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Walk Tennessee launches with amazing accomplishments

BY DAN POPOVIC

On Sept. 30, the Tennessee Municipal League officially launched *Walk Tennessee*, an initiative to determine the most active city in the great state of Tennessee. Currently, there are 16 cities that have formed teams and collectively those teams have logged more than 2500 miles. That is simply an amazing stat and a positive indicator of how a community comes together.

Participants in the challenge have been logging their daily activities by how far they walked, ran or rode their bikes. As these points accumulate, they increase their city team points. We've also seen a flurry of activity with participants adding events to the calendar, such as 5ks, obstacle courses and even a 50k!

The Stump Jump took place in early October in Tennessee, and the three participants that completed that event were from two different city teams in the *Walk Tennessee* Community. Stump Jump events carry a higher point value as participants run for more than eight hours.

There are several things that make *Walk Tennessee* fun for me. Aside from all the great accomplishments participants are achieving, it's the people I get to meet and the communities I get to visit. Along the way I usually get to hear about their stories, what they like to do, and what inspires them. I recently had the chance to visit Manchester and meet Bonnie Gamble, chair of the Coffee County Health Council and director of the Manchester Parks.

Gamble said she first heard about the *Walk Tennessee* Challenge in *Tennessee Town and City* and



wanted to get involved. "We have made health our central programming theme and mission," she said. "We provide many services, but our emphasis is to put programs in place that will improve the health of our community members. We put out the flyers and personally contacted those who come to our recreation complex and use parks to encourage them to enter the program. Our next step is to provide outreach to those that don't walk or run regularly."

Gamble said the Tennessee Department of Health has awarded Manchester a grant to establish a running/walking club for middle school students. She plans to get them involved in the program also. "Right now we have 50 students who have signed up and are participating. The vast majority of these students did not exercise regularly at all."

Gamble said she first began exercising in her 20s, and now enjoys running, biking and swimming. She recently completed her first half marathon. "I used to say that biking was fun, running is work. But after my recent success preparing for the half marathon, I have really enjoyed

See **WALK TN** on Page 8

Tennessee municipal benchmarking project kicks off eleventh cycle

BY JOY WEST
MTAS intern

The UT Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) has launched the 2013 Tennessee Municipal Benchmarking Project (TMBP) – its 11th annual project cycle. Representatives from participating cities gathered in four locations across the state for a videoconference meeting to kick-off this year's project cycle.

On point with the meeting theme of "Managing the Growth," MTAS welcomed six new cities (Martin, Murfreesboro, Paris, Springfield, Spring Hill, and Tullahoma) and launched two new service areas (parks and recreation and the pilot for information technology). MTAS also welcomed Sevierville, who after attending the kick-off meeting, decided to join for this year's project.

As the 2013 project cycle begins, MTAS has 21 participating cities from across the state and 11 service areas for performance and cost measurement.

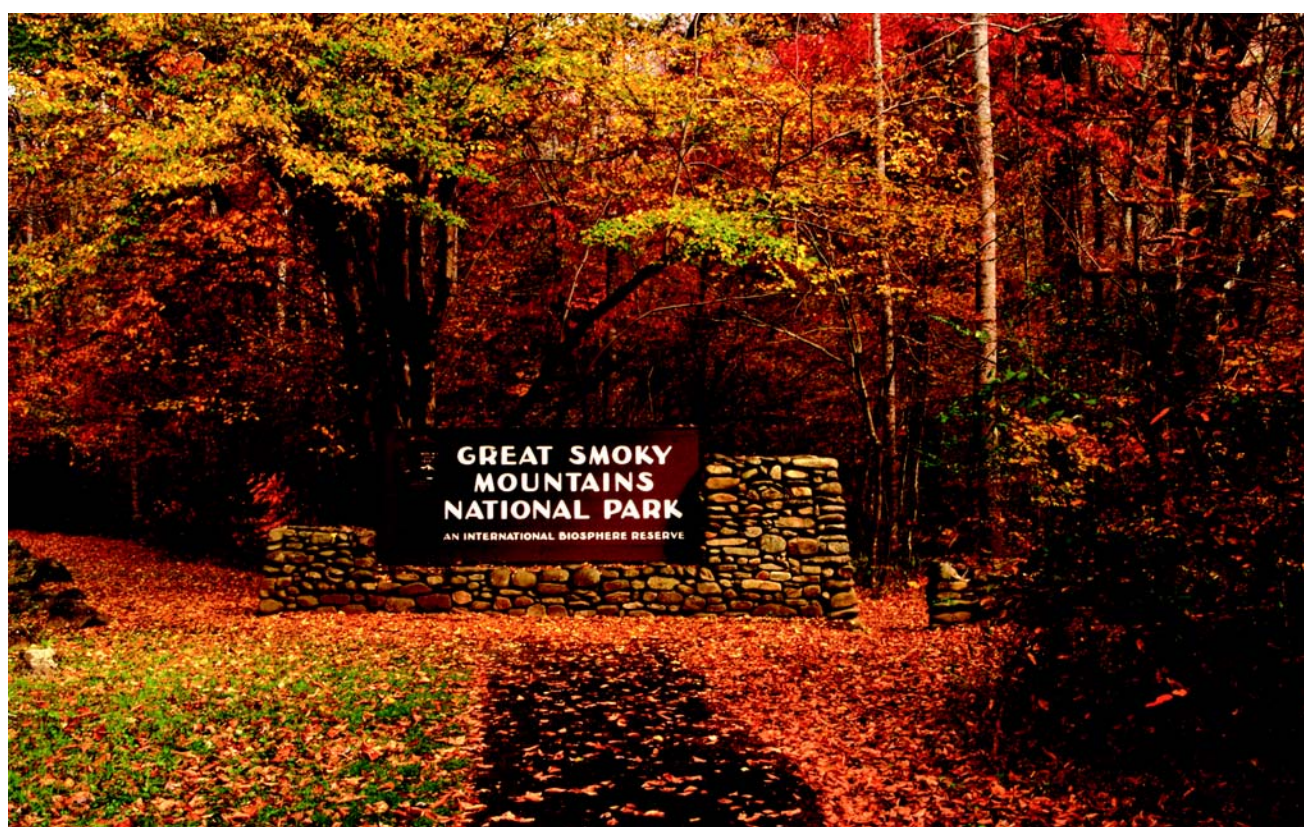
The group discussed how to effectively continue to grow the benchmarking project and ensure

that each city gains meaningful results. It explored how to go beyond the data to develop solutions, improvements, and best practices for service provision. It also discussed possibilities for enhancing the value of the project to participants by integrating the benchmarking process into the budgeting process, performance management, and strategic planning in each city.

Next year, the benchmarking project will acquire new software to streamline the data collection and reporting processes. ClearPoint Strategy, a vendor that provides performance measurement/scorecarding software, led the group through a customized demonstration. The cities were able to see how the data collection and reporting process would function from their perspective. ClearPoint Strategy also demonstrated features that integrate the data into project planning, generating additional reports, and public publishing options for greater government transparency.

See more at: <http://www.ips.tennessee.edu/content/tennessee-municipal-benchmarking-project-kicks-11th-cycle#sthash.niVwzuyr.dpuf>

Gateway cities feel affects of park closure



The Great Smoky Mountains National Park is the most visited national park in the United States, and October is one of the busiest months in terms of park visitation. Economists predict the two-week shutdown cost the regional economy more than \$35.7 million in total lost visitor spending.

BY CAROLE GRAVES
TML Communications Director

It's still too early to tell in terms of real dollars just how much the government shutdown affected the Tennessee economy, but for those gateway communities dependent on visitors to the Great Smoky Mountain Park, they felt its affects immediately.

"We felt it the first morning they announced the government was shutting down and the park would close. We had several people check out and cut their visit short, and others cancelled their reservations all together," said Michael Talley, Townsend mayor and owner/operator of the Talley Ho Inn. "So we noticed it; we noticed it every single day. The first week was almost like a ghost town. There was hardly any

traffic on the roads."

The Townsend entrance to the park serves as one of three main entrances into the park and is the closest to Cades Cove. During the government shutdown, the entrance was closed, as was the popular Cades Cove Loop Road. "We basically became a dead zone," said Talley.

"The closing of the national park certainly affected Pigeon Forge. The primary consideration is that it put doubt in people's minds about whether to plan a trip here. We'll never know how much business was lost in that regard," said Leon Downey, executive director of the Pigeon Forge Department of Tourism.

"There was a certain amount of room cancellations from people whose trips were centered around

drives into the park or hikes on specific trails. Consider, too, that beyond the loss of any room nights were losses to restaurants, attractions and retail establishments. The government shutdown was a bad deal all around, even though it might not have appeared dramatic in Pigeon Forge. We are fortunate to have so many attractions and activities that are tourism magnets themselves, but it's extremely serious when people hear that the region's bedrock attraction — the mountains — are off limits to them. This must never happen again. Policymakers should never, never have let this situation occur," said Downey.

October is one of the busiest times of year for the Great Smoky Mountain National Park, along with the park's gateway cities of See **SMOKIES** on Page 8

Southwest Development District honors cities, counties for progress, caring

BY VICTORIA SOUTH
TML Communications Coordinator

No one thanked the "academy," but gratitude took center stage, as the Southwest Tennessee Development District (SWTDD) awarded cities, counties and citizens for exceptional projects that helped communities at its annual awards banquet and directors meeting at the Jackson Fairgrounds.

For more than 40 years, development districts have been in existence in Tennessee, created by the legislature primarily to be economic development and planning organizations with both city and county governments. The Southwest district is made up of eight counties and 35 cities. The primary award criteria is that the communities utilize the services of the SWTDD.

"We like to say we are an extension of their staff because we have people who write and administer grants, and offer technical assistance, and we are in the small business loans business, so we do a wide array of things for cities and counties," said SWTDD Executive Director Joe Barker. "Each of these award winners have certainly been supporters of our organization and directly involved in what we do. You've got a lot of hard working local elected officials out here that do things, not for recognition, but for the love of their communities. We want to recognize them for the great job they do."

A special awards committee, comprised of people from inside and outside the organization, reviewed the nominations before making the final selections.

Among this year's winners are the city of Parsons, Savannah pharmacy owners Catherine Brown and Angie Roberts Etheridge, Jackson Mayor Jerry Gist, and the town of Saltillo

Parsons

Parsons Mayor Tim Boaz stepped up to the plate to accept his



Above: Cities and counties across Southwest Tennessee were honored at the recent Southwest Tennessee Development District (SWTDD) Director's Meeting and Awards Banquet at the Jackson Fairgrounds. Bottom left: Volunteers from SWTDD joined the Jackson Month of Miracles initiative in April 2013, to assist elderly citizens with house repairs, clean up and other needed services. Jackson Mayor Jerry Gist was awarded the SWTDD Impact in Aging Award for the project. Right: Parsons received the SWTDD Building Block Award for the city's downtown revitalization project.

city's Building Block Award. The award embodies several municipal projects which fit together to form a collective community goal.

Parsons received a series of grants to redevelop its downtown district in several phases, including sidewalks, street lighting and new facades.

"The committee felt like they had done an outstanding job in connecting the dots in what they are trying to do there," said Barker.

The city also has been awarded a Land & Parks Recreation Fund (LPRF) grant for Phase I of a design to re-purpose approximately 10 acres of the Scott-Gibson Airport for recreation.

"We've been involved with them to create a community-wide recreational facility, and they were the first to apply for funds in what we call a digital factory," Barker added.

The city had to provide a building for the digital factory, which serves as a co-working center with office space, shared broadband connectivity, a conference room, training and workrooms that connect candidates, remote employers and online training courses for customer service jobs.

Parsons has been highly successful so far, putting more than 80 people to work, according to Barker. "We've been working with

See **SWTDD Awards** on Page 8



ANTIOCH

Nashville-based Asurion, one of the industry's largest cell phone insurance companies, is adding 800 support technician positions to a new facility amid growing demand for mobile devices. The new 122,000-square-foot support center at 5720 Crossings Blvd. will open in early 2014. Asurion provides mobile phone insurance services, and has been growing rapidly. In 2012, Asurion announced plans to bring 500 jobs to downtown Nashville. In August, a permit was issued for a 31,000-square-foot Asurion office near Nashville International Airport. With the new location, Asurion will occupy 557,473 square feet in Davidson County.

