

## Lawmakers leaving state house, senate seats ahead of 2018



BY KATE COIL  
TML Communications Specialist

A total of 27 Tennessee legislators have announced they will not seek re-election in November 2018, making the upcoming legislative session the last for seven senators and 19 state representatives.

The Senate will be losing its Senate Majority Leader, and Senate Speaker Pro Tempore, Republican Caucus chairman, and Democratic Caucus Leader. The House will be losing its House Speaker, House Deputy Speaker, Democratic Caucus Leader, and Republican Caucus Secretary/Treasurer.

Together, the 27 lawmakers who will be leaving their posts have served a collective 340 years in the General Assembly – 72 years in the Senate and 268 cumulative years in the House.

### SENATE

**Sen. Mae Beavers**, R-Mt. Juliet, represented Senate District 17 for 14 years before announcing her resignation from the Senate on Sept. 1, 2017, to devote herself to a gubernatorial bid. Before joining the Senate, Beavers served in the House for eight years from 1994 to 2002 representing District 57.

**Sen. Mark Green**, R-Clarksville, represents District 22 and announced he will not seek re-election to run for the Congressional seat vacated by U.S. Rep. Marsha Blackburn. Green had been nominated by President Donald Trump to serve as Secretary of the Army in 2017, but withdrew himself from consideration a month later after opposition to his nomination. Green serves as the vice-chair of the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee and has served for five years in the senate.

**Sen. Lee Harris**, D-Memphis, will not seek the District 29 seat again. The Senate Democratic Cau-

cus Leader has served for three years in the Senate, but decided to leave the legislature to run for the Shelby County mayor's seat in 2018.

**Sen. Bill Ketron**, R-Murfreesboro, is leaving his District 13 seat after 14 years in the legislature. Ketron, who currently serves as the Senate Republican Caucus Chairman, announced his intention to run for Rutherford County mayor in 2018. Ketron has run for the Rutherford County mayor seat three times previously in 1990, 1994, and 1998.

**Senate Majority Leader Mark Norris**, R-Collierville, will be leaving his District 32 seat after 16 years. Norris has been nominated to serve as the U.S. District Court judge for the Western District of Tennessee, which includes Memphis and the surrounding counties. Norris will have to be confirmed by the U.S. Senate and leave the legislature to take the position.

**Sen. Doug Overbey**, R-Maryville, will be leaving his District 2 seat after eight years in the Senate. Overbey previously served for eight years in the House representing District 20 and represented Senate District 8 from 2008 to 2012. He has been nominated and confirmed by the U.S. Senate to serve as the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Tennessee. To take the position as a U.S. attorney he is required to leave both his law firm and the state legislature. Overbey is the chair of the Tennessee Senate Ethics Committee.

**Senate Speaker Pro Tempore Jim Tracy**, R-Shelbyville, announced he will be leaving his District 14 seat to serve as the state director for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development office. Tracy was appointed to the position by Trump, but unlike judicial positions, the state director position does not require federal confirmation by the Senate. Tracy has served for 12 years in the Senate and is a

member of the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR).

### HOUSE

**Rep. David Alexander**, R-Winchester, has represented House District 39 for seven years. He also serves as the House Majority Secretary and vice chairman of the House Finance Committee. Alexander announced he will be leaving the House to run as mayor of Franklin County.

**Rep. Harry Brooks**, R-Knoxville, announced he will retire from the legislature after 15 years representing District 19. Brooks is the chair of the House Education Instruction and Programs Committee. In June, Brooks donated excess campaign funds he had raised for the 2018 race to the four high schools in his district.

**Rep. Shelia Butt**, R-Columbia, will not be seeking re-election in 2018 after seven years representing District 64.

**Rep. JoAnne Favors**, D-Chatanooga, will be leaving her position as the District 28 representative after 13 years in the General Assembly. A retired registered nurse, Favors said she decided to leave the legislature in order to spend time with her family and care for her aging mother.

**Rep. Craig Fitzhugh**, D-Ripley, announced he will be leaving his District 82 seat after 23 years. The House Democratic Caucus Leader has thrown his hat in the ring for the 2018 gubernatorial election, announcing his candidacy in June.

**Rep. Brenda Gilmore**, D-Nashville, will be leaving her House District 54 seat after 11 years to run for the Senate District 19 seat currently held by State Sen. Thelma Harper,

D-Nashville. Harper has held the seat for 28 years but has not said whether or not she plans to seek re-election in 2018.

**Rep. Marc Gravitt**, R-East Ridge, will be leaving the District 30 seat after three years. Gravitt announced he intends to run for Hamilton County Register of Deeds. Incumbent Register of Deeds Pam Hurst decided not to seek re-election.

**House Speaker Beth Harwell**, R-Nashville, also announced her decision to leave the House to run for governor. The first female Speaker of the House for Tennessee, Harwell has represented District 56 for 28 years.

**Rep. Sherry Jones**, D-Nashville, will not be seeking re-election to her District 59 seat after 23 years in the House. Jones announced her intention to run for Davidson County. See **LAWMAKERS** on Page 4

## Gatlinburg, Pigeon Forge officials discuss road to recovery one year after wildfires

BY KATE COIL

One year after devastating wildfires ravaged Gatlinburg, Pigeon Forge, and much of East Tennessee, cities in the region are well on the road to recovery and eager for visitors answer the call of the mountains.

Pigeon Forge City Manager Earlene Teaster said wildfires had always been a fact of life for area residents, but no one had expected a fire of the scope and magnitude experienced in November 2016.

"The fire could have been controlled had it not been for the near hurricane-force winds that happened, which we had never seen before," Teaster said. "At the base of the Smoky Mountains, we are used to wildfires but they've always been easily maintained. It was the addition of the wind that changed things, and they said we had winds up to 80 or 85-miles-per-hour. It came together and created a perfect storm. I would have never dreamed that morning that by the evening I would be sleeping in our fire hall. It happened so quickly."

Gatlinburg City Manager Cindy Cameron Ogle said she was awake for 36 straight hours at the city's command center the day of the fires.

"My hope and prayer for every community is that they never have to experience something like what happened here," Ogle said. "It was a historic and unprecedented event not just in Sevier County but also the state of Tennessee and the Southeast as it relates to wildfires. It was just a highly unprecedented set of circumstances that led to this horrific happening."

The area has been in the midst



Pigeon Forge recently unveiled this memorial to first responders at the town's Patriot Park following a luncheon to honor the more than 200 first responders who came to fight the wildfires.

of the rebuilding process for the past six months with 300 structures currently being worked on within the city limits of Gatlinburg and another 300 in Sevier County.

