



FACT: 44 percent of TDOT's funding comes from the state gas tax, which has not changed in 26 years.

Taxing by the mile, not the gallon

BY ELAINE S. POVICH
Stateline.org

Evan Burroughs plopped into his 1996 Subaru Outback and pointed to a green plastic box tucked below the steering column. It blinked once. As Burroughs eased the car out of the parking lot and drove toward the highway, the box kept track of his speed and braking, but most importantly, of how many miles he drove.

The green box, part of a pilot program, sends the data to a private contractor like a GPS device manufacturer, which reports the miles to Oregon, which calculates Burroughs' tax bill—1.5 cents per mile.

As revenue from the standard per gallon gas tax diminishes, states are looking for other ways to pay for the construction and maintenance of roads and bridges. California recently authorized its own mileage tax pilot project. Between 2008 and 2014, at least 19 states considered 55 measures related to mileage-based fees, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. Vermont and Washington enacted bills to study per-mile fees in 2012. But Oregon is leading the way. Its experiment, OreGO, is the first that involves ordinary citizens. Other states have been watching closely since the program began July 1.

"It's kind of like playing a computer game, but with real stuff," said Burroughs, 56, who obviously gets a kick out of seeing data detailing his driving habits.

Matthew Garrett, Oregon's transportation director, noted that Oregon enacted the nation's first gas tax in 1919 so it could pay for roads to get vehicles out of the mud. "We've always been pioneers, and after 90 years, it's time to innovate again," he said.

Diminishing Returns

New, more fuel efficient cars have

eaten into gas tax revenue. Furthermore, many gas tax rates—including Oregon's 30-cent levy—have not kept up with inflation. In Oregon the effective tax rate will fall to less than 24 cents per gallon in inflation-adjusted terms within 10 years, according to the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, a nonpartisan think tank. That decline would basically undo the state's 6-cent increase in 2009, ITEP noted.

A mileage, or road usage, tax also erodes with inflation, but is immune from improvements in fuel efficiency.

"If you don't have the revenue source you can't maintain the infrastructure," Garrett said. "Traditional methods of funding transportation—the gas tax—were constructed for the longest time. But the world has changed."

For purposes of the experiment, which isn't designed to put more money in the state's coffers, Oregon charges 1.5 cents for every mile driven. Every driver who participates in the program, whether he or she drives a little fuel-efficient car or a big pickup truck, pays the same rate for driving on Oregon roads (the program doesn't count driving in other states or on private roads). The state reimburses drivers who paid more in traditional gas tax than they would be assessed using the mileage calculation.

To illustrate how the program works, the Oregon Department of Transportation compared a 2014 Toyota Prius and a 2014 Ford F-150 (the two most popular vehicles enrolled in the program). The Prius averages 50 mpg and the F-150 gets 18 mpg. The average Oregonian drives 12,962 miles a year.

Given those numbers, the Prius owner would use 259 gallons in a year and pay \$77.77 in gas taxes. See **MILEAGE FEE** on Page 6

Tennessee economy continues to experience steady growth, experts predict budget surplus

BY CAROLE GRAVES
TML Communications Director

Tennessee continues to experience steady economic growth. Experts are projecting that revenue growth for 2016 - 17 will range from 3.4 percent to 4.8 percent.

State finance officials were given the news during the Tennessee State Funding Board meeting held earlier this month in Nashville.

Economists Bill Fox with the Center of Business and Economic Research at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, Robert Currey of the Legislature's Fiscal Review Committee, and state Revenue Commissioner Richard Roberts all made presentations to the board. Currey's

estimate was the most optimistic, projecting a surplus of \$422 million for the budget year ending June 30, while Roberts projected \$525 million in new revenue for the budget year starting July 1. Fox estimates \$376 million in new revenue, based on 3.44 percent growth.

The Funding Board – which is made up of Secretary of State Tre Hargett, Comptroller Justin Wilson, Treasurer David Lillard, and Finance and Administration Commissioner Larry Martin – uses the projections to make budget estimates for each fiscal year. The panel is scheduled to meet again Nov. 23 to approve its own projections.

Recently released revenue collections for October report that

year-to-date collections for the first three months of the fiscal year were \$223.3 million more than the budgeted estimate.

With the state's rainy day fund now exceeding \$500 million, several lawmakers have voiced ideas on how to spend the expected surplus and new revenue, including proposals to repay road funds, decrease the sales tax on food, or phase out the state's Hall Income Tax.

Gov. Bill Haslam has been quoted in the press that increasing costs in education and TennCare will use up most of the budget surplus. He will deliver his annual budget presentation to lawmakers in February using the numbers the State Funding Board approves this week.

The sky is the limit for cities exploring drone usage



Municipalities across the country are using drones, like the one seen here, to aid in everything from fixing water towers to helping in search and rescue operations to land surveying.

BY KATE COIL
TML Communications Specialist

As drones become more popular and cheaper, many government entities are exploring how these aircraft can be useful for everything from inspecting city infrastructure to monitoring emergency situations.

Also known as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), cities and states across the country are not only exploring how to use drones for government purposes but also how to regulate them. The Federal

Aviation Administration already has some regulations on the use of drones for government entities, and more regulations are expected in the future.

This year alone 45 states have considered at least 156 bills regarding the regulation of drones, and 19 states have passed legislation targeting drones for commercial use or by police departments, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. State-level regulations on privacy, trespassing and harassment are also being used to prosecute the malicious use of drones.

With drone technology emerging, cities like Murfreesboro are exploring ways UAVs can help municipalities save money and protect their workers. Murfreesboro's Information Technology Department began experimenting with unmanned aircraft at Barfield Crescent Park in October, and network specialist Justin Robinson said city officials are excited about the potential for UAVs.

"Murfreesboro Water and Sewer has to send someone up to investigate all of the water towers in the city," Robinson said. "It can be a dangerous task. With the UAV, you can cut down the time on doing that without putting city employees at risk when having to climb that tower. Murfreesboro Electric can use it to inspect power lines after storms. UAVs can be used for disaster relief by our public safety sector, search and rescue, and fire suppression. They can be used to detect heat spots in homes and can be used for hostage situations and terrorist incidents. It can also be used for land surveying."

For now, the IT department is just experimenting with how to fly UAVs and potential uses. Robinson said the department plans to present their findings to city officials next spring.

"As of right now, the IT department is only doing the training,



but we intend to integrate other departments as we move forward," Robinson said. "The city has not moved forward with the program in full, so we are just working toward streamlining our training practices. We are finding the ins and outs of flying a UAVs and what we need to do to make that happen quickly, safely, efficiently and without violating privacy rights."

Since Murfreesboro is one of the first cities in the state to explore drone usage, Robinson said working with an emerging technology can be "a double-edged sword."

"Dealing with an emerging technology like this makes you a trailblazer," he said. "We are cutting a path no one has ever done before. On one hand, it allows you a little bit more freedom, and you don't have to be defined by previous laid-down instructions and policies. You are creating it as you go along and using your imagination to go forward. But that can also be a pitfall. You don't have anything to go by and don't have a mentor to help you along."

Robinson said he has reached out to other agencies across the nation that are using drone technology and the FAA to learn more about the potential for UAVs.

"We are just working alongside people across the country, tapping their resources and experiences," he said. "However, their experiences are only a little more than ours. We have worked with the Grand Forks, N.D. Sheriff's Department, who has one of the longest running pro- See **DRONES** on Page 5



Save the dates!

TML Annual Conference

June 11-14, 2016

Gatlinburg, TN



The TML Staff is already at work planning another great TML Annual Conference, slated for June 11- 14, 2016, in Gatlinburg. So mark your calendar and watch your in-box for more information about the 77th TML Annual Conference!

NEWS ACROSS TENNESSEE



ASHLAND CITY

Ashland City will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Cumberland River Bicentennial Trail, which attracts people from across the state. The trail began in 1992 when a group of trail enthusiasts came together to promote turning the abandoned railroad bed between Nashville and Clarksville into a trail, creating one of the first Rails to Trails projects in the state. Ashland City, under former Mayor Mary Grey Jenkins, leased four miles from Marks Creek on Chapmansboro Road and an additional .8 acres north of the intersection. Through a grant proposal submitted to the Tennessee Department of Transportation, four miles of the trail were developed with a trailhead off Chapmansboro Road. The trail has since expanded to 6.7 miles and is maintained by the Friends of the Cumberland River Bicentennial Trail.

COLLIERVILLE

Orgill, Inc. plans to build a new world headquarters in Collierville, investing \$15 million in the community to construct a 100,000-square-foot facility. The new location is expected to create 115 new jobs in Shelby County. Orgill is the largest independently owned hardlines distributor in the world, and was founded in Memphis in 1847. The company distributes hardware and home improvement products to customers in all 50 states, 10 Canadian provinces, and more than 50 countries throughout the world. The world headquarters provides support to its six North American distribution centers and manages all business activities that extend beyond physical distribution. Orgill plans to begin construction in 2016 and to move into the new facility in the fourth quarter of 2017.

