238

**Nov. 19: Lynchburg**  
*1st Annual Gingerbread House Competition*  
Merchants dress in period clothing and the public square is decorated for the season. For more information, call 931-759-4111 or visit [www.lynchburgtn.com](http://www.lynchburgtn.com).

**Nov. 19 - Dec. 5: Lewisburg**  
*Annual Christmas Village*  
From 8 am - 4 pm at The Powder Room, 570 West Church Street. Homemade Crafts, Christmas Décor, candles, baked goods and more. Free. For more information, call 931-359-1211

**Nov. 18-20: Lawrenceburg**  
*29th Annual Christmas in the Country*  
Held at Rotary Park, 927 N. Military Ave. Visit with Santa on Sat. from 10 to 2 and Sun. from 1 to 3. Craft booths featuring antiques, baskets, Christmas breads candies, toys, doll clothes, dolls, folk art, jewelry, quilts and more. Hours: Sat. 9am to 5 pm and Sun 1pm to 4pm. For more information, call 931-762-4911.

**Nov. 22-Jan. 1: Clarksville**  
*Christmas on the Cumberland*  
Join Santa and special guests on Nov. 22 at the McGregor Park/RiverWalk as they light up the Cumberland with more than one million holiday lights. The lights are turned on at 5 pm each day and remain on until 10 pm on week days and 11 pm on weekends. For more information, call 931-645-7476.

**Nov. 26: Adams**  
*Christmas in the Park*  
Drive-thru display at the Bell School with cocoa, cookies, music and Santa Claus. For more information, call 615-696-2593.

**Nov. 25-27: Smithville**  
*Appalachian Center for Craft Annual Holiday Festival*  
Enjoy an elegant shopping experience with craft demonstrations, live music, showcase exhibitions, handmade gifts, and ornaments. Free admission. For more information, Email: [craftcenter@ntech.edu](mailto:craftcenter@ntech.edu) or call 931-372-3051.

**Dec. 10-11 - Covington**  
*Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol"*  
Historic town square. Delight to the carolers, musicians, street performers, storytelling and shops. Enjoy specialties by our restaurants. Hours are Sat. from 10 a.m.- 7 p.m. with lighting of the tree at 5 p.m.; Sun. noon - 5 p.m.

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# Athens welcomes cast of soap box derby film to TN

## Actor/director Corbin Bernsen's 25 Hill a movie with a message

BY VICTORIA SOUTH  
TML Communications Coordinator

It has all the makings of a blockbuster: action, drama, heartbreak, victory, but for multi-talented actor/writer/director Corbin Bernsen, of *Major League* and television's *L.A. Law and Psych* fame, his latest movie, *25 Hill*, reflects a much deeper meaning, the values of the American spirit: respect, teamwork, family and community, all intertwined within the framework of the all American Soap Box Derby (AASBD).

How Bernsen came to write, produce, direct and star in the film, his own quest for self-discovery, and the other lives the film has touched in the process would carry

approached AASBD headquarters with an idea. "I saw this opportunity... all the elements for this cool little drama...there's the bank lost the money, engaging characters, tradition. I told them maybe it would help get recognition for the derby," he continued. "I would create a revenue stream, and they could participate in the profits of the movie."

The resulting family-oriented film is a much needed shot in the arm for the industry, according to viewers in some of the cities who've seen it. "It really is a very good movie," Bernsen notes. "Kids, parents, grandparents; everyone can relate to it." But for Bernsen, one of the most important elements is the film's message. "In learning about the derby and what it really is, we learn

notes. "We are the oldest consecutive running race in the state. We helped Cookeville get their race started, and then Tullahoma."

The race, a preliminary to the World Championships in Ohio, follows a wide margin, where youths ages 7-18 vie for trophies and the trip to Akron. National winners compete for college scholarships. Youths from Tullahoma have won the World Championships twice, an amazing accomplishment, according to Fesmire. "When they started in Akron in 1934, no one in Tennessee had ever won the race. It took 60 plus years for Tennessee to get its foot in the door for winning."