"A little more than 1,000 structures were destroyed," Ogle said. "Of the structures destroyed, only about 60 were commercial. By and large, the structures destroyed were residential. Of those residential structures, we estimate at least 50 percent were second homes or overnight rental facilities. There was

definitely a misconception that Gatlinburg had burned down or that we lost the downtown. Our downtown has remained pretty much intact. In the eastern part of town, the fire actually stopped right before it got to the city hall. The arts and crafts community had some smoke damage, but there was no fire damage."

In fact, Ogle was one of 11 city employees who lost their homes in the fires, which also included Mayor Mike Werner and members of the city's fire and police department. Ogle said members of the city's public safety departments worked tirelessly to protect other citizens while their own homes burned.

While Pigeon Forge didn't lose as many structures as other areas, Teaster said the town and local business were still impacted by the wildfires.

"Things could have been a lot worse for us," she said. "We didn't lose any businesses, but we lost an entire subdivision of 19 structures.



The city of Gatlinburg recently unveiled plans for a memorial to both first responders and fire victims to be located on the city's parkway.

I think our visitation was affected the most. Pigeon Forge's only industry is tourism. We have bounced back this year. Our city board and business community have worked together to address that. We have had great assistance from the state of Tennessee, the Tennessee Department of Tourism, and our state legislators. They came to our rescue this year.

Despite the devastation, Ogle said Gatlinburg residents have remained strong.

"We are Mountain Tough; that's not just a cute phrase," she said. "We are resilient, and the overriding thing is our strong faith in God. He has given us strength in our community, personally and professionally to get up and start the process of healing, recovery and to rebuild. I already knew that about our community, but it's certainly been underlined and highlighted in a big way. We are adjusting to a See **FIRE** on Page 7

## Tax reform continues to move forward

BY BRIAN EGAN  
National League of Cities

A lot has happened in the past month on tax reform. On Nov. 16, the House passed its version of a tax bill, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (H.R.1), just under a week after the Senate released its own version of the bill.

After a tenuous 20 hours of debate and deal-making, the Senate too passed a version in the early morning of Dec. 2.

Now Congress has two versions of the bill, each with some marked differences.

Now, the bill moves to the reconciliation process, where a conference committee composed of five Senators and five Representatives will work to iron out the differences between the chambers. While the two versions have moved more closely in terms of city priorities, incongruities between the Senate and House bill in other areas will make the committee's job of reconciling differences all the more difficult. Still, congressional leadership remains optimistic that they will send a bill to the president by the end of the year.

Below are some important differences for city leaders between the versions of the bills passed by both chambers:

**Exemption for interest earned on publicly issued municipal bonds**

House: Preserved  
Senate: Preserved

**Exemption for interest earned on qualified private activity bonds**

House: Eliminated  
Senate: Preserved

**Exemption for interest earned on advance refunding bonds**

House: Eliminated  
Senate: Eliminated

**Deduction for local property taxes**

House: Capped at \$10,000  
Senate: Capped at \$10,000

**Deductions for local sales and income taxes**

House: Eliminated  
Senate: Eliminated

**Historic Tax Credit (HTC)**

House: Eliminated  
Senate: Eligibility on construction costs reduced from 20 percent to 10 percent

**New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC)**

House: Eliminated  
Senate: Preserved (until reauthorization)

There are a number of interests at play, but NLC will work throughout the reconciliation process to preserve the progress we've made, and to push for greater progress. NLC will pay special attention to preserving the tax exemption for all bonds, including Private Activity Bonds, which are only saved under the Senate version. Preserving the progress made on the state and local tax (SALT) deduction and pushing for its full preservation are also of key concern.

Given that the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act continues to fall short on critical issues for cities, including various forms of bonds, credits and state and local deductions, we stand ready to oppose the final bill, if it remains a bad deal for cities, when it goes back to both chambers. To track the status of city priorities throughout tax reform and to learn more visit [www.nlc.org/taxreform](http://www.nlc.org/taxreform).

More than 800 local leaders have already signed onto NLC's action letter to Congress outlining our key priorities for tax reform and the upcoming expiration of the Continuing Resolution this week. Read the letter and add your name at [www.nlc.org/StandWithCities](http://www.nlc.org/StandWithCities).

# NEWS ACROSS TENNESSEE



## BRENTWOOD

The city of Brentwood recently launched a Bicycle and Pedestrian Connectivity Study to identify options for east-west connectivity of the city's bike and pedestrian system across or under the Interstate 65 corridor. The city currently has an extensive multi-use trail network east of I-65 with a more limited network west of I-65. The long-term goal is to overcome the divide created by the I-65 corridor and create an east-west connection to expand the bike and pedestrian network within the community. Kimley-Horn will be conducting the planning study with the goal to recommend the most feasible and cost effective options to the Brentwood City Commission. A public meeting will be held in January to discuss the project.

## BRISTOL

The city of Bristol has developed an incentive program that will help encourage residential development within the city limits. Incentives are offered in the form of city-provided water/sewer system materials which are available for any new construction of a major subdivision consisting of three or more lots. The development incentive would be considered for new construction where city water and sanitary sewer mains are currently available. Materials qualifying under the incentive program would be water pipe and valves that are 6 inches or larger and fire hydrants. Under the sanitary sewer portion of the plan, 8-inch or larger pipes and associated manholes would qualify. The developer would be responsible for installation and other material costs

## CHATTANOOGA

The Chattanooga Fire Department has earned an Insurance Service Office's (ISO) rating of 1, making it the first of Tennessee's four major metro areas to earn a 1 rating and only the fifth city in the state to earn the ranking. Residents and local business owners may see reduced property insurance premiums in the next year as a result of the rating. Four main areas are evaluated to determine a fire department's classification: the fire department itself, emergency communications, water supply, and aspects of community risk including code inspections and public education activities.

## CHATTANOOGA

M&M Industries will invest more than \$42 million and create 110 jobs in Chattanooga. Headquartered in Chattanooga, M&M will purchase and retrofit a building at 1435 E. 14th Street and expand its current manufacturing facility at 316 Corporate Place to suit its expansion needs. The expansions will provide additional capacity to support growing demand across M&M's product lines. The solutions packaging manufacturer manufactures plastic pails, plastic open head containers and custom packaging for the chemical, pharmaceutical, health care, construction materials and other industries.

## CLARKSVILLE

The city of Clarksville has approved the purchase of the land needed to build an athletic complex that could eventually host soccer, lacrosse and minor league baseball fields as well as an ice hockey rink affiliated with the Nashville Predators. The more than 400-acre tract near Exit 8 of Interstate 24 is located between Rossvie Road and the Red River. The city council

already budgeted \$6.5 million for the project and, with the purchase complete, city leaders are hoping to begin the design phase of the new athletic complex.