COLUMBIA

Sleep Solutions and Services, LLC will be locating a new call center in Columbia, investing \$3.6 million and creating 137 new jobs in the area. The company, also known as S3, is a medical software and support company specializing in respiratory services, and is an industry-leading resupply business that employs web-based technology with live support to clients with respiratory medical conditions, such as sleep apnea. Cli-

ents work with sleep coaches who provide assistance with ordering supplies to support their medical equipment. Sleep coaches also help manage re-order schedules to ensure that supplies are ordered timely, and communicate with clients on a regular basis to educate them throughout their treatment processes. The Columbia facility will house S3's sleep coaches in a call center environment. S3 utilizes five outreach methods – live call, email, smart phone app, patient portal, text – to generate a high volume of orders, a high quality of order, and to retain patients long term inside their resupply programs.

KNOXVILLE

The city of Knoxville has purchased the former State Supreme Court site for \$2.47 million, just before a decade-long option for the city to purchase the Art Deco building ended. The property extends across an entire city block between Locust and Henley streets. It has been vacant since the Tennessee Supreme Court moved to the post office building on Main Street in 2003. The city has twice attempted to find a developer for the property before acquiring the building. The city is working on a study to find out what type of use the building will support, including retail, residential, office and hotel space options. The city is expecting the report back in the spring, and has handed the building over to the Public Building Authority, which will continue to operate a parking lot at the site.

LA VERGNE

The Sinomax Group will be locating new manufacturing operations in La Vergne, investing \$28 million and creating 350 jobs in the area. The Chinese-owned company will construct a new 505,000-square-foot facility to function as a manufacturing facility and will renovate the former Whirlpool site on Hennessey Drive with plans to be operational in June 2016. Renovations will turn the site into a state-of-the-art automated pour and fabrication facility. Sinomax is a foam products manufacturer and distributor that makes polyurethane comfort products, specializing in memory foams that include innovative technology created for the consumer.

LEBANON

The Wonderful Group announced the company has selected Lebanon as the site of its first U.S. operations, and the company will invest \$150 million as well as create 220 new jobs in the community. The Lebanon manufacturing facility will be located in the Cherry Farm Industrial Site. Construction on the 500,000-square-foot plant is currently underway and is expected to be operational in late 2016. The Chinese-based Wonderful Group produces high-quality porcelain tile. The company's investment will mark the largest capital investment made by a Chinese-based project in Tennessee history.

MEMPHIS

Two measures approved by the Memphis City Council will help

tackle blight issues. The council approved a resolution to create the Blight Authority of Memphis, Inc., and approved the second reading of a new Mow-To-Own Ordinance. The Blight Authority is a nonprofit land bank that will have access to up to \$7 million in federal grant funds awarded by the Tennessee Housing Development Agency. The authority will be able to acquire real estate with blighted structures and apply for grants to tear those structures down. The Mow-to-Own ordinance allows those living next to abandoned and unkempt properties to acquire them from the government.

MEMPHIS

LEDIC Realty Company plans to locate its new national headquarters in Memphis, investing \$10.2 million



The Ralston Creek Stream Restoration project in Franklin has received an Honor Award from the Tennessee American Society of Landscape Architects. The project was launched after the area was directly affected in the May 2010 floods when flood waters caused substantial erosion resulting in the loss of stream bank, damage to wood tie retaining walls, and a loss of vegetation and habitat. The project directly affected eight individual property owners and the overall character of the subdivisions open space/ recreation area. The final design created a single channel with a natural meandering stream section within the existing drainage easement on site. Single and double rock toe protection construction were used to stabilize the stream banks.



House Speaker Beth Harwell visited Tullahoma on Nov. 16, and met with Mayor Lane Curlee to discuss the upcoming session of the Tennessee General Assembly and issues affecting Tullahoma and Tennessee's cities.

in a new state-of-the-art facility and creating 300 jobs. LEDIC is a fully integrated manager, owner, and developer of multifamily properties across the United States, and was founded in Memphis in 1979. The new headquarters at 555 S. Perkins Road will be a four-story, 60,000-square-foot building, and the company will retrofit and improve the space to create a state-of-the-art training facility housing classrooms configured with training technology and equipment. Approximately 100 of the new jobs will be based at the national headquarters while the remaining 200 jobs, which include management, construction, maintenance and leasing positions, will be distributed throughout the state

MURFREESBORO

The city of Murfreesboro has approved a \$400,000 request by the Linebaugh Public Library System for the construction of a Community Technology Center on the campus of Hobgood Elementary School. The Linebaugh Library Board hopes to raise between \$1.7 and \$1.8 million for construction and equipment with additional funding from other sources.

The Community Technology Center (CTC) would provide free or low-cost computer access and training to those in the community who lack resources to have a computer or internet service in their home. Computer services would be provided to all citizens in the community for educational enhancement and job searches and would also serve as a training center and an incubator for small business meetings and collaboration. The projected opening date for the CTC is January 2017.

NASHVILLE

Approximately 50 Nashville bus operators are now driving electric vehicles. Nine zero-emission buses are currently on the Music City Circuit's blue and green routes, which transports passengers to the Bicentennial Mall and Gulch areas. The new buses are more fuel efficient than traditional buses and run much quieter. The Nashville Metro Transit Authority expects to save \$75,092 annually. Buses can be charged at the Riverfront Station, and a second charging station will be built near the Bicentennial Mall.

NEWPORT

Hearthstone Inc. is investing \$3.9 million to expand their operations in Newport, creating 38 new jobs in the area. The custom log and timber homes manufacturer will be installing new machinery as well as creating and developing new products as part of the investment. The company will also be reopening its sawmill and timbering operations. Hearthstone specializes in building and manufacturing log and timber frame homes. The company has been manufacturing homes for over 40 years and has been a pioneer in CAD/CAM timber cutting production in the United States since 1997.

PULASKI

SaarGummi Tennessee, Inc. will be expanding its manufacturing operations in Pulaski by purchasing additional finishing equipment and improving existing infrastructure. A leading manufacturer of innovative sealing systems for the automotive industry, SaarGummi Tennessee will create more than 150 new jobs over the next five years. The company operates worldwide out of 15 locations in worldwide.

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PEOPLE

Debby Dale Mason has been selected as the new chief of staff for Nashville Mayor Megan Barry. Mason previously worked as chief community development officer for the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, and will oversee the political side of Barry's office, including the management of executive offices and the formation and implementation of policy. Mason, who began her job in Barry's mayor's office on Nov. 18, served as a chief of staff in former Nashville Mayor Bill Boner's administration, where she worked from 1987 to 1990. Mason will be working alongside the city's chief operating officer, Rich Riebeling, and their positions have been designed to replace the position of deputy mayor. In addition to working with the Nashville Area Chamber, Mason has held positions with the Tennessee Arts Commission, Historic Nashville Inc., Nashville Convention & Visitors Corporation, the Nashville Downtown Partnership and as a small business owner managing a consulting company.



Debby Dale Mason

a recent appointment by Gov. Bill Haslam. Ogle will serve on the board until 2020. Ogle has served as Gatlinburg's city manager since 1989 and works alongside the city commission as well as manages more than 350 employees. She was selected for the arts commission board based on her extensive leadership and management experience as well as her love of the arts. The commission is a 15-member board made up of volunteers with an interest in the arts and culture of Tennessee. They are each appointed by the governor to a five-year term, and help fund arts and cultural activities for more than 600 organizations, schools, local governments, nonprofits across the state.

Brian Wagner has been named the assistant commissioner for marketing for the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development. Wagner joined the department staff on Oct. 26. He formerly served as the senior marketing and special projects manager at the Ryman Auditorium. Prior to joining the Ryman team, he was president of Flashpoint Entertainment and owner of The Wagner Agency. Originally from Michigan City, Ind., Wagner moved to Nashville in 1999. He graduated from Ball State University where he majored in English and minored in journalism. After graduation, he also served as promotions director for the university program board.



Brian Wagner

Thad Jablonski has been appointed as the new assistant city manager in Columbia. Formerly the city treasurer and deputy city manager in East Ridge, Jablonski began his tenure with Columbia in October. He has also previously held positions as the executive coordinator for the city of Lakeland and as a professor of political science for East Tennessee State University. He graduated from ETSU with a bachelor's degree in political science and an MPA in public administration. He also served as an intern for State Sen. Steve Southerland, R-Morristown. He is a native of East Ridge.