The youngsters not only enjoy the thrill of the competition, but meeting other racers from all over the world. "Annually, we send two racers from each of our Tennessee cities up to Akron," Fesmire said. "We sit down with the New Zealand and Japanese teams and the kids forge friendships with international racers from Germany, Australia, Mexico and Canada, along with people from other states. These are lifetime friendships," he adds.

Hopefuls in Tennessee who want to join the race should call the All American Derby, according to Fesmire. "They have it all mapped out and will send you to the race closest to you," he said. "Until we got Tullahoma, Cookeville and Chattanooga going, people had to come from three hours away to race."

*25 Hill's* storyline strikes a chord with Fesmire, who as a child, narrowly missed his turn to race down the streets of Jackson, TN. "They raced down the street behind my house and I would go watch just waiting until I could get in the derby," he revealed. "Then, all of a sudden they decided not to race anymore. I made a promise to myself if we ever started (in Athens), it wouldn't be grownups who decided we weren't going to race anymore."

Fortunately, Athens' interest in the sport remains strong for both adults and children. "We ran 18 cars in 1995, and in this past year, had 32 participants," said Fesmire. That's how a group of 30 met up with Bernsen at the World Championships in Akron. "We all had on our T-shirts with 'Athens TN Soapbox Derby' across the front," Fesmire recounts, amused about how he almost missed out on another soap box opportunity.

Bernsen, who was planning to take the movie on a cross country tour, was impressed with the number of people who had traveled to Ohio from Athens and the group's enthusiasm about soap box. "He said 'Wow, you all must really like soap box derbies,'" and he started talking with my wife, who was at the bottom of the track about coming to Athens," Fesmire recalls. "People came to the top of the hill, where I was helping the drivers, and told me Corbin Bernsen wanted to speak with me, but I thought they were playing a joke!"

But team members quickly slipped Fesmire's business card in Bernsen's hand and when he got home, Fesmire received a very important phone call. "He said 'Hey Austin, this is Corbin,'" Fesmire laughs. "I said 'Holy Smoke!' The rest, as they say, is history. Bernsen liked the idea of premiering the film in a southern home town with a strong soap box following, and Athens was more than ready to roll out the red carpet for Hollywood.

"Athens was the smallest city on the tour, but we outshone the big cities with our southern hospitality," Fesmire said proudly. "They were definitely pleased with the reception they received in Athens. We had full media coverage and a live radio show, Channel 10 out of Knoxville. Banners were hung everywhere saying 'Athens is 'Psyched' About Soap Box Derby.'" And we had first class movie equipment setup at the Middle School so it would be just like a theater."

The city provided a free showing of the film, where Bernsen was on hand to sign autographed DVDs and speak about the movie. The All American Soap Box Derby is once again in the black as ten percent of the money raised to make *25 Hill*, as well as a portion of the profits have been, and will continue to be given to the entity.

On Sunday, Bernsen became just one of the crowd, as he raced along the streets of downtown Athens. "We're all so involved in technology, but when you see someone get in one of these cars and go down