## CROSSVILLE

Police officers with the city of Crossville have begun carrying EpiPens to render aid to victims of anaphylactic shock from an allergic reaction. Funding for the ephedrine device, came from the Cookeville Regional Charitable Foundation, which matched a donation of \$300 for the city of Crossville's purchase of 12 epinephrine auto-injectors. The city of Cookeville has already deployed EpiPens among its officers and Crossville will be the second city in the state to do so. The EpiPens will be administered by trained officers for persons suffering from anaphylaxis related to acute allergic reactions to foods, insects or other life threatening allergic emergencies.

## ERIN

Magnum Manufacturing, Inc., will invest \$2 million and create approximately 50 jobs during the next five years as part of an expansion to its operations in Erin. Magnum plans to expand into an adjacent building, which will double its existing footprint in Erin. The company will invest in new equipment and building renovations. Magnum manufactures metal stamping and produces raw metal seat frames and doors for the automotive sector. The company has operated in Tennessee since 1991.

## FRANKLIN

The Franklin Transit Authority will add 100 new stops, new buses, and a new service plan after an 18-month study of the citywide transit system. The new system will provide stops at the Columbia State campus, downtown Franklin, and several residential neighborhoods to help accommodate the city's growth and manage congestion. The FTA has transitioned from a fixed route, gridded system to one that is more in line with user needs. Pickup and drop-off times have been decreased to 30 minutes and plans are in motion to add four new vehicles and eight new drivers. The transit authority serves some 62,000 riders per year.

## KINGSPORT

Kingsport's Bays Mountain Park is now home to a red fox, the newest addition to the 3,550-acre nature preserve and the largest city-owned park in the state of Tennessee. After the death of the park's raccoon, Belle, in February, the park began looking for a new animal exhibit to bring to the park. The new red fox, named Jamie, was raised in captivity and then cared for by the Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency. Jamie is a red fox but shows more signs of a silver fox because of a genetic mutation that alters his coloring. Due to this, his winter coat shows off redder coloring than his summer coat. He will join other animals living in the park including wolves, bobcats, raptors, and reptiles.

## KNOXVILLE

The city of Knoxville has begun replacing streetlights with LED technology as part of a comprehensive retrofit of the city's streetlight system. Approximately 100 demonstration LEDs will be installed at 17 locations throughout Knoxville. These pilot demonstration installations will help contractor Siemens and city officials determine the best fixtures and bulbs for different locations and street types. The city plans to retrofit nearly 30,000 streetlights to LED technology as a major step toward exceeding its goal of reducing municipal greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent by 2020. With anticipated energy and maintenance cost savings of \$2 million annually, the investment will pay for itself in less than a decade. Official installation will begin in 2018 with all work completed by mid-year 2019.

## MCKENZIE

Allegion Americas will expand its Republic Doors & Frames operation in McKenzie, investing \$4.5 million and creating 70 new jobs in the next five years. The secure doors and frames manufacturer will be updating and modifying

equipment to expand production capabilities. Republic Doors & Frames has operated in McKenzie since 1976 and was acquired by Allegion in January 2017. Allegion manufactures hollow metal doors and frames at the McKenzie facility, complementing its Steelcraft® brand and core business in the Americas. Allegion is headquartered in Carmel, Ind., and is a subsidiary of Allegion, Plc, headquartered in Dublin, Ireland.

## MT. JULIET

City officials in Mt. Juliet have officially dedicated two new municipal parks. Troop 150 Eagle Scout John Forth proposed creating Eagle Park on West Division Street as his scout project last year. After receiving land donated from the city, Forth used labor and financial donations to create the bicycle park, which is aimed at teaching young cyclists about biking and safety. Robinson Park was also dedicated and has already become a popular destination for bikers and walkers. Land for the 11-acre park was donated by Bill and Phyllis Robinson of Robinson Properties. The park features a half-mile circular hiking trail, outdoor fitness equipment, and a certified wildlife habitat created by members of Girl Scout Troop 425.

## MURFREESBORO

The city of Murfreesboro is conducting a special census to certify the city's growth in population. The population of Murfreesboro was last certified in 2011 by the state of Tennessee at 109,031, after an annexation special census count. Currently, the U.S. Census Bureau estimates the 2016 population for Murfreesboro to be 131,947. Based on the current number of households along with building permits issued for new residential dwellings, the 2017-2018 population likely exceeds the 2016 estimate. Residents can respond to the survey in person at city hall or online at [www.murfreesborotn.gov/census](http://www.murfreesborotn.gov/census).

## PARIS

Eurotranciatuira is looking to add 40 jobs and expand its Paris facility by 51,000-square-feet after presenting expansion plans to the Paris Municipal Regional Commission. The company produces and sells stator and rotor laminations for electrical motors and generators and has been located in Paris since 2014 when it acquired the lamination division of Tecumseh, which was located in the city. This most recent expansion is part of a \$12.6 million investment announced last year, which is expected to create more than 170 jobs by 2021. Eurotranciatuira, a joint venture between Euro Group S.P.A and Kuroda Precision Industries Ltd., supplies the U.S. market for companies such as Stanley Black & Decker, Franklin Electric, ThyssenKrupp, Regal Beloit, Generac as well as Tecumseh Products.

## ROCKWOOD

Rockwood Police Department K-9 Officer Shadow has received a bullet and stab-protective vest from a charitable organization based in Massachusetts. Vested Interest in K9s, Inc., presented the vest to the department after receiving funds from a donor percentages program through Amazon Smile. Donors use the program on Amazon.com to give a percentage of their purchases toward purchasing the vests for K9 officers. Each vest has a value between \$1,795-\$2,234 and a five-year warranty and are made custom by Central Lake, Michigan-based Armor express. For more information on the program visit [www.vik9s.org](http://www.vik9s.org).

## SAVANNAH

Tri-Matic Spring, Inc., will invest \$1.2 million to expand its operations in Savannah. The precision spring manufacturer will create 20 jobs in the area as the result of the expansion. Tri-Matic is adding 27,100 square feet to its existing operations to meet increased market demand. The company plans for the new expansion phase to be operational in the spring of 2018. Founded in 1982, Tri-Matic is a second-generation, family-owned and operated business. Tri-Matic supplies the automotive, lawn and garden, medical, and home appliance industries. It ships products throughout the U.S. and worldwide.

## Smyrna officials break ground on memorial honoring fallen Blue Angel



Officials with the city of Smyrna recently broke ground on the Capt. Jeff Kuss USMC Memorial at the city's Lee Victory Recreation Park. In a ceremony attended by residents, dignitaries, military officials, family and friends, the groundbreaking honored the life of the Blue Angel pilot who died in a plane crash while preparing for the Great Tennessee Air Show in 2016. More than \$1 million has been raised to finance the memorial and funds can still be contributed online at [CaptJeffKussUSMCMemorial.com](http://CaptJeffKussUSMCMemorial.com).