Thad Jablonski

Collierville Fire Inspector **Paul Witt** has received two designations from the ICC. Witt recently added the Certified Fire Marshal (CFO) ICC 2015 and Certified Building Official (CBO) ICC 2015 to his long list of designations. He's had to pass several other exams as prerequisites to sitting for the CFO and CBO, such as Fire Inspector I and II, and Fire Plans Examiner. Witt started his career as a volunteer firefighter in 1922 and began work as a full-time firefighter in 1994 for the city of Millington. He has been with the Collierville Fire Department since 2000.



Paul Witt

Gatlinburg City Manager **Cindy Cameron Ogle** will represent the 1st Congressional District on the Tennessee Arts Commission board following



Cindy Cameron Ogle

Farragut, Chattanooga city officials elected to serve on NLC Board

The National League of Cities (NLC) named its 2016 Leadership and Board of Directors at the annual Congress of Cities and Exposition in Nashville.

Dot LaMarche, Farragut vice mayor, and Chris Anderson, Chattanooga councilmember, were elected to the board of directors each to serve a two-year term.

Twenty members of the NLC Board of Directors are elected each year during the annual business meeting. In addition, the president, first vice president, and second vice president are elected to one-year terms.

During the Annual Business Meeting, the membership elected Melodee Colbert-Kean, councilmember and former mayor of Joplin, Mo., to serve as NLC's 2016 president; Matt Zone, councilmember of Cleveland, Ohio, as first vice president; and Mark Stodola, mayor of Little Rock, Ark., as second vice president. All officers are selected by nominating committee and are elected by NLC's membership.

LaMarche was first elected as Farragut Alderman of Ward II in April 2003. She was re-elected for a third term (unopposed) in 2011. She now serves as vice mayor. In addition, she has served as a board representative on the Municipal Planning Commission on the Board of Zoning Appeals. She is active in the Tennessee Municipal League (TML), serving on the Board of Directors and as past District 2 Director. This is her second term as an NLC board member.

Anderson is a life-long resident of Chattanooga. He is currently director of Development and Marketing for Mark Making, a Chattanooga-based nonprofit that empowers underserved individuals and populations through professionally-led public art projects. He



Dot LaMarche



Chris Anderson

was first elected to the Chattanooga City Council in 2013. In his role on the city council, Anderson chairs the Economic & Community Development Committee, focusing on job creation and improving neighborhoods.

NLC board members play a key role in shaping NLC's priorities and directing the organization's advocacy, education, research, and membership activities.

Former U.S. Sen. Fred Thompson dies

Fred Thompson, a former U.S. Senator, Watergate attorney and GOP presidential candidate died in Nashville on Nov. 1, 2015. He was 73.

Thompson died after a recurrence of lymphoma, according to a statement issued by his family. He was first diagnosed in 2004.

Born in Alabama, Thompson grew up in Lawrenceburg, deciding to become a lawyer at the age of 17 after reading an autobiography of Clarence Darrow.

He earned a degree from Vanderbilt University in 1967, and began working as an assistant U.S. attorney, where he befriended U.S. Sen. Lamar Alexander. While working together, Alexander introduced Thompson to U.S. Sen. Howard Baker, who would become his close friend and mentor. Thompson worked as Baker's campaign manager in 1972.

When Baker became the ranking Republican on the Senate Watergate Committee, Thompson was selected as committee counsel. Thompson continued to work as a lobbyist off and on for more than 20 years as well as serving as counsel to several legislative commissions.

Thompson wrote a book titled "Marie" about his role as the lawyer of Marie Raghianti, who exposed corruption in the parole and pardon process under the administration of then Gov. Ray Blanton. In 1985, Thompson would play himself in the film version of the book, which marked his first foray into Hollywood. He would go on to have roles in films such as "Days of Thunder," "The Hunt for Red October," and "Die Hard 2" as well as TV roles in "Law and Order," "Sinister" and "Allegiance."

Thompson was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1994, and served the state of Tennessee there until 2003. In 2008, he made a brief run for the Republican presidential nomination.

U.S. Sen. Lamar Alexander was one of many who expressed his condolences to his colleague's family. "Very few people can light up the room the way Fred Thompson did," Alexander said. "He used his magic as a lawyer, actor, Watergate counsel, and United States senator to become one of our country's most principled and effective public servants. He was my friend for nearly 50 years. I will miss him greatly."

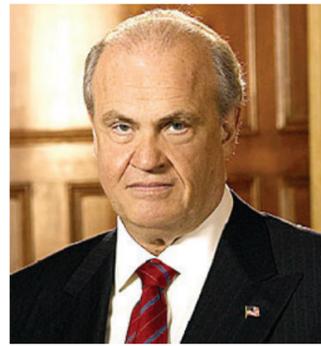
U.S. Sen. Bob Corker said Thompson always remembered his Tennessee roots. "Fred never forgot where he came from, and our state and country miss his common-sense approach to public service," Corker said. "I greatly appreciated his friendship and am saddened to learn of his passing."

Former U.S. Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist served with Thompson in Washington. "Working at his side in the Senate for eight years, Fred embodied what has always been the best of Tennessee politics — he listened carefully and was happy to work across the aisle for causes that he believed were right," Frist said. "Tennessee has lost a great statesman and one of her favorite sons"

Former vice president Al Gore, whose unexpired term Thompson was first elected to fill in 1994, said Thompson was an exemplary public servant. "His longtime dedication to public service helped millions of people around the country and here, in our home state," Gore said.

Gov. Bill Haslam said Thompson will be missed. "Tennessee has lost a great statesman and one of her favorite sons," Haslam said. "Crissy and I have always appreciated his friendship, and we will miss him."

Thompson is survived by his wife, Jeri Thompson, and their children Hayden and Sammy; his brother, Ken; his adult children Tony and Dan; and several grandchildren.



Fred Thompson

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Goodlettsville Tim Ellis honored by Sumner County Council

Goodlettsville City Manager Tim Ellis was named City Manager of the Year by the Sumner County Council of Governments on Nov. 4, at their annual awards dinner. Ellis was nominated by Mayor John Coombs and Goodlettsville city employees.

Under Ellis' leadership as city manager, the city of Goodlettsville:

- received the 2015 Award of Excellence in Municipal Government from the Tennessee City Management Association;
- secured approximately 18 million dollars in various grants; and
- maintained a reserve balance of 30 percent of a 26 million dollar budget.

Ellis is not only dedicated to the citizens of Goodlettsville, he serves on multiple boards to further advance the county and the region. He

stays current on legislative issues and informs surrounding municipalities on issues as they affect them directly.

Ellis has worked diligently to make government as transparent as possible to the citizens of Goodlettsville. He has implemented a variety of methods for residents to be informed. Every department completes a monthly report to be compiled into the City Manager's Monthly Report. Reports are published monthly on the city's website. The Board of Commissioner's meetings and Study Sessions are now recorded and available for online viewing.

Ellis has also created multiple citizen engagement programs such as City Manager from Citizens Leadership Academy, designed to inform citizens on the inner workings of their municipal government and "My Goodlettsville," a program



Tim Ellis

created for citizens and community stakeholders to work together for the betterment of their city.

"Tim is a well-rounded leader and city manager who works around the clock for the city of Goodlettsville, its residents, and its employees," said Goodlettsville Mayor John Combs.

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STATE BRIEFS

The Tennessee Education Lottery Corp. has posted its highest first-quarter sales returns in the organization's history. The education lottery saw first-quarter sales of \$361.7 million, which is a 10 percent increase over last year. Of those funds, \$84.6 million went to educational scholarships, grants and after-school programs. The majority of the lottery's revenue goes to paying winners and a portion is also handed out to retailers. The education lottery has also cut some operational expenses. Since the lottery began in 2004, nearly 1 million scholarships, grants and dual-enrollment awards have been presented to Tennessee students. Other educational programs the lottery supports includes after-school programs, promoting energy ef-

iciency in schools and Tennessee Promise.

The State of Tennessee completed the sale of approximately \$384 million general obligation (GO) bonds at some of the lowest interest rates in Tennessee history. Tennessee's excellent credit stimulated heavy interest from investors, amounting to almost \$2 billion in orders. This high demand allowed the state to reprice most of the maturities on its GO bonds 5 to 10 basis points lower than the price that was initially offered, which saves the state millions of dollars over the 20-year life of the bonds. Tennessee has one of the lowest debt levels of any state, and investors recognize its strong history of balanced budgeting. Investors were willing to pay a \$68.5 million up-front premi-

um to acquire Tennessee's bonds. The debt offering was sold in two series of bonds, consisting of Series A for \$286 million in tax-exempt bonds and Series B for \$97 million of tax-exempt refunding bonds. The combined true interest cost of the bonds was 2.63 percent. The proceeds of the bonds will be used to fund new capital projects and refinance currently outstanding bonds. The refinancing will save Tennessee taxpayers \$8.9 million, or 8.56 percent, over a 13-year period. "This bond sale is extraordinary by any measure," Comptroller Justin P. Wilson said. "The people of Tennessee should take pride in the conservative fiscal approach of the Governor and General Assembly. This historic sale proves that a well-managed state allows taxpayers to save money." For the sale Tennessee received AAA credit ratings from Fitch Ratings and Moody's Investor Service, and a AA+ rating from Standard & Poor's.

