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www.TML1.org

Volume 72, Number4

March 8, 2021



TML Virtual Legislative Conference 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m./ CST March 15

It's not too late to register for TML's Virtual Legislative Conference to be held March 15 from 11 a.m to 1 p.m. CST.

We are pleased that Gov. Bill Lee has accepted our invitation to join our program.

Other speakers for the Legislative Conference include Lt. Gov. Randy McNally, House Speaker Cameron Sexton, and Comptroller Jason Mumpower. Senate State and Local Chairman Sen. Richard Briggs and House Local Government Chairman Rep. John Crawford will also participate in our program.

The purpose of this conference is to provide a forum for local officials to become more involved in the legislative process-to learn about some of the legislative issues currently being considered before the General Assembly - and to give city officials an opportunity to hear from the state's top leaders on what they perceive to be the state's most eminent priorities.

The TML staff works hard to advocate on behalf of city governments, but our success depends greatly on your involvement throughout the legislative session.

Registration is currently underway. This is a free event, and all municipal officials and staff are encouraged to tune in.

To register, go to <u>https://</u> www.tml1.org/2021-tml-legislative-conference.

Save the Dates!



Gov. Bill Lee



Sen. Randy McNally Lt. Gov. and Senate Speaker



Rep. Cameron Sexton House Speaker

TML Annual Conference Sept. 18 - 21, 2021 Chattanooga

With the uncertainty that the Coronavirus still presents and the risks that it imposes to our public health, the Executive Committee of the Tennessee Municipal League Board of Directors agreed that it is in





Small airports have big economic impact

By KATE COIL TML Communications Specialist

Whether its people or packages, flying the friendly skies has a massive economic impact on the state of Tennessee and nowhere is this more felt than in smaller and mid-size cities.

A recent Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) study on the economic impact of aviation found that the industry generates \$40 billion worth of economic benefits to the state and employs more than 220,000 people. While the eight airports located in Chattanooga, Knoxville, Memphis, and Nashville spur billions of dollars in impact on their own, the bulk of the economic impact generated



the best interest of our membership to reschedule TML's 2021 Annual Conference for a time later in the year.

With this in mind and with the support of the TML Board, TML staff worked to secur new dates - Sept. 18-21, 2021 - at the Chattanooga Convention Center.

So please mark your calendars to save the dates. We will provide more program information in the upcoming months.

Tennessee Urban Forestry Council helps connect cities, trees, and people

By KATE COIL

With spring right around the corner, the Tennessee Urban Forestry Council (TUFC) is eager to work with municipalities across the state on programs and initiatives that will enhance and benefit their communities.

Ashley Kite-Rowland is an urban and community forestry coordinator who works with the Tennessee Urban Forestry Council as well as a liaison for the Tennessee Division of Forestry. She said there is often a misconception that her organization only works with major metro areas.

"I live in Martin, which has a population of around 11,000. We have a tree board, we have two arboreta, and we are starting a food forest through our tree board," she said. "It doesn't matter how big a community it is as long as there are people there who want to make things happen. We are the place where people, buildings, and trees all come together."

Kite-Rowland said TUFC works with organizations like the Tennessee Environmental Council, who sponsor Tennessee Tree Day on March 20, and the Arbor Day Foundation's Tree City USA program, to educate communities on the benefits of trees as well as support local tree boards, arboreta, municipal planners, and other projects.

She said one of the organization's main goals is bringing various groups together to share resources, develop new programs, and connect through meetings,



With spring approaching, Tennesseans have plenty of opportunities to plant trees in their own communities. Tennessee Tree Day is celebrated on March 20 with Arbor Day on April 30. The Tennessee Urabn Forestry Council (TUFC) has resources that can connect people with tree planting programs as well as provides educational material about the benefits of trees in cities both big and small.

such as their annual conference in October and the webinar series the organization is presently putting on. One of the things TUFC is most known for is its work with local tree boards.

"I'm actually the president of my local tree board," Kite-Rowland said. "Our goal is to give those boards the tools to advocate, to get ordinances in place, and to promote tree planting and the care of trees once they are planted. We also help them access more development opportunities and connect them to educational resources that we develop or can find. We are connected to states and councils all across the country, so we can bring in information from other places and get them out to areas across Tennessee."

The organization also works with municipal foresters across the state.

"We are trying to organize a time to bring everyone together so it's not just us pushing down information," she said. "We want to create a network for the municipal foresters so they can come together, share ideas, resources, and energy, and help support the development of community forests."

See TREES on Page 3

A FedEx plane lands at the Millington-Memphis Airport in Memphis. Serving as a backup location for the shipping giant's operations based at the Memphis International Airport, the MIllington airport has seen exponential growth as the state's shipping and logistics industry has expanded.

in the state -51.25% – comes from the 70 airports operated in and by smaller municipalities.

These facilities generate \$20.5 billion in economic impact, offering services for both major corporations and locally-owned small companies. As the economy becomes more globalized, access to a local airport is becoming a must have for many businesses of all sizes.

FREIGHT AND CARGO

One of the biggest jobs for many of the state's regional airports is cargo and freight shipping services. The TDOT study found the top commodities shipped via air in the state were pharmaceutical products, transportation equipment, precision instruments and apparatus, electronic equipment and components, and textiles and leather. Transportation and warehousing are the top aviation-reliant industry in the state followed by retail trade. Freight and cargo services from airports support an additional 82,000 jobs and \$19 billion worth of economic impact.

The growth of cargo and freight aviation services can be best exemplified by the growth of the Millington-Memphis Airport (NQA), which has gone hand-in-hand with the growth of Memphis-based shipping giant FedEx. While Millington has a population of a little more than 11,000 residents, the city still manages to operate the airport with the third-biggest economic impact of any in West Tennessee.

Millington-Memphis Airport Executive Director Roy Remington said cargo is big business for the facility.

"The biggest user of our airport is FedEx," he said. "They are the largest aviation user in the state of Tennessee. We fill a unique role in that we are the backup airport for their hub at the Memphis International Airport. We have an air traffic control services and have an aircraft rescue and firefighting station that is staffed with specially trained firefighters to respond to aircraft incidents. Those services help support the ability to take overflow aircraft or aircraft that can't get into Memphis due to weather. We offer that redundancy so they can make their deliveries on schedule."

After Chattanooga's Lovell Field, the Tullahoma Regional Airport (THA) generates the most money of all the TDOT study's Region 2 airports with an economic impact of more than \$21 million. THA Manager Jon Glass said airport officials are often all hands-on deck at the drop of a hat whenever a local business needs cargo service.

"It's sometimes hard to predict when we will receive cargo, but we handle quite a bit," Glass said. "Mainly, we see a lot of use from the local auto part manufacturers. We usually receive cargo when a company gets behind or something breaks. We have received cargo 12 nights in a row and then have no cargo for a month. We are still on call 24/7, and I've been out there at 1 or 2 a.m. unloading cargo myself."

The reason for this is that a cargo shipment - ranging from goods and services to parts - can mean big bucks for local business.

"It's really important that we can support our local companies," Glass said. "When a factory shuts down, it can cost them hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost time. If they need a part from Texas, we can get it to them in two to three hours and get them back up and running."

Located centrally between the cities of Bristol, Johnson City, and Kingsport, Tri-Cities Regional Airport (TRI) serves not See AIRPORTS on Page 3





CHURCH HILL

A long-awaited \$1.6 million park project in Church Hill is finally moving forward after Norfolk Southern Railroad announced it would grant permission for construction of a public railroad crossing at the park entrance. The Church Hill Board of Mayor and Alderman has already awarded the construction contract to Goins Rash Cain, Inc. of Kingsport with work slated to begin in April. The wait for the construction of the crossing has held up the park project for the past five years after the city of Church Hill purchased 65 acres of land for the new park in 2015. The parcel is bordered by the railroad, Holliston Mills Road, and the Holston River. The first phase of construction for the park includes the railroad crossing as well as a gymnasium, paved roadways, and parking. Eventually, the city hopes to expand the park to include multiple indoor sports facilities, ballfields, and walking trails.

CLARKSVILLE

Hankook Tire will begin Phase 2 of the expansion of its Clarksville tire plant, which is expected to bring nearly \$1 billion in total investment and double the plant's annual production capacity to 10 million tires. Officials said one of the goals of the new expansion is to increase the plant's production from 6,000 tires per day to 10,000 per day, enough to generate 24 daily shipments out of the plant. The South Korean-based company will invest almost \$91 million in the plant for the construction of a new building on its current facility's campus and an additional \$270 million for maintenance. The company said an unspecified number of new jobs will also be added as a result of the expansion. The plant presently employs just under 1,000 and operates 1.5 million square feet of manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, and administrative facilities on its Clarksville campus.

in 1911, Franke is headquartered in Aarburg, Switzerland, and employs 10,500 people in 68 countries.

GOODLETTSVILLE

The city of Goodlettsville, Nashville Electric Service (NES), and streetlighting development firm PATH Company are moving forward with an LED streetlight conversion project for the city. The overall goal of the project is to increase the quality of street lighting as well as reduce annual energy and operational savings. When the installation is complete, the city will see an annual gross savings of nearly \$100,000. The project began 15 months ago and is now progressing to the conversation of 1,124 lights within the city limits. Officials estimate the project will take six weeks to finish with a completion date of late March-early April. Citizens can track the real time progress of the project at https://goodletsville-tn-2119-20. lightedison.com/project-map.

JACKSON

The city of Jackson has been selected for an Urban Transportation Planning Grant from the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT). The grant makes the city eligible to receive up to \$200,000 for planning services for the bicycle, pedestrian, and greenway master plan as part of the city's long-term transportation goals. The goal is for the city to create a livable document that will focus on improving mobility for pedestrian and bicycle use. The main objectives of the plan include existing conditions analysis, establishment of a defined network, identification of improvements, capital plan for implementation, and a design toolbox. The city of Jackson will work on a plan over the next year that will include input from the community and stakeholder meetings to understand visions and set goals.

KNOXVILLE

Global IT and business consulting company CGI is locating new operations in Knoxville, investing \$27 million and creating 300 jobs in the next five years as it locates its eighth U.S. IT delivery center in the city. The Knoxville location will become the newest member of CGI's innovative U.S. delivery center network that will help clients gain access to high quality, U.S.-based IT services, support and solutions. As a core element of its business strategy, CGI offers IT delivery options to its government and commercial industry clients. CGI is partnering with the University of Tennessee at Knoxville on the launch of the IT delivery center and will be working with the university to engage students across interdisciplinary programs in colleges such as the Haslam College of Business and the Tickle College of Engineering. CGI will partner with the university to build a talent pipeline focusing primarily on advanced analytics, cybersecurity and digital transformation through emerging technologies for the new Knoxville facility.

more parking in the city's Snuff District through the use of the building's multi-leveled parking garage. There were also concerns that the blight would hinder other developments in the area, such as the Loews Convention Center Hotel and Renasant Convention Center projects. Funding for the purchase comes from Center City Revenue Corporate's payment-inlieu-of-taxes extension fund. The purchase will have to be approved by the Shelby County Commission.