## Johnson City wins awards for parks and recreation



The Johnson City Parks and Recreation Department recently received four awards from the Tennessee Recreation and Parks Association (TRPA) at its 66th annual conference in Franklin. The city's Rotary Park Playground and Splash Pad took top honors for New Facility. Teen Adventure Quest Summer Camp and Turtle Trek Challenge won top honors for Programs. Johnson City Vice Mayor Jenny Brock was also recognized with a Four Star Individual Service Award. All of the awards presented to Johnson City were Four Star Awards, the top award offered by TRPA.

## Erwin auctions off elephant statues to benefit Hohenwald sanctuary



This statue was one of eight one-of-a-kind art pieces decorating downtown Erwin that were recently auctioned off to raise money for the Elephant Sanctuary in Tennessee based in Hohenwald. The eight statues were on display downtown for five months before each artwork was auctioned off, raising more than \$7,000 for the sanctuary. The statue auction is part of Erwin's second annual Elephant Revival event, which was organized by town officials, members of RISE Erwin, and various other local organizations to honor Erwin's history as well as help a worthwhile organization in another Tennessee community.

## Lebanon gasification plant wins top award at TCAPWA conference



Lebanon City Engineering Director Randy Laine, left, and Mayor Bernie Ash, right, accept the 2017 Project of the Year Award from the Tennessee Chapter of the American Public Works Association (TCAPWA). The city was lauded at the TCAPWA annual conference in Knoxville for its gasification plant, the largest downdraft gasification plant in the world. Designed and built by Aries Clean Energy, the project has already won five industry awards including the Tennessee Governor's Stewardship Award and the project of the year award for both *Environmental Leader* and *Water and Waste Digest*. Winning the TCAPWA award means the Lebanon gasification project will be nominated for the American Public Works Association's (APWA) nationwide Top Ten Projects of the Year.

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# Gallatin glass crusher keeps costs down, city green

BY KATE COIL

TML Communications Specialist

As recycling and landfill tipping fees increase, one Tennessee city has turned to recycling glass in-house to save money while still staying green.

The cost of recycling glass via private firms and businesses has gone up, leading some cities to forgo recycling glass in favor of dumping it in landfills, which has become cheaper than recycling. Zach Wilkinson, director of public works for the city of Gallatin, said his city was one of many municipalities facing cost issues when it comes to glass recycling.

"I think a lot of communities are facing a similar issue with glass," Wilkinson said. "The demand for it in the market has disappeared over the last several years. It costs more to send it off to be recycled than to just landfill it, which was the situation we were in. It was really obvious to me that it wasn't cost effective to haul the glass and then pay a higher tipping fee to have it recycled."

While putting glass in a landfill was cheaper in the short term, Wilkinson said he didn't want to do something that wasn't sustainable in the long term.

"If we had hauled it a quarter of the distance, we could have put it in a landfill for cheaper," he said. "Justifying that extra cost was a hard thing to do, but I didn't want to landfill anything we didn't have to. So we started researching an alternative that would help us stay green but also make things more financially palatable."

According to the Glass Packaging Institute, glass is a 100 percent recyclable product allowing for both the reduction of emission, saving energy, and reusing raw materials such as sand, soda ash, limestone and "cullet," the industry term for furnace-ready recycled glass.

Despite the fact the material can be reused, very few municipalities and government entities process glass themselves. Even some major metro areas do not have glass recycling equipment. In 2016, the city of Metro Nashville reported



it was still hauling recycled glass to a facility in Atlanta which charged \$38.50 per ton, more than \$87,000 in annual cost to the city.

In February 2017, the city of Gallatin received a \$25,000 recycling equipment grant from the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) toward the purchase of the glass pulverizer.

Wilkinson said the grant covered half of the material cost of the crusher. City employees helped construct the building located over the pulverizer and the pit below it, which also saved money.

Planning ahead on where to position the machine paid off.

"We spent a lot of time thinking about where we should put it to make the process as streamlined as possible," Wilkinson said. "I am really pleased with how that turned out. We took a lot of time to plan it out, including how we wanted to load it and where we wanted things to fall out. We've made a few adjustments to the setup since things were installed, but for the most part our installation has worked out really well."

Wilkinson said learning how to operate the machine was a bit of a challenge.

"When we started looking into applying for grants, I was looking

for some local communities to talk to about glass recycling," he said. "There weren't really any that were doing it. Most every community I talked to was located in the Northeast or Southwest. Nashville sends theirs off to be crushed and sends other cities sent it off to a private firm to deal with. We've had to fine tune how we process the glass. At first we were probably putting a little too much product into it just to see how much it could handle. We have actually created a way that we clean it regularly so it's not as maintenance intensive and the best way to feed it."

Like most recycling programs, Gallatin accepts only food grade glass for processing. Window panes, ovenware, Pyrex, crystal, light bulbs, and similar materials are not manufactured in the same way as traditional glass and therefore have to be recycled differently. Wilkinson said the city has also learned through trial and error what works and what doesn't.

"There are certain things you don't want to process, like glass that has candle wax in it," he said. "Those don't do well in it. There are certain size objects you don't want to stick in the crusher because they clog things up. We mainly accept glass bottles, food jars, and those sort of things."



Above: Gallatin public works employees use a loader to dump recycled glass into a hopper, which then feeds the glass into the pulverizer. Left: After the glass is processed, it comes out in eight-of-an-inch or smaller pieces that can be held in bare hands without causing cuts.

Wilkinson said city employees use a loader to feed the glass into a hopper that leads to the pulverizer. A rake is then used to pull the individual bottles into the crusher. Wilkinson said there are three main products from the pulverizer.

"The first things that come out are byproducts like the labels and metal caps," he said. "We dispose of that. It then produces two sizes of glass: an eighth inch and another size that's like sand it is so fine. Once it gets down to that eighth-of-an-inch size it won't cut you. That was a concern for us because knowing we wanted to use it in construction projects we didn't want to make something that would harm our employees when they were working. We were surprised at how safe it is to handle."

Wilkinson said the public works department is working in conjunction with the city of Gallatin's Street Department to find uses for the recycled glass. Others have also expressed interest in the product.

"Because we operate our streets department out of the same facility as our recycling center, it made sense to find a way to use it in-house," he said. "The crushed aggregate can be used for construction projects. So far, we've used it as backfill for a house basement on

city property and then used some for drainage backfill. We've also been seeing a lot of local interest for it from contractors and even the local concrete plant to buy the material to use it in specialty projects. We've got a few of our own experimental projects going on to see how it looks when mixed into concrete. We are excited to see how it works out."

The interest in the recycled glass produced by the city may also help recoup some of the costs.

"We've heard people talk about using it from everything from landscaping mulch to mixing in concrete," Wilkinson said. "We may eventually start selling the product because of the demand, which is very encouraging. Some cities want us to start crushing glass for them. We want to have our own process nailed down first and have the manpower before we do that. We also would have to charge for the extra manpower that we would need."

Other communities are also taking notice of Gallatin's success.