October revenues \$90.7 million than budgeted estimate

Growth in sales tax collections and a large one-time corporate payment contributed to growth in Tennessee revenue collections for October. Finance and Administration Commissioner Larry Martin reported that collections for October were \$970.8 million, which is 11.06 percent more than October 2014, and \$90.7 million in excess of the budgeted estimate.

"The sales tax, which is our best economic indicator, reflected relatively strong growth for the month and recorded the strongest first quarter growth since 2004, which is extremely encouraging," Commissioner Martin said. "Franchise and excise taxes were also strong, pushed by a substantial non-recurring tax payment from a large corporation. That's not an unusual occurrence, but it's important for us to recognize that we can't expect that every month.

"Calendar year tax filers also make October unusual because that's when they are allowed to request a refund or pay an underpay-

ment of taxes," said Martin.

General fund collections for October were \$91.0 million more than the budgeted estimate, and the four other funds that share in state tax collections were \$0.3 million less than the estimate.

Sales tax collections were \$36.8 million more than the estimate for October. The October growth rate was 7.73 percent. The year-to-date growth rate was positive 7.48 percent.

Franchise and excise combined collections for October were \$77.4 million, which is \$39.0 million more than the budgeted estimate of \$38.4 million.

Gasoline and motor fuel collections increased by 3.17 percent and they were \$2.2 million more than the budgeted estimate of \$73.2 million. Tobacco tax collections for the month were over collected by \$0.6 million.

Privilege tax collections were \$3.1 million more than the budgeted estimate of \$25.7 million.

Inheritance and Estate taxes

were over collected by \$0.6 million for the month.

Business tax collections were \$2.7 million more than the October estimate.

Hall income taxes were over collected by \$2.8 million in October. All other taxes were over collected by a net of \$2.9 million.

Year-to-date collections for three months were \$223.3 million more than the budgeted estimate. The general fund was over collected by \$207.8 million and the four other funds were over collected by \$15.5 million.

The budgeted revenue estimates for 2015-2016 are based on the State Funding Board's consensus recommendation of Dec. 16, 2014, and adopted by the first session of the 109th General Assembly in April 2015. Also incorporated in the estimates are any changes in revenue enacted during the 2015 session of the General Assembly. These estimates are available on the state's website at <http://www.tn.gov/finance/bud/Revenues.shtm>

Some \$23.3 million in water, wastewater construction loans awarded

Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam and Department of Environment and Conservation Commissioner Bob Martineau announced that four communities and one Authority have been approved to receive more than \$23.3 million in low-interest loans for water infrastructure improvements.

The State Revolving Fund (SRF) Loan Program provides low-interest loans that help communities, utility districts, and water and wastewater authorities finance projects that protect Tennessee's ground and surface waters and public health. Loans are used to finance the planning, design and construction of water and wastewater facilities.

Through the SRF Program, communities, utility districts, and water and wastewater authorities can obtain loans with lower interest rates than most can obtain through private financing. Interest rates for loans can vary from zero percent to market rate based on each community's economic index. Loans utilizing EPA grant funds can include a principal forgiveness component.

The Department of Environment and Conservation administers the SRF Loan Program for the state of Tennessee in conjunction with the Tennessee Local Development Authority. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency provides grants to fund the program, and the state provides a 20 percent match. Loan repayments are returned to the program and are used to fund future SRF loans.

The funding order of projects is determined by the SRF Loan Program's Priority Ranking Lists that rank potential projects according to the severity of their pollution and/or compliance problems or for the protection of public health.

A Wastewater Loan was announced for the following recipient:

- **Town of Gordonsville** (Smith County).- The town of Gordonsville will receive \$608,500 for a Collection System Expansion project to provide sewer service for residents in the Spring Valley and Meadow Drive Areas. The project will be funded with a 25-year, \$565,905 loan with an interest rate of 2.15

percent and \$42,595 in principal forgiveness that will not have to be repaid.

Traditional Wastewater Loans were announced for the following recipients:

- **City of Springfield** (Robertson County) - The city of Springfield will receive \$19.25 million for a Collection System Rehabilitation Phase I project. The project will be funded with a 25-year loan with an interest rate of 1.35 percent.

- **Town of Gordonsville** (Smith County) - The town of Gordonsville will receive an additional \$61,500 for a Collection System Expansion project to provide sewer service for residents in the Spring Valley and Meadow Drive Areas. The project will be funded with a 25-year loan with an interest rate of 2.15 percent.

- **Jackson Energy Authority** (Madison County) - The Jackson Energy Authority (JEA) will receive \$2 million for a GREEN - WWTP improvements project to the Miller WWTP. The project will be funded with a 20-year loan with an interest rate of 1.43 percent.

A Drinking Water Loan was announced for the following recipient:

- **City of Hohenwald** (Lewis County) - The city of Hohenwald will receive \$260,000 for a Water Main Line Extension project to install approximately 28,000 LF of waterlines along Summertown HWY to provide water service to 90 households. The project will be funded with a 20-year, \$195,000 loan with an interest rate of 0.71 percent and \$65,000 in principal

forgiveness that will not have to be repaid.

Traditional Drinking Water Loans were announced for the following recipients:

- **Town of Troy** (Obion County) - The town of Troy will receive \$981,000 for a new 700 GPM Water Treatment Plant project. The project will be funded with a 20-year, loan with an interest rate of 0.47 percent.

- **Town of Troy** (Obion County) - The town of Troy will also receive \$156,000 for a Water Main Line Improvements project. The project will be funded with a 20-year loan with an interest rate of 0.47 percent.

Since its inception in 1987, Tennessee's Clean Water State Revolving Fund Loan Program has awarded more than \$1.6 billion in low-interest loans.

Since its inception in 1996, Tennessee's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Loan Program has awarded more than \$271 million in low-interest loans. Both programs combined award more than \$90 million annually to Tennessee's local governments for water and wastewater infrastructure projects.

Any local government interested in the SRF Loans, should contact the State Revolving Fund Loan Program, Tennessee Tower, 12th Floor, 312 Rosa L. Parks Avenue, Nashville, TN 37243, or call (615) 532-0445. Additional information about the SRF Loan Program may be found online at <http://www.tn.gov/environment/topic/wr-srf-state-revolving-fund-program>.



Journalist Peter Greenberg and Dolly Parton pose with the statue of the country music legend in Sevierville. The pair spent two days across the state as part of a documentary being made for the USA network.

Dolly Parton featured in documentary

Internationally-known travel journalist Peter Greenberg recently spent two days touring Tennessee with entertainment legend and native Tennessean Dolly Parton for the Brand USA travel celebrity series.

The two-day whirlwind tour included visits to Nashville and the Smoky Mountains with stops at Ryman Auditorium, Country Music Hall of Fame & Museum, Tootsies, Arnold's and Studio B. In East Tennessee, Dollywood, DreamMore and the Dolly statue in Sevierville were highlights.

The crew also filmed Olympic kayaker Eric Jackson at Rock Island State Park, capturing some of Tennessee's breathtaking scenic beauty and outdoor experiences.

The documentary will also feature Chattanooga, Knoxville, Memphis and Northeast Tennessee and is expected to air internationally in multiple markets in 2016.

It is no wonder that Peter Greenberg requested Dolly Parton as his Tennessee celebrity. Parton is one of an elite group of individuals to receive at least one nomination from all four major annual American entertainment award organizations: Emmy, GRAMMY, Oscar, and Tony. In 2004, the U.S. Library of Congress gave her the distinguished Living Legend Award.

In 2006, she was selected to receive the prestigious Kennedy Center Honors. Five years later in

2011, she was awarded a GRAMMY Lifetime Achievement Award.

In December 2015, NBC will air the made-for-television movie "Coat of Many Colors."

DreamMore Resort in Pigeon Forge has opened and the announcement was recently made for Lightning Rod, the world's first launched wooden roller coaster, coming to Dollywood in 2016. Songwriting, recording, and touring are always on for Parton.

A multiple Emmy-winning investigative reporter and producer, Peter Greenberg is America's most recognized, honored and respected front-line travel news journalist. Known in the industry as "The Travel Detective," he is the travel editor for CBS News, appearing on CBS This Morning, CBS Evening News with Scott Pelley, and Sunday Morning, among other broadcast platforms.