SEVIERVILLE

Construction has officially begun at the newest fire station for the city of Sevierville. Officials held an official ground breaking ceremony at the site at 122 Prince Street in October, but weather has delayed construction until March. The new station will be a 10,000-squarefoot facility with room for three apparatus bays, an engine, a ladder truck, and a quick response apparatus. Six firefighters will be stationed at the new location, which replaces the former station on Dolly Parton Parkway. The new station will primarily serve the West Main, Old Knoxville Highway, Gist Creek, and downtown areas of Sevierville.

WHITE HOUSE

Officials with the city of White House have approved \$7.8 million for renovations to replace and upgrade the current Billy S. Hobbs Municipal Building. The funds will go toward a new, three-story, 26,000-square-foot municipal facility set in a campus-type environment on the corner of College Street and Highway 31 West. The new complex will house a senior center with updated amenities, a new boardroom for city boards and commissions to meet, a break room and outdoor patio for city employees, and new offices for the city's parks, administration, human resources, finance, and planning departments. Plans call for the demolition of portions of the present municipal facility, which is located in the former White House School built in 1940. City officials hope the new facility can keep the gymnasium from the old facility but add on new restrooms, storage space and a warming kitchen. The municipal complex will retain the name of Billy S. Hobbs, who was

Chattanooga welcomes first 3D-printed building facade



Photo by Matt Hamilton, Chattanooga Times-Free Press

Chattanooga will soon be home to one of the first 3D-printed building facades in the world as crews work to construct the new branch location for the Tennessee Valley Federal Credit Union. The unique wave design created by Chattanooga robotics and design company Branch Design is located at 125 West 20th Street. The façade and company logo were both created entirely through the use of 3D laser printers, which allows for a variety of designs to be made in ways that use less waste and conserve energy.

Hohenwald sanctuary mourns North American's second-oldest elephant



Hohenwald's Elephant Sanctuary in Tennessee recently announced the passing of Asian Elephant Shirley, who at 72 was the second-oldest elephant residing in North America. Born in Sumatra in 1948, Shirley was captured from the wild and sold to a traveling circus. During this time, she survived capture by the forces of Fidel Castro, a highway accident that killed two other elephants, and the sinking of a ship that left her with burns on her back and the loss of part of her right ear. In 1977, she was sent to live at the Louisiana Purchase Zoo and Gardens where she remained for 22 years. Finally, she arrived at The Elephant Sanctuary in 1999, reuniting with Jenny, an elephant she had performed with at circuses nearly a quarter of a century earlier. Matriarch of the sanctuary's herd, Shirley resided there for 21 years. The Elephant Sanctuary has asked those who want to memorialize Shirley to make a donation in her honor at shop.elephants.com/give.

located in Covington. The Baltzer family owned the facility for 60 years and were keen supporters of local youth sports programs. Baltzer field was constructed in the early 1960s through donations from local companies and the Covington Jaycees. It has also been used by local high schools as their home field, but has since fallen into disrepair. Donations to restore the field are being raised through the Covington Parks Foundation as well as through local sales tax revenue.

An anonymous donor has given

the city of Covington \$10,000 to

help fund the restoration of the

city's Baltzer Field. The ballfield

located within Cobb Parr Park

was named for L.O. Baltzer, the

former owner and operator of the

Coca-Cola Bottling Company

FAYETTEVILLE

COVINGTON

Franke Foodservice Systems will expand its Fayetteville operations, creating 56 jobs. Franke is presently in the midst of a \$1.3 million investment to expand and making improvements to its operations, including the addition of woodworking capability to its core stainless-steel fabrication activities. Franke specializes in the design and manufacture of foodservice equipment to equip major restaurant chains with everything from workstations to entire facilities. Franke also distributes replacement equipment and supplies to customers globally from its facilities in the U.S., Europe and Asia. Founded in Switzerland

Tennessee Town & City (ISSN 00403415 USPS 539420) is published semi-monthly except in the months of June and December 19 times per year by Tennessee Municipal League, 226 Anne Dallas Dudley Blvd, Suite 710, Nashville TN 37219-1894 Subscription rates: \$6 per year to mem-bers, \$15 to nonmembers, \$1 a copy. Periodicals Postage Paid at Nashville TN POSTMASTER:Send address changes to ennessee Town & City, 226 Anne Dallas Dudley Blvd, Suite 710, Nashville TN 37219-1894. Official publication of the Fennessee Municipal League. Publisher: Anthony Haynes (ahaynes@TML1.org) Editor: Carole Graves (cgraves@TML1. org; Phone: 615-255-6416. Advertising: Publisher reserves the right to reject any advertising deemed unacceptable. Fax classified ads to TT&C: Attention Carole Graves at 615-255-4752, or e-mail cgraves@ TML1.org. Fax advertising copy to TT&C Attention Debbie Kluth at 615-255-4752 or e-mail to dkluth@ TML1.org. Opinions expressed by non League officials or staff do not necessarily reflect policies of TML.

MEMPHIS

The Memphis City Council has voted to purchase the building at 100 North Main Street to the tune of \$15.5 million. The structure is the tallest building in the city with 37 floors. Completed in 1965, the property was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2015, the same year it was condemned by the Shelby County Environmental Court. City officials in favor of the vote said the purchase would help redevelop the blighted property as well as offer the first mayor of White House when the city was incorporated in 1971, and former principal of the school that became the municipal facility.

Tennessee cities see some of nation's highest job growth despite pandemic

Seven Tennessee municipalities managed some of the highest rates of job growth in the nation despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, a new study has found.

The research by financial planning website 24/7 Wall Street found that Knoxville, Morristown, Chattanooga, Cleveland, Jackson, Clarksville, and Johnson City were among the top 30 cities that have maintained positive job growth despite the pandemic.

Knoxville ranked third on the list with an employment increase of 2.8% between February and November 2020. Overall, Knoxville saw an estimated 19,488 jobs added during that period. Professional and business services were the fastest-growing sectors for the city.

Morristown was ranked seventh overall with a 1.9% increase in employment during the study period. The city saw an increase of 1,778 jobs in its labor force with the education and health services industry seeing the largest growth of jobs.

Chattanooga ranked 10th on the list with an employment increase of 1.7% and adding 8,175 new jobs during the study period. Education and health services also saw the biggest growth in Chattanooga.

Just out of the top 10, **Cleveland** ranked 11th for job growth with an increase in employment of 1.7%. The city saw a labor force increase of 2,026 jobs with leisure and hospitality seeing the largest growth of any sector.

Coming in at 15th on the list was **Jackson** with an employment increase of 1% and an addition of 2,106 jobs. The professional and business services sector saw the biggest growth in the city.

Clarksville was ranked 17th on the list with a 0.8% increase in employment and the addition of

2,919 new jobs to the labor force. Trade, transportation, and utilities saw the biggest increase in jobs in Clarksville.

At 28th, **Johnson City** saw no change in its employment rate, but did add 1,762 new jobs between February and November. The financial services sector saw the biggest growth in the city.

Tennessee was one of only 11 states with cities who made it onto the list. Economists believe this may be because companies are moving to smaller markets as a reuslt of the pandemic.

The information was compiled based on statistics including the change in municipal unemployment rates between February and November 2020 as well as changes to the total size of the labor force, median household income, and amount of people employed. All information was gathered from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.



TENNESSEE TOWN & CITY

Tennessee's small airports have big economic impact

AIRPORTS from Page 1

only Tennessee but other states with two Tennessee counties as well as the cities of Kingsport, Johnson City, Bristol, and Bristol, Va., all appointing members to the airport's board. Executive Director Gene Cossey said many are unaware that even commercial flights, like those that land at TRI, can also be used for cargo.

"There is a lot of freight shipped in and overnight type stuff through the commercial airlines," he said. "A lot of people don't realize these airlines have extra capacity beyond passengers and have extra cargo capacity. Itemscan be shipped via those airlines especially when they need to get here quickly or overnight. We see things like bank letters, real estate transfers, and all kinds of things that aren't large cargo items."

TRI also has the added benefit of allowing companies to bring in cargo from other countries directly to the region.

"We have a foreign trade zone and customs and border clearance station here that allows people to directly ship to the airport on charter services," Cossey said. "Cargo gets chartered a lot too, so we can receive and ship directly here. This also allows corporate aircraft to fly in directly instead of having to stop first at another airport. That is very important for companies that do a lot of international travel."

CORPORATERECRUITMENT

With the economy becoming even more globalized, ease of access to an airport is becoming a bigger need for national and international companies. As a result, corporate flights - both chartered and non-chartered - are a main focus of many of the state's airports.

"We live in a global economy, and we need fast, easy, and convenient transportation to be a part of that economy," Cossey said. "We are definitely a part of a much larger world, and when you think of it from a systems dynamic, we are one of

the k e y links in a system that connects the world to the Tri-Cities region. Without that connection, it would be difficult for our area to function in that world."

Kingsport-headquartered Eastman is one such example of an international company that relies on air travel.

"Everyone – even if you don't fly - gets a benefit from the economic impact here," Cossey said. "Not only do you benefit from the dollars that come in from travelers and the people who work here and contribute to our economy, but it's the businesses that couldn't be here without an airport like that. Eastman is one of our largest companies in the whole Tri-Cities area, and it would be very difficult for them to continue their operations without an airport nearby. If you don't have a way for people to travel, it's hard to attract those types of businesses. When you think about it, everyone in one way or another benefits from having an airport in their community."

Often serving as a "reliever" airport for Nashville's busy BNA, Smyrna is actually the third largest airport in Tennessee and is the state's busiest general aviation airport. John R. Black, executive director of the Smyrna Airport said Smyrna's smaller size and proximity to Nashville has made it a choice for numerous corporations that want good service without the hassle of visiting a big international airport.

"Our primary service here is corporate aviation," he said. "That's how business America moves. We have an air traffic control tower and full service, which makes us very attractive to corporate aviation. There are a lot of good amenities here. A business can hit two or three stores in one day and then be back home. Airports are like a time machine for



Freight and cargo makes up \$19 billion of the \$40 billion-a-year economic impact local airports have on the state of Tennessee's economy. From shipping to corporate travel, local airports are a key ingredient for economic development.

corporations. We have tripled our economic impact in the past nine years because corporate aviation is using the airport more and our facilities have grown here."

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Remington said smaller airports have seen more corporate traffic through charter flights.

"They have been coming through those general aviation airports because they feel it is a safer environment," he said. "They are less crowded, and there is less exposure. People have talked about the shift to Zoom and teleconferencing, and while I think that will be a part of business going forward, at the end of the day, you can't replace the value of a face-to-face meeting. People who make deals and build trust need that. I think airports, especially community airports, fill that role now and will fill it in an even greater way in the future as larger carriers adjust their networks to the demand."

Remington said airports are

just as essential as other modes of transportation.

"Just like having a highway go through your town or having a rail line serve your town, airports are a way for people to access your community," he said. "If you don't have a way for people to get there, you aren't in the game at all. We are economic drivers. You can have a manufacturing company based in your town that employs local residents that is headquartered globally. An airport provides an immediate touchpoint where they can come in, handle the business they need to, and then get back to other locations. They can meet with vendors and suppliers all from the reach of their local community airport."