"I have been surprised at how many communities are calling to ask about how we are doing it," Wilkinson said. "I think a lot of cities are looking into this. We've had some want to come see our set up. We've sort of been the guinea pigs."

## Improving convenience by way of increasing sustainability for Pikeville

BY MARK VALENCIA

TDEC Office of Sustainable Practices

Improving efficiencies throughout city departments has been a main focus in helping to reduce costs for most cities. When budgets are already spread thin for small cities, there isn't much left for utility expenses, building maintenance, and property management.

One small city, Pikeville, was able to reduce costs associated with utilities, building maintenance, and property management, by consolidating most departments under one roof, while improving energy efficiencies.

In 2014, Pikeville officials set out to turn around their vacant and dilapidated former Pikeville Elementary School building into a municipal complex to house their municipal offices, utility, police departments, courtroom, a community kitchen, and training facility for workforce development. Pikeville was awarded a Clean Tennessee Energy Grant (CTEG) to make energy improvements to the building.

Municipalities throughout Tennessee have recognized the need to implement energy efficiency projects to reduce pollution, fossil fuel consumption, and costs. The costs associated with energy efficiency upgrades can be quite expensive but can pay for themselves over time from the energy savings. The use of a Clean Tennessee Energy Grant can assist with the cost burden associated with energy upgrades.

In 2011, a federal court settlement of an enforcement action under the Clean Air Act with the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) obligated them to provide the state of Tennessee \$26.4 million to fund environmental mitigation projects.

The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation was designated by the Governor as the lead state agency to develop and manage a process for selection and implementation of the environmental mitigation projects for Tennessee. The Clean Tennessee Energy Grant was created from the TVA settlement and is designed to provide financial assistance to municipal governments, county governments, utility districts, and other entities created

by statute in Tennessee to purchase, install, and construct energy projects that reduce emissions and pollutants. CTEG grants were awarded to applicants who can match a certain percentage of the awarded amount (usually at least 50 percent). For a small city like Pikeville, energy projects can be quite burdensome to their annual budget, but the help of a CTEG awarded grant made once unachievable sustainability goals now achievable.

Pikeville recognized the need to reduce costs, reduce energy consumption, and increase sustainability throughout their departments. The former Pikeville Elementary School was an unused building that was slowly deteriorating. Pikeville recognized the former elementary school's potential as becoming a way to consolidate most of the city's departments into one building.

With the consolidation, fewer buildings would be in use, which can reduce building operating costs, building maintenance costs, and more importantly reduce energy consumption. Pikeville recognized that incorporating energy improvement projects would reduce overall operating costs, reduce pollution by consuming less energy, and would be able to apply for a CTEG grant, which could help cover some of the improvement costs.

In 2014, Pikeville was awarded a \$250,000 CTEG grant. With a match by the city of 56 percent, Pikeville was able to install energy efficient heating and cooling systems, insulated windows, building insulation, and low-energy light fixtures. The heating and cooling systems installed were 12,000 BTU mini-split units in which each room could be controlled separately.

Not all heating and cooling units would need to operate when certain rooms are unoccupied because they control the climate of each room separately. The installation of the mini-split systems, reduced energy consumption from heating and cooling from 95,467 kWh to 45,380 kWh, resulting in around \$9,000 in anticipated annual savings.

Once the heating and cooling system was upgraded, the building still needs to be able to keep as much of the conditioned air inside



The former Pikeville Elementary School was an unused building that was slowly deteriorating. Pikeville recognized the former elementary school's potential as becoming a way to consolidate most of the cities departments into one building.

the building by improving windows and insulation.

To improve efficiencies and reduce temperature fluctuations, Pikeville decided to replace outdated windows and upgrade the insulation. The original single-pane windows with aluminum framing tend to allow outside temperatures to penetrate into the building.

The windows were replaced with 1-inch insulated glass that are glazed with a "low-E" tint, which reflects up to 96 percent of the sun's infrared radiation. A new drop ceiling was installed in the building and filled with a more robust insulation, and the walls were filled with additional insulation. The insulation installed is an added barrier to insulate the building from the elements outside.

With upgrades made to a once unused building, the city of Pikeville has new space for their employees and community to enjoy. From comfortable offices to a space for the community, the new Pikeville Municipal Building provides services to the community in a fiscally responsible and sustainable manner.

A community kitchen, workforce development training space, and central location for municipal matters makes a great central point for the community. The city was



Former classrooms now serve as offices and meeting rooms for Pikeville's city staff at the renovated municipal complex.

able to provide a beneficial service to the community, provide central access for employees, and reduce energy consumption by utilizing a CTEG grant.

Cathy Andrews from the Southeast Tennessee Development District who assisted with the project believed the CTEG grant "was a resource in developing a municipal building that not only saves the community money but also improves sustainability for the city of Pikeville."

Large and small cities alike throughout Tennessee face a balancing act of saving money and improv-

ing their community on a daily basis. For Pikeville, they recognized the need to make a convenient central point for their residents. Their new municipal building now provides a convenient service for their community and does so while reducing pollution, energy use, and increases sustainability.

"Renovating an old elementary school that was built in the 50s and bringing life back to this area of the city has been rewarding. This project has been a great asset for the city of Pikeville and Bledsoe County," says Betty Renick, with the city of Pikeville.



## PEOPLE

**Katie Ashley** has been selected as the new director of legislation for Gov. Bill Haslam. One of the longest serving Haslam staffers, Ashley will serve as the governor's chief advisor and strategist for legislative matters. She began working on the Haslam campaign in 2009, becoming a legislative liaison in 2011 and deputy director of legislation in 2015. Before joining the Haslam administration, she was a constituent relations manager in U.S. Sen. Lamar Alexander's office. She graduated from the University of Tennessee, Martin with a bachelor's in university studies, with an emphasis in political science.



Katie Ashley

ance industry with Tennessee Farm Bureau 1993-98 and the pharmaceutical sales industry from 1998 to 2014 before joining TriStar Bank in Dickson, where he is executive vice president/chief retail officer

**Ken McLawhon**, town administrator for the town of Nolensville, was recently honored at the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) conference in San Antonio, Texas, for 30 years of service in local government. McLawhon was hired three years ago as the first town administrator for Nolensville. A native of Richmond, Va., he entered the U.S. Marine Corps after high school before attending J. Sergeant Reynold Community College and Virginia Commonwealth University. McLawhon began his career in government as assistant to the county administrator for Hanover County, Va., before going to work for the Virginia Department of Employee Management Services as a personnel practices analyst. He then served as the assistant town manager and then town manager of Smithfield, Va., before becoming the town manager of South Boston, Va., and then Indian Head, Md. He came to Nolensville after serving 13 years as the town administrator for Warrenton, Va.