The consummate insider on reporting the travel business as news, Greenberg hosts a new television show, "The Travel Detective with Peter Greenberg" on public television. The series offers 42 half-hour episodes that seek to empower audiences with travel news, must-have information and insider tips known only to a select few.

Greenberg was tapped by Brand USA to produce celebrity travel documentaries for all 50 states to air internationally as part of Brand USA's marketing efforts.



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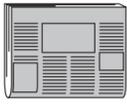
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ASSISTANT CITY PLANNER

GALLATIN. The city of Gallatin is seeking applications for the position of Assistant City Planner in the Planning Division. Responsibilities include performing technical and administration level work in coordinating planning activities while assisting the City Planner in the overall departmental administration. Applicant must have a Bachelor's Degree in an urban/regional planning or related field. Must have a minimum of five years of professional planning work experience. Must have AICP certification. This is a 40 hrs. per week, day shift position. Starting hourly rate is \$29.26+ excellent benefits. Interested persons must apply on-line at www.gallatinon-themove.com under "Employment" at the top of the webpage and follow the instructions. Submit an online application, cover letter and resume by Nov. 18, 2015. EOE.

CITY ATTORNEY

MASON. The town of Mason is seeking individuals interested in the position of city attorney. Applicants must have municipal experience. Please send resume to: Town of Mason, Attn: Gwendolyn Kilpatrick, Mayor, 12157 Main Street, Mason, Tennessee 38049

FINANCE DIRECTOR

GERMANTOWN. The city of Germantown is seeking applications for the position of finance director. This position reports to the city administrator and serves as part of the city's executive leadership team. The finance director oversees three main areas: accounting, treasury and city court and is responsible for establishing financial policies, procedures, controls and reporting systems that ensure the financial security of the city government and maintains its triple-A credit ratings. Key responsibilities include: ensuring legal and regulatory compliance for all accounting and financial reporting functions; oversees the investment of city funds and the payment of bond obligations; analyzes investment alternatives based on the level of risk; directs the Treasury collection activity and custody of public funds; directs the annual audit process; prepares financial reports that summarize and forecast the city's financial position; reviews actuarial reports for accuracy; and acts as departmental liaison with the Board of

Mayor and Aldermen and various commissions providing financial advice and direction. The ideal candidate for this position will have: thorough knowledge of principles and practices of business and public administration; knowledge of professional accounting principles, practices and methods in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB); knowledge of practices and procedures of investing and debt management; knowledge of state and federal laws, rules and regulations governing municipal accounting functions and the investment of city funds; ability to present facts and recommendations in a clear, concise, logical manner, verbally and in writing; and demonstrated skills in leadership, initiative and drive. Qualifications include: equivalency to a bachelor's degree in accounting, finance, business or public administration and seven years of experience managing accounting and cash management operations, including two years public accounting experience. Master's degree is strongly preferred. Local government experience and certification as CPA is desired. Please send response to the City of Germantown Human Resource Office, 1930 South Germantown Rd. Germantown, TN 38138 or email to hmailbox@germantown-tn.gov Application Deadline: Dec. 4, 2015 Salary is dependent on qualifications; limited relocation funds available

HUMAN RESOURCES TECHNICIAN

COLLIERVILLE. This is specialized and complex office work assisting the administrative staff in the Human Resources Department. Requires an associate degree in business administration, public administration, H.R. or related; supplemented by 1 year of experience in employee program administration which may include benefit administration or related areas, or any equivalent combination of education, training and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities for this job. Must have excellent computer skills and be proficient in word-processing and spreadsheet software. Two years' experience in personnel/benefits highly desired with special emphasis in insurance (i.e. claims, filing, benefit coordination and administration). Salary is \$26,777.00 - \$33,282.00 annually (DOQ) with excellent benefits package. Applications and complete job descriptions are available at the Human Resources Office, 500 Poplar View Parkway, Collierville, TN.,

38017, Monday through Friday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. The official application of the town of Collierville must be filled out and may be accompanied by a resume. Pursuant to Tennessee open records law, applications and resumes are subject to disclosure. Position will remain open until filled. EOE.

POLICE CHIEF

HENRY. The city of Henry is accepting applications for the position of Police Chief. Candidates must be a high school graduate or GED equivalent. Candidates must have attended and completed the Tennessee Law Enforcement Training Academy and currently be POST certified by the state of Tennessee. This is a full time position that will consist of 40 hours per week with benefits. Applications will be accepted until Dec. 11, 2015, or until filled. Resumes will not be accepted in lieu of applications. Applications can be picked up at Henry City Hall at 1232 Pioneer Road.

PUBLIC WORKS CREW LEADER

PIPERTON: This position requires considerable independent judgment in supervising work crews in the maintenance, construction and repair of streets, water and sewer distribution/collection systems, buildings, rights-of-way, and other Public Works facilities. Work is performed under the general supervision of the Public Works Director and is reviewed through results achieved. Minimum Qualifications include: graduation from an accredited high school or equivalent GED supplemented by minimum five years of experience in water and sewer system operations. A combination of training and experience may qualify an applicant for consideration. Valid Tennessee driver's license, with an acceptable driving record. Water Distribution and/or Wastewater Collection Certification possession or obtain. Considerable knowledge of the principles and practices of street maintenance and repair; considerable knowledge of water systems, including placement of service and distribution lines; considerable knowledge of sewage collection systems, including placement of lines; considerable knowledge of and the ability to make re-pairs to water/sewer systems under both emergency/non-emergency conditions. Knowledge of the occupational hazards associated with the work, safety precautions, and the ability to communicate such knowledge to those under his supervision. Ability to supervise work crews and assist in the installation, maintenance and repair of municipal water lines, water meters, hydrants, sewer lines, grounds and building maintenance, and street repairs; ability to plan, schedule and coordinate the activities of employees; ability to establish and maintain professional working relationships with the general public, fellow employees, and outside professional associates; ability to understand and carry out oral and written instructions; ability to communicate effectively; ability to perform manual labor; ability and skill in operating a wide range of construction and maintenance equipment. The city of Pipeston is an Equal Opportunity Employer and a Drug-Free Workplace. Certain positions require pre-employment drug testing. Please e-mail resume to TPARKER@PIPERTON.TN.COM

Cities exploring drone usage



Drones could soon be used to help find people missing in remote parts of the country.

DRONES from Page 1

grams. They have done a lot with law enforcement-related cases like search and rescue, and crime scene reconstruction. The Mesa County, Ariz. Sheriff's Office is one of the initial government agencies that started this, working with the federal government to establish the current UAV guidelines. We also have worked with the Illinois State Police to implement some of their practices and policies."

One of the most important policies for UAV revolve around protecting privacy, Robinson said. The Tennessee General Assembly has put in place a statute that governs UAV use by government agencies, and Robinson said the FAA also has regulations to adhere to. Presently, the city is only allowed to fly drones at Barfield Crescent Park under the training certificate issued to them by the FAA.

"We cannot fly over 400 feet because small engine aircraft start flying at 500 feet and above," he said. "We can't fly beyond the line of sight of the operator and visual observer. We have to maintain strict training standards, and there are certificates they require before a training program can begin."

Currently, Robinson and the Murfreesboro IT department are training on a consumer-grade Unique Q300 Typhoon, which is similar to those hobbyists can purchase. Robinson said the \$1,200 UAV made of plastic helps them get used to the mechanics as well as navigating the atmosphere around Murfreesboro.

If the city moves forward with the program, he said the city will look into purchasing a more durable, government-grade UAV made of carbon fiber with thermal-imaging technology, a higher resolution and built-software to help with reconstruction and 3-D mapping. While the carbon fiber UAVs are more durable than the plastic ones, Robinson said both drones are sturdy.

While these government-grade UAVs are more expensive, Robinson said they are far less expensive than a city aviation program. He said flying UAVs is a little more intensive than flying a model airplane, but not as hard as flying a helicopter or real airplane because of the GPS technology drones have built-in.

"You have to maintain a high-level of training, a high-level of knowledge and a high-level of knowledge of where you are," Robinson said. "You have to make sure you're in compliance with the regulations as well."

The versatility of UAVs continues to be surprising, he said. "When we first started, I imagined maybe half a dozen things we could use it for," Robinson said. "As I educated myself on both Tennessee state statutes and the abilities of the aircraft itself, I became amazed at the actual number of things a UAV can achieve or do better than personnel because it is done more efficiently and safer. Now we have a sheet of two dozen things we could use it for. The sky is the limit, no pun intended. As people with more imaginative ideas come forward, I expect the number of roles for UAVs to increase."

Risk Management Pool Board to meet

Notice is hereby given that the Board of Directors of the TML Risk Management Pool will meet in regular session on Wednesday, December 16, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. local time at The Pool's office in 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.