As a result, local airports are a valuable economic development tool.

"I work with the local chamber of commerce all the time about recruiting business, not just businesses locating in the airport," Black said. "We help recruit businesses throughout Rutherford County and even throughout Middle Tennessee who choose to fly in here. We also work with the state economic development folks."

Businesses are locating at airports as well. More than 60 business tenants employing around 750 people are located at Smyrna Airport, and not all tenants are part of the aviation industry.

Cossey said TRI is also developing its own aerospace park to draw related industries in the area.

"The park will be completely finished in the spring, and we expect as we start getting tenants in the park who are employing people and contributing to the aerospace industry, we will see an even larger economic impact than we've seen," he said.

THE FUTURE OF FLIGHT

As business continues to grow in Tennessee, local airports expect to play a major role in that growth. Glass said Tennessee's location makes it ideal for industries who use aviation.

"Aviation is such a large industry that moves people and material all around the country," he said. "We live in the eastern part of the U.S. where about a third of the population is within a three- or fourhour flight from our airport. We knew we made a good economic impact and are very proud of that. Aviation is never going away. Airports will continue to play a very vital role in our nation's economy."

In addition to growing outside

Tennessee Urban Forestry Council connects cities, trees, and people

TREES from Page 1 **Certified Arboreta program**

TUFC also offers the Tennessee Certified Arboreta program, which works to preserve the biodiversity of trees in the state. Arboreta certified through the program are located on university campuses, at schools, city parks, churches, and in neighborhoods.

"The arboretum program is typically in public spaces, though we have some neighborhoods involved in the program as well," Kite-Rowland said. "You have to have at least 30 distinct species of trees to certify as a Level 1 arboretum. It's not that hard to qualify. To be a Level 4 arboretum – which is the highest level, you have to have 120 tree species, and we do have Level 4 arboreta in the state." Kite-Rowland said many communities have areas that qualify for arboretum status and may not realize it. There are also plenty of ways to expand the diversity of trees in an area to qualify. "Tennessee Tree Day gives out 10 different types of trees every year, and they change every year," she said. "There are also layers to a tree canopy. They can range from oaks at the top of the canopy to dogwoods and redbuds that are in the understory. Some communities are also developing food forests that are growing fruit and nut trees. The foods from those trees can then be used by the community or donated to food pantries."

program works to honor and preserve trees that have had important roles in local history.

A tree classified as a "historic tree" may mark the place a treaty was signed or an important meeting was held while a "landmark tree" is one that was often used as a local landmark or gathering spot. "heritage trees" are former trees on the list who have since fallen. "We don't always think about it, but trees are a part of history," Kite-Rowland said. "The older trees, especially, have seen so much. Old trees have a different place in the community. When people think about their community, trees can play an important role in how people envision a space. This program can also be a way to preserve these historic trees during times of development."



eastern red cedar has been the state evergreen tree since 2012.

There are multiple benefits to having an arboretum in a community.

"The arboretum isn't just about a diversity of trees - which is good for wildlife and the environment," she said. "It's also educational because all of the trees have to be tagged with the trees common and scientific names. That can be educational both for the people developing the arboretum as well as the folks who are visiting. We encourage municipalities to have tours or activities in those spaces, and we can connect them with curriculum to utilize that space. We really want it to be used as an outdoor learning opportunity across generations."

Kite-Rowland said TUFC is willing to work with any community that wants to create a certified arboretum and can connect those interested in the program with local organizations and help access free or low-cost trees.

Landmark, Heritage and Historic Tree program

Another one of the programs offered by TUFC honors specific trees and their roles in communities. The Landmark, Heritage and Historic Tree

Some of the trees in the program include willow trees planted by President Andrew Johnson in Greeneville, a tree outside Medina where Daniel Boone carved his name, and a group of trees in Elizabethton grown from seeds that were sent aboard the Apollo 14 space mission.

Kite-Rowland said there are numerous benefits trees can have on communities, ranging from decreasing pollution in local air and water to improving health outcomes for individuals with asthma.

Trees in communities benefit public health at the individual level as well as bring cohesion to a community," she said. "People are more likely to gather in areas that have trees. People spend more money in areas that have trees. There is also research that found that when trees were planted in public housing communities, people spent more time outside, children played outside more, and violence in those communities decreased. Studies have shown having trees in the area can improve mental health outcomes by decreasing depression and anxiety. There is also something known as the island effect in cities. Having trees helps cool a city."

Overall, Kite-Rowland said the only thing needed to start reaping these benefits in your own community is a desire to help out.

"Trees do matter in your community. It's not just about giving the access to trees; it's about giving the knowledge to plant and care for them," she said. "A mature tree has so much more value than a sapling. Just putting a tree in the ground is the first step. Sustaining a healthy community forest takes a community. You don't have to be educated about trees to get involved. My background is not in forestry, but I

There are **178 tree species** native to the state of Tennessee. The biodiversity of trees found in East Tennessee's Appalachian Mountains is second only to that of tropical rainforests.

As of 2020, there are **45 Tree** City USA communities in Tennessee. Norris is the oldest Tree City USA with 41 years in the program.



TREE CITY USA The town of Townsend was

founded in 1901 by Pennsylvania lumberman Wilson B. Townsend as a company town to serve the railroad and timber mill he had built in Tuckaleechee Cove. Within 10 years, the town was producing 120,000 board feet of wood a day.



The oldest tree in Tennessee is believed to be a white oak located in McMinnville. The tree is estimated to be around 371 years old.

Approximately 52% of Tennessee roughly 14 million acres of the state - are forested. The state is home to an estimated 284.1 million trees. An estimated 21.8 million of those trees grow in urban areas.

Before European settlers arrived in the state, American chestnut trees made up 25% of Tennesse's forests. Today, the species is nearly extinct.



The tallest tree in Tennessee is believed to be the Boogerman Pine, an eastern white pine located in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. At last measurement, the tree was 57.55 meters tall.



Memphis was known as the "hardwood capital of the world" because it was home to as many as 40 sawmills. The city supplied the vast majority of the nation's furniture market in the early 1900s.

There are 28 Christmas tree farms located across the state of Tennessee, according to the Tennessee Christmas Tree Growers association.



love trees. Even if you just have enthusiasm and a love for trees, you can make a difference in your community."

If there is a particular issue or need a community has, Kite-Rowland said TUFC is eager to help. Contact her at 615-638-8027 or email info@tufc.com.

business, Black said Tennessee is also ideally situated to advance the aeronautics industry itself.

"In Middle Tennessee in particular, we have a sort of corridor of aviation talent and future growth," he said. "You can start at Fort Campbell where there are a lot of folks with aviation experience. Austin Peay and TSU have aviation programs, and on the engineering side Vanderbilt and Middle Tennessee State University have programs. MTSU has one of the top programs in the country. You have the Arnold Engineering Development Center in Tullahoma with a lot of aviation-related talent there, and then across the border in Huntsville there is a lot of aerospace technology. I think in the future, this corridor is really going to play a big part in attracting new aerospace industry to Tennessee."

Cossey said he hopes the TDOT study will show not only how much airports economically impact their local communities but also how important it is for communities to support those airports in turn.

"As the state continues to look at ways to support airports, grow airports, and grow regions around our state and in turn make the state stronger on a national and international scale, it is important to realize how each airport has an impact on its own region and the state as a whole," Cossey said. "I'm very hopeful for the state of Tennessee, especially post-COVID. States like ours have more growth capacity, and I think a lot of people are looking at places to go where they can operate in a better business environment, pay less taxes, and have a place for their families. If we strengthen and build our airports, that will turn around and strengthen and build our economy. Having a strong, viable airport is just as important as having good internet, good healthcare, and good schools.'

For more information on the TDOTAirport Economic Impact study, visit https://www.tasp2040.com/.



Tommy Gregg, mayor of Mosheim for the past eight years, has resigned his position due to health con-



Tommy Gregg

cerns. Gregg has a total of 27 years of service with Mosheim's municipal government as both an alderman and mayor. He took over the position of mayor in 2012 when his predecessor Billy Myers became ill. Gregg initially intended to retire in 2020, but decided to run again when no one else applied to run for the office. Alderman David Myers has been appointed to serve as acting mayor of Mosheim until the end of Gregg's term in 2022. Alderman James Foshie will serve as vice mayor and Marc Campbell was selected to fill the alderman seat vacated by Gregg's resignation.

Roger Haley, former city manager of Murfreesboro, died Friday, Feb. 19, 2021, from complica-

tions from



Roger Haley

COVID-19 at the age of 75. Haley's wife, Holly Sims Haley, was also treated for the virus. Haley served as city manager of Murfreesboro from 1989 until 2009, and before that on the Murfreesboro City Council from 1978 until 1982, and again from 1985 until 1989. Haley was well known for his involvement in several major economic development projects for the city including the Gateway, the Avenue Murfreesboro, and the Medical Center Parkway project. He also expanded parks and recreation opportunities through the creation and expansions of projects like Barfield Crescent Park, SportsCom, the Stones River Greenway, and Patterson Park and Community Center. Haley was elected to the TML Board of Directors in 1989 and served as vice chairman of the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund. He was also named city manager of the year by TCMA in 2009. A graduate of MTSU, Ha-



PEOPLE

Burt Johnson addition to

serving as city manager. Before coming to work with the city of Soddy-Daisy, Johnson was a senior tax accountant at Joseph Decosimo and Company for seven years. Johnson holds a bachelor's degree in accounting from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.



Mark Ledbetter

Brown resigned after 17 years of service. Ledbetter previously served the city as vice mayor and has served on the city council since 2015. After a tie election, Ledbetter was selected to fill the seat left by Councilman Adam Nelson. Ledbetter will hold the seat of mayor until the city's next municipal election can be held in August. Councilwoman Kim Shelton will take over Ledbetter's duties as vice mayor and Richard Hunt was selected to fill the vacancy on the council left by Brown's resignation until the upcoming election.

Rachel

Slusser has

been named

the new fi-

nance direc-

tor for the

city of Port-

land, taking

over from

retiring di-



rector Doug Yoeckel. Slusser comes to Portland from the city of Greenbrier where she has worked for more than 13 years. She began her career in government as an accounting specialist for the city of White House in 2005 and worked there until 2007 when she joined the city of Greenbrier's finance department. She served as head of the finance department, city recorder, and often as city administration. Slusser holds an associate's degree in accounting from Volunteer State Community College and a bachelor's degree from Trevecca Nazarene University in 2007. She also holds a master's degree in public administration from Walden University and is a Certified Municipal Finance Officer (CMFO).

Smyrna police officer honored by DOJ, U.S. DA

Smyrna Police Department Detective Kevin Krieb received the Award for Excellence in Law Enforcement from U.S. Department of Justice and the Office of the U.S. Attorney for the Middle District of Tennessee.

Krieb was presented the award by U.S. Attorney Don Cochran for his role in a nine-month investigation that resulted in the indictment of five members of a fraudulent oxycodone drug trafficking organization.

The award is given to officers and agents who exceed the call of duty to keep their communities safe.