BRISTOL

The city was awarded the Plan Implementation award from the Tennessee Chapter of the American Planning Association for the Fairmount Neighborhood Plan. The plan, completed and adopted by the city council in August 2011, involved significant participation from the neighborhood and involved many implementation actions. Most of the neighborhood was rezoned to eliminate multi-family conversion and intrusion. The sidewalk network was expanded, many of the alleys were cleared of overgrowth and improvements were made to the neighborhood park. The plan was completed in-house and implementation steps and method of tracking progress could easily be replicated in other communities.

CHATTANOOGA

Charity Navigator, America's largest and most-utilized independent evaluator of charities, has awarded the Chattanooga Zoo the prestigious 4-star rating for good governance, sound fiscal management and commitment to accountability and transparency. The Chattanooga Zoo is currently the only zoo in Tennessee with a 4-star rating. Charity Navigator works to help charitable givers make intelligent giving decisions by providing information on more than 5,000 charities nationwide and by evaluating their financial health. It calculates each charity's score based upon several broad criteria, including how much is spent per dollar raised, what percentage of funds goes to programs vs. administrative and fund-raising expenses, and the organization's long-term financial health. It then assigns a rating from one to four, with four being the best rating.

CLARKSVILLE

South Korean tire-maker Hankook, the world's seventh-largest tire maker, announced that it will build its first North American plant in Clarksville, creating 1,800 jobs. Construction on the 1.5 million-square-foot, \$800 million facility is scheduled to begin by the end of next year, and the company will begin making high-end performance tires in 2016. Seung Hwa Suh, Hankook's vice chairman and CEO, said the decision to locate in Tennessee was the result of a year of discussions with state officials, citing the central location and existing auto industry as major factors.

CLARKSVILLE

The American Bus Association (ABA) recently announced that the Rivers & Spire Festival has been named one of the Top 100 Events in North America for 2014. Inclusion in the Top 100 list, in the September/October issue of *Destinations* magazine, indicates that Rivers & Spire offers excellent entertainment value to both tour groups and individual travelers from around the world. The honor gives Rivers & Spire an important boost in visibility among professional tour planners. ABA's 2014 Top 100 Events Selection Committee selected Rivers & Spire from hundreds of event nominations submitted by ABA members. Judges considered the event's broad appeal, its accessibility to motorcoaches and skill at handling large groups, and a variety of other relevant criteria. The Top 100 Events list is available online at www.buses.org/News-Publications/Top-100.

GREENEVILLE

US Nitrogen, set to begin operations in 2014, will construct a special fire training facility in return for automatic aid from the Greenville Fire Department in the event of an emer-

gency. US Nitrogen will manufacture liquid ammonium nitrate, which is to be transported from Greene County to facilities in the Midwest operated by US Nitrogen's parent company, Austin Powder Company.

HUMBOLDT

Connected Tennessee's West Tennessee State Operations Manager Deanna Ward attended the opening celebration of the Stigall Center of Morning Star Baptist Church, presenting five new printers as a gift for its youth center. The Stigall Center tutors youth from 15 to 18 years old and functions similarly to the local Boys & Girls Club but does not take children under the age of 13. The five printers donated to the Stigall Center are part of a donation made by Lexmark International to Connected Tennessee's Computers 4 Kids (C4K) program. Kentucky-based Lexmark provided a total of 250 printers to the C4K program that have been distributed across the state in the last year. As part of the Computers 4 Kids: Preparing Tennessee's Next Generation for Success project, the C4K program deploys computers, academic support programs, and workforce training to those in the state's foster care system who are "aging out" as they turn 18, and youth who are active in the state's 76 Boys & Girls Clubs. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act-funded program will impact the lives of nearly 60,000 youth across the state throughout the life of the grant.

JACKSON

The Jackson Chamber received an Award of Excellence recently in a national competition sponsored by the American Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE). The Chamber received the award for its branding campaign, "Jackson: Connect Here." Chamber and CVB officials worked together with Jackson-based marketing firms Younger Associates and Sodium Halogen to develop the brand and build a website incorporating the chamber, economic development and tourism. In July 2012, Jackson Chamber unveiled the new logo and brand identity that is now shared by the city, the Jackson Convention and Visitor's Bureau and the chamber.

JACKSON

The city will be home to Champion Power Equipment's newest distribution facility. Champion will hire up to 50 employees during the first 15 months of operation and invest more than \$3 million into its 80,000 square-foot facility. The company specializes in the design, manufacture and support of portable generators, inverters, log splitters, pressure washers, transfer pumps and winches. Champion is a US privately-owned and operated company.

KINGSTON SPRINGS

The city commission voted to change municipal night court hours to a day court format. City Manager Laurie Cooper noted that employee overtime and shuffling police officer schedules could be minimized or even avoided with the switch. Municipal court is scheduled only once a month, unless an additional session is warranted by demand or special circumstances.

KNOXVILLE

Sunglasses maker Luxottica is closing its manufacturing facility at 4716 Middle Creek Lane, resulting in the loss of 310 jobs. The company said it made the decision after a recent efficiency review. Seventy-six jobs were lost in 2009, after Luxottica consolidated its Anderson Road facility with the Middle Creek Lane plant. Luxottica makes prescription frames and sunglasses for such brands as LensCrafters and Pearle Vision. It also manages glasses at Sunglass Hut locations.

LAFOLLETTE

The city is working to bring people back to the downtown area and has hired a planning consultant to help with the initiative. Ten citizens will be part of a focus group to target downtown areas that need improvement. The city is working with the state to apply for downtown and Main Street grants, while also urging participation from the private sector. Last month, the city enforced cleanup efforts for some buildings, while making several drug and pros-

titution-related arrests. City leaders say they hope the initiative will make the area more appealing to new businesses.

MANCHESTER

Great Lakes Cheese is opening its first cheese manufacturing and packaging plant in the Southeast. The Hiram, Ohio-based company said it plans to invest \$100 million in the 330,000-square-foot facility and create more than 200 jobs. The company supplies grocery and warehouse stores and restaurant chains and food service distributors. Another cheesemaker, MDM Foods, announced in August that it plans to build an expanded production facility in Manchester. The new facility is expected to increase employment from 41 to about 70 people in the next few years.

MEMPHIS

The city is one of seven nationwide cited by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce for its public-private relationships focused on spurring innovation, revitalization and job creation. Memphis was recently recognized for the Mayor's Innovation Delivery Team, which launched an ambitious neighborhood revitalization program, "The Neighborhood Vitality Initiative." An outgrowth of a \$4.8 million grant from Bloomberg Philanthropies, the program's goal is to increase business starts, boost business activity and lower vacancy rates for commercial spaces by removing blight and other environmental barriers, while generating interest, ideas and resources tailored to each community's goals. The nine-member team provides the city and its partners, with extra capacity and fresh eyes and ears to analyze and address public and private issues facing the neighborhoods.

WHITE BLUFF

Officials kicked off a downtown revitalization program marketing the town's rural farming and natural settings. Accepted into the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development's Tennessee Downtowns program last winter, a volunteer committee of local citizens participated in a training curriculum about comprehensive, sustainable downtown revitalization and historic preservation. The program included a \$15,000 reimbursable grant to complete individualized downtown development projects. Town officials and the committee worked with downtown property owners to generate ideas for affordable improvements. Revitalization planners developed a 50/50 matching "mini-grant" program as an "impetus" for downtown property owners to join the effort; along with a design assistance manual for the owners to look at as a reference for revitalization efforts.

Brentwood's Environmental Education Day marks sixth successful year



More than 200 students from Brentwood and Ravenwood High Schools descend upon Deerwood Arboretum to learn about local wildlife and ecosystems.

Brentwood recently hosted its sixth annual Environmental Education Day. As part of a partnership with Williamson County Schools, experts from Williamson County government, the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, the Discovery Center of Murfreesboro, and six private sector environmental and engineering firms offered more than four hours of hands-on instruction.

Participating students, most of whom are enrolled in AP Environmental Science, rotated among 10 different stations that included displays and demonstrations on everything from in-stream biological assessments and macro invertebrates to water filtration, animals, and birds. One station provided students with microscopes and "Bug Soup", a concoction of water, mud, grass, and organisms, from which they could observe the tiny creatures that inhabit Middle Tennessee's waterways.

"It's great to see such interest

our environment" noted Mayor Betsy Crossley, who is a former biology teacher and volunteered to lead the "Bug Soup" station. "I feel like outreach events such as this are part of the city's obligation to the community, the value of which will be known in the future when these kids are adults - when they become the stewards of our natural resources".

Environmental Education Day began in 2009. City leaders credit the success of the event to the many partners that have been so generous with their time and resources.

Participating organizations include city of Brentwood, Williamson County Schools, Williamson County, TDEC, Discovery Center, CDM Smith, Inc., Civil & Environmental Consultants, Inc., Barge Waggoner Sumner & Cannon, Inc., Smith Seckman Reid, Inc., Hethcoat & Davis, Inc., and Hazen & Sawyer

For more information about the program, contact Jay Evans, assistant city manager, at 615-371-0060.



Connected Tennessee presented a gift of five new printers for the youth center at the opening of the Stigall Center of Morning Star Baptist Church. Pictured from left, Alderman Bobby Barnett, Alderman Chuck Lovell, the Rev. Quill Brabham, Deanna Ward, Connected Tennessee West TN state operations manager; Mayor Allen Barker, Morning Star Baptist Church Secretary Kathleen Smith, and Parks and Recreation Director Barry Bunn.

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Portland plans for its future while embracing its past

BY MARK PENLAND
TDEC
Office of Sustainable Practices

City officials and citizens in the city of Portland, a town of only 11,000, are diligently working to grow the community, while at the same time, preserving the past. Currently, the city has several preservation efforts underway, while promoting economic growth and tourism.

City officials are building on the success of similar projects, by studying two comparably sized cities, Clarksville and Galena, IL, which have successful commercial areas within historic downtowns, and a mentoring relationship with the cities of Franklin and Crossville.

Portland is in the early stages of the effort that's centered on the Moye/Green House and the Temple Theater. The restoration of these two buildings is part of the city's downtown revitalization plans under the Certified Tennessee Downtown Program (CTDP). CDTP is the first step a city will take in route to receiving its final designation as a Tennessee Main Street Program city. Portland has also partnered with the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development to receive a grant in the amount of \$15,000 to begin the revitalization and restoration work on these two historic buildings.

The Moye /Green House was originally used as a boarding house during the years that railroad passenger service was available in Portland. Located just 30 miles north of Nashville, the historic center began as a stop on the Louisville to Nashville Railroad in 1858 when it was known as Richland Station. The name was later changed to Portland as there were already two cities in Tennessee named Richland. The area continued to grow around the rail depot and eventually became Main Street.

The house was recently acquired by DeRoyal Industries of Knoxville. The Portland Preservation Foundation, a 501c (3) organization, partnered with DeRoyal to receive funding to begin restoring the historic property, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Future plans are to make it a welcome center at the beginning of the trail to Richland Park. Portland

Mayor Kenneth Wilber hopes to develop the center with possible space for meetings and a museum, as well as a parking lot and walking trail.

The restoration of this historically significant and centrally located structure creates not only a place to educate locals and visitors alike about the area's history and culture, but also enhance the downtown and adjacent properties. Through this partnering arrangement, Hospital Disposables (DeRoyal) also benefits through relief of ongoing property liabilities and maintenance issues that will allow for development of the property.

The second project, the historic Temple Theater, was built in 1937 and by 1939, was considered to be one of the best small theaters in Tennessee. The theater had all the amenities to keep its guests comfortable including air conditioning and a water fountain kept ice cold by electric refrigeration, both rare for that time period. The theater has not shown a movie since the 1950s.

Portland has partnered with the cities Crossville and Franklin in modeling its theater restoration efforts after similar renovation projects in those cities.

While Portland is striving to protect its past, city leaders and elected officials have an eye on the future as well. Due to a concern voiced by local industry leaders regarding the lack of highly skilled and trained workers, a working group consisting of members of the school board, county commissioners, Tennessee Economic and Community Development, industry leaders and elected officials met to develop a plan to address this issue. A potential solution has been identified through the possible conversion of an unused former middle school building into a state of the art technical skills teaching facility.