Ken McLawhon

**Michael Bowen** has been named the new chief of police for the city of Murfreesboro. Bowen has been serving



Michael Bowen

as a deputy chief for the city since October 2010 and was appointed interim chief in October 2017 following the resignation of Chief James "Karl" Durr. Bowen began his career in law enforcement with the Murfreesboro Police Department in 1988 as a patrol officer. He was assigned to a field training position in 1991 and promoted to sergeant in 1996, lieutenant in 2001, and captain in 2003. Bowen is a 2007 graduate of the Northwestern University School of Police Staff and Command. He holds an associate's degree in law enforcement from Middle Tennessee State University and a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Troy State University.

**Patience Melnik** has been selected as the new manager of the city of Knoxville's Office of Solid Waste. Melnik has previously served as the director of Keep Knoxville Beautiful for nearly three years, and will take over from Rachel Butzler, who was recently promoted to the deputy director of the public service department. Melnik will start her role in early December. A native of California, Melnik earned a bachelor's degree in liberal arts from St. John's College in Sante Fe, N.M. She was employed by ABC-CLIO Publishing for nearly four years before going to work as director of environmental health programs for the Tennessee Clean Water Network in 2013. She served in that position until 2015, when she began working with Keep Knoxville Beautiful.



Patience Melnik

**Stephen Smith** has been named the chief of staff for Gov. Bill Haslam, serving as the top advisor and strategist as well as overseeing day-to-day operations of the governor's office. Smith joined the governor's office in August 2016 and most recently served as senior advisor to the governor. He has served in the Haslam administration since 2011, previously as deputy commissioner for policy and external affairs for the Tennessee Department of Education. Smith, an attorney, formerly worked in private law practice as well as the nonprofit sector representing clients in both a legal and consulting capacity. He earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Tennessee - Knoxville, and a law degree from the Nashville School of Law.



Stephen Smith

**Terry Cobb**, director of codes for Metro Nashville, will step down from his position in April after 28 years on the job. Cobb is believed to be the longest-serving department head in the history of Nashville government. A native of Nashville, Cobb was selected as codes director in 1990. He has served under five Nashville mayors: Bill Honer, Phil Bredesen, Bill Purcell, Karl Dean, and Megan Barry.



Terry Cobb

**Lauren Cox**, special event and program coordinator for the town of Farragut, was elected vice president of the Tennessee Recreation and Parks Association (TRPA) at the organization's annual meeting in October. Cox has been employed with the city for six years and a member of TPRA for 11 years. She has served on several committees within the organization as well as its East District Chair. Cox has a bachelor's degree in outdoor education from Middle Tennessee State University. She was previously employed by the city of Pigeon Forge as a youth program supervisor.



Lauren Cox

**Mark Watson**, city manager for the city of Oak Ridge, recently received a lifetime achievement award from the Kansas University City Managers and Trainees Alumni Organization (KUCIMAT) during a banquet at the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) Annual Conference in San Antonio, Texas. Watson graduated from the University of Kansas with a bachelor's degree and master's degree in public administration and city management. A second generation city manager, Watson served



Mark Watson

**Robby Harmon** has been named the new vice mayor of the city of Dickson after being approved by his fellow councilmembers at a November meeting. Harmon was elected to the council from the city's Ward 2 in 2015 and will succeed Mike Legg, who served as the city's vice mayor for the past decade. Harmon is the fourth vice mayor to serve under Dickson Mayor Don Weiss Jr., who has served for 24 years in the city. Harmon has a bachelor's degree in agricultural business from Freed-Hardeman University and a master's degree in business administration from Lipscomb University. He worked in the insur-



Robby Harmon

## Charles "Bones" Seivers recognized by NLC for 55 years of public service, work with TML

For 55 years, Charles "Bones" Seivers has tirelessly worked for municipal governments – first as an alderman on the Clinton Board of Mayor and Aldermen, later elected as mayor of Clinton, and then appointed as the city's first administrator and city manager – a role he served in for 20 years.

Throughout his tenure with the city of Clinton, he was always an active supporter and participant in the Tennessee Municipal League and worked determinedly as an advocate for both large and small municipalities. Through his involvement with TML, he was also an active member of the National League of Cities (NLC), and helped to establish the Small Cities Advisory Council.

NLC recently recognized Seivers' service at the City Summit in Charlotte, N.C.

In 1979, The Tennessee Municipal League made history when it founded America's first statewide municipal liability pool. Seivers served as one of the founding members on the TML Insurance Pool Board of Trustees, now known as the TML Risk Management Pool. In 1985, he recognized the need for municipalities to obtain low-cost financing for capital improvement

needs. He worked to bring municipalities and the state together and helped create the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund. Seivers served as chairman of the board for the first eight years of its existence. Upon his retirement from the town of Clinton in 1993, he continued to serve municipalities as President and CEO of the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund.

In 1995, the Bond Fund was asked by the Tennessee County Services to structure a similar program for counties, resulting in the formation of the Tennessee County Services Loan Program. Now, after more than 25 years, the Municipal Bond Fund and the County Loan Program have made more than 1,385 loans totaling \$4.35 billion -- and having saved cities and counties \$600 million in interest costs alone. Other accomplishments include:

- President, TML Board of Directors (1990)
- Clinton Community Center dedicated to Charles G. Seivers (1978)
- Highway dedicated Charles G. Seivers Boulevard, Clinton, TN (1987)
- Award recipient, National Public Service award from President Ronald Regan (1988)



Charles "Bones" Seivers

- Award recipient, TML Overall Community Improvement Award (1972)
- Award recipient, TML Award for Most Effective Use of Federal Programs (1976)
- Award recipient, TML Superior Municipal Achievement Award (1985)
- Award recipient, TML Beverly C. Briley Award (1992)
- Renaming of the Capitol Boulevard Building in Nashville to the Charles "Bones" Seivers Building (2016)

He and his wife Bettye have been married for 61 years. He has two children, two grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

## Lawmakers leaving house, senate seats

**LAWMAKERS** from Page 1

Juvenile court Clerk in October, and said she will not keep her house seat if she wins.

**Rep. Roger Kane**, R-Knoxville, will leave District 89 after five years in the legislature. The insurance broker announced he will be running for Knox County Clerk in 2018. Kane presently serves as the chair of the House Education Instruction and Programs Subcommittee.

**Rep. Judd Matheny**, R-Tullahoma, will leave District 47 after 15 years to run for the 6th District Congressional Seat for Tennessee. The seat was open after U.S. Rep. Diane Black announced her plans to run for governor. Matheny previously served as the state House Speaker Pro Tempore.

**Rep. Jimmy Matlock**, R-Lebanon City, announced he will run in Tennessee's 2nd Congressional District to succeed U.S. Rep. John "Jimmy" Duncan Jr. of Knoxville, who announced his retirement. Matlock has represented Tennessee's House District 21 for 10 years.