Krieb began his law enforcement career as an officer with the Vanderbilt University Police Department before joining the Smyrna Police Department in 2002. He was most recently promoted to detective sergeant of narcotics and serves on the department's DEA task force.



Smyrna Police Department Detective Kevin Krieb, left, receives the Award for Excellence in Law Enforcement from U.S. Attorney Don Cochran, right.

Oak Ridge firefighters earn international designations

Two Oak Ridge firefighters have joined the ranks of on 548 Fire Officer (FO) designees from the Commission on Professional Credentialing (CPC).

Richard Cox, who served as a fire captain and paramedic, and Shay West, who is a firefighter, EMT, and engineer, also join 11 members of the Oak Ridge Fire Department to hold such designations.

The Designation program is a voluntary program designed to recognize individuals who demonstrate their excellence in seven measured components including experience, education, professional development, professional contributions, association membership, community involvement and technical competence. In addition, all applicants are required to identify a future professional development plan.

The FO designation program uses a comprehensive peer review model to evaluate candidates seeking the credential. The Commission on Professional Credentialing awards the designation only after



an individual successfully meets all of the organization's stringent criteria.

"I am so proud of Richard and Shay for accomplishing this achievement. We are very lucky to have them in our department and for their dedication to fire service," Oak Ridge Fire Chief Travis Solomon said.

Achieving this designation signifies both Cox's and West's Shay West

commitment to their career in the fire and emergency services.

This professional designation is valid for three years. Maintaining the designation requires recipients to show continued growth in the areas of professional development, professional contributions, active association membership and community involvement as well as adhere to a strict code of professional conduct.

Downham joins MTAS as new consultant

Chuck Downham has joined the University of Tennessee's Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) as a municipal management consultant based in the Middle Tennessee area.

Downham officially began his duties with MTAS on March 1. Downham has more than 30 years of management experience in both the private and public sectors, with more than half of that experience coming from working in various municipalities across Tennessee. Prior to joining MTAS, he served as assistant city administrator for the city of Spring Hill for nearly four years. He served as growth management director for the city of Lakeland in 2003, planning director for the town of Collierville from 1998 until 2000, and at the city of Tullahoma as a planning and municipal services director from 1986 until 1996 and then as city administrator from 1996 until 1998.

Before joining the municipal staff in Tullahoma, Downham served as a staff planner with the Tennessee Technological Corridor Development Authority, which was also part of his graduate program at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville. Downham also spent 15 years in various managerial roles in the private sector in both the state of Tennessee and Alaska. During this time, he worked at companies including Lend Lease, Littlejohn, S&ME, and Looney Ricks Kiss. He holds a bachelor's degree in urban geography and a mas-





Richard Cox

ley also owned and operated two companies in Murfreesboro: Mr. Tool Rent-All and Murfreesboro Supply Company.

Burt Johnson has been unanimously approved by the board of commissioners to be the new city manager of Soddy-Daisy. Johnson began working with the city in 2011 as the finance director and city recorder. A certified public accountant (CPA) and certi-

Chuck Downham

ter's degree in planning, both from the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. He is also a certified public supervisor through the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

No loan is too large or too small



The city of Milan recently closed on a \$1.5 million fixed-rate loan with the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund (TMBF) issued to finance electric system improvements. Seated L to R: Jason Griggs, superintendent of public utilities; Milan Mayor B.W. Beasley; and Autumn Stewart, city recorder. Standing is Tommy Green, TMBF marketing representative.

See us for your special projects needs. (615) 255-1561



The city of McKenzie has used the TMBF programs since 1987. McKenzie recently closed on three refunding issues in order to lower the rate of interest on the debt. The General Obligation Refunding Bond is in the amount of \$2,648,995 and was placed with a local bank in McKenzie. From L to R Jennifer Waldrup, city recorder; McKenzie Mayor Jill Holland; and Tommy Green, TMBF marketing representative.





The Federal Highway Administration has named five scenic byway routes in Tennessee to the national America's Byways list. The Cumberland Historic Byway, Great River Road National Scenic Byway, Newfound Gap Road Byway, Norris Freeway, and Sequatchie Valley Byway were all new designations to the list. The Cumberland Historic Byway extends from the Cumberland Gap to the Cumberland River, documenting the westward expansion of Tennessee while the Great River Road National Scenic Byway follows the course of the Mississippi River. The Newfound Gap Road Byway covers the mountain pass between Gatlinburg and Cherokee, N.C., while the Norris Freeway was built between Norris Dam and Knoxville to easily transport materials for TVA. The Sequatchie Valley Scenic Byway extends from Crossville to South Pittsburg. The five Tennessee routes added to the list were a part of 49 new byway designations in 28 states across the U.S. including 15 All-American Roads and 34 National Scenic Byways. Presently, there are 184 scenic byways located in 48 states.

The Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR) has suggested the state needs to update maps showing internet coverage before moving forward with expanding broadband access. TACIR found current federal maps that rely on U.S. Census blocks often overstate the availability of high-speed internet, designating rural areas as "covered" when only a single household has access. The report concluded that the Department of Economic and Community Development (TNECD) should follow the map-making lead of Georgia, which found that at least listed as served by the FCC were "at best only partially served. Tennessee ranked 34th among states in broadband coverage, according to the FCC's 2020 broadband deployment report, which itself relied on data taken in 2018. There are still 432,627 Tennesseans living in census blocks where no provider reported the baseline broadband speeds as of December 2019.

255,000 homes and businesses

Changes to the National Flood **Insurance Program (NFIP)** this fall could mean more than 137,000 Tennessee homeowners could see large increases to their flood insurance rates. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is overhauling the NFIP this fall in what is expected to mark the biggest change to how insurance premiums are calculated since the 1970s. Premiums are expected to be tied to the actual flood risk of individual properties through the new model. New date released by the First Street Foundation has suggested insurance premiums for homes located in the most floodprone areas could triple, though most homeowners won't see massive changes and some may even see decreases. Tennessee is home to 19,114 properties within FE-MA's Special Flood Hazard Areas that are mandated to have flood insurance if they have a federally-backed mortgage. Premiums for these homes could increase by 3.6 times to adequately cover their risk under the new model. More than 10% of the state is considered a flood hazard area by current standards, and Tennessee frequently ranks among the top 10 inland states impacted by flooding each year. Scientists have predicted that the state will see frequent and expansive floods in the future due to climate change.

Environmental group raises \$5.25M to protect Chattanooga natural areas

An environmental group is launching a \$5.25 million fund to protect and conserve key natural areas around Chattanooga.

The Open Space Institute (OSI) is using the funds to conserve at least 30,000 acres of forest through the Chattanooga-based Thrive Regional Partnership's Appalachian Landscapes Protection Fund. Joel Houser, OSI's Southeast field coordinator located in Chattanooga, tected lands in the region by 2055 by adding 1 million acres. This coincides with predictions that the Greater Chattanooga area will grow in population by about half a million by the same year.

By preserving the biodiverse region, officials with the organization are hoping to increase travel and tourism revenue for the area, particularly through recreation tourism. Preserving the natural beauty of the area is also a way of preserving the area's history and heritage.

TSSBA makes largest bond sale in history

Tennessee's colleges and universities will benefit from nearly \$112 million in net present value interest cost savings over the next 24 years after the Tennessee State School Bond Authority's (TSSBA) successful sale of \$713.4 million of higher education facilities refunding bonds.

The TSSBA's largest bond sale in history was held during the week of Feb. 8, 2021, and closed on Feb 24. Because of the TSSBA's highly-rated credit, investor interest allowed the authority to reprice most of the maturities of the bonds to at least five basis points lower than the price that was initially offered.

The majority of the bond proceeds will be used to refund, or refinance, previously issued bonds that had formerly financed 111 higher education capital projects. A small portion of the bond proceeds will finance the purchase of an existing bioworks facility for The University of Tennessee Health Science Center in Memphis.

The TSSBA sold \$713.4 million of Series 2021A taxable refunding bonds at a true interest cost of 2.03%. The aggregate net present value savings of \$111.8 million represents 18.5% of the refunded bonds. The bonds have serial and term maturities between 2022 and 2045.

The bonds will be repaid with revenues generated by those projects that were financed by the Tennessee's public higher education institutions.

"The pandemic has caused unique challenges for our state's public colleges and universities," said Comptroller Jason Mumpower. "The savings generated by this sale are unprecedented and will have an



Tennessee State Comptroller Jason Mumpower, left, and Secretary of State Tre Hargett, right, sign off on the largest TSSBA bond sale in history. Colleges and universities across the state will receive \$112 million from the sale.

immediate and lasting impact. Tennessee continues to be a very lowdebt state, and we're fortunate that our fiscal stability is very attractive to investors."

"Tennessee is a well-managed state," said Secretary of State Tre Hargett. "This successful sale is a testament to the conservative fiscal management demonstrated by the governor, the Tennessee General Assembly, and the TSSBA."

"This is yet another example of how Tennessee continues to benefit from smart management of our financial resources and strong fiscal leadership by the Tennessee General Assembly," said Treasurer David Lillard. "Our low debt and high credit rating continue to yield greater savings allowing us to reinvest in Tennesseans."

"Tennessee's commitment to stewardship is again paying off in a big way despite the disruptions from COVID-19," said Gov. Bill Lee. "These funds result in more than \$100 million that directly support critical needs for higher education and I commend Comptroller Mumpower and his team for their work."

"We are grateful that the TSS-BA took the initiative to generate more than a hundred million dollars in savings for Tennessee's higher education institutions," University of Tennessee System President Randy Boyd said. "TSSBA's hard work and diligence will translate into tremendous benefits for our campuses."

State, federal officials agree to shared stewardship

Tennessee's forests will benefit from strengthened partnerships between federal and state agencies following a virtual signing of a Shared Stewardship agreement.

Under Secretary of Agriculture James Hubbard represented USDA and Tennessee's Department of Agriculture Commissioner Charlie Hatcher, Department of Environment and Conservation Commissioner David Salyers, and Wildlife Resources Agency Director Bobby Wilson all signed on behalf of Gov. Bill Lee.

The agreement between US-DA's Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service and the state agencies establishes a framework to improve collaboration, accomplish mutual goals, further common interests, and effectively respond to the increasing



said even more funds could be raised for the project as it continues.

The nonprofit has created a long-range conservation plan for 16 counties located in Southeast Tennessee, Northwest Georgia, and Northeast Alabama.

Areas under the conservation plan include Walden Ridge, Lookout and Pigeon Mountains, Hiwassee River Corridor, Cumberland Plateau, Southern Blue Ridge Mountains, the Appalachians Connector, and Paint Rock Watershed.

Funds for the project were raised through private donations as well as partnerships with the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Lyndhurst Foundation, Riverview Foundation, and Tucker Foundation. OSI will work with land trusts and municipalities on property acquisitions and conservation easements.