The city has partnered extensively with many organizations to grow the economy including Tennessee Economic and Community Development, the Tennessee Department of Transportation, the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, the Middle Tennessee Industrial Development Association, the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce and the industrial development boards of Sumner and Robertson counties. In an example of city and industry partnering,



The Portland Preservation Foundation have partnered with DeRoyal Industries in Knoxville to begin restoring the Moye /Green House, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Unipres, an automotive parts manufacturer, provided a matching grant for a Tennessee Department of Transportation grant the city had received to facilitate "just in time" delivery facilities upgrades at the regional airport. In addition to the financial support, Unipres has also opened a new health clinic on their premises.

Portland is growing and is constantly pursuing ways to attract industry and tourism to the region while prioritizing and showcasing the past through these projects. Key leadership and partnerships have been essential in securing a sustainable outlook that will influence future generations.

"It's created an excitement in the downtown area that hasn't been seen in some time," said Mayor Wilber.



The Moye /Green House was originally used as a boarding house during the years that railroad passenger service was available in Portland.

City Economic and Community Development Director Denise Geminden believes that while economic growth and development are

critical to the city and surrounding county, preserving Portland's rich history and historic landmarks are equally important.

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Considered at one time to be one of the best small theaters in Tennessee, The Temple Theater in Portland, built in 1937, has not shown a movie since the 1950s. The city is partnering with Crossville and Franklin, in modeling the renovation plans for the theater.





PEOPLE IN THE NEWS



State Rep. **Eric Watson**, Cleveland, the chairman of the House Criminal Justice Committee, says he won't seek re-election to the Legislature next year and will instead run for sheriff of Bradley County. Watson was elected in a 2006 special election to the seat previously held by former Rep. Chris Newton, who had pleaded guilty to bribery charges in the FBI's Tennessee Waltz sting operation. He has served in the Legislature since 2005 and has been a committee chairman since 2010.



Watson

Tennessee State Treasurer **David Lillard Jr.** received the Jesse M. Unruh Award from his peers at the National Association of State Treasurers (NAST) Annual Conference, held in Asheville, N.C. The award, which is named in honor of a founding member of NAST and the former California State Treasurer, recognizes an active treasurer's outstanding service to the association, the profession and his or her state. Treasurer Lillard currently serves as secretary/treasurer of NAST, which is a bipartisan, nonprofit association with the mission of promoting best practices and sound public fiscal policy. Treasurer Lillard also serves as chairman of the State Debt Management Network.



Lillard

State Rep. **Charles Curtiss**, Sparta, says he will not seek re-election. Curtiss, 66, didn't give a specific reason for his decision



Curtiss

but said he wanted to give candidates considering running for his District 43 seat plenty of time to plan. Curtiss was elected in 1994 and will have served 20 years when his current term ends.

Tommy Bragg announced he will not seek a fourth term as mayor. The three-time elected mayor has served 12 years at the helm



Bragg

of the government for Murfreesboro, one of Tennessee's most-progressive cities in terms of job growth, economic development and education. Bragg, 66, comes from a family with years of public service impact not only for Murfreesboro, but regionally including Cannon and Rutherford counties and statewide in the state legislature and Tennessee National Guard.

Glenn Rosenoff has been selected as Erwin's new town recorder following the resignation of Randy Trivette, who had served in the role since 2004. Most recently, Rosenoff served as the director of planning at the First Tennessee Development District in Johnson City. Prior to that, he spent 11 years with the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development, with stints as a regional planner and principal planner of the agency's local planning assistance office.

Bill McCord will be Gallatin's new planning director and **Chuck Stuart** has been appointed as the new building official. McCord is the principal planner of transportation for Port Orange, Fla., and Stuart, the building official for Washington Parish, La. McCord expects to start by the end of October and Stuart said he hopes to begin by the start of 2014.

The Lebanon Housing Authority board has selected **Patrick Johnson** as its new director. Johnson, 49, has been the pastor of Peyton Road Church of Christ for 21 years, and was past chairman of the Lebanon Housing Authority board. Johnson was also Chief Executive Officer with Christian Communities Services Inc., a nonprofit in Nashville that works with public housing.

Milan Fire Department Capt. **Richard Floersch**, 59, died of an apparent heart attack while serving on duty. Floersch had served with the fire department for 36 years and had been a captain for 35 years.

After 33 years of service in state government, 23 in Tourist Development, Deputy Commissioner **Tom Lightsey** announced his retirement. Lightsey began his career in state government in 1973 in Finance and Administration and moved to TDOT in 1982 just in time for the World's Fair in Knoxville. At a recent reception, Commissioner Susan Whitaker honored Lightsey with special remarks and presented him with a framed state flag that had flown over the Tennessee State Capitol.



Lightsey

Andrew Hyatt became the new city manager of East Ridge on Oct. 21. Hyatt has been the city manager for the city of Fairview since 2010.

David Sparks, a Hickory, N.C. native, is Farragut's new assistant town engineer. Previously, Sparks worked with the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT), Region 1, in Knox County. Sparks will assist town Engineer Darryl Smith with the acquisition of TDOT funding for town projects; coordination of consultants and contractors for projects; resurfacing projects; oversight of park and greenway improvements; and review of new subdivisions and other commercial developments.



Sparks

Veteran Signal Mountain Police Chief Boyd Veal, tapped during recent years to fill in as interim town manager, will become the community's assistant town manager. Veal, whose father served as the town's police chief for 32 years — joined the force eight years ago. In 2009, he completed the Southeastern Command and Leadership Academy (SECLA) at the University of Tennessee.



Veal

MTAS bids adieu to Sid Hemsley after 31 years

After 31 years as a legal consultant with the UT Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) Sid Hemsley is retired at the end of September. Hemsley began his career as a mechanic in the Army before attending college where he obtained a master's degree in public administration, and a law degree from UT Knoxville. Hemsley and his wife Jancie have nine children, 16 grandchildren and 50 honorary kids and grandkids from MTAS. In his spare time, he enjoys renovating houses, laying tile, installing hardwood floors, painting, repairing cars and babysitting his grandchildren.



Hemsley

"Sid's knowledge and understanding of the law and his gentlemanly spirit have become a powerful combination in delivering exceptional service to each and every MTAS customer he has encountered. And in 31 years, that number is measured in thousands." Jim Thomas, MTAS executive director

TDOT/Keep TN Beautiful present awards at the Biennial conference



From left are Melissa (Missy) Marshall, executive director of Keep Tennessee Beautiful; Nancy Zion, director of Williamson County Solid Waste; Laurie Rousseau, Williamson County recycling specialist; and Lyndsay Botts, TDOT chief of staff.

Keep Williamson Beautiful received the \$1,000 Public Participation Award for America Recycles Day of Tennessee as part of the TDOT/Keep Tennessee Beautiful (KTnB) 2013 Biennial Conference. Winners received Awards of Excellence plaques and grant checks, honoring the environmental achievements and legacies of people and organizations who work to improve their community's appearance through public education programs.

The Keep Williamson Beautiful award was presented to Nancy Zion, director of the Williamson County Solid Waste Department and Recycling Specialist Laurie Rousseau.

The award is given to organizers of an America Recycles Day event

that demonstrates creativity, broad scope of citizen and government involvement, and total results.

Keep Williamson Beautiful participated in the 11th annual career fair for eighth-grade students at the Ag Expo Park to celebrate Keep America Beautiful's America Recycles Day. The Williamson County Department of Solid Waste partnered with Williamson Recycles and Keep Williamson Beautiful to present information to students interested in pursuing solid waste and recycling careers.

The educational opportunity encouraged students to explore recycling strategies. During the event, 290 students took the Keep America Beautiful pledge to recycle.



Ardmore / Giles County Welcome Center was named Tennessee's 2013 Welcome Center of the Year. The award was presented at the Tennessee Governor's Conference on Tourism in Franklin. The newly-built Ardmore Welcome Center opened in 2011 and is located on I-65 northbound in Giles County. Director of Welcome Centers Pete Rosenboro presented the award to Brenda Anderson, center manager. Regional Manager Michael Ross was also on hand to celebrate the award. Veteran Regional Manager Janice Rich, recently retired, also joined her former colleagues during the awards presentation.



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STATE BRIEFS

Haslam sets goal to improve teachers' salaries

Gov. Haslam wants Tennessee's teacher salaries to become the fastest improving in the nation, a long-term and still-unfunded goal that complements a new pay plan that rewards educators who perform the best. The governor announced during a ceremony for the Tennessee Teacher of the Year awards, that bumping teacher salaries in Tennessee, which currently sit at the bottom 10 nationwide, to the very top in growth, is one of the most important objectives his administration has taken on.

State's auto industry poised to grow stronger

Tennessee's automotive industry is in solid shape and poised to grow even stronger, according to a report released by the Brookings Institution. Tennessee has the largest auto sector in the South in terms of jobs, the report states. Tennessee's share of North American auto manufacturing jobs grew from 2.9 percent in 2010 to 3.3 percent in 2012. Describing the state's auto manufacturing industry as the "Southern automotive powerhouse," the Washington research organization says that Tennessee is making great headway in the global marketplace. To help boost its auto industry, the report said Tennessee needs to attract and produce more qualified workers, promote innovation and expand its supplier network.

State ranks 15th best tax climate

Tennessee has the 15th best tax climate for business out of all 50 states and the second best in the South, according to the 2014 State Business Tax Climate Index released by the Tax Foundation, a non-partisan fiscal policy research organization that generally favors lower taxes. The index collects data on more than 100 tax provisions for each state and synthesizes them into a single score. The states are then compared against each other, so that each state's ranking is relative to actual policies in place in other states. A state's ranking can rise or fall significantly based not just on its own actions but on the changes made by other states, according to the Tax Foundation. Tennessee's ranking of 15th is unchanged from the 2013 report issued last year but down from its ranking of 13th in the 2012 report.

Domestic violence facilities to aid state's reduction efforts

Tennessee's efforts to curb domestic violence will be strengthened with the opening of three new facilities in Chattanooga, Nashville and Cookeville, that represent unified coordination of services among government agencies and nonprofit service providers. Bill Gibbons, commissioner of the department of safety and homeland security, credited Family Justice Centers for helping communities address domestic violence and help victims restart their lives. City officials and representatives from the other cities where centers are planned are touring the Knoxville Family Justice Center to learn how the facility functions. According to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, this year through Au-

gust there were 50,370 reported domestic violence incidents compared with the 56,451 incidents reported during the same time in 2012. The grants to get the new Family Justice Centers up and running come from the state through a federal grant as part of Gov. Haslam's overall public safety plan.

TN part of \$30M settlement

Tennessee is one of a group of states that has won a \$30 million settlement against a marketing company the state says used confusing and deceptive business practices. According to the state attorney general's office, Affinion and its subsidiaries offer a variety of services, including credit monitoring, roadside assistance and discount travel. Consumers complained that Affinion charged them for services without their authorization. Some also reported that they had trouble canceling or getting a refund. Other consumers were confused because they thought the services came from Affinion partners, which usually were banks or retailers with which the consumers did business. Attorney General Bob Cooper says consumers should check their credit card and bank account statements and look for the names of Affinion's membership programs. They can be found at <http://www.tn.gov/attorneygeneral/cases/Affinion/affinionlist.pdf>.

Report finds state has highest crime rate

Tennessee has the unpleasant distinction of having the nation's highest violent crime rate last year. 24/7 Wall St. reviewed the states with the highest rates of violent crime in the country and where violent crime is most likely to occur, including murder, rape, robbery and aggravated assault. The state was among the top 10 in the country for murders and robberies and was first for aggravated assaults, with an estimated 479.6 for every 100,000 residents. Tennessee's 41,550 violent crimes in 2012 were up 6.8 percent from 2011 but down 10 percent from 2007, when there were 46,380 violent crimes. There were 388 murders in the state in 2012, up for a second straight year. Tennessee's violent streak is concentrated in some of the major metropolitan areas.