TML requests E-mail addresses

The quickest way to keep city officials apprised of legislative happenings is through e-mail. With so many recent municipal elections, TML has been working to update its elected officials and city staff contact information. Send your updates to Mona Lawrence, by fax at 615-255-4752, by e-mail to mlawrence@TML1.org, or call 615-255-6416.

NATIONAL BRIEFS

The economy in the U.S. expanded at a slower pace in the third quarter as companies took advantage of gains in consumer and business spending to reduce bloated stockpiles. Gross domestic product grew at a 1.5 percent annual rate, in line with the 1.6 percent median forecast of economists surveyed by Bloomberg, Commerce Department data showed. Excluding the biggest swing in inventories in four years, the pace of growth was 3 percent compared with 3.9 percent in the previous three months. Household purchases, buoyed by job and income gains, will probably continue to underpin the world's largest economy even as weaker demand from overseas customers holds back exports and manufacturing. The quick re-balancing of stockpiles to be more in line with domestic demand heading into the holiday season indicates factory production will soon stabilize, eliminating a source of weakness. "The domestic drivers in consumption are quite strong," said Gennadiy Goldberg, U.S. rates strategist in New York with TD Securities, who correctly projected the third-quarter gain. The median forecast for GDP, the value of all goods and services produced, was based on a survey of 80 economists. Projections ranged from gains of 0.9 percent to 2.4 percent. The estimate is the first of three for the quarter, with the other releases scheduled for November and December when more information becomes available.

Nissan's October U.S. sales jumped 12.5 percent, compared to the same month a year earlier, as shoppers snapped up the Japanese automaker's crossovers, sport-utility vehicles and pickup trucks. It was Nissan's best October ever in the U.S. Sales of the company's pickups, crossovers and SUVs rose

29.3 percent for the month, fueled by a 69.8 percent increase for the Rogue crossover. Sales of the company's cars rose only 1.5 percent. The Nissan brand recorded an 11.5 percent increase, while the luxury Infiniti division recorded a 23.2 percent increase.

More than 1 billion customers will have used their mobile phones to do their banking by the end of the year, and that's expected to reach 2 billion by 2020 — 37 percent of the adult global population, according to Juniper Research. Growth of mobile banking has been especially fast in emerging markets, prompting Juniper to up its 1-billion timetable to this year from next. Other findings include: 19 percent of global household bills will be paid via PC, tablet and mobile devices this year; and Global online banking users as a proportion of banked individuals is forecast to cross the 50 percent mark in 2016.

A new report finds that teenagers 13 to 18 years old spend almost nine hours a day on "entertainment media" — that's longer than they usually sleep and includes things like checking out social media, music, gaming or online videos. And that's not including time spent using media for school or homework. The report, by Common Sense Media, a San Francisco-based non-profit, tracks children and their technology use. Meanwhile, tweens — those aged 10 to 12 — are not far behind, consuming about six hours of similar content. The study also found that half of teens say they often or sometimes watch TV (51 percent), use social networking (50 percent), text (60 percent) and listen to music (76 percent) while doing homework. You can bet that those figures include some who do all four at the same time.

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Pilot program taxes by the mile, not the gallon

MILEAGE FEE, from Page 1

while the F-150 owner would use 720 gallons and pay \$216 in gas taxes. The annual road usage tax due for both drivers would be \$194.43. The average Prius owner would pay the state \$116.66 (the difference between the \$194.43 in road usage taxes and the \$77.70 in gas taxes), while the average F-150 owner would get a \$21.60 rebate (the difference between the \$216.03 in gas taxes and the \$194.43 in road usage taxes).

Garrett said the goal isn't to discourage the use of fuel-efficient cars, but rather to ensure that those drivers are paying their fair share to maintain roads and bridges, which they rely on just as much as drivers of less fuel-efficient cars.

"On a fundamental level, having people pay for the roads by how much they use them is fair," said Jessica Moskovitz, of the Oregon Environmental Council. But she urged the Legislature, when it evaluates the program, to think twice about "incentivizing cars that are good for our planet or incentivizing gas guzzlers."

Nel Osborn, 64, a Salem retiree who drives a Prius with a "53 MPG" license plate, volunteered for the experiment. She pays an additional \$1 to \$1.50 to the state per month under the road usage tax system. "It does seem weird that people who have Hummers benefit and people that drive Priuses do not," she said. But Osborn said she is willing to pay a little more to help maintain Oregon's roads and bridges. The extra money she owes is deducted automatically from her account, and she said the additional information had changed her driving habits: "I've been braking a little less."

The trial program is also designed to gauge what people think

about the new system, and both Osborn and Burroughs complained about one feature: When they drive less than a mile, the device notifies them that they could have walked. Osborn said that's not practical when she comes home alone from the library at night. Burroughs, who has used a wheelchair since a 1991 accident, just chuckles. "I use drive-ups a lot," he said.

When the pilot was first conceived last year, it drew skepticism from privacy advocates, who worried about the state tracking people's whereabouts. But because the program is currently voluntary, and no information about driving habits is sent to the state or law enforcement without a warrant, that criticism has been muted.

During debate on the program, the American Civil Liberties Union was assured that if it ever becomes mandatory, taxpayers could opt for an alternative to the GPS-based device. "We were able to get to a place where the ACLU did feel good about the program," Becky Straus, legislative director for the ACLU of Oregon, said at the time.

The program was authorized for up to 5,000 participants, but since the July 1 start date, only 940 people have signed up. Some are concerned about privacy; others are reluctant because they simply do not want to get involved. Oregon is trying to get more people comfortable with the idea, in part through advertising.

California Driving

In 2014, the California Legislature directed state transportation officials to study the feasibility of replacing the state's 42.4-cent gas tax with a road usage tax. The bill noted that if there is no change in the existing state gas tax, by 2030 as much as half of the gas tax revenue that could have been collected would

be lost to fuel efficiency.

The study is underway and by the end of this year, sign-ups will begin for an experimental program much like Oregon's that is to start at the beginning of 2017. A report on the effort is due to the Legislature by the end of June 2018.

U.S. Rep. Mark DeSaulnier, a Democrat who was in the California Assembly when the bill passed, is the author of the legislation. He said he wrote it because of "a dire shortfall when it comes to investment in infrastructure."

He said he had to overcome privacy concerns and "anti-tax people." Supporters tried to address the privacy concerns by including an option allowing drivers to simply have their odometers read once a year and the mileage noted. But that would not differentiate out-of-state driving, as the GPS systems could. DeSaulnier said the federal government could learn from Oregon and California.

Congress has not addressed the federal gas tax of 18.4 cents a gallon, which has not been lifted in two decades and now generates 31 percent less than in 1998, according to ITEP. Without federal help, states have been forced to act.

Since 2013, 17 states have either increased old-fashioned gas taxes or set up some link to inflation. Georgia has done the most; it increased its gas tax by 6.7 cents this year and will raise it each July through 2018, based on growth in both fuel efficiency and inflation. After 2018, the increase will be based on fuel efficiency alone.

"I think the biggest problem in Washington, D.C. is they think they can invest in infrastructure without paying for it," DeSaulnier said. "At some point the federal government has to do what the states are doing—find out how to fix the gas tax."



TENNESSEE FESTIVALS

Now - Jan. 3: Sevierville, Pigeon Forge and Gatlinburg

Smoky Mountain Winterfest blankets the area in millions of lights and holiday displays throughout the area. During Smoky Mountain Christmas now through Jan. 3, 2016, at Dollywood in Pigeon Forge, kids and kids at heart can enjoy four million lights throughout the park, performances, Dollywood's A Christmas Carol, and Appalachian Christmas, an acoustic show of holiday classics. The area's largest living Nativity, Santa and his elves, and lots of live animals that include a white lion and camels are all part of the Christmas at the Smoky Mountain Opry Theater through Jan. 3, 2016, in Pigeon Forge. Sevierville celebrates Winterfest with 15 million lights and is home to Shadrack's Christmas Wonderland through Jan. 3, 2016 at Smokies Stadium. Buy Winterfest 3D glasses for \$1 that turn each Christmas light into a dazzling snowflake.

Nov. 20 - Jan. 28: Nashville

A Country Christmas at Gaylord Opryland Resort will include two million lights, ICE! featuring The Nutcracker and "Dr. Seuss' How The Grinch Stole Christmas! The Musical." Grammy Award-winning Larry Gatlin and the Gatlin Brothers have a new Christmas dinner show that blends their harmonies with holiday favorites. Two million pounds of colored ice tells The Nutcracker story in a new way as the original Tchaikovsky score is played while guests walk through the ICE! exhibit. Experience snow tubing and ice skating, The Elf on the Shelf Scavenger Hunt throughout the hotel, and the outdoor Nativity by carriage ride

Dec. 12-13: Franklin

Dickens of a Christmas. Celebrating its 31st anniversary, Dickens of a Christmas incorporates 200 characters, dancers and entertainers from Charles Dickens' stories like Fagin from "Oliver Twist," Tiny Tim, Ebenezer Scrooge and Jacob Marley from "A Christmas Carol." The Franklin police officers even get in on the fun, dressing up as English patrolmen. Sugar plums and roasted chestnuts are sold on the street; carriage rides are given; musical performances occur on the stage and in the street; and a town sing of classic Christmas carols heralds in this joyful time of year.