**House Deputy Speaker Steve McDaniel**, R-Parkers Crossroads, announced in September that he will not seek re-election to his District 72 seat after 29 years in the House. He has previously served as a party leader and house caucus chair for the Republican Party.

**Rep. Debra Moody**, R-Covington, will be leaving her District 81 seat after five years to run for the District 32 Senate seat previously held by Senate Majority Leader Mark Norris. Moody serves as vice chair of the House Civil Service Committee.

**Rep. Joe Pitts**, D-Clarksville, will also be retiring from his position after 11 years representing District 67. When he announced his retirement in May, Pitts said he felt it was time to give someone else a chance to represent the area. Pitts said he has not ruled out a possible run for Clarksville mayor.

as the city manager of several cities in Texas, Montana, and Arizona before coming to Oak Ridge in 2010.

**Rick White**, chief of the Nashville Fire Department, will be retiring from his position after a 40-year career. A native of Nashville, White was appointed interim fire chief in 2013 and then was named director chief in 2016. White first joined the Nashville Fire Department as a firefighter in February of 1978. After serving as firefighter, fire engineer, fire instructor, captain of the Hazardous Materials Team, district chief of special operations and assistant chief of the Urban Search and Rescue Team, he was promoted to assistant chief in 2003. Nashville Mayor Megan Barry has appointed Commander William Swann to serve as interim director chief for the department.



Rick White

**Rep. Mark Pody**, R-Lebanon, is leaving his District 45 seat after seven years to run for the Senate District 17 left vacant by Sen. Mae Beavers. Pody was the sole Republican qualifier for the seat in a special primary election held in October and will face off against Democrat Mary Alice Carfi for the seat on Dec. 19 in a special general election.

**Rep. Charles Sargent**, R-Franklin, has represented District 61 for 21 years and said the 2018 legislative session will be his last. Sargent currently serves as chair of the House Finance, Ways and Means Committee and is one of the most senior Republicans in the House. He cited health issues related to skin cancer as well as wanting to spend more time with his family as reasons for why he has decided not to seek re-election.

**Rep. Art Swann**, R-Maryville, will be leaving his District 8 seat after seven years. Swann announced his intention to run for the Senate District 2 seat recently vacated by Sen. Doug Overbey. After being confirmed as a U.S. attorney, Overbey had to resign from his position in the General Assembly.

**Rep. Dawn White**, R-Murfreesboro, will be running for the State Senate seat vacated by Sen. Bill Ketron, who is running for Rutherford County mayor. White will face off against current Rutherford County Mayor Ernest Burgess for the Republican nomination for the Senate District 13 seat. White has held her House District 37 seat for five years.

**Rep. Mark White**, R-Memphis, is also leaving his seat to run for the District 32 Senate seat previously held by Senate Majority Leader Mark Norris. White has represented House District 83 for seven years and currently serves as chair of the House Education Administration and Planning Subcommittee.

**RUMORED**

Five other lawmakers have also been said to be considering leaving their current posts.

**Sen. Thelma Harper**, D-Nashville, has reportedly considered retirement from her Senate District 19 seat after 28 years of service. However, Harper has not confirmed her intention to make the 2018 legislative session her last.

**Rep. John Ray Clemmons**, D-Nashville, has allegedly considered running for the Tennessee's District 8 U.S. Senate seat held by U.S. Sen. Bob Corker, who announced he will not be running for re-election in 2018. Clemmons has represented the Tennessee House's District 55 for three years.

Following a serious heart attack he suffered in September, rumors circulated that **Rep. Jim Coley**, R-Bartlett, was considering retiring from his District 97 seat after 11 years. However, Coley has reportedly recovered swiftly since September, and many expect him to be back on the ballot in 2018.

**Rep. Jimmy Eldridge**, R-Jackson, said in June that he is "leaning toward" running for mayor of the city of Jackson, but hasn't officially announced whether or not he will seek re-election to his house seat in 2018. The city of Jackson will not hold a mayoral election until 2019. Eldridge has represented House District 73 for 15 years and is the chair of the House Consumer and Human Resources Committee.

**Rep. Dan Howell**, R-Georgetown, has considered stepping down from his seat, but made no formal announcement regarding 2018. Howell has represented District 22 for three years and presently serves as the chair of the Joint Government Operations Judiciary and Government Subcommittee as well as vice chair of the House Local Government Committee.

## Bartlett swears in 8 new police officers



Bartlett Mayor Keith McDonald swore in eight new police officers during a ceremony at the Bartlett Justice Center. Pictured from left to right: (sitting) are Zachary Apel, Nick Bramlett, Blake Bueltemann, and Felipe Perez; (standing) Chief of Police Gary Rikard, Josh Prince, Christian Rodriguez, Christian Waller, Hunter Kissinger, and Mayor Keith McDonald.

## STATE BRIEFS



Fewer than 30 percent of Tennessee hospitals received an "A" in safety in a recent study conducted by an independent firm. Leapfrog's Fall 2017 Hospital Safety Grades ranked the state 29th in the country in terms of hospital grades. Only 18 of the 63 hospitals in the state received "A" grades with 28 hospitals receiving a "C" grade or less. Hospitals in the report are scored on the processes and procedures they use to prevent common injuries and infections among patients.

Tennessee was one of five awardees to receive a grant for just under \$900,000 from the U.S. Department of Education's office of career, technical, and adult education to support career and technical education (CTE) teacher pipelines. The funding will support the department's Experienced Professionals in the Classroom (EPIC) project that seeks to improve recruitment, preparation, and retention of effective CTE educators. The grant will focus on Tennessee's in-demand industry sectors of advanced manufacturing, health science, and information technology to build flexible options for districts to be able to entice experienced professionals into CTE classrooms.

## October tax revenue \$1.3M under budget estimate

Tennessee revenues for October exceeded revenues from the same month a year ago, but were marginally less than the budgeted estimate. Finance and Administration Commissioner Larry Martin reported that October revenues were \$1 billion, which is \$31.1 million more than October of last year and \$1.3 million less than the budgeted estimate. The growth rate for October was 3.16 percent.

"All in all, October revenue results were mixed. Sales taxes, our best economic indicator, grew at a relatively modest rate while corporate revenues, realized from our franchise and excise taxes, recorded negative growth," Martin said. "This is not alarming and is a normal occurrence in Tennessee's business tax cycle. October is the month when corporate calendar year filers that filed a six month due date extension are allowed to request a refund. It is also the month in which corporations reconcile their books relative to their actual tax obligation.

"While our revenue trends continue to reflect moderate growth, we must proceed cautiously, and closely monitor our revenue and expenditure patterns for the balance of this fiscal year. We are committed to keeping Tennessee's budget balanced."

On an accrual basis, October is the third month in the 2017-2018 fiscal year.