About \$42 million has been recovered by the Tennessee Valley Authority to help pay for more than \$1

billion in expenses stemming from the cleanup at the 2008 ash spill at the Kingston Fossil Plant. The latest payment comes after an arbitrator ruled that one of TVA's insurers, Bermuda-based Arch, had to pay for part of the cleanup from the collapse of a coal ash pond where TVA dumped coal residues for decades at its Kingston plant. The arbitration award is the first of three pending cases between TVA and its insurers over the Kingston ash spill. TVA has collected \$92 million from property and casualty insurance companies, and the agency could receive up to \$200 million more, depending upon the outcome of pending arbitration cases. TVA spokesman Duncan Mansfield said TVA is seeking the policy limits of \$150 million from ACE Bermuda and another \$50 million from Zurich insurance. Even if successful, TVA still will get back only about a fourth of what the utility expects to spend to repair and clean up the river and surrounding property damaged when an ash dike ruptured at an 84-acre solid waste containment area in Roane County three days before Christmas in 2008.

Eat REAL Tennessee launched to promote healthy restaurants

A Washington, D.C.-based group has received a three-year grant to help launch a new certification program in Tennessee for healthy restaurants. The U.S. Healthful Food Council will use the \$346,000 grant to launch Eat REAL Tennessee, which will assess and recognize restaurants and foodservice establishments for their Responsible Epicurean and Agricultural Leadership. The program was selected by the state to combat diabetes and obesity.

New laws for dispensing pain meds in effect

Beginning in October, prescriptions for opioid pain medicines and benzodiazepine medicines may not be dispensed in Tennessee in quantities that exceed a 30-day supply. The new limits apply to anyone dispensing the drugs. That includes pharmacies, dispensaries and mail-order programs located outside the state. According to the Tennessee Department of Health, some of the drugs limited under the new law are Lortab, Oxycotin, Percocet, Xanax and Valium. For Schedule II medicines, each 30-day supply requires a new prescription. For other drugs, a single prescription can be refilled in 30-day increments for up to six months. Tennesseans who need help with a drug problem can call the Tennessee REDLINE at 1-800-889-9789.

ECD sets 2013 regional ThreeStar workshops

TN Economic and Community Development will conduct a series of regional workshops during October and November for designated ThreeStar coordinators to discuss the ThreeStar Program.

The following topics will be covered: purpose and benefits of ThreeStar participation; program design and requirements; best practices and promising projects from year one; process and timeline for application submittal; and demonstration of online reporting and application system.

Please email the name, title, and

workshop location to be attended to ECD.ThreeStar@tn.gov

West Tennessee

• **Tuesday, Oct. 29, 1:30-4:30PM**
College Hill Museum, Brownsville
• **Wednesday, Oct. 30, 9am- 12 pm**
Northwest TN Development Dist
Martin

Middle Tennessee

• **Friday, Oct. 25, 9am - 12 pm**
Cookeville-Putnam County
Chamber of Commerce, Cookeville
• **Thursday, Oct. 31, 9 am - 12 pm**
The Renaissance Center

TN September revenues under budgeted estimates

Overall September revenues were under the budgeted estimates in Tennessee, although sales taxes continue to show modest growth. Finance and Administration Commissioner Larry Martin reported today that overall September revenues were \$1.1 billion, which is 5.22 percent below the budgeted estimate.

"The sales tax is the 'bread and butter' of revenue collections in Tennessee, and it's our leading economic indicator," Martin said. "September sales tax collections continued to reflect modest growth consistent with a sluggish economy."

"With uncertainty surrounding resolution of the federal budget, and national economic indicators that continue to reflect mixed results, we are required to continue close scrutiny of revenues and expenditures for the balance of this fiscal year. We will maintain a balanced budget and conservatively manage the state's spending."

On an accrual basis, September is the second month in the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

September collections were \$59.0 million less than the budgeted estimate. The general fund was under collected by \$62.1 million and the four other funds were over collected by \$3.1 million.

Sales tax collections were \$1.9 million less than the estimate for September. The September growth rate was positive 3.50 percent.

Franchise and excise taxes combined were \$65.6 million below the September budgeted estimate of \$342.7 million. The September growth rate was negative 10.37 percent.

Gasoline and motor fuel collections for September increased by 4.82 percent and were \$2.2 million above the budgeted estimate of \$69.6 million.

Tobacco tax collections for the month were under collected by \$1.7 million, and the growth rate was negative 4.97 percent.

Privilege tax collections were \$0.3 million less than the budgeted estimate of \$20.0 million.

Inheritance and estate tax collections were \$5.3 million above the budgeted estimate.

All other taxes were over collected by a net of \$3.0 million.

Year-to date collections for two months were \$83.3 million less than the budgeted estimate. The general fund was under collected by \$82.9 million and the four other funds were under collected by \$0.4 million.

The budgeted revenue estimates for 2013-2014 are based on the State Funding Board's consensus recommendation of December 19, 2012, and adopted by the first session of the 108th General Assembly in April 2013. They are available on the state's website at www.tn.gov/finance/bud/Revenues.shtml.

Tenn. employers to pay lower premium rates for unemployment insurance

The TN Department of Labor & Workforce Development announced most employers will pay a reduced amount on their quarterly unemployment insurance premium rates.

Unemployment insurance rates will decrease because the balance of Tennessee's Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund on June 30 was more than \$650 million, triggering the permanent expiration of the 0.6 percent additional fee in premium rates. Additionally, the trust fund trigger temporarily shifted the Premium Rate Table from table three to five, further increasing potential savings for employers for the next two calendar quarters.

Legislation enacted in June 2009 created a temporary additional fee of 0.6 percent on all unemployment insurance premium rates. This provision became effective Jan. 1, 2009, as the trust fund became nearly insolvent, causing the state to take a \$20 million interest-free loan from the federal government to continue benefit payments. The state paid back the federal loan within a month, and the measure has steadily improved the health of the fund to its balance of \$817,606,274 as of Aug. 23, 2013.

"Tennessee has shown a tremendous amount of fiscal responsibility managing the fund into which employers contribute," said Labor & Workforce Development Commissioner Burns Phillips. "This announcement is good news for both employers and the citizens of our state."

Employers were mailed notifications of the changes to their individual accounts at the end of August showing their revised premium rate for the third and fourth quarters of the current year.

Eight Employer Accounts offices are located across the state and are staffed with auditors who answer employers' questions. They can assist Tennessee employers who are starting a business understand premium and wage reporting and the payment of premiums.

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Cities Lead: recipes for local success

BY JAMES BROOKS
National League of Cities

Urban scholar and commentator Neal Peirce released his book *Citistates* (How Urban America Can Prosper in a Competitive World) all the way back in 1993. The themes concerning successful and globally competitive cities and regions were compelling then and his findings have been borne out by authors including Michael Porter (The Competitive Advantage of the Inner City), Rosabeth Moss Kanter (World Class: Thriving Locally in the Global Economy) and Thomas Friedman (Pick your book: Lexus and the Olive Tree, The World is Flat, or Hot, Flat and Crowded).

The City-State, or as my former colleague William Barnes referred to it—the metropolitan centered economic region—is the smallest and most essential unit of economic prosperity. As such, all the cities and counties within the larger and interdependent urban-suburban region are connected—or so they should be. It is with a focus on the strengths and advantages of cities as the dynamic engines of action, innovation and economic prosperity that National

Journal author Michael Hirsh offers an updated vision in the August 31, 2013 edition of the magazine.

To read much of contemporary news media, one would be surprised to discover that many cities are in fact thriving places. Important news about a new freight rail bridge linking the United States and Canada between Windsor and Detroit is overshadowed by Detroit's bankruptcy filing, for example. The local advancement of light rail, street cars and bike sharing in countless cities is drowned out by the hiccups experienced in New York City's bike share roll-out.

It's not all perfect in city halls of course. But it's encouraging to see that while Congress fiddles and federal programs burn, it is city and county leaders who are taking the hard steps to solve problems, find new resources, form new collaborations and get the necessary tasks done.

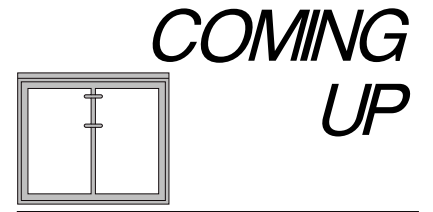
The keys to success for cities are not hard to comprehend. NLC's research on resilient regions, looking at places in Michigan and Arizona for example, point to some specific action steps that align with Mr. Hirsh's summary in the National Journal.

NLC's findings about the centrality of economic regions points to some very specific techniques and tools that may in fact be winnowed down to three indispensable principles for thriving cities:

1. Establish an inclusive and creative process of community engagement to assess problems, identify solutions and implement a unified response that holds consistently over time (which in some cases may require decades);
2. Develop and nurture credible, dynamic and aggressive leadership on the part of local and regional elected or appointed officials and build the capacity of the government departments or agencies to synchronize with that leadership; and
3. Foster partnerships across city departments, across political boundaries and between the public, private and nonprofit stakeholders in the region.

As Mr. Hirsh points out, "all these factors can breed a critical survival trait for successful cities and their metro areas: resilience."

Editor's Note: James Brooks is NLC's Program Director for Community Development & Infrastructure.



Nov. 12-14: The Tennessee Stormwater Association's Conference "What Are You Wading For?" held at Henry Horton State Park in Chapel Hill. Includes more than 30 sessions on topics including regenerative stormwater practices, Qualified Local Program (QLP), An Education Panel, Macroinvertebrate sampling and stream assessment training and more. Networking activities will include a tree planting service opportunity, guided hike, and a social with live music to name some of the opportunities to meet and learn from other professionals throughout the state. Visit <http://tinstormwater.org/blog/conference/>

Nov. 17-21: 62nd Tennessee Recreation & Parks Annual Conference at the Chattanooga Convention Center and Marriott Hotel. New program ideas, current trends and issues, and innovative parks and recreation equipment are among the many topics to be discussed. For complete conference information, agenda and registration visit www.trpa.net.

UT MTAS November MAP Classes

Planning and Zoning's Impact on Municipal Economic Development

Attracting development and ensuring that it meshes with the long-range comprehensive planning of the city is vitally important to growth and sustainability of a municipality.

This session will address the role of the planning and zoning board and the municipal planning and zoning requirements in economic development.

Time: All classes are from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm
Cost: Municipal Employees – \$50/person/class. All other participants – \$65/person/class.

Will qualify for four hours of planning and zoning commissioner continuing education hours.

Schedule of sessions
Nov.6 - Knoxville
Nov.7 - Collegedale
Nov.13 - Bartlett
Nov.14 - Jackson
Nov.15 - Kingsport
Nov.22 - Nashville

Location
Bartlett, Bartlett Station Municipal Center, 5868 Stage Rd.
Collegedale, Collegedale City Hall, 4910 Swinyar Dr.
Jackson, University of Tenn.—West Tenn Research & Education Center, 605 Airways Center
Kingsport, Northeast State Community College, Kingsport Center for Higher Education, 300 West Market St.
Knoxville, UT Conference Center, 600 Henley St., 4th floor.



Nashville, TBI Headquarters, 901 R.S. Gass Blvd.

To register, go to the website, www.mtas.tennessee.edu and click "register for a class." MTAS needs to receive payment in order to confirm your attendance for the class.

For assistance with registration or payment, contact MTAS at 865-974-0411. For more information, contact Kurt Frederick at 615-253-6385 or e-mail kurt.frederick@tennessee.edu

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NATIONAL BRIEFS



The government forecast that most households will pay more for heat this winter. Heating oil users will catch a slight break, but still pay near-record prices to keep warm. Prices for natural gas, electricity and propane should be higher, the primary reason that more than 90 percent of homes will incur higher heating expenses. Homes using natural

gas for heat will pay about \$679. That is about 13 percent higher than a year ago but still four percent below the average for the previous five winters. Homes relying on electricity for heat, about 38 percent of the U.S., will likely pay about two percent more for heat compared with last year. For heating oil customers, there is good news and bad news in

the Energy Department's annual outlook for heating costs. Their average bill should drop two percent, to \$2,046. But that's still the second highest average on record, behind last year's \$2,092. Some analysts are concerned about a spike in heating oil prices. That's because the fuels that refiners make alongside heating oil, including diesel and jet fuel, are

in high demand around the world and inventories are low. Natural gas should average \$11 per thousand cubic feet, the highest price since the fuel averaged nearly \$13 per thousand cubic feet in the winter of 2008-2009, but four percent below the five-year average. Over half of U.S. households use natural gas for heating. Only six percent use heating oil.