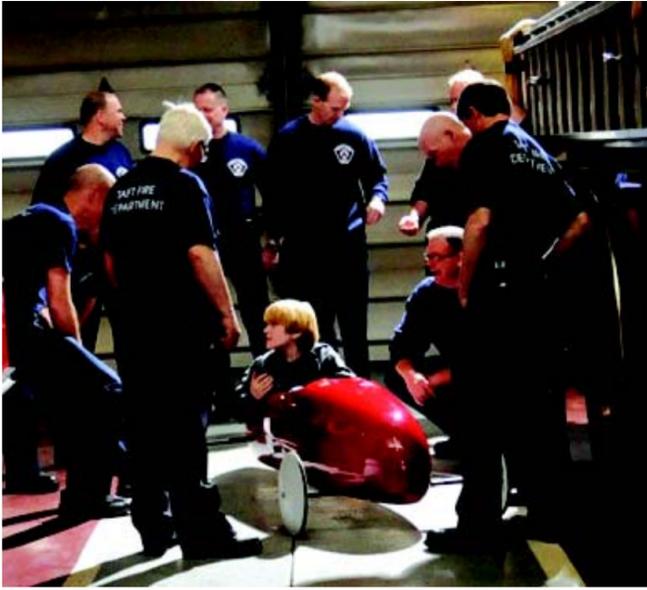
Corbin Bernsen

Photo By Kelleigh Miller

the hill with the wind in their faces, it's like a relaxing message, so nice and free," Bernsen said, adding that he hopes to distribute the film nationally early next summer.

"We're so excited to have brought the movie to the Athens area where we have so many enthusiastic derby racers and families,"

Bernsen continues. "I'm not saying the derby's going to save the world, but I know its core values of respect, tradition, teamwork, family and community is a brick in the new foundation of rebuilding our country. Together we're going to fire up a whole new passion for the derby."



Actor Nathan Gamble is seated in a soap box derby car as he films a scene from the movie *25 Hill*, written and directed by actor Corbin Bernsen.

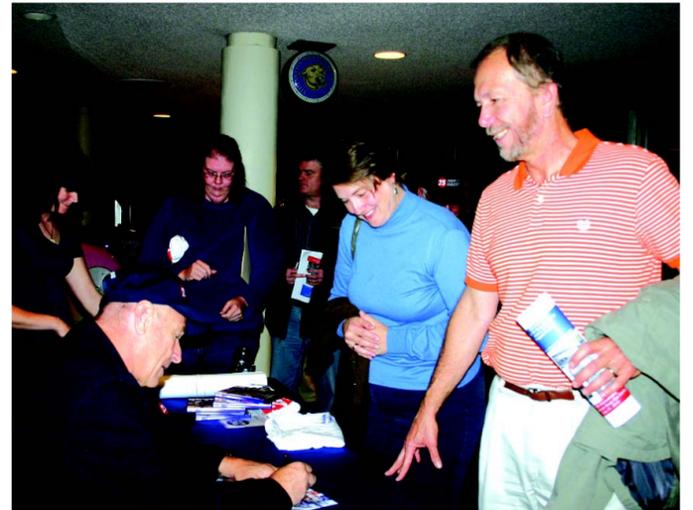
him from the All American Derby Championships in Akron, Ohio, to the small, derby-friendly community of Athens, TN.

After years in the spotlight, Corbin Bernsen, born of Hollywood royalty, Jeanne Cooper, matriarch of the long running soap opera *The Young & The Restless*, and Hollywood producer, the late Harry Bernsen, suddenly found himself adrift following the death of his father. "When my dad died about five years ago, I felt divinely pushed in a direction of exploration; just letting my guard down and going with my instincts," Bernsen said in a phone interview with TT&C.

Those same instincts had driven Bernsen to conduct on-sight re-

all of these things, the respect, teamwork, family and community come together to have these races," he muses. It's fathers, mothers, aunts, uncles, all coming together to work on this one little effort. There's such utter respect in the process of it, I started thinking, "Wow, that's what's missing in America. And gosh! I'm not stumping for a presidential platform," he adds.

The concept of civility and teamwork is echoed by Parks & Recreation Director, Austin Fesmire of Athens, where the film recently made its Tennessee premier. "It's totally different from any other sport," Fesmire explains. "It's a great tailgating sport, because when you're eliminated, you're not really



Athens citizens gather around to have their movie programs autographed by *25 Hill* actor/director Corbin Bernsen.

### About 25 Hill

"25 Hill" stars Nathan Gamble ("Dolphin Tale," "The Dark Knight") as Trey Caldwell, whose dreams of Derby victory fade when his father Thomas, played by Tim Omundson ("Psych," "Judging Amy"), is killed fighting in Afghanistan.