The project is part of an overall goal to double the number of pro-

TML Board to meet March 15

Notice is hereby given that the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Municipal League will meet in regular public session on Monday, March 15, 2020, at 9:30 a.m. in the Comptroller's Conference Room located on the second floor of the Cordell Hull Office Building in Nashville, for the purpose of considering and transacting all business that may properly come before said board. Some members of the board may participate in such meeting via ZOOM or by telephonic means, which will be audible to any member of the public attending such meeting. If reasonably possible, an agenda will be available on Friday, March 12, at the offices of the Tennessee Municipal League, 226 Anne Dallas Dudley Blvd., Suite 710, Nashville. Additional information may be obtained from Jackie Gupton, 615-255-6416.

Bond Fund Board to meet March 15

Notice is hereby given that the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund Board of Directors will meet in regular public session on Monday, March 15, 2020, at 8:00 a.m., local time, in the Comptroller's Conference Room located on the second floor of the Cordell Hull Office Building in Nashville, for the purpose of considering and transacting all business that may properly come before said board. Some members of the board may participate in such meeting via ZOOM or by telephonic means, which will be audible to any member of the public attending such meeting. If reasonably possible, an agenda will be available on Friday, March 12, at the offices of TMBF, 226 Anne Dallas Dudley Blvd., Suite 502, in Nashville. Additional information may be obtained at 615-255-1561.

Tennessee's Department of Agriculture Commissioner Charlie Hatcher was one of several state officials who signed a shared stewardship agreement with USDA officials that will help maintain forests across Tennessee and help ensure long-term sustainability in the state.

ecological challenges and natural resource concerns.

This new agreement centers on USDA's commitment to work with states and other partners to use the best available science to identify high-priority forests that require active management, and to ensure the long-term sustainability of public and private lands.

Involved agencies are individually tasked to address a wide range of challenges that negatively impact our state's natural resources. These challenges include human population increase leading to more development, catastrophic storms, droughts, flooding, wildfires, insect and disease outbreaks, invasive species, increased recreational pressures, and a lack of adequate markets to help drive investments in sustainable forest management.

The Shared Stewardship Agreement will foster collaborative planning, priority setting, and actions to address these challenges. Proposed actions include restoring fire-adapted communities and reducing the risk of wildland fire; identifying, managing, and reducing threats to forest and ecosystem health; fostering economic development strategies that keep working forests productive; conserving working forestland; and providing quality outdoor recreational experiences.

The agreement can be found online at <u>www.fs.usda.gov/manag-ing-land/shared-stewardship.</u>

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Advertising: \$9.25 per column inch. No charge to TML members. Send advertising to: Carole Graves: cgraves@ TML1.org.

ACCOUNTING TECHNICIAN/H.R. ASSISTANT

PIPERTON. The city of Piperton has an immediate opening for an accounting technician/H.R. assistant. The successful candidate must have the ability to interact with a variety of city staff, appointed and elected officials, vendors and contractors and possess effective communication (oral and written) and interpersonal skills and attention to detail. Experience with automated applications is desirable; computer literacy and extensive knowledge of Microsoft Office, especially MS Word and Excel, is required. The candidate must have attained a high school diploma or G.E.D., plus a minimum of two years accounting experience. A valid driver's license from state of residence is also required. The individual employed in this position will perform bookkeeping and fiscal work for various financial and accounts management functions as well us all Human Resource functions including payroll processing. The accounting work involves receiving, preparing and processing financial documents; performing accounts payable and/or receivables work; advanced customer service tasks: reconciling accounting transactions; maintaining and balancing accounting ledgers; creating and maintaining accounting databases and automated files; and preparing records, repolts and summaries regarding assigned fiscal operations. Hourly wages will be commensurate with experience. A background check will be conducted. Health insurance and retirement benefit package is provided. Email letter of interest and resume to mgeorgc@pipertontn. com. EOE.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND **RECEIVABLE SPECIALIST**

PUBLIC ENTITY PARTNERS. Public Entity Partners is a public entity risk pool that has been providing risk management and workers compensation, property and casualty insurance services to Tennessee cities and city agencies for nearly 40 years. Public Entity Partners insures more than 90% of the cities in Tennessee and is headquartered in Franklin, TN. The accounts payable and receivable specialist will process and manage the company's accounts payable and receivable online workflow, manual functions, and financial reporting in accordance with company policies and procedures. Strong communication and interpersonal skills are essential as you will be interacting with almost 500 local government members and approximately 2,000 vendors and business partners. Key competencies include: knowledge of and experience in core business operations; creative thinking and problem-solving skills; strong work ethic and results-driven outlook; ability to work cooperatively and collaboratively on a professional level' ability to manage and maintain confidential information with the utmost care, security, and discretion. Bachelor's degree in accounting or related field from an accredited college or university, desired but not required Proficiency in Microsoft Office Suite, Sage 100 and AvidXchange, desired but not required. Minimum of five years of experience in accounts payable and receivable functions. Demonstrated ability to accomplish multiple projects and tasks on deadline. Strong interpersonal, communication, and analytical skills. Technological competency in software applications. Full Job description can be found at pepartners. org. Excellent benefits and retirement plan. Please send cover letter and resume to ctaylor@pepartners.org or Attn: Celeste Taylor, 562 Franklin Rd. Suite 200 Franklin, TN 37069. Salary range: \$65,000 -\$75,000 (DOE) EOE/Drug-free workplace. **BUILDING CODE INSPECTOR III** GALLATIN. The city of Gallatin is seeking applications for a building codes inspector III. The purpose of this position is to perform intermediate technical work in the inspection of residential, commercial, industrial, and public facilities for compliance with building, plumbing, mechanical, gas piping and electrical codes, and other ordinances. May be assigned specific inspection areas, and other duties per position. Performs field inspections of residential, commercial, industrial, and public facilities for compliance with building, plumbing, mechanical, gas piping and electrical codes, and other ordinances. Conducts building and related inspections. Prepares and maintaining inspection records and files. Receives and investigates complaints regarding non-compliant construction and inspects existing buildings for hazardous conditions or systems failure. Receives and resolves complaints regarding defective construction and handles enforcement issues. Researches manufacturing specs for compliance with standards. Communicates findings. Inspects existing building for hazardous conditions, structural failure. Reports hazardous or life-threatening conditions to the building official and assists with the complaint as assigned. High school diploma/equivalent. Must have 5 years recent construction related experience. Valid driver's license. IAE/or equivalent Electrical Certifications required. Must have six (6) or more I.C.C. certifications as identified by and beneficial to the City Must meet TN requirements for plumbing, mechanical, and/or building. To apply: go to www.gallatintn.gov or https://cogselfserve.gallatin-tn.gov/MSS/ employmentopportunities/default.aspx. Position open until filled. EOE / Drugfree workplace.

plan review, responding to public requests for service and resident's concerns, enforcing city ordinances, and assisting the building official as necessary. At least one ICC commercial certification is required. Remaining ICC commercial certifications must be obtained and maintained within one year (building, plumbing, and mechanical inspector) of hire. Must have five years code enforcement/inspection experience, including two years supervisory experience. Valid driver's license is required. Background check will be conducted. Salary is commensurate with experience. Medical and retirement benefit package is provided. Applications may be obtained at the Piperton Administrative Office at 3725 Hwy 196 Suite B, or at www.pipertontn.com/jobs. Return application and resume to tjohnson@ pipertontn.com. EOE.

BUILDING INSPECTOR/CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

PIPERTON. The city of Piperton has an opening for a full-time building inspector/ code enforcement officer. Duties will include residential construction inspections (building, plumbing, and mechanical), record maintenance, responding to public requests for service and resident's concerns, and enforcing city ordinances. Must hold or obtain and maintain ICC Certifications within one year (building, plumbing, and mechanical inspector). Working knowledge of ICC and local ordinances, legislation, rules and regulations is preferred. Computer proficiency and excellent communication skills are a must. High school diploma or equivalent and valid driver's license is required. Priority will be given to certified inspectors or applicants with current background in building or related trades.Background check will be conducted. Salary \$38-\$45k and is commensurate with experience. Medical and retirement benefit package is provided. Applications may be obtained at the Piperton Administrative Office at 3725 Hwy 196 Suite B, or at www.pipertontn. com/jobs. Return application and resume to tjohnson@pipertontn.com. EOE

CITY ADMINISTRATOR

SPRING HILL. The city of Spring Hill (Pop. 46,000+) is seeking a city management professional to be their next city administrator. The city administrator is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. The city has a \$90.55M overall budget with 261 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees. Candidates should possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in public administration, business administration, or a field closely related to municipal management and a minimum of eight years of progressively increasing city management experience, or any combination of education and municipal experience that demonstrates proficiency in managing a complex municipal corporation. Residency within the city limits will be a requirement. A position profile is available at www.springhilltn. org. Salary commensurate with education, experience and marketplace conditions. Send cover letter and resume immediately by electronic mail to the University of Tennessee's Municipal Technical Advisory Service, attention Gary Jaeckel, at gary. jaeckel@tennessee.edu. Initial review of applications will occur in April/May, 2021. Please direct questions to Gary Jaeckel, MTAS Management Consultant, at the same email address.

CLAIMS SYSTEM ADMINISTRATOR

PUBLIC ENTITY PARTNERS . Under the direction of the Director of IT, the Claims System Administrator is responsible to: Support, enhance, secure, optimize, and maintain the Origami Claims Management System and supporting systems. Ensure data integrity and that the system maintains a high level of security, performance, and availability. Work closely with any IT Staff & End Users (internal, external, or third party) to resolve any issues. Provide any assistance needed to access PEP data sources to meet needs and protect sensitive information. Work closely with Adjusters and other Claims staff to understand processes and workflows, then make recommendations to automate these processes to gain efficiencies. Qualifications include: undergraduate degree in a computer related field from an accredited college or university, and six years of experience in the computer-related or information technology field, or a substantially- equivalent combination of education and experience is required. Experience maintaining, optimizing, and securing Microsoft Windows network systems. Experience supporting; Microsoft Windows 10 systems and peripherals; Microsoft Office \ 365 suite; Microsoft Windows Servers \Networks. Experience using and supporting any of the following applications preferred but not required: Origami Risk Claim System; HTML \ XML; Microsoft SQL \ SSIS Packages; C#; Microsoft Visual Studio; Scripting; PowerShell. Full Job description can be found at pepartners.org. Salary range \$90,000 - \$102,000 DOE. Excellent benefits and retirement plan. Please send cover letter and resume to ctaylor@pepartners. org or Attn: Celeste Taylor, 562 Franklin Rd. Suite 200 Franklin, TN 37069.

COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

SPRING HILL. The city of Spring Hill seeks to fill the full time, exempt position of communications director. He or she will develop, implement and maintain the city information program, and oversee public communications throughout the organization. The director will serve as the city spokesperson and primary news media liaison. He or she will develop and implement a cohesive communications strategy. Manage all news media relations, serving as city spokesperson; write news releases, and other web and social media content; manage primary city social media pages using government social media management best practices; manage website using content management system, serving as website administrator; and gather facts to distribute to news media. Manage Multimedia Specialist position, approving all graphic design work, print and digital promotional materials, photos, video projects, and operations of live video streaming system. Attend weekly department head meeting and write internal weekly staff report; occasionally write staff memos based on topical research; occasionally write mayoral speeches and talking points; coordinate with community partner agencies to develop and distribute communications materials; provide communications support to city departments; and develop, present and manage annual communications department budget. Respond to citizen inquiries through multiple communications platforms; plan, manage and execute annual State of the City Address event. The ideal candidate has strong writing and verbal skills, experience in news media relations, social media and website management experience, and a passion for working in the public sector. This strategic communications position will serve a pivotal role in citywide communications to ensure accurate and consistent messaging on behalf of the city of Spring Hill. Four-year degree in communications, public relations, journalism, public affairs or related area of study. Minimum of five years of relevant communications, media, or public relations experience. Excellent oral and written communication skills required. Knowledge of media tactics, and modern principles of digital mass communications and public relations required. Proficiency with Microsoft Office Suite and Adobe Creative Cloud. Management experience desired. Some event planning experience a plus. The City of Spring Hill offers an extensive and generous employee benefit package, which includes an 100% Employer paid Medical coverage option for the entire family, optional vision insurance, employer paid dental insurance for the employee with the option to purchase family coverage, Flexible Spending Account, employer paid Life, AD&D and LTD Insurance, as well as voluntary life and STD. TCRS Pension. Applications/resumes MUST be submitted online at: www.springhilltn.org/Jobs. aspx Questions to staylor@springhilltn. org NO PHONE CALLS PLEASE. 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. Minorities and women are encouraged to apply.

clerk, and all other responsibilities, as assigned. College degree preferred, but not required depending on experience. Finalist must pass a background check and drug test prior to employment. Work hours are typically Monday through Friday, 7:30 am. - 4:00 p.m., but will vary several days each month for meetings. Employment applications available online at www.townofwartrace.com, mail resume to Town of Wartrace, P.O. Box 158, Wartrace, TN 37183, or email to admin@townofwartrace.com.

ENGINEER – DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS SPECIALIST

BRENTWOOD. The city engineer - development projects specialist is responsible for ensuring new developments, both residential and commercial comply with city standards and commonly accepted industry practices of municipal engineering. The city engineer is the primary technical liaison to the planning department and the planning commission during the review and approval process for rezonings, site plans, subdivisions, and other public and private projects. Duties and responsibilities include ensuring that plans submitted comply with city code regarding areas such as site grading, floodplain management, roadway design, site drainage, roadway signage and lighting, and construction. The city engineer reports to the director of engineering working with a high degree of independence. The job requires a PE license and strong civil engineering technical skills as well as good interpersonal skills. The city engineer interacts daily with internal staff, engineers, builders, developers, residents, elected officials and government agencies. For a complete job description and to apply please visit the city of Brentwood web site here, https:// www.brentwoodtn.gov/departments/ human-resources/current-job-openings.

FINANCE DIRECTOR

NASHVILLE. The Greater Nashville Regional Council (GNRC) is seeking an experienced professional to serve as its finance director. The Finance Director manages the agency's financial, accounting, and budgetary functions and is a key member of the organization's senior leadership team. GNRC is a public sector agency with a typical annual budget of approximately \$15 million. The vast majority of revenue is sourced from state and federal grants allocated by formula or awarded competitively to fund the agency's work across a variety of programs and services aimed at improving the region's economy and quality of life. Approximately 60 percent of the budget is used to fund the agency's day to day operations including its 80 member staff. The remainder is subgranted to local community partners such as municipal and county governments, non-profit organizations, senior centers, and aging and disability service providers. The finance team is staffed by four professionals including the Finance director. For more information and to apply please go to: www.gnrc.org/jobs.

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER

EAST RIDGE. The city of East Ridge is seeking a qualified human resources manager. Duties include but not limited to managing/maintaining personnel/medical files, employee orientation; recommends, plans, and implements changes in personnel policies and procedures. Must be familiar with governmental requirements and reporting. Manages workers compensation claims and annual audit, responsible for all government reporting. Manages entire benefit program and serves as liaison with insurance company. Responsible and oversees payroll administration and prepares documentation for budget review. Clerical duties are also part of this job function. Qualified applicants should have five years experience in Human Resources management; or three years experience in Human Resources management with a bachelor's degree in human resources management, business management, or related field. Salary DOQ. Open until filled. EOE/ Drug free workplace.

through another state and can be certified in Tennessee by an abbreviated class at the Tennessee Law Enforcement Training Academy will be considered. One-year experience preferred. The schedule is a 14 day a month rotating shift with nights and weekend work required. The employee would be off every other weekend, under normal schedule conditions. Starting salary is based upon experience (\$40,000.00 to\$42,000 per year). State retirement TCRS with match by the town of Somerville. An optional retirement plan is also available with matching funds. Excellent medical benefits for employee and family. After first full year of employment you may be eligible for college tuition reimbursement for a degree program relating to the field of law. Somerville Town Hall, 13085 N. Main Street, Somerville, TN 38068. EOE /Drug-free workplace.

PUBLIC WORKS SUPERINTENDENT

GALLATIN. The city of Gallatin is seeking qualified applicants for the open position of superintendent of public works to plan, direct, manage, and oversee the activities, projects, and operations of the public works department including environmental services (sanitation and stormwater), facilities and vehicle maintenance, recycling collection, and street maintenance and construction. Gallatin Public Works provides excellent environmental services, facility and vehicle maintenance, and street and construction maintenance at competitive rates, and in a safe, environmentally clean and efficient manner. This position supports a department of approximately 70 employees. Minimum qualifications include bachelor's degree in civil engineering or closely related field with a minimum of 10 years recent work experience of an increasingly responsible nature in the public works management, construction, or related field; or an equivalent combination of education, experience, and training. Master's degree and P.E. preferred. Must have five years of supervisory experience. Must have a valid driver's license. To apply, please submit an online application, cover letter, and resume at the city of Gallatin website: https://cogselfserve.gallatin-tn.gov/ MSS/employmentopportunities/default. aspx Current starting pay: \$89,135 with excellent benefits. Open until position is filled. EOE / drug-free workplace.

UTILITY DIRECTOR

SPRING HILL. The city of Spring Hill is accepting applications and resumes for a full-time, exempt utility director. He or she will perform administrative and managerial work in the planning, organizing, and directing of overall operations amongst the water and wastewater treatment plants; and, the water distribution, and sewer collection. This employee must possess the ability to make prudent and independent decisions as they apply to daily activities. The incumbent in this position will supervise assigned employees; coordinate activities between departments, and maintain records and budgets for various projects. The utility director provides substantive and highly complex staff assistance to the city administrator and operates under his or her direct supervision. The employee will perform other related and/or non-specific work as required, some of which will be mechanical. Must possess a bachelor's degree in engineering; must possess professional engineer (P.E.) licensure from the state of Tennessee; Must possess a valid driver's license; 10 years' experience in water or wastewater system maintenance or construction, hydraulic engineering, or civil engineering of which some experience having been in an increasingly responsible administrative or supervisory capacity. The city of Spring Hill offers an extensive and generous employee benefit package, which includes an 100% employer paid medical coverage option for the entire family, optional vision insurance, employer paid dental insurance for the employee with the option to purchase family coverage, Flexible Spending Account, employer paid Life, AD&D and LTD Insurance, as well as voluntary life and STD. TCRS pension. Applications/resumes MUST be submitted online at: www.springhilltn.org/Jobs.aspx Questions to staylor@ springhilltn.org NO PHONE CALLS PLEASE. 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. Minorities and women are encouraged to apply.

CHIEF BUILDING INSPECTOR

PIPERTON. The city of Piperton has an opening for a full-time chief building inspector. Duties will include residential and commercial construction inspections (building, plumbing, and mechanical),

CITY ENGINEER

SPRING HILL. The city of Spring Hill is seeking to fill the full time, exempt position of city engineer. This employee performs administrative/technical functions to ensure that infrastructure proposed through development plans meets city regulations and to provide general engineering support to the public works department, and other departments. Duties and responsibilities include providing technical expertise in areas of construction problems, floodplain and drainage issues; overseeing new development work; reviewing sewer and water system capacity in conjunction with the system managers; setting bond amounts to ensure city protection from developers' defaults; performing site inspections and estimating project costs; project management; and providing information to the public. This employee also supervises and directs the work of the associate engineer and utility inspectors. Bachelor's degree in civil engineering or related field required, with five to seven years of experience as a Professional Engineer knowledgeable in general construction, water and sewer system construction, stormwater drainage, roadway construction, estimating, and development plans review; or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities for this job. Valid Tennessee licensure as a Professional Engineer required. The city of Spring Hill offers an extensive and generous employee benefit package, which includes an 100% employer paid medical coverage option for the entire family, optional vision insurance, employer paid dental insurance for the employee with the option to purchase family coverage, flexible spending account, employer paid Life, AD&D and LTD Insurance, as well as voluntary life and STD. TCRS Pension. Applications/resumes MUST be submitted online at: <u>www.springhilltn.org/Jobs.</u> aspx Questions to staylor@springhilltn. org NO PHONE CALLS PLEASE. 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. Minorities and Women are encouraged to apply.

DEPUTY CLERK / MUNICIPAL CODES OFFICER

WARTRACE. The town of Wartrace is seeking to hire a deputy clerk / municipal codes officer to help manage day-to-day administrative operations. This position is a full-time training position for succession planning. Responsible for scheduling, advertising, and support of meetings and public hearings, and maintain records of same for safekeeping. Additional responsibilities include writing resolutions and ordinances, grant management, oversee all aspects of municipal codes inspections, train for and get licensed to perform building inspections, permit issuance within three years of employment, train in the management of the annual budget, banking services, financial obligations, debt obligations, annual audit, tax preparation (1099s), cross-train with town

PARKS AND REC DIRECTOR

MANCHESTER. The city of Manchester is seeking a director of parks and recreation. This will include day-to-day operation of the recreation complex. This includes providing advisement to the board of mayor and alderman on facility, program development, long-term maintenance of facilities, and development of additional funding through private donation and grant resources. Key attributes include ability to develop and update long-range plans for department, speaking ability to large groups of people, communicate to the public in a polite manner, and the ability to work under pressure and deadlines to complete recreation programming, grants, and all assigned tasks from the board of mayor and alderman and the recreation commission. A BA/BS in parks and recreations with five years of experience in administration of parks and recreation facilities and programs including employee supervision is preferred. Applications and full job description may be picked up at City Hall, 200 W. Fort St. Manchester, TN 37355. Online applications may be filled out at www.cityofmanchestertn. com, resumes may be sent to cdavis@ cityofmanchestertn.com. Applications will be accepted until April 1, 2021, at 9 a.m. EOE.