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The city of Morristown closed a \$20 million loan for sewer system upgrades.



The city of Ripley closed a \$1 million loan for a new fire hall and equipment.



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Discover, engage, learn at the 2013 Congress of Cities

The 2013 Congress of Cities and Exposition, to be held Nov. 13-16 in Seattle, Washington, will offer a variety of learning and networking opportunities to city officials, including many new offerings. Online registration is open at www.nlc.org.

Conference programming will incorporate keynote speakers, more than 20 workshops in varying formats, a range of exciting peer networking sessions, a dynamic exposition hall, and will showcase the dynamic ways cities are driving change on the nation's most pressing challenges. City officials and staff from across the country will come together in Seattle for a unique opportunity to share best practices and learn strategies to promote local economic and financial health, improve the built and natural environment, and ensure quality of life for all city residents.

This year's Congress of Cities promises to be one of the most dynamic and engaging NLC conferences to date. NLC has reached out to members in a variety of ways to gather input for the types of topics and issues to be featured at the conference. A call for topics in April garnered over 100 responses. Ideas were also collected from NLC's committees and councils, research and analysis of mayoral State of the City addresses, and surveys of local officials on their policy priorities.

More dynamic session formats, spontaneous engagement activities and robust networking opportunities are being planned for this year's conference to maximize the overall experience for all conference delegates. Learning from someone else is the fastest way to learn, say social scientists, and conferences—like the Congress of Cities and Exposition—make use of this proven method of building knowledge and fostering innovation.

The Congress of Cities will be held at the Washington State Convention Center located in the heart of downtown Seattle. The City of Seattle is proud to host the Congress of Cities and show local officials from across the country its unique programs.

Seattle is home to several ground-breaking programs and initiatives that align with the conference topics requested by NLC members. Mobile workshops focusing on community resiliency, zero waste strategies, bringing technology to neighborhoods and community

schools collaboration are just a few of the tours being planned. In addition, over a dozen pre-conference training programs will be offered.

To learn more about this year's conference and to register go to www.nlc.org.



Nov. 1-2: Paris

Candlelight Christmas Open House
Take an old fashioned wagon ride and shop to the sights, scents, and tastes of a Victorian holiday. Event hours are Fri., 6-8 pm, Sat., 6-8 pm and Sun., 1pm-5pm. For more information, contact the Downtown Paris Association c/o Kathy Ray—P.O. Box 95 — Paris, TN. 38242 or call 731-653-7274.

Nov. 2: Chattanooga

Pumpkin Smash, Fall Harvest Festival

Held from 10 am to sundown at Crabtree Farms, 1000 East 30th Street. This family friendly event features carnival style, fun-on-the-farm games and activities for all ages and live bluegrass music. Petting zoo, face painting, tractor rides and pie eating contests. A free game alley with corn hole, potato sack races, butternut squash relays and more. Local vendors or guests may bring their own food to fry in local lard. Apple cider, cold beer and water available all day. Local dinner at 5:30 pm, bonfire and heel tappin' good times. Bring leftover Halloween pumpkins to launch from Crabtree's "Pumpkin Chuckin' Trebuchet." For more information call the Crabtree Farms office at 423-493-9155, ext.13 or email info@crabtreefarms.org.

Nov. 2: Selmer

Fall Hog BBQ Festival

Selmer City Park. Some of the best cooks in the region compete for the honor of being Fall Hog Grand Champion. A golf tournament and 5K Run along with a huge car show plus music cap off the event.

Nov. 9: Portland

40th Annual Harvest Craft Show & Sale

Held from 9am-4pm at Richland Gym and The Robert Coleman Community Center, located at 303 Portland Blvd. Booths with handmade crafts, jewelry, unique items, baked items, food vendors, and more. For more information, call Tammy Groves at 615-325-6464 or email groves@cityofportlandtn.gov.

Nov. 10: Oneida

BSF Vintage Train Fest

Held at Oneida City Park after a 20-year absence. The event is free and open to the public. The sound of a steam excursion train will once again chug along on the rails of the Norfolk-Southern main line to Oneida, trekking up the Cumberland Plateau. The excursion train, pulled by a 1904 vintage steam locomotive, will bring 400 passengers to Oneida. Passengers will disembark at the park for arts and crafts vendors, a classic car cruise-in, live music entertainment, and other fall festivities. For more information and tickets, visit www.tvrail.com/pages/21st-Century-Steam.

Nov. 8-9: Manchester

Christmas Arts & Crafts Festival
Manchester-Coffee County Conference Center, 147 Hospitality Boulevard. Free admission and parking. For more information, call 931-728-0509.

Nov. 13: Gatlinburg

Winter Magic Kickoff and Chili Cookoff

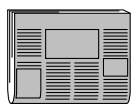
The city kicks off Gatlinburg Winter Magic from 5 to 8 pm on the Downtown Parkway by turning on more than three million lights. Enjoy live entertainment, sample chili recipes from local restaurants and businesses and vote for your favorite. For more information, email: info@gatlinburg.com or call 800-568-4748.

Nov. 26-Jan. 4: Clarksville

Christmas on the Cumberland
Riverwalk at McGregor Park. Spectacular display of more than one million lights. Free. visit www.cityofclarksville.com/index.aspx?page=332

Nov. 29: Paris

North Pole Family Fun Day
Downtown on the Courthouse lawn. Santa and Rudolph roll in on the big red fire truck. Free crafts, face painting, trackless train rides, petting zoo, music and more fill the square with holiday fun from 10am — 2pm. For more information, contact the Downtown Paris Association, Kathy Ray, at 731- 653-7274.



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Advertising: \$9.25 per column inch. No charge to TML members. Send advertising to: TT&C Classified Ads, Mona Lawrence, 226 Capitol Blvd. Suite 710, Nashville TN 37219; e-mail: mlawrence@TML1.org; or fax: 615-255-4752.

CERTIFIED BUILDING & CODES INSPECTOR

PLEASANT VIEW. The town is seeking a motivated and dedicated individual with a strong work ethic and great people skills to fill the position of part-time Certified Building and Codes Inspector. The position is part time carrying out guidelines of the Planning Commission. The position is responsible for technical work in the enforcement of building and zoning codes, city ordinances, inspection and maintenance of municipal playground equipment, ADA inspections, and other duties as assigned. Qualifications for the position include a valid Tennessee driver's license, high school graduation or equivalent, and current certification as a building inspector by the State of Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance State Fire Marshal's Office. Playground Maintenance and Safety Inspector certificate must be obtained within 12 months of hire date. Applications and job description may be obtained at City Hall, 1008 Civic Court, Pleasant View, TN 37146, 615-746-0600. All applications must be turned in at City Hall no later than 4:30 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 8, 2013. The Town of Pleasant View is EOE and does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability or veteran status in employment opportunities and benefits.

CITY RECORDER

MASON. The town is accepting applications for a qualified, innovative and committed professional with proven leadership merits and strong analytical skills to serve as the city's recorder. Major duties for the position include: assist the mayor and other department heads with the development and implementation of financial policies, procedures and controls; prepare and submit financial statements and related reports of the city's bookkeeping, supervise disbursements of city funds; coordinate development of the annual budget with the mayor and department heads, city council and outside agencies. Update statistical tables and schedules; manage preparation of city council meetings; coordinate city code updates; maintain official city files, records, minutes, leases, deeds, contracts and other financial records; assist the public with requests for information and attest official records; supervise staff and participate in various personnel responsibilities including hiring, training employees, planning, assigning, delegating work, addressing complaints, resolving issues, completing annual budgets, payroll processing, and debt/grant management. Qualifications for this position include: Certification as a CMFO or extensive knowledge of governmental accounting and preferably at least five years previous experience in financial management with ability to supervise others. Starting salary and benefits to be negotiated. Applicants should submit a letter of interest along with resume by mail to the city attorney: James S. Haywood, Jr., PO Box 438, Brownsville, TN 38012. DOE

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE/CITY CLERK

CLEVELAND. The city is accepting applications from qualified individuals for the position of Director of Finance/City Clerk. Qualified applicants will possess a BS Degree in Accounting, and will be a Certified Public Accountant with more than 10 years related experience preferably in the field of governmental accounting. Major duties of the position include: assist the city manager and other depart-

ment heads with the development and implementation of financial policies, procedures and controls; supervise the preparation of financial statements and related reports; supervise disbursement of city funds; coordinate development of the annual budget with the city manager, assistant city manager, department heads, city council and outside agencies; update statistical tables and schedules and complete an application and grading sheet for a government sponsored budget recognition program; manage preparation of city council agendas and review minutes of council meetings; coordinate city code updates; maintain official city files, records, minutes, leases, deeds, contracts and other financial records; assist the public with requests for information and attest official records; supervise staff and participate in various personnel functions including hiring, training employees, planning, assigning and directing work, appraising performance, rewarding and disciplining employees, addressing complaints and resolving problems; other duties as assigned by the city manager. Interested individuals should submit a letter of interest and resume by mail to the city of Cleveland, P.O. Box 1519, Cleveland, TN 37364-1519, ATTN: Human Resources Department, or by email to jdavis@clevelandtn.gov. Salary range entry level is \$76,664.EOE.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

COLLIERVILLE. The town is seeking applicants for the position of Economic Development Director. This position performs highly responsible administrative work managing, directing, coordinating and overseeing activities and operations of the Economic Development Department to promote the town. Requires a bachelor's degree in public administration, business administration, planning, economics or closely related field; supplemented by five years increasingly responsible experience in community development and business or industrial development and recruitment; or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities for this job. Valid Motor Vehicle Operator's License at the time of hire and maintain throughout employment. Knowledge of State and Local economic development programs, site location/selection criteria, economic incentive programs and knowledge of business relocation issues is desired. Salary range is \$70,000.00 - \$85,000.00 (DOQ) annually with excellent benefits package. Applications and complete job descriptions are available at the Human Resources Office, 500 Poplar View Parkway, Collierville, Tennessee, 38017, M-F or at Collierville.com. The official application of the Town of Collierville must be filled out and may be accompanied by a resume. Applications and resumes are subject to disclosure. Position will remain open until filled. EOE

FIRE CHIEF

SPRING HILL. The city is accepting applications/resumes for Fire Chief. A successful candidate will be responsible for the administration, coordination, and supervision of administrative and support functions of the Department; He or she will also implement long-range departmental/budgetary planning, goals, objectives and strategies. Must also serve as a liaison between City departments, citizens, and other local/state/federal agencies and organizations, etc. Bachelor's Degree in Fire Science or related field. 7+ yrs supervisory experience in fire services-related work, or any combination of education, training, and experience providing the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the essential job functions. Must meet/maintain qualifications/training standards as established by the

Department and the State of TN. Applications and resumes must be submitted online at www.springhilltn.org. Include references, salary history and salary expectations. The City of Spring Hill offers an extensive and generous employee benefit package, which includes 100% Employer paid Medical coverage for the entire family, optional vision insurance, employer paid dental insurance for the employee with the option to purchase family coverage, Employer paid Life, AD&D and LTD Insurance, as well as voluntary life and STD. Flexible Spending Accounts also available. Applications will be considered on basis of qualifications, experience, and suitability for position without regards to race, color, religion, sex or national origin. The City of Spring Hill is an EEO/AA/Title VI Employer. Questions may be directed to staylor@springhilltn.org

POLICE CHIEF

TREZEVANT. The town is seeking applicants for a full-time Police Chief. Applicants must be at least 18 years of age, must have a POST certification with experience in a chief's position preferred. The position offers a competitive salary commensurate with experience. Benefits are available. Shifts will be determined by the needs of the town. Applications may be picked up at City Hall. For inquiries, call (731) 669-4831 during business hours. Applications will be accepted through November 8. EOE.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

THOMPSON'S STATION. The town is seeking an experienced, energetic, team builder and leader to be their next town administrator. The town administrator is appointed by and reports to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen comprised of a mayor and four aldermen elected at-large to staggered, four year terms of office. Candidates should possess a bachelor's degree in public administration, business administration, or a field closely related to government management, with a master's Degree in a related field preferred; and a minimum of seven years of progressively increasing professional experience with a municipality or county in a high level management position. Salary range \$80K - \$100K DOQ. The town is seeking an administrator who is an effective collaborator and leader who can communicate clearly and directly while maintaining a personable manner. Candidates should have established success in managing in a high growth environment, expanding the tax base while maintaining and protecting the pastoral setting, natural resources, and beauty of this historic community. The administrator will have a proven record in effective service delivery and creative problem solving skills with a history of honesty, integrity, and transparency. The town administrator will roll-up his/her sleeves and lead by example to ensure an open and trusting relationship with the board, staff, and community. The town administrator will promote an atmosphere of quality customer service and citizen partnership. Position profile is available at www.thompson-station.com. Send cover letter, resume, and detailed salary history by electronic mail to the University of Tennessee, Municipal Technical Advisory Service, attention Jeff Broughton, by Nov. 30, 2013. Please direct questions to Jeff Broughton at jeff.broughton@tennessee.edu.