UT-MTAS DECEMBER MAP CLASSES

CMFO FINANCIAL AND COMPLIANCE UPDATES

This course will discuss the updates to the CMFO manuals which will include GASB updates, best practices, and new or amended state laws that will impact municipal finance and accounting functions.

Target Audience: All CMFOs

Dates/Locations/Times:

Dec. 3 Knoxville 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. EST

Dec. 3 Jackson 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. CST

Dec. 10 Franklin 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. CST

Credits: .4 CEU or 4 CPE/CMFO (Financial) (PA)



To register for a course, go to www.mtas.tennessee.edu, or fax to 865-974-0423. Credit card payments must register online with the Solution Point System: <http://www.solutionpoint.tennessee.edu/MTAS> or by invoice. For registration assistance, call 865-974-0413. Or for more information, contact Kurt Frederick, training consultant, at 615-253-6385.

No loan is too large or too small



The town of Livingston closed a loan through the TMBF loan program in the amount of \$1.1 million for a capital outlay note to finance parks and recreational facilities.

The city of Jackson closed a variable rate loan through the TMBF loan program in the amount of \$17.4 million to finance its three-year capital improvement plan.



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Tennessee city officials attend NLC Conference in Nashville



Livingston Mayor Curtis Hayes, Nashville Mayor Megan Barry, and TML Executive Director Margaret Mahery



Nashville Councilmember Fabian Bedne, Chattanooga Mayor Andy Berke, and Nashville Councilmember Karen Johnson



Gale Tharpe of Paris; Morristown Councilmember Kay Senter; and Charles "Bones Seivers, President and CEO of Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund



Seated: Clinton Police Chief Rick Scarbrough, Councilman E.T. Stamey, and Fire Chief Archie Brummett. Standing: Councilman Brian Hatmaker and City Manager Roger Houck



Troy Mayor Deanna Chappell, McKenzie Mayor Jill Holland, Martin Mayor Randy Brundige, and Three Way Vice Mayor Mary Ann Tremblay



Columbia Councilmembers Mark King and Debbie Mathews with Columbia City Manager Tony Massey



Knoxville Councilmember Daniel Brown, Milan Alderman Tammy Wade, and Paris Commissioner Sam Tharpe



Alamo Mayor Tommy Green and Morristown Councilmember Tommy Pedigo

Third-term mayor, John Holden proud of Dyersburg's many accomplishments

BY LINDA BRYANT

Growing up in Dyersburg, Tennessee, John Holden spent his spare time stocking shelves and helping customers at his parent's small business, Holden's Grocery. Today, even after being in public service for more than two decades, he says he applies the same work ethic he learned while bagging groceries at Holden's.

"I learned from my parents that you need to do whatever it takes to get the job done," Holden said. "I'm not the kind of a guy who has to get out front and be recognized. My focus is on the community, the folks we serve, and the team we have in the city."

Holden, who is currently serving his third term, has led Dyersburg through many highs and lows. Low points include the Great Recession, which pummeled the local employment rate especially hard, and the 2010 flooding of the Forked Deer River, which devastated hundreds of homes and businesses.

The highs include an award-winning school system, millions of dollars of new investment or reinvestment in business and industry, a new industrial park, and major improvements to city assets such as the Dyersburg Regional Airport.

Dyersburg's accomplishments and hard work are paying off. With a population of nearly 17,000, the city is even in the national spotlight for being named one of the most promising "micropolitan" regions of the country.

"We have issues like every other community does," Holden said. "We face them with common sense and determination. But it's really not about me; it all goes back to the leadership of the different departments that lead our city. I rely on them and trust them. We get it done together."

Holden is a board member of the Dyersburg-Dyer County Chamber of Commerce and the Dyersburg Regional Medical Center. He is a member and past president of the Dyersburg Noon Rotary Club, past president of the YMCA of Dyer County and the Dyersburg State Community College Alumni Association. Mayor Holden has two children, ages 14 and 13.

TT&C: Can you talk about your background and tell us how you ended up in public service?

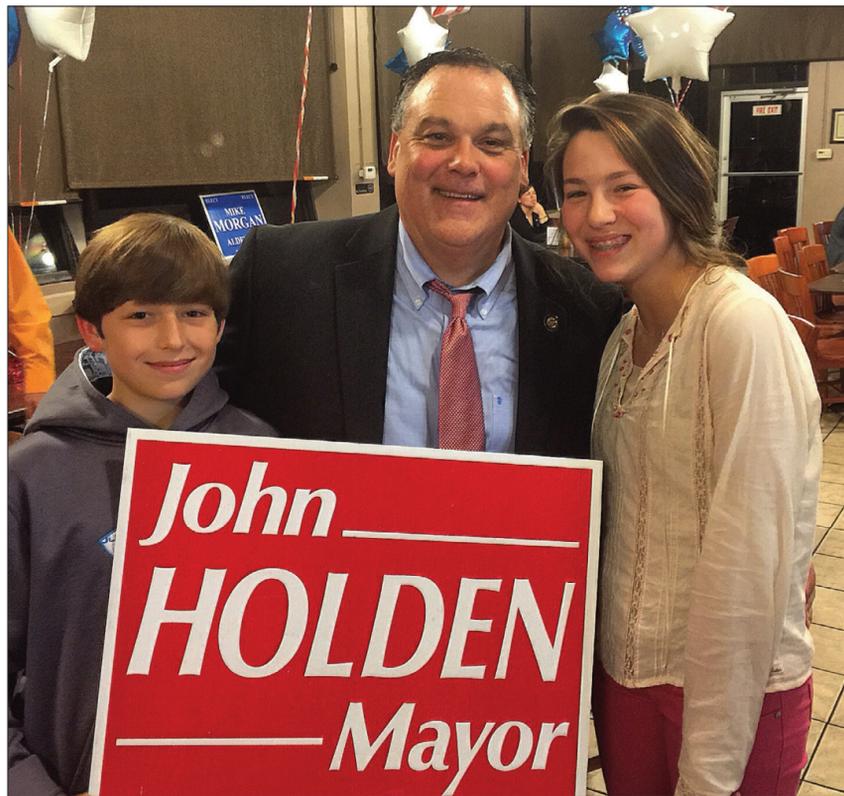
JH: I was born and raised in Dyersburg. I graduated from Dyersburg High School in 1978, and attended Dyersburg State Community College. I went on to the University of Tennessee at Knoxville and graduated with a degree in business administration in 1983. I minored in transportation and logistics and worked for Averitt Express for a number of years. I had several roles with that company. I worked in Nashville for a few years. I then got the opportunity to move back to Dyersburg while working for the same company. I had never been interested in politics before other than maybe a few extracurricular activities in high school. But when I moved back, I became active in the community and in groups such as the chamber of commerce. I ran for Dyer County Commissioner in 1994 and was elected. I ran two more times and won both times. I gained a lot of insight and knowledge during that time. There were gentlemen who had been on the county commission for a long time who were very instrumental in helping me. I ran for mayor in 2006, and I took office in 2007. I ran for a second term in 2010, and I ran again in 2014.

I grew up in the family business. My parents owned a convenience store called Holden's Grocery. That was back in the days before Mini-Marts or Walgreens. In a family business, you learn to do whatever you have to do to be successful. I'd come in the store after school and do my homework. Then I'd stock shelves, take groceries to cars, bag ice, fill the drink machines — you name it. My parents worked very hard — from 6 a.m. to past midnight. They taught me a lot about the value of hard work and about how to really treat people.

TT&C: Dyersburg has a growing national reputation for being one of the top 'micropolitan' areas in the country for new industry site selection. Can you talk about what this means?

JH: Micropolitan areas are smaller urban areas with a population at least 10,000 but less than 50,000. There are 576 recognized micropolitan regions in the United States. Dyersburg has been in the Top 10 micropolitan areas for two years in a row. (The designation came from *Site Selection Magazine*, a national publication that covers corporate real estate and economic development.) Dyersburg tied for 8th place this year, and the year before that we tied for 10th place. It's very important for us to rank high in this category. It shows how hard we've worked — and continue to work — to attract new industry and business. We also work hard to maintain our existing industries and help them grow.