POLICE OFFICER

SOMERVILLE. The Somerville Police Department will be accepting applications for CERTIFIED ONLY Police Officer candidates for current openings. Eligible applicants must be certified as a police officer by the Tennessee Police Officer Standards and Training Commission (P.O.S.T.), be at least 21 years of age, possess a valid driver's license, have a high school diploma/GED a U.S. citizen, have no felony convictions and be able to successfully pass psychological, physical, and polygraph exams as well as a drug screen. Officers who are P.O.S.T. certified

UTILITY AND PUBLIC WORKS **SUPERINTENDENT**

WARTRACE. The town of Wartrace is accepting applications for a utility and public works Superintendent to supervise the overall operations of Wartrace Waterworks and Sewer Systems and public works duties. Responsible for proper operation, maintenance, reporting, collection, treatment, distribution and/or disposal of water and wastewater. Maintenance of city fleet, equipment, streets, storm water drains, city-owned buildings, and parks. Supervises three employees. Prefer four or more years of experience and State of Tennessee Grade 1 Water Distribution, Grade 1 Wastewater Treatment and Grade 1 Wastewater Collection Certifications. Valid Tennessee driver's license and valid Tennessee CDL or ability to obtain within 6 months. All licenses will be verified. Experience with Telemetry and SCADA Systems, administrative and supervisory skills, experience with operation of heavy equipment: Backhoe, Skid Loader, etc. Knowledge of safety requirements and precautions. Finalist must pass a background check and drug test prior to employment. Work hours are Monday through Friday, 7:30 am. – 4 p.m. (subject to change). Some overtime required (on call hours), some weekends. Applications available online at www.townofwartrace. com or mail resume to Town of Wartrace, P.O. Box 158, Wartrace, TN 37183.

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Bo Perkinson (2017) Vice Mayor, Athens John Holden (2016) Mayor, Dyersburg Curtis Hayes (2015) Mayor, Livingston Dale Kelley (2013) Mayor, Huntingdon Kay Senter (2011) Morristown Vice Mayor Sam Tharpe (2010) Commissioner, Paris Tommy Pedigo(2009)Councilman, Morristown

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TN Urban Forestry Council

Rural communities are finally getting attention; so where do we go from here?

Despite a recent groundswell of interest, rural America still has unique challenges ahead

By GARRIS STROUD *Route Fifty*

Revitalizing rural Ameri-

ca has garnered more attention

in the past four years. Despite

this renewed interest, reports

continue to identify a growing

divide between America's ur-

ban centers and rural heartland.

The unique challenges and

misconceptions facing rural

communities continue to hin-

der economic and educational

progress. These obstacles-

further exacerbated by the

Covid-19 pandemic-raise

several questions about the

sustainability of rural commu-

organizations and leaders can

take to tackle harmful miscon-

ceptions about rural America

and address the unique chal-

lenges that threaten the sus-

tainability of our communities.

1. Recognize that rural com-

munities aren't a monolith.

often paints rural communities

with broad brushstrokes, the

reality is that we're far more di-

verse ethnically, culturally and

ideologically than believed.

The Rural Matters Institute

gets it right when they say that

to understand rural America,

you have to understand one

this means that greater part-

nership between national and

local outlets can lead to more

nuanced, informed reporting

on rural communities, which

can in turn help combat

harmful misconceptions. For

policymakers, it means that

For media organizations,

community at a time.

While the national media

Below are several steps

nities.

sweeping generalizations about rural communities can have damaging consequences and should be avoided.

2. Understand the complex relationship between education and rural workforces.

The labor force behind rural economies, which often depend on mining, agriculture and service industries, is differently skilled than those in urban areas where access to job training is higher and industries are more digitized. Consequently, when employers relocate to rural communities, the skills gap creates serious challenges.

The growing popularity of career and technical education (CTE) in rural states like Kentucky is encouraging, but school districts and local employers must continue thinking outside the box to upskill their local workforces and make rural economies more sustainable. Doing so will likely mean more apprenticeship and work-based learning experiences for students, as well as targeted investments in CTE by state and local governments.

3. Get serious about addressing brain drain.

When large numbers of young, talented college graduates leave their rural hometowns for big cities like Atlanta, Seattle, and Nashville, it can pose serious economic concerns for the communities they've left behind. This phenomenon, called brain drain, disproportionately impacts rural areas struggling to retain college-educated workers.

Case studies from around the nation have shown that most rural communities are having middling success in addressing brain drain. Tuition breaks, tax incentives, and even free land programs, in which cities and counties give away property to those willing to migrate, have all been employed with mixed results. Data suggests that college graduates with the highest loan balances are the most likely to flock to cities, yet initiatives to help tackle the student debt crisis, like loan forgiveness and expanding community college access, still haven't been widely adopted. To beat back the effects of rural brain drain, federal, state and local leaders will have to be creative through loan forgiveness initiatives and other bold actions.

4. Expand broadband access.

Expanding broadband connectivity is already a proven game changer for rural communities seeking to retain their young talent, particularly now that more employers are making the work-from-home jump a permanent one. Unfortunately, more than 20 million Americans lack adequate access to high-speed internet, and they disproportionately live in rural areas.

While activist groups have been drawing attention to inequitable practices by internet service providers since the onset of the pandemic, rural areas often have their own geographies to blame for their chronic lack of access. Kentucky has put forward an interesting proof of concept in its broadband expansion project KentuckyWired, which, despite early challenges, offers a model for other rural states seeking to expand access. State and federal leaders must step up by investing in broadband expansion, working collaboratively with providers, and making rural communities a priority. It's past time we consider the needs of rural communities in the same way we consider the needs of other places. There are no fast or easy answers. But these initial steps offer some concrete ideas for a path forward.

COMING UP

March 15, 2021 *TML Legislative Conference Virtual Event* 11 a.m - 1 p.m. / CST

April 6 - 8, 2021 TN Fire Chief Association Spring Conference Gatlinburg

April 7 - 9, 2021 TN City Management Association (TCMA) Spring Conference Murfreesboro

May 20 - 21

Municipal Court Clerk Conference Franklin

June 2 - 4, 2021

TNAssociation of Municipal Clerks and Recorders (TAMCAR) Spring Conference Murfreesboro

Sept. 1-3, 2021

TN City Management Association (*TCMA*) *Fall Conference* Chattanooga

Sept 15 -17, 2021

TNAssociation of Municipal Clerks and Recorder (TAMCAR) Fall Conference Franklin

Sept. 18-21, 2021

TML Annual Conference Chattanooga

Nov. 1-3, 2021

TN Chapter America Public Works Association (TCAPWA) & Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) Annual Conference Memphis

NATIONAL BRIEFS

Energy infrastructure across the nation might be tested by increasing amounts of extreme weather events, with consumers paying the cost. A new report from Scientific American found that an increasing amount of weather events like wildfires, droughts, floods, heat waves, hurricanes, and deep freezes are putting a strain on both electrical and natural gas infrastructure across the country, often causing them to fail when they are needed most. Many of the nation's power grids are not prepared to deal with extreme weather events and states have had to resort to tactics like having rolling blackouts to prevent wildfires. Likewise, systems running on coal and gas are often unable to work at certain temperatures. Many grids in place are not designed to handle frequent weather events, like those the nation has seen in past years, and parts of the national energy infrastructure may need to increase

its capacity as much as 35% to handle the fallout from such events while still providing services to customers.

A lack of pharmacies may be one of the reasons many rural Americans have been unable to obtain and COVID-19 vaccine. A new report looking at pharmacy deserts – areas where there are no pharmacies or not enough to serve the local populationfound at least 111 rural counties in the U.S. have no pharmacy to dispense vaccines. The recent analysis by the Rural Policy Research Institute found more than 1.6 million Americans needing to travel more than 20 miles to reach their nearest pharmacy. As a result, rural residents often must drive long distances to obtain vaccine doses – twice in the case of multiple doses. As vaccination opens up to more groups, it may become harder for rural pharmacies to the demand from local population, especially as many pharmacies are the only health care center that can provide vaccinations in their rural communities.

increased in 2020 despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. A study from financial services company LT Trust found that the average 401K balance increased by 30.3% between 2019 and 2020 with employee contribution increasing by 6.12% in the same time period. Utah recorded the largest average balance increase at 47.2% while North Dakota saw the lowest increase at 11.5%. Males struggling with pandemic-related issues such as supply-chain shortages and short-term shutdowns for sanitizing factories. Global shortages of necessary components, like semiconductors in the automotive industry, may hamper continued manufacturing growth.

Americans are by-and-large skipping Spring Break trips this year amid the ongoing pandemic. The U.S. Travel Association said only 12% of Americans were planning a trip during Spring Break this year with travel demand remaining low. Industry officials said it remains "far from clear when demand for travel will rebound on its own." Industry officials have continued to urge tax credits to encourage leisure and business travel, though the CDC is still encouraging all Americans from refraining from travel that is non-essential. Many foreign countries are still prohibiting travel to and from the U.S. with the CDC saying the U.S. should not relax its own international travel guidelines until at least 80% of the country is vaccinated.

TN Stormwater Assn

TML SPONSORS **5 STAR SPONSOR** Voya Financial Advisors **4 STAR SPONSOR** Blue Cross Blue Shield **3 STAR SPONSOR** First Horizon Bank **2 STAR SPONSOR** Alexander, Thompson, Arnold, CRA's Alliance Water Resources Bank of America Bank of New York Mellon, Co. Entegrity Environmental Products Group Waste Management Inc. of Tennessee **1 STAR SPONSOR** The Brick Industry Charter Communications Employee Benefit Specialists, Inc. J.R. Wauford & Co. Consulting Engineers Local Govt. Corporation Mattern & Craig, Inc. NORESCO Pavement Restorations, Inc. **Republic Services** Smith Seckman Reid Tennessee 811

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Anthony Haynes, Executive Director Chad Jenkins, Deputy Director Mark Barrett, Legislative Research Analyst Kate Coil, Communications Specialist Jackie Gupton, Administrative Assistant Carole Graves, Communications Director & Editor, *Tennessee Town & City* Sylvia Harris, Conference Planning Director John Holloway, Government Relations Debbie Kluth, Marketing Director / Member Services Kevin Krushenski, Legislative Research Analyst Denise Paige, Government Relations The average state retirement contributions and balances in all states were more likely to see their 401K contributions grow over females by 3% while employees between the ages of 21 and 30 saw the largest average balance increase rate at 77%.

U.S. manufacturing expanded at its fastest pace in three years in February. The Institute for Supply Management reported that manufacturing activity rose 60.8% in February, 2.1% above the January rate of 58.7%. Economists said manufacturing has been buoyed by a shift in the way Americans are spending their money during the pandemic, choosing to invest in their homes and other projects rather than going out to eat or shopping. However, many manufacturing firms are still



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Lamberth outlines plans for criminal justice reform, education

By KATE COIL TML Communications Specialist

House Majority Leader William Lamberth never considered running for public office until he was encouraged to do so by a friend. Now nearly a decade later, he serves an important leadership role in the State House.

A fifth-generation resident of Sumner County, Lamberth grew up on his family's farm. After graduating from Portland High School, he earned his bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville and then went on to earn a law degree from the William and Mary School of Law at the College of William and Mary, one of the oldest institutes of higher education in the country. While there, he was elected president of the Student Bar Association.

After graduating from law school, Lamberth served as an assistant district attorney in Sumner County and presently is in private practice as an attorney in Gallatin. He has also served in a variety of leadership roles within his district.

Lamberth was first elected in 2012 to represent State House District 44, which includes much of Sumner County, the cities of Mitchelville and Westmoreland, and portions of the municipalities of Gallatin, Hendersonville, and Portland.

He was then elected to serve as House Majority Leader in 2018. House Speaker Cameron Sexton, R-Crossville, said Lamberth has been a valuable asset to the House.