TOWN MANAGER

SMYRNA. The town is seeking a visionary leader to fill the vacancy of Town Manager. This position provides leadership and management to the town; serves as chief executive officer, and directs all operations of the municipal organization as set forth in the town's charter. Duties and responsibilities include: providing direction and supervision for department directors, coordinating the development of and presentation of annual operating budget, attending all council meetings and providing guidance as needed, ensuring laws and provisions of the charter are enforced, supervising the control and col-

SWTDD honors communities



The Main Street Pharmacy in Savannah offers gifts that would rival fancy boutiques. The brainchild of co-owners Catherine Brown and Angie Roberts Etheridge, the project received the existing infrastructure award by the SWTDD, after the women bought and renovated an abandoned KFC restaurant with local bank and SWTDD financing.

SWTDD AWARDS from Page 1

company that makes the products. The people take the calls and sell the products on commission with flexible hours, 24-hours-a-day," he said.

Following Parsons success, in April, SWTDD placed another Regional Economic Development center in Ripley.

Savannah

Ever felt a distinct coffee shop vibe when picking up a prescription? Probably not, but you might, after a visit to the Main Street Pharmacy in Savannah, where customers have the option of sitting on a comfortable sofa and shooting the breeze or shop for an array of unique gift items found at fancy boutiques. There's great jewelry, scarves, books, dishes, clothing, even gourmet foods along with the Big Green Egg charcoal cooker. There's even a wedding registry.

The idea is the brainchild of long-time co-workers Catherine Brown and Angie Roberts Etheridge, who decided to purchase and convert a run down Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant into a thing of beauty.

"We knew we could provide good service as well as add a feminine touch, minus the sterile environment," Brown said. "We wanted it cozy, where people can have a cup of coffee on the couch while waiting for prescriptions instead of the older style pharmacy we had worked in."

Purchased and renovated through loans with the SWTDD and a local bank, the women have already paid the development district loan in full.

"I could tell these ladies were highly motivated," said Barker. "It was an excellent location and their application was top notch. I told them I'd like to loan them some more."

Looking out his office window, Savannah Assistant City Manager Seth Sumner is happy to see the bustling pharmacy in place of the abandoned building. "They did a wonderful job. You can't even tell it's a KFC," he marvels.

But the process wasn't easy, according to Brown. Once the building was purchased, it had to be gutted, which took three to four months. The contractor had to remove all the ventilation, among other tasks. "We were beyond honored to have the award come our way," said Brown, whose father escorted her to the banquet. "It was very humbling."

Jackson

Things have been bustling as usual in Jackson, as the city known for fitness came together in April to implement a month-long plan to help local people in need, particularly the elderly, with every day tasks many might take for granted. As a result of this successful initiative, the Month of Miracles, Mayor Jerry Gist took the SWTDD stage to accept the Impact in Aging award. The program was a concept Gist developed as a spin off to National Volunteer Month.

"The Month of Miracles exceeded my hopes," Gist said. "The Jackson community is greatly strengthened by the neighborly acts of kindness. The citizens united in a common goal to serve as agents of change to make Jackson better now and for future generations."

The cost of project materials and equipment was provided by the businesses, private citizens, churches and various equipment rental and sales firms, all who gave generously. The Month of Miracles project is focused on helping individuals find a volunteer activity that suits their individual personality and skill sets, hoping that people will continue to assist in the growth and

strengthening of the Jackson community. Many of the projects required time and a skill related to something creative, human interest, or environmental development.

SWTDD is particularly focused on the elderly in conjunction with its Area Agency of Aging and Disability division. Many SWTDD employees heeded the call, organizing activities and volunteering to help senior citizens.

"We wanted to find someone who has made the community a better place, particularly for older residents, those that don't have anyone to help with yard work, cutting down limbs, moving furniture, house work and more," said Barker.

Jackson's message of "Connect Here" was lived during the campaign, as citizens connected with a mission to serve others.

"People enjoyed interaction with others from different churches, backgrounds, generations and cultures," adds Gist. "Employees came together in an informal setting and volunteers enjoyed the spirit of fellowship."

Month of Miracles participants were rewarded with certificates, t-shirts, prizes, badges and media coverage.

Saltillo

With the help of SWTDD, the small town of Saltillo, pop. 742, applied the big guns to a very real problem happening all over the United States. Armed with a comprehensive planning grant from the EPA, community leaders worked alongside SWTDD planners to develop their own planning commission and create a master plan to redevelop four brownfield sites.

According to the EPA Assessment Grant Fact Sheet, the presence of several vacant, abandoned, and underutilized sites in 2010, hindered redevelopment and economic expansion in the city. In addition, the closure of the local H.I.S. blue jeans plant had a profound economic effect upon the city, with the loss of 165 jobs. Saltillo's unemployment rate at the time was at 12.4 percent.

The \$250,000 Brownfield grant, according to Saltillo Mayor Larry Lowery, assisted with the environmental assessment of the sites toward redevelopment.

"They checked the soil for contamination," Lowery said. "The criteria now for bank loans is that any business that previously had chemicals stored on the property require a certificate that the land is free of contamination."

The community brought in professional engineers, planners and urban designers, and conducted public meetings, where elected officials and citizens examined how they could make the brownfields into something the city would be proud of. "The plan was pretty impressive, particularly for a small city," Barker adds.

"SWTDD was a wonderful support in the grant writing as well as helping us establish a planning commission," said Lowery. "We want to be sure that everything is in its proper location while maintaining the culture and historical integrity of our town."

Today, the factory property is on the road to resale and another is also in the clean up phase. The city aims to purchase the downtown plot to build an outdoor market, while the Main Street property is open for business as a convenience mart.

"Sometimes small towns feel no one even notices us, but these type of awards remind us that people are watching and want to help," Lowery said. "Sometimes it's up to you to incorporate them into your plans so they can."



While roads through the park including Newfound Gap, the Spur and the Gatlinburg Bypass were open, other roads in the park were closed — including the Townsend entrance to the park and the popular Cades Cove Loop Road. The park's trails, campgrounds, overlooks and visitors centers were also closed.

Gateway cities feel effects of park closure

SMOKIES from Page 1

Gatlinburg, Pigeon Forge, Sevierville and Townsend.

"If it weren't for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Gatlinburg and all the development surrounding the park would not be here. We don't ever forget that," said Cindy Ogle, Gatlinburg city manager. "I just hope we aren't right back here again in January."

Many local businesses intertwined with the park, like restaurants, cabin rentals, wedding chapels and tour guides count on the fall season to help generate enough money to get them through some of the leaner winter months. And after a rainy spring and summer that put a damper on the number of park visitors, folks in the gateway communities were looking forward to a strong "leaf season," when millions of visitors travel to the Smokies to enjoy the vibrant fall foliage.

"It's very disheartening that government will allow this to happen," said Talley. "I don't know yet what it cost our city in terms of dollars — but I'm sure we lost revenues and may have to cut spending in certain areas. But long-term, I think it creates uncertainty and shakes people's confidence. We saw it recently with the Great Recession. It changed purchasing behaviors. People were less likely to book vacations and plan ahead."

Terry Maddox, executive director of the Great Smoky Mountain Association, speculates that it may take years to come back from this two-week closure. The last time the federal government shut down was for 21 days in 1995-96. He said the park didn't feel as great an impact because it happened during the winter months when visits to the park are probably at its lowest point of the year.

According to a Western Carolina University economist, the national park costs \$60,100 to operate per day, yet it generates \$2.38 million per day by visitor spending in Tennessee. That means that during the 15 days the Smoky Mountain Park was closed, \$1.1 million was lost in local taxes for Tennessee cities and counties, and close to \$2 million in lost sales tax revenues to the state of Tennessee.

"The Great Smoky Mountains National Park is the most visited national park in the United States, and October is one of the busiest months in terms of park visitation," Steve Morse, director of WCU's



Park Superintendent Dale Ditmanson welcomes the public back into the park after being closed for 15 days. Local officials who were onsite for the opening described the scene as "parade-like," as folks lined up in cars and honking their horns as they entered the park.

Hospitality and Tourism Program said. "Every day that the park was closed meant that 36,912 visitors were not visiting the park and were not spending money in the local economy."

Morse also estimated that \$882,911 per day was lost in worker wages and paychecks, totaling some \$13.2 million in lost worker income in Tennessee for the 15 days that park employees were furloughed.

City officials in Gatlinburg, Pigeon Forge, Sevierville, and Townsend, along with the Sevier and Blount County mayors were all involved in the effort with the state of Tennessee to get the National Park reopened, as were members of Tennessee's congressional delegation. Responding to the economic impact that the park closures were having on many communities and local businesses, Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell announced that she would consider agreements with governors who indicated an interest and ability to fully fund National Park Service personnel to reopen national parks in their states.

Tennessee agreed to pay 80 percent of the cost in the form of a \$240,400 tourism grant to Sevier County with Sevier and Blount counties funding the remaining \$60,100 to fully fund operation of the park for five days.

"Gov. Haslam's decision to reopen the Smokies was welcomed news for the communities and small businesses that surround our nation's most-visited national park. I

thank the governor for his leadership, and will continue working in Congress to make sure the state is reimbursed by the federal government," said U.S. Sen. Lamar Alexander.

Sen. Alexander introduced legislation in the Senate to reimburse states within 90 days for all state funds used to reopen national parks while the federal government was shut down. Rep. Phil Roe and John J. Duncan, Jr., both introduced similar legislation in the House.

"On the bright side, if anything positive is going to come out of this — is that it set precedence for states to work with the federal government," said Talley. "So if this ever happens again, we can get the park back open sooner and it will go more smoothly."

Because of the work done on the local and state level, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park reopened after 15 days. Federal parks nationwide reopened after the 16th day, following a temporary budget deal approved by Congress.

Nationwide, the National Park Service (NPS) estimates the shuttering of 401 parks and monuments across the country cost the economy \$1.2 billion and the NPS lost some \$7.2 million (\$450,000 per day) in lost entrance fees and revenue from park activities such as campground reservations and tours.

In addition, the National Park Service employs approximately 24,000 people, and national parks support 252,000 private-sector jobs.

Walk Tennessee launches with enthusiasm

WALK TN from Page 1

pushing myself to new goals." The people I see every day here at the Recreation Complex who have health and physical challenges, they inspire me. They don't give up and sit home, but get up and get moving and try to become stronger, healthier, and reduce their stress levels. When you see people coming in with walkers and wheelchairs that are fighting cancer and other serious conditions, then there are no excuses," she said.

Some of the events planned for Manchester 5K and 10K races, including an evening Neon 5K and a Running of the Turkeys 5K/10K during the Thanksgiving weekend in November. Her department also has walking events planned. "Manchester is fortunate to have a really nice

greenway system that we are expanding which has really helped support the growth in running and walking," she said. "We also have a rubberized indoor track that people use to walk and run. The indoor track has been especially beneficial to our seniors and for people that have physical challenges because they can exercise and sit down, have restrooms close, and a controlled temperature without threat of cars or

dogs."

It was a great visit for me to see a truly unique way in how a community has come together to inspire others. It takes a community approach and folks like Bonnie Gamble to push us to achieve more. It's still not too late to join the challenge. For more information email us at info@cmecompete.com or go to <http://www.cmecompete.com/communities/walk-tennessee/>

TML Risk Management Board to Meet

Notice is hereby given that the Board of Directors of the TML Risk Management Pool will meet in regular session on Friday, November 22, 2013 at 8:30 a.m. local time in the Board Room at The Pool, 5100 Maryland Way, Brentwood, Tennessee, for the purpose of considering and transacting all business which may properly come before the Board. Additional information concerning the meeting may be obtained by calling The Pool's office at 800-624-9698.