But Trey begins to rebuild those dreams with the help of a reluctant hero, one-time derby champ Roy Gibbs (Corbin Bernsen), who is contending with

his own heartbreak. A friendship is forged and wounds are healed under the light of a backyard garage, but their hopes are threatened when the Derby's demise appears imminent.

The film also stars Bailee Madison ("Don't Be Afraid of the Dark"), Michael Tucker ("L.A. Law"), Maureen Flannigan ("7th Heaven") and Ralph Waite ("The Waltons").



Austin Fesmire, Athens Parks & Rec director and Corbin Bernsen

search in small towns for his recurring role in the hit television series *Psyche*, where he said he began to realize the deeper value of a family/community connection and the promise the connection held for the entire country. "I started feeling stronger in my soul and I didn't know why," Bernsen recalls.

It was during this period, he came across a newspaper article citing that the All American Derby in Akron was experiencing deep financial trouble, enough for the soap box headquarters to consider canceling its world championship races. "We're a 300-year old country raised on the traditions of apple pie and good old team work," Bernsen said, at times brimming with the ardor of a candidate stumping for office. "The soap box derby is an American institution. It bothered me."

After conducting some research on his own, Bernsen's creative wheels were spinning and he

against anyone because we're all trying to get the best driver to the World Championship. Everybody stays around to see who that is. The objective is to make everyone equal, so the true champion will win."

Each racer runs his/her car down the hill for an initial time. Then swap wheels and lanes with the driver they're racing for a second heat. "It's about driving, not speed," Fesmire notes. "All the cars technically go the same speed if you set them up the right way. But because you're relying on gravity, you have to know physics and math to understand what makes the car go faster. We've had kids run the 950 ft track and be dead even. We have races timed to .001 of a second."

In Athens, all competition takes place along the city street. Athens is one of only four communities in Tennessee with a soap box derby franchise. (The others are Chattanooga, Tullahoma and Cookeville). "This will be our 18<sup>th</sup> year," Fesmire

### All American Soap Box Derby: History in the making



Bettmann / Corbis

Clifford Hardesty of White Plains, New York, waves from his car after winning the 1939 derby.

The All-American Soap Box Derby is a coasting race for small gravity-powered cars built by their drivers and assembled within strict guidelines on size, weight and cost. The Derby was started by Dayton, Ohio newspaper Myron Scott after he witnessed several boys racing handmade carts down a hill while on a photographic assignment in 1933. Scott decided to start an organized race for kids and the first All-American Soap Box Derby was held in Dayton in 1934.

The race got its name because early on most cars were built from wooden soap boxes. The following year, the race was moved to Akron because of its central location and hilly terrain. In 1936, town leaders saw the need for a permanent site for the growing event and with the help of the Works Progress Administration, Derby Downs was constructed.

Held every summer at Derby Downs in Akron, Ohio, the Soap Box Derby is open to all boys and girls from 8 to 17 years old who qualify. There are three competitive divisions: 1. Stock (ages 8-17)—made up of generic, prefab racers that come from Derby-approved kits, can be assembled in four hours and don't exceed 200 pounds when driver, car and wheels are weighed together; 2. Super Stock (ages 10-17)—the same as Stock only with a weight limit of 220 pounds; 3. Masters (ages 11-17)—made up of racers designed by the drivers, but constructed with derby-approved hardware. The racing ramp at Derby Downs is 989 feet, four inches with an 11 percent grade.

For more information, visit the All American Soap Box Derby website at [www.aasbd.org](http://www.aasbd.org)

See a *Time* Magazine pictorial on Soap Box Derby history at [www.time.com/time/photogallery/0,29307,1912571\\_1913903,00.html](http://www.time.com/time/photogallery/0,29307,1912571_1913903,00.html)