"I appreciate William's partnership with our members and all of his hard work guiding Gov. Lee's key initiatives through the House over the last two years," Sexton said. "He has done a tremendous job, and we are very fortunate to have him as a member of our leadership team."

Lamberth is married to Lauren Schimdt Lamberth, and they have two children: Allison and Pierce.

TT&C: What first interested you in politics? Was there a particular cause that made you decide to run for office?

William Lamberth: About six or seven years into serving as a district attorney, a really good friend I had known my entire life, Tommy Whittaker, sat me down at lunch one day and told me - not asked me - that I should run. Quite frankly, it had never crossed my mind to run for public office. I was never a person who thought this was a pathway God would have wanted for me. I told Tommy - and he also had the chairman of the state Republican party there with us for lunch – that my wife was six months pregnant with our second child, and I had a job that I absolutely loved that I would have to quit to pursue this. I told him I didn't think it was the right timing. He told me to pray about it and talk to my wife about it, and I did. As soon as I talked to my wife Lauren about it, she was all in. She said this is our community. This is where our children are growing up. And, we need to make sure that it is safe. I just felt I



House Majority Leader William Lamberth, **R-Portland**



Lamberth bringing dinner to the officers of the Gallatin Police Department. A former assistant district attorney, criminal justice issues and reform are concerns close to the lawmaker's heart.



House Majority Leader William Lamberth after a spelunking expedition with his family at Cedars of Lebanon State Park. Lamberth said the pandemic has given his family a chance to visit much of the state's park system and better appreciate the natural wonders the state has to offer.

stand exactly how the state can best serve those who are serving at the local level. Most of them are very good friends of mine. Most of them have served their communities for years. I have known some of them since I was a very young man. The relationship I have with folks at the local level could best be described as we're just very good friends. In Sumner County, I don't think there is a single local elected official who would feel uncomfortable picking up the phone and calling me if they needed something.

TT&C: What is your stance on preemption and local control?

WL: The best government is the government that is closest to the people, which means most was led to serve our community, and it's been decisions should be made at the local level. At the same time, there are things that need statewide application. Those fall mostly into areas like criminal justice, budgetary issues, healthcare, and education. Sometimes there are issues that are state responsibilities. You wouldn't want something that is a crime in Sumner County to not be a crime in Davidson County or a crime in Knoxville but not in Memphis. Your criminal code has to be consistent statewide. Other than those obvious issues where you need a statewide policy, the best kind of government is closest to the people. That means that our local officials are the ones who need to be running the day-to-day operations of their community.

pathway, but it's a small percentage of folks coming through the system. Our code doesn't recognize that. We have to have a conversation about truth in sentencing and about better programming, both inside in the jail and outside. Anytime someone comes into the criminal justice system, we need to ask what brought them there. We need to ask are they punished appropriately for their behavior, but we also have to make sure there is a pathway back to prosperity for that individual.

TT&C: You have proposed House Bill 434 that would offer lifelong orders of protection to help victims of violent crimes. Why is this an important issue for you?

WL: There is a young lady – Nikki Goeser – who used to work in the legislature. Nikki had to suffer the horror of watching her husband being killed in front of her. Then, after the individual who did that was convicted and sent to prison, the murderer continued to send her letters. The person sent what I can only refer to as love letters in essence to a victim of a violent crime. This is a person who is still going to be dangerous when released if he is still fixated on the victim. It is critical in the criminal justice system that we protect victims of a crime, and that we respect their wishes to be left alone by the defendants who have already victimized them. There are so many other victims and survivors of violent crime that fall in this same category. I am very passionate about supporting victims. We focus a lot on defendants in the criminal justice system, and we should. Their rights should be protected. We should make sure our criminal justice system keeps our communities safe, which means figuring out what programs someone needs. But we should never lose sight of the fact that, especially in cases of violent crimes, a victim and a victim's family have had their lives destroyed by the actions of another. They have a right in the system to – at the very least – have a lifetime order of protection so the victims know the court, the legislature, and the laws of this state will have their backs every step of the way so they can live their lives the best they can.

college degree, a TCAT degree, a four-year college degree, and beyond, it just changes the trajectory of an entire family. We are going to make sure they have every single support and service they need.

TT&C: What piece of legislation have you worked on that you are the proudest of or feel has had the biggest impact?

WL: When I first ran for state representative, I wanted to combat intoxicated driving. Driving under the influence is a horrible decision by anybody, and is a potentially deadly crime. I have seen both in my own family and in so many other families the devastation that can occur when someone gets behind the wheel when intoxicated. The first bill I filed was an aggravated vehicular assault bill to crack down on folks that had multiple DUIs and seriously injured someone. It took multiple years to get that funded, but I was very proud of the fact that we stood up for victims and combated intoxicated driving. Since then, I've carried bills to create a DUI fifth offense and sixth offense, stiffen the penalties on vehicular homicide, and at the same time provided a variety of options for treatment for those who have gotten a DUI so they never get that next one.

TT&C: You and your family are frequent visitors to Tennessee State Parks. Why do you feel the state park system is an asset?

WL: I have an 11-year-old and a nine-yearold. It is truly majestic seeing the beauty and splendor Tennessee's natural surroundings have to offer through our parks system and especially through the eyes of a child. During the pandemic when life slowed down a bit, my family spent as much time as we could traveling through our state parks system. Every single park has a gem to offer that you won't expect to see until you are there. We have traveled throughout the U.S. and the national parks system, and Tennessee has parks that are just as gorgeous as anything they can offer in any other state. I would encourage every Tennessean to visit our parks. I am proud to say that this year in the budget there is \$33 million for deferred maintenance to help those parks get up to the standard they should be.

an honor to do so these past nine years.

TT&C: Congratulations on your re-election as House Majority Leader. What do you feel are the important characteristics of a good leader?

WL: I think you have to always put others before yourself. I think a true leader is always a servant to those that have elected them to serve. When I'm in a room – no matter how many people are in that room, whether it's just a couple of other folks or hundreds of people - I just always assume that everyone else in that room knows more about different subjects than I might know myself. I try to engage in conversation and learn from the folks that I'm spending time with. While everyone has different levels of expertise, if you listen and learn from other people you learn how well you can do collectively. You have to love people, and you have to put others above yourself.

TT&C: What do you feel is the primary role for the majority leader? How do you personally approach fulfilling this role?

WL: For me, being the majority leader is about making sure the House Republican Caucus' voice is heard. I spend a lot of time with our members. We went into the election cycle last year with 73 members, and we brought back all 73 seats. The role is kind of twofold. During election time I'm there to support my fellow members by raising funds to support their campaigns. I crisscross the state. Most of the members' whose districts had competitive races used some of the funds we had raised from the caucus as well as some of the funds I had raised from my leadership PAC. I knock on doors with other candidates. Really, that's a huge portion of what the majority leader does when we're out of session.

When we are in session, I work on all of the policy issues from the budget to education to healthcare to criminal justice. If it's a significant issue that is coming through the Legislature, then part of my role is to make sure our members have a role in that process through making sure that the governor's office, the Senate, and the minority caucus all hear collectively what our members care about. That is a job that takes a lot of time and effort to make sure I understand what is important to our members, their constituents, and our shared constituents.

TT&C: How would you describe your relationship with city officials in your district? WL: I rely on them heavily to help me under-

TT&C: As a former assistant district attorney, you have an interest in criminal justice reform. What measures do you think need to be taken that allow offenders who want it to be rehabilitated while still making sure serious crimes are punished?

WL: One of the things that has to happen is we have to take a complete top to bottom look at our sentencing code. It hasn't been rewritten since 1989. The world has changed dramatically since then. The types of crime that are being committed and how they're being committed have simply shifted. I think our understanding of ways to intervene when someone has committed a crime has changed. When I say 'intervene' I really mean it that way, because that is what the criminal justice system is meant to do. It is there to mete out punishment when needed and keep the community safe, but the goal is to alter someone's behavior so they don't recommit the same crime or another crime.

You want to pursue justice and justice should always be tempered with mercy. The people I prosecuted were not just names on a page. These were young men I had played ball with or against. These were young men and women who I had gone to church with or with their families. I knew their moms, dads, aunts, and uncles. I learned from day one it is really about digging into the issue that brought someone into the criminal justice system and then trying to figure out what punishment or what remedy would alter the course of their life so they live life back in bounds.

Obviously, there are some people who refuse or are incapable of doing that. There are repeat, violent felons who simply will not stop. Unfortunately, there is nothing we can do for a small subset of the folks in the criminal justice system but lock them up for as long as possible because they are simply bent on havoc. There are a lot of things that lead up to that along the

TT&C: You are sponsoring HB 139 that expands eligibility for the Tennessee HOPE scholarship's foster child tuition grant. What do you hope this will accomplish?

WL: Unfortunately, we have had over the past couple of decades a real break down of the family unit. We have a lot of broken homes, and we have a lot of children who go into foster care, far too many. When they age out of the system at 18, a lot of these children don't have the resources to pursue a higher education. Many have really buckled down through difficult situations and persevered, doing very well in their educational journey. They deserve the ability to further their educational opportunities.

What this will do is really expand the eligibility for the HOPE scholarship fund's foster child tuition grant. It creates opportunity for those children who have spent nine to 11 months in custody to be eligible for those funds. Hopefully, what it will do is change the trajectory of not just that child's life but their children, their grandchildren, and for generations. Education is a gamechanger for so many kids. If they can achieve a two-year community

TT&C: In what areas is the state of Tennessee doing well? Where does the state need improvement? How do you envision the state's future and what needs to be accomplished to get there?

WL: When I first ran for public office, I wanted to focus on making sure we had great schools, that we were keeping our budget in control, that we continued to balance our budget, cut taxes, and that we have safe communities. I can tell you we have focused hard on that in the past year. During a global pandemic, we cut \$1.5 billion out of the budget in a very short amount of time. We cut to the bone.

Now, this year, when other states are really suffering and have to raise taxes on their constituents and cut services, we are running over a \$2 billion surplus because we prepared for the worst. The worst did not occur, and we haven't seen absolute economic fallout from this yet. We have put back more than \$1.5 billion in our rainy day fund, we have balanced our budget, and we have ensured that Tennessee's best days are still in our future. We are leveraging those federal dollars that came in to make sure that TennCare, the unemployment trust fund, and education are on solid footing.

In the educational realm, we came in the second week of session and had a special session on education. Our children have fallen behind because, unfortunately due to the pandemic, children have missed school. I'm proud to say that all of our school systems are now offering in-person education and virtual learning as an option, based on what's best for their family. Another thing I think we've done to position Tennessee for the future is raised teacher pay significantly and increased the funding for K-12 education by \$1.8 billion in the past several years. On top of that, we have put in place learning loss stop gap measures that will help with literacy, provide some after school services, and summer school programs.

We have also invested very heavily in our rural healthcare safety net. We have the amount up to about \$22 million a year now. That is for places like the Salvus Center that do such a good job providing care to people who are uninsured or under-insured so they can get actual care. A lot of folks talk about getting people insurance, but we are focusing very heavily on making sure they get quality health care, not just insurance.