Drive-in movies: Another slice of Americana going dark?

BY VICTORIA SOUTH
TML Communications Coordinator

It's almost magical in its simplicity. A giant screen, a comfortable night—add some blankets and a double feature, some fresh popped corn and a carload of family and friends can experience the best entertainment value around. Since the 1930s, people have gone giddy for drive-ins—from hot rods and family bonding time, to that first kiss under the stars, this slice of Americana is not just where movies are seen, but where memories are made.

In their heyday, around the late 1950's, there were thousands of drive-in theaters across America. However, that number has dwindled significantly to only 368; soon to be even less, as movie studios phase out 35 mm film prints to digital projection. Unfortunately, many of today's mom & pop operations are unable to afford the \$85,000—plus installation—price tag of a digital projector. As a result, many theaters

We knew at the price of a new projector, we were going to have to close the theater, there was no doubt about that," he said. Today, a banner draped across the State-Line's screen shouts: "We Will See You In April 2014 as a Digital Theater!" The projection room is undergoing major renovations to convert to the digital equipment. Wetzel hopes to have the remodeling complete by Dec. 1 in time for the April season. In the meanwhile, the old 1947 projector has found a new home in Wetzel's basement. "I can't get rid of it," he said. "I like it too much."

Anyone for a deep fried oreo?

Drive-ins are notorious for the mouth-watering treats served up at the concession stands. According to Drive-Ins.com, the theaters make little money on ticket sales. Those funds go to the studio to pay for the movie. The concessions are the bread & butter of this industry. And outside of the usual fare of popcorn, candy and hotdogs, some snack bars

drive-in theater has a personal history.

Opened in 1948 and closing in the 1980's, the Sparta Drive-In reopened in 2002 "putting the heart back into the historic community suffering from high unemployment, competition from nearby towns and lack of tourist dollars," the theater's website says. Owners Tommy and Judy Brown love the nostalgia of old 1950's music, memorabilia, antique cars and their old reel to reel change over projectors. Customers favorites: the aroma of popcorn, eating burgers and treats from the concession stand; the playground; sitting on lawn chairs or blankets; meeting friends; and seeing two top family movies with radio sound for the price of one.

"With a 25-year three percent S.B.A. loan and God's will, we eventually struggled through hard times and flourished," writes Danny Warden, owner of the Twin City Drive-In in Bristol. Built in 1949 by R.A. Warden, this family-owned theater, passed down through the generations, is situated on 29 acres in a beautiful mountain setting. But on Oct. 1, 1977, a tornado destroyed the original wooden screen tower, which was built from timber in the woodlands behind the theatre. Within a week, a new Selby Screen Tower was erected and not a weekend of movies was missed, Warden notes, thanks to his many relatives, friends, and neighbors, who helped with the clean up and reconstruction. Today, the theater doubles as a temporary campground for the NASCAR and Drag races of the Bristol Motor Speedway.

With no other recourse, some of Tennessee's drive-ins are already posting their goodbyes, marking the end of the drive-in era in their communities.

"After 2013, the Midtown Drive-In will close as a theatre," Harriman owner Doug Freeman writes on his message board. "If there are a few movie companies, that by chance, change their policy and continue to distribute movies on film, then we may run a limited schedule in 2014. Thanks to our many loyal customers for sharing the great times we had."

To donate to the digital projector fund with the Honda Project Drive-In campaign and vote to save a drive-in, visit the website www.projectdrivein.com before Dec. 7.



The State-Line Drive-In in Elizabethton was one of the four lucky recipients of a new \$80,000 digital projector in the ongoing Honda Project Drive-In contest. Drive-ins that received the highest number of votes from across America were awarded the projectors.

will go dark by the end of this year.

But just when all seems lost, a car company, of all heroes, has come to the rescue. Honda, through its Project Drive-In Campaign, recently donated five digital projectors to save five drive-ins, then collected \$34,692 in public/private donations to save four more.

"Cars and drive-ins go hand in hand. So who better to help save the drive-in than a car company?" Honda quizzed on its contest website. "Since 1933, these iconic outdoor screens have been built around car culture and Honda understands that the classic drive-in movie theater is an important part of our American heritage."

The campaign, posted at indiegogo.com, features a short informational video explaining the circumstances behind the movement and an option for the public to make donations by Dec. 7 to meet the \$100,000 goal. More than half-way there, Honda says it will reset a new \$100,000 goal, if it meets the first. The site is not set up for specific drive-in donations. America decided which of the 126 participating drive-ins received the additional four projectors, with the top vote-getters receiving the prize.

One of the lucky four recipients was Elizabethton's own State-Line Drive-In, located on Highway 19E. Built in 1947, the theater has never closed and currently has the distinction of being the only motion picture theater in town. The State-Line still has its original 1940's screen and projectors.

Big gambles have always paid off for owner Andy Wetzel, who purchased the State-Line in 1995 with his wife as a lark. But Wetzel, who is also an Elizabethton fireman by trade, as well as a Marine reservist, almost didn't register for the Project Drive-In contest. "I received an e-mail from them about registering, but I didn't take it seriously," he said. After about three e-mails, I gave them a call and determined it was a legitimate contest that someone had put a lot of time and effort into."

Wetzel immediately started organizing his website and Facebook page, and sending e-mails to the many friends he's met across the nation while serving in the military, to cast votes for the State-Line. He also received an amazing amount of support from the community and the city of Elizabethton, along with the Chamber of Commerce.

venture into gourmet territory with delicacies such as deep fried confections, freshly dipped ice cream cones, tenderloin or New York Ruben sandwiches. The Macon Drive-In in Lafayette boasts the best burgers in the county.

Most importantly, just like the people who frequent them, each

New to Drive-In Theaters?

Drive-Ins.com advises first time drive-in patrons to do some prep work before going to the show.

- Not all drive-ins allow you to bring pets. Call ahead.
- Some drive-in theaters are only open on weekends.
- Find out when the box office opens. Arrive early to get a good spot for the show.

What to bring:

- Lawn chairs, blankets, pillows, or sleeping bags. Some drive-ins encourage you to sit outside your car.
- A portable radio (and extra batteries) in case you want to sit outside of your car.
- Mosquito repellent if you're in a humid region. Some drive-ins even sell the classic PIC coils.

What to leave at home:

- Laser pointers. Drive-ins frown on these because they interfere with the movie.
- Food from outside the drive-in. Some drive-ins sell a permit for bringing in outside food, but most prefer you do not bring in food.

During the show:

- Avoid letting your head-

lights shine on the screen or on others. Use your parking lights and drive slowly. Newer cars may require that you put your emergency brake on to disengage daytime running lights.

Some drive-in operators encourage the ritual of horn honking to communicate enthusiastic agreement while some drive-in operators consider it rude and inconsiderate.

If tuning in the movie soundtrack on your radio, be sure to put your key in the accessories position. You may also want to start your engine occasionally. This will help prevent having a dead battery.

If you do find yourself with a dead battery, let the staff know. They are accustomed to this and will know what to do.

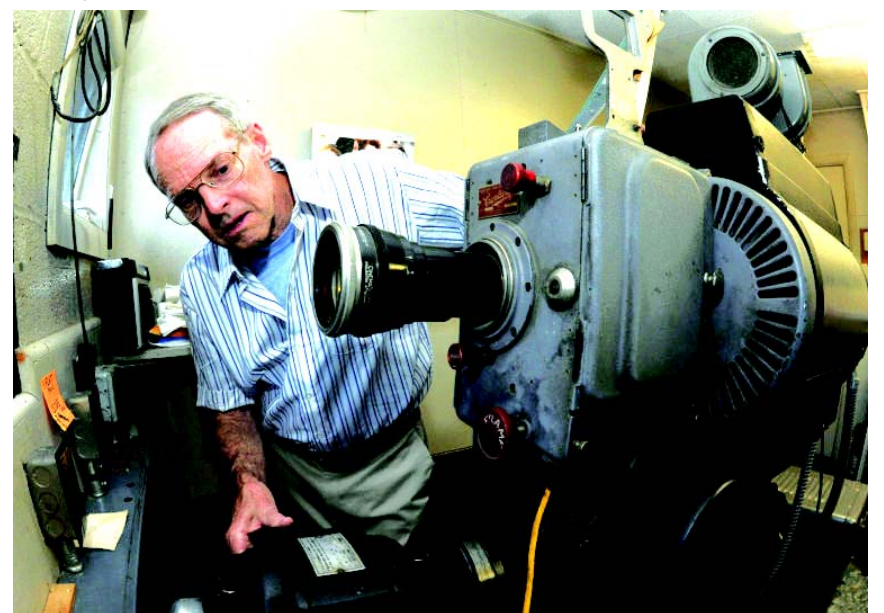
Give the drive-in concessions a try. Concessions sales are the drive-in's main profit center. If you want the drive-in to stick around, patronize the snack bar often!



The Hi-Way 50 Drive-In located in Lewisburg is Tennessee's oldest continuously operated drive-in opened back in 1946. Its screen tower is one of the few remaining examples of the screens that were typical in the very early days of the outdoor picture show. Many country music videos have been shot on site.



The Stardust drive-in in Watertown, has digital projectors for its multi-screen operation. The facility is a number one gathering spot for friends and neighbors from surrounding communities and is open all the way through November.



Owner Danny Warden cleans his decades old lens before the movie at the Twin City Drive-In in Bristol.

Help save these TN treasures

• **Pink Cadillac Drive-In**, 2506 Highway 100 Centerville

ent families. This drive-in was declared a historical landmark on June 23, 2003.

• **Hi-Way 50 Drive-In**, 1584 Fayetteville Hwy., Lewisburg oldest continuously operated drive-in, opened back in 1946. Its screen tower is one of the few remaining examples of the screens that were typical in the very early days of the outdoor picture show. There have been many country music videos shot on site.

• **Parkway Drive-In**, 2909 E. Lamar Alexander Pkwy. Maryville. The 50's and 60's are alive at the Parkway.

• **The Midtown Drive-In**, 2728 Roan St. Hwy., Harriman. Operated from the 50's to the 70's as the Roane Drive-In. After it closed, the marquee and ticket booth were left standing, but the screen was removed and the concession building torn down. The property was used for many things before the theater was resurrected in 1995. The place has the distinct vibe of the 50's and 60's.

• **The Macon Drive-In**, 3570 Scottsville Rd., Lafayette. First opened in 1950, the theater has been showing movies every weekend in the summer ever since. Throughout the years, it has been under the ownership of only four differ-

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Banking background provides insight into city finances

Sparta's Hoyte Jones practices good stewardship with taxpayer dollars

BY LINDA BRYANT

Hoyte Jones' service to the city of Sparta and White County began years before he was elected to public office on the city's Board of Mayor and Aldermen 16 years ago. As a young man in the 1960s, Jones worked in the trenches as a city employee. After working his way through Tennessee Tech University, he settled into a vocation as a local banker, a career that touched many residents of the region.

"When I worked at the bank, I tried to meet everyone who came in the door," Jones said. "I made sure to get out in the lobby. I was like a greeter at Walmart. I tried to treat them like I'd like to be treated."

Jones, 70, is clearly proud of his hometown and county. He's devoted to his small country church—Hickory Valley Baptist. He belongs to the local Masonic lodge and is a member of the Shriners and Eastern Star fraternal orders. He has also served on Tennessee Tech's Board of Trustees.

"Sparta is my love and I'm not planning on going on anywhere else," Jones said.

Jones has always been heavily involved with family. He was a caregiver for his father, mother and aunt before they passed away. His grown daughter and son have settled nearby, working as an electrical engineer in Smithville and a comptroller at River Park Hospital, respectively.

"I like to stay very close to family," Jones said. "I have two lovely grandchildren who are 10 and 16. Just yesterday my granddaughter was hit in the head with a golf club and had to go to the hospital. I'm the one she's going to call today if she needs anything because I'm the only one in the family who's available."

Not surprisingly, Jones thinks of the entire Sparta community as family. He wants to be available for them just like he has been for his blood family.