I've had the good fortune of working with County Mayor Richard Hill. Before he became county mayor, he was chairman of the Dyer County Budget Committee. I replaced him on the budget committee when he ran for county mayor. The great relationship with Mayor Hill — and all the Dyer County Commission — helped lay the foundation for what I'm doing today. It's really important for our community — the city, county, and chamber of commerce — to work together as a whole. That team approach has helped us successfully recruit business and industry to Dyersburg. We're blessed with a diversity of manufacturing firms. We aren't tied to one certain sector or product. We also have a great team in place in our city and



Dyersburg Mayor John Holden with his son Walker and daughter Whitby.

county governments.

We went through the ups and downs of the recession, but we stayed strong and did what we needed to do. We have learned to work well with our partners in the state — Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), the Department of Economic and Community Development (ECD) and all the other agencies that help bring projects to us. We have deal-ready sites that are just waiting to be selected. We try to be very proactive and aggressive when showing a site to a prospective company. We do what we have to do to help get those jobs here. A lot of folks are involved.

TT&C: DOT Foods chose the Dyersburg Industrial Park for a \$24 million distribution center, bringing more than 150 jobs to the community. That facility opened early in 2015. What process did you go through to attract this high level of investment in your area?

JH: With Dot Foods it was a long courtship of three years. A lot of preliminary work was involved in the early stages — providing information to the state, to the site locators, and others. They had a number of locations to choose from, and they just started whittling it down. Initially, there's a lot of information sharing about utilities, workforce availability, and local and state incentives. Dot Foods, like many projects, seemed to go dormant for awhile and then it resurfaced. It turned out that the relationships we developed with the family that owns Dot Foods worked very well in our favor. We fit what they were looking for because of our strategic location, quality workforce, and regional transportation. Plus, their available site was ready to go; they didn't need to do anything to it other than take care of infrastructure related to construction. I believe the end result shows that our team never stopped. To succeed you have to respond to requests and continue to pursue the opportunity. We never give up.

We live in a society of instant gratification. Look at Facebook, Twitter, and the way the news gets out now. People know about things within minutes. You have to remember that some things take a long time. We're competing for these projects with every other town and city in the United States. It takes time on the other side, too. Companies have their own vetting to do. You want to make sure it's a good match on both sides. Dot Foods is now a big part of our community.

One of the reasons we received the high micropolitan ranking is because of quality of our existing industries in Dyer County. It's not just about attracting new investment in the community. It's just as important for us to maintain our relationships with our existing industries. We have seen millions of expansion dollars invested in companies that are already here. A lot of new jobs have been created as a result. We have a lot of great companies and employers — Caterpillar, Nordyne, Ermco, Heckthorn Manufacturing, Firestone Industrial Products and many more. Our hospital complex, Dyersburg Regional Medical Center, is also a big employer. Availability of medical care makes a significant difference for us when we're recruiting industries.

TT&C: How do you develop your workforce?

JH: We draw our labor from a 10-county area — all of northwest upper Tennessee and some from Missouri and Arkansas. We recognized the importance of education in our community a long time ago. Long before Gov. Haslam intro-



Mayor Holden with Israel Barbee, a sixth grader in the Dyersburg City School system. Holden has mentored Barbee from the time he was in kindergarten. The picture was taken following a Martin Luther King Day event in Dyersburg last year.

duced his initiatives to provide free education to students going to community colleges, the city of Dyersburg and the Dyer County government created the Dyer County Promise scholarship for graduating seniors. It's one example of how progressive we are. We recognize the fact that we need a quality, educated workforce.

Our business community has good relationships with our educational institutions. For example, the president of Dyersburg State Community College sits on the board of our Chamber of Commerce. The school has a lot of offerings that help with workforce training, including a lot of support for manufacturing technology. They tailor offerings for industries looking for specific skill sets. We also have the Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT) close by in Newbern, Tennessee. It's a great resource and provides opportunities for high school graduates and adults already in the workforce to train for new skills.

Here's a great example from Dot Foods. They needed people to drive trucks. They donated \$100,000 or more to TCAT to provide classes and training for new truck drivers. It's that kind of collaborative effort between our industries and our high school and colleges that make us successful. We also have a dual enrollment program in which high school seniors can take classes at Dyersburg State Community College. When they graduate from high school they might have as much as 18 to 21 hours of college credit. They have already started on the path to college.

TT&C: What are some of your biggest challenges?

JH: We are no different from many other cities in Tennessee and the United States. Aging infrastructure issues have to be addressed — streets, lights, sewers, etc. And like any other town or city in America, we want and need more jobs. One of our major industries announced it was closing just a few months before I was elected mayor in 2007. Honestly, it wasn't how anyone would want to start their first term as mayor. During those years we experienced unemployment rates as high as 15.6 percent. We have continually improved on that number. I think the lowest we've had was 7 percent in April 2015.

We try to address our infrastructure issues with grants. We have a very proactive team, and we have been pretty successful. We've received

\$14 million in grant monies in recent years. We got a grant from U.S. Economic and Development Administration (EDA) to build new \$2 million water tank, which is going to supply Commerce Park, our new industrial park. We received more than \$3 million in grants to repave the runway and make other improvements at the Dyersburg Regional Airport. The airport is truly the front door of our community. It's important that the airport shows well and that we keep it up. We are very proud of the airport, its staff and all the improvements.

We received grant money to build Safe Rooms from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Safe Rooms are facilities designed to protect our residents from winds up to 250 miles per hour, which is the speed of an F-5 tornado. The Safe Rooms are an example of us seeing an opportunity to help our citizens and acting on it. Currently, we are involved with a \$375,000 THAC grant to make repairs to houses. It's going to help a lot of people.

TT&C: What are some of your biggest accomplishments?

JH: I'm proud of the services we provide and the concern we show for our citizens. I'm proud that we are proactive in recruiting businesses and that we've stayed the course through tough times. We have 17-18 departments in our city, and we meet on a quarterly basis to discuss issues and identify opportunities. We have a good senior group of folks who have been with the city a lot longer than I have. I don't know how to run a water and sewer department, be a police chief or manage a wastewater treatment plant. But there are folks in those positions I trust 100 percent. It's a big accomplishment for us to have such good working relationships in place.

TT&C: Can you describe your management style?

JH: I'm not a micro-manager. I don't call people every day. I just want to be kept informed. I don't like surprises, and everyone knows that. It's important to me that we keep our focus on our citizens and on whatever we can do to assist them. I believe in using common sense. I believe in being fair and consistent. I try to make informed decisions based on the policies, procedures, and laws we have. It's really important to me to treat everybody the same way.

TT&C: The quality of education is a big issue all over Tennessee and the country. How is Dyersburg doing?

JH: I'm very pleased with the Dyersburg City School system. I have two children in Dyersburg schools — a daughter, who's a freshman, and a son in 8th grade. Our schools provide outstanding educational opportunities for our students, and they are being recognized for it. I just recently attended a SCORE (State Collaborative on Reforming Education) in Nashville. Dyersburg City Schools was chosen as one of the top-three improved school districts in the state based on test scores and all the other benchmarks for improvements. We were very humbled. It's a testament to the administration, leadership, faculty and teachers.

TT&C: Do you have important mentors in your life?

JH: Growing up in the 1960s and 70s and watching my father work so many hours a day made quite an impression on me. He didn't have a college education, but he provided the opportunity for me to go to college. I can't tell you what it meant to witness his work ethic and see how he treated people; it set the stage for who I became. My father passed away three years ago, and it's still hard.

One of my former pastors, Rev. Raymond Boston of First Baptist Church, had a big influence on me. He was instrumental in guiding me as I grew up, entered college and then as I entered the workforce. I confided in him a lot. I'm still a member of First Baptist today. I'm 55 now, but I was only 34 when I held my first elected position. Throughout, I have relied on a lot of experienced leaders in the community. They have been there to mentor me along the way.

TT&C: Would you change anything about the direction you're going? Where would you like the community to be in the next few years?

JH: We are on a good path for growth, safety, and we're making progress as an educated community. We want our school system to continue to educate young people who want to come back to our community to make it better. My hope and prayer is that Dyersburg continues to thrive and be more successful than it is today. I want anybody who wants a job to be able to find work. I am really concerned about our youth, and I want to make sure we always have positive ways of reaching out to them in our community.

TT&C: You are the first vice-president of TML this year. Can you speak about your role in the organization?

JH: TML is an outstanding organization, and I certainly enjoy being a part of it. They do an outstanding job lobbying at the state for initiatives that affect our communities. I got involved because an alderman of 48 years here, Bob Kirk, is very involved in TML. He's been a TML president, and he's been president of the Bond Fund. I'm first vice-president this year, and I'll be president next year. It's an honor, not necessarily for me, but for our community. We have a chance to be a part of an organization that does many good things for our communities. It's important that we come together to create policies, debate issues, or discuss issues of local importance, and it's important for us to speak with one voice. I really do feel honored and blessed to be a part of TML.