The city lost three major employers during the recent economic downturn, and many fellow residents in the city and region are still struggling to find good paying jobs. Jones has worked with others in the city, county and region to bring attention to the area, especially by backing tourism initiatives, offering incentives to potential companies and prepping industrial sites for tenants.

He believes the city will soon jump to a new level of recognition.

"Sparta is a great little town," Jones said. "We are getting a lot closer to being noticed by employers. We are looking forward to growth in our tourism sector. It's just a matter of getting the word out."

Jones' current term as alderman ends in August. He's considering another run at the position, but hasn't yet made up his mind.

TT&C: Tell us about your background and family. How long have you lived in Sparta?

HJ: I was born and raised in Sparta and White County. I'm proud to be from a loving, God-fearing family. I'm one of 12 children. After high school, I worked in construction for several years, but realized I needed more education. I enrolled in night classes at Tennessee Tech in Cookeville. At the time, I had two little babies.

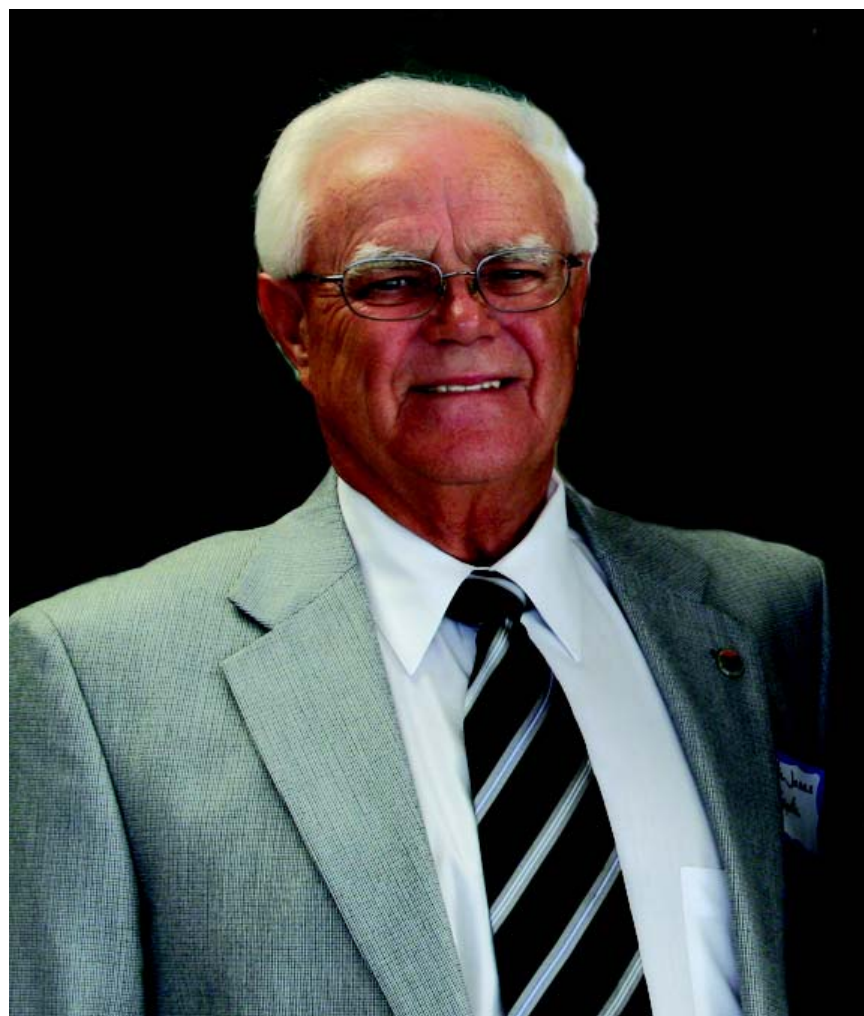
I worked for the city of Sparta for several years, starting with the water department for three years and then the electric department. I worked on a line crew for a couple of years. In 1967, I got hired as the executive department office manager, a job I worked until 1972. That's when I went to work at First National Bank. I spent 37 years in banking and retired in 2009. First National merged with Dominion Bank and then First Union Bank. After I retired from the larger bank, I went to work for a little local bank – The Bank of White County. I was their regional president for 11 years. I am on the board of directors of the bank, so I'm still affiliated with the bank.

TT&C: How and when did you get involved in politics?

HJ: I first ran for alderman in 1998. My friends and family who knew me best were aware of my love for Sparta and my background with the city working for the water and electric department. I decided to run because of their encouragement. I also served as vice-mayor for three terms. It was an interesting initiation because I knew a little bit about the two departments I'd worked in before. I got into office in a time where many small towns and cities began to struggle. We've had a lot of problems and yet we have a record of overcoming them.

TT&C: Did your banking career help prepare you to be a public servant?

Being involved with bookkeeping and lending money made me conservative. In banking you simply don't want to make mistakes with other people's money. I feel the same way about the money that comes into the city of Sparta. It doesn't belong to the aldermen or the employees; it belongs to the citizens. We have to be good stewards of their money. Of course, it was the same way at the bank. We had to be sure that all transactions and accounts were handled properly. We were regulated and everything had to be exact and correct. I think when it comes right down to it, being a banker prepares me for spending tax dollars wisely.



Hoyte Jones, Sparta alderman and TML District 4 Director

"In banking you simply don't want to make mistakes with other people's money. I feel the same way about the money that comes into the city of Sparta. It doesn't belong to the aldermen or the employees; it belongs to the citizens."



Jones and Angie Scarlett, also from Sparta, attend TML's Annual Conference in Memphis. Jones has been active in TML for the past 16 years.

"The residents of the city of Sparta are my boss. They elected me to do this job. I have learned that when you pay attention to the residents many will surprise you. They'll end up seeing the big picture and understand your position."

Before I retired from banking, I became an easy ear for citizens who needed to talk about their problems, whether it's some kind of problem on their street, water pressure, etc. I was hemmed in, and I had to listen. I'm glad I did though. I really learned how much people need to be heard. If I couldn't give them an immediate answer, I would get their number and call them back.

TT&C: Did the Great Recession impact Sparta?

HJ: Yes, very much so. It really hurt our community. We lost three major employers. Our Unemployment rate is still around 12 percent. It's hard to overcome but we are putting a real effort into it. We're seeking ways to help people find jobs, but we aren't the only ones looking for new industries. People who've gotten laid off locally come to me and say, "Hoyt, what are we going to do, we have to have a job?" I explain to them that we are trying our best but it's very competitive, all of our adjoining cities and counties are doing the same thing. It takes patience and commitment to make it happen, and we're trying every avenue we can to find those new industries.

TT&C: Tell us about some of the things you are doing to try to attract employers to Sparta.

HJ: Our membership in the Highlands Initiative is a very helpful part of the process. The Highlands Initiative is an economic and community development group that helps Overton, Putnam, Jackson and White Counties. They search for people to move to our area. They have raised more than \$2 million from private and public groups and are recruiting industries and companies who want to move to our area. There's a lot of support for the Highlands Initiative from city and county government, chambers of commerce, and other key groups. If we work together we have a better chance of success. Of course, Sparta wants to land new

business and employers but when any company comes to a nearby city, town or county, it's still a plus for us because our residents can still easily apply for jobs at these companies.

We hoped to get something from the Volkswagen plant in Chattanooga since we are within a 100 mile radius, but it didn't work out. We've had to make improvements. For example, we missed out on a good company coming to Sparta because of the sewer system. The county has now built an industrial site right next to the airport and we've extended our sewer line to that area.

We just formulated a new organization for tourism. We think our efforts in try to bring more tourism will not only improve our economy but will attract more industry. With tourism comes employment, motels and restaurants. I really believe that tourism will help to change Sparta's future. Things are looking up. Our local industrial site here has had many prospects. We have small businesses coming in. I'd actually rather have five small companies coming in rather than one big one. When a big company leaves your community, it leaves a hole. There's room for more retailers here. We have some retailers such as Walmart, Dollar General and Dollar Tree, but you have to drive to Cookeville to go to many stores.

Sparta is great place to live. We have a good school system, and are fortunate to have great teachers and leaders in our schools. We have a good hospital affiliated with St. Thomas Hospital. Combined, all of these things mean so much if you are going to relocate to a community. So many people I've talked to, moved to Sparta because they were driving through and just fell in love with it. It speaks well for us.

TT&C: What are the city's biggest challenges?

HJ: Our biggest challenge right now is jobs, jobs, jobs. Even though we've had high unemployment, people have remained very loyal to Sparta. I don't think many have actually moved away to find employment. They may

have to travel further to another place to work. If you go out one of our main arteries, Highway 11, you'll see cars going both ways. People from Putnam County are driving to White County and vice versa. They have found a job somewhere, and that's good, but many of those jobs aren't paying as well as they used to. It's very tough for many of our citizens, and meanwhile the cost of living continues to go up.

TT&C: What is the hardest thing about leading a city like Sparta?

HJ: We just don't have money and it makes things tough. We've had to borrow some money to upgrade our sewer system and water plant. We have a property tax rate of 1.05 and it's stayed that way for more than 20 years. I'm proud that we haven't had to raise property taxes, but I do feel like that it's going to have to happen at some point. We are going to have to sell it to the public, but at a reasonable rate if we want it to have a good chance of passing. We're at the point where some streets and sidewalks need to be replaced. I feel like our citizens deserve that, but it's expensive.

TT&C: What are some of the lessons you've learned in your years of serving Sparta?

HJ: First of all, it's impossible to fix all the problems overnight. Without revenue, your hands are tied. When you pool your assets together, you have a stronger hand in trying to bring something into our communities.

I try to be honest with everyone. You have to be able to sympathize with people. Sometimes you need the patience of Job because you can't do what someone is asking you to do immediately, and sometimes it's impossible under the current circumstances. But you have to listen. I try to explain to people the best I can why we sometimes can't fix problems without raising property taxes or borrowing the money. We work from a budget and try to explain how it works to them. I think residents learned to trust that if they have some kind of a problem that needs to be brought before the council, I will bring it up for them. You have to follow through and do the best you can to address everyone's concerns.

I've really learned how much it helps people to be heard. When I was in banking, I was an easy target for the public. People would come into the bank and talk to me about whatever their various problems were with the city. I was hemmed in; I had to listen. I'm glad I did. If I couldn't give them an answer then, I would get their number and call them back.

The residents of the city of Sparta are my boss. They elected me to do this job. I have learned that when you pay attention to the residents many will surprise you. They'll end up seeing the big picture and understand your position.

TT&C: What are some of Sparta's accomplishments that you are the most proud of?

HJ: When I first came on as alderman in 1998, we started the annual Liberty Square Celebration. The event celebrates the history of bluegrass music in our area. The famous bluegrass legend, Lester Flatt, was from Sparta, and we are very proud of that fact. The Liberty Square Celebration really brings the community together and promotes better understanding among all sorts of groups and organizations. It's really grown into a big event that attracts thousands of people, and the tax money it brings in is really a big help.

The lighting of Highway 111 at the North Spring Street entrance and exit ramps is a great improvement for us. Three years ago we got a TDEC grant and came up with about \$500,000 on our own to match it. Now when you approach Sparta, there are street lights, and you know you are in a metropolitan area. We still have one intersection we know we're going to have to provide lighting for at some point. We've looked at the cost of it, and really can't afford it right now.

It was a great thing for the city when Tennessee Tech put an extension in Sparta. It makes it possible for people in our community to take evening classes. It's been a great plus for us.

TT&C: What do you think Sparta will be like in 10 years?

HJ: In 2000, we converted our old downtown theater into a welcome center. It was a big project. We almost had to tear the whole building down to make it work, but it's been successful. There are plans to expand it again. It's going to cost more than \$1 million to do it. We don't have the money right now, but in the future I believe it will get done.

I would like to see all unemployment gone, better streets and sidewalks, and be out of debt. It's a constant struggle, but we are making headway.

TT&C: You are on the Tennessee Municipal League's board as a district director. Can you talk a little bit about your involvement with TML?

HJ: I've been going to TML meetings for 16 years. Over the years I've seen TML really make a difference. It's a great opportunity to meet other city leaders. We pretty much all face the same problems, and TML allows you to share ideas and solutions with others.