General fund revenues for October were \$8.7 million less than the budgeted estimate, and the four other funds that share in state tax revenues were \$7.4 million more than the budgeted estimates.

Sales tax revenues were \$4.2 million more than the estimate for October. The October growth rate was 2.62 percent. The year-to-date growth rate was positive 3.51 percent.

Franchise and excise combined

Tennessee is the state with the best efforts and tools to fight sex trafficking, according to a recent study conducted by anti-sex trafficking organizations The Protected Innocence Challenge and Shared Hope International. Tennessee scored a 96.5 out of 100, the highest grade of any state in the nation, and a major jump from the previous year when Tennessee was listed as 49 out of 50 on the same list. Every state was graded on the strength of its laws addressing child sex trafficking and produces legal analysis for stakeholders.

For the fifth month in a row, Tennessee's seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate is lower than ever before in recorded history. The state unemployment rate for October 2017 held steady at 3.0 percent, matching the historically low rate set in September. Tennessee first marked an all-time low unemployment rate in June at 3.6 percent, which was bested by the July rate of 3.4 percent, and then in August fell to 3.3 percent. Tennessee's October 2017 unemployment rate is two percentage points lower than it was one year ago and continues to outpace the national average, which currently sits at 4.1 percent.

revenues for October were \$48.6 million which is \$13.8 million less than the budgeted estimate of \$62.4 million. The growth rate for October was negative 26.58 percent. The year-to-date growth rate was negative 6.03 percent.

Gasoline and motor fuel revenues increased by 36.82 percent and they were \$7.9 million more than the budgeted estimate of \$90.3 million. Motor Vehicle Registration revenues increased by 7.93 percent and they were \$500,000 less than the October estimate.

Tobacco tax revenues for the month were comparative to the budgeted estimate.

Privilege tax revenues were \$200,000 more than the budgeted estimate of \$29.6 million. Inheritance and Estate taxes were \$1.2 million more than the October estimate.

Business tax revenues were \$100,000 less than the October estimate. Hall income taxes were \$2.7 million less than the October estimate.

All other tax revenues exceeded estimates by a net of \$500,000.

Year-to-date revenues for three months were \$42.7 million more than the budgeted estimate. The general fund exceeded estimates by \$21.4 million and the four other funds that share in state tax revenues exceeded estimates by \$21.3 million.

The budgeted revenue estimates for 2017-2018 are based on the State Funding Board's consensus recommendation of Nov. 29, 2016, and adopted by the first session of the 110th General Assembly in May 2017. Also incorporated in the estimates are any changes in revenue enacted during the 2017 session of the General Assembly. These estimates are available on the state's website at [www.tn.gov/finance/article/fa-budget-rev](http://www.tn.gov/finance/article/fa-budget-rev).

## Tennessee Highway Patrol urges motorists to watch out for deer

November-December worst time for deer-related crashes

The Tennessee Highway Patrol (THP) cautions motorists to watch out for deer on or near the roadways. An increase in deer-related crashes is more likely during November-December due to deer mating and hunting season.

"Deer related crashes can be a very serious and dangerous incident," THP Colonel Tracy Trott said. "Deer pose a danger to motorists throughout the year, especially in the fall. Stats show November is typically the worst month for deer-related crashes. It is important for motorists to exercise caution, slow down and remain alert in areas where deer are present."

In Tennessee from 2012 and 2016, 6.4 percent of deer-related crashes occurred on state highways. In 2016, there were 7,219 deer related crashes including 330 that involved injuries and one that was fatal. That's a 3.8 percent increase from 6,955 the previous year. Since 2011, deer-related crashes in Tennessee have increased 26.7 percent. As of Oct. 31, 2017, there have been 4,223 deer-involved traffic crashes across the state.

October through December is prime mating months for deer. This causes deer to be less aware causing motorists to pay extra attention to deer darting directly in front of traffic.

The Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security (TDOSHS) and the Tennessee Highway Patrol suggest the following tips to help prevent deer related crashes during peak mating and hunting seasons particularly at dawn and dusk:



lowing tips to help prevent deer related crashes during peak mating and hunting seasons particularly at dawn and dusk:

- When you see deer cross the road, expect more to follow. Many times, the second or third deer crossing becomes the one that motorists hit;
- Be attentive and drive defensively constantly scanning the roadside, especially at dawn and dusk;
- Do not swerve to avoid contact with deer. This could cause the vehicle to flip or veer into oncoming traffic causing a serious crash. Swerving can also confuse the deer as to where to run;
- When you spot a deer, slow down immediately. Proceed slowly when passing;

- If you do collide with a deer, never approach the animal. They are powerful and can cause bodily harm to a human. Report any deer collision, even if the damage is minor.

In the event of a deer crash, move the vehicle as far off the road as possible and dial \*THP (\*847). The call will be connected to the nearest THP communications center, and a state trooper will be dispatched to the location.

Tennessee law allows deer killed in a collision to be taken and used as food, as long as you contact the nearest Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) regional office and report the accident within 48 hours. For a list of TWRA regional offices, visit the website at [www.tnwildlife.org](http://www.tnwildlife.org).

## TN economy reaches sixth year of positive growth

Six years of year-over-year growth coupled with historically low unemployment rates indicate Tennessee's economy won't slow down anytime soon, according to a report released by the Secretary of State's office.

There were 9,326 new entity filings in the third quarter of 2017, representing a 4.8 percent increase compared to the same time last year. Initial filings have had positive year-over-year growth for 24 consecutive quarters. Domestic limited liability corporations (LLCs), which are up 12.4 percent this quarter, account for more than half of all new entity filings.

"Every quarter these reports confirm that Tennessee's leaders have created a wonderful climate where businesses can thrive. Hope-

fully, this marked success attracts more businesses to call the Volunteer State home," said Tennessee Secretary of State Tre Hargett.

The Tennessee Quarterly Business and Economic Indicators report is created to provide a periodic snapshot of the state's economy based on a variety of information, including new business data from the Division of Business Services.

There were 25,242 dissolutions filed during the third quarter of 2017, representing a 7.5 percent increase compared to the same time last year. This is a common seasonal pattern as many entities are administratively dissolved in August for failing to file annual reports.

Among the state's four largest counties, Shelby County experienced the largest year-over-year

growth at 17.2 percent with 1,868 initial filings for the third quarter. Davidson County had 2,220 initial filings. Knox and Hamilton counties saw 791 and 635 filings respectively. The four counties account for 5,514 new entity filings during the third quarter, which is a 7.8 percent increase compared to 2016.

The state's unemployment remains at a record-breaking 3 percent in October after first hitting the milestone in September. Tennessee's unemployment rate is now well below the current national average of 4.1 percent.

The national economy grew 3 percent in the third quarter compared to the quarter before it due to more jobs, growing housing starts, declining auto sales and falling gas prices nationally.

## TNECD report identifies high demand jobs across state

A report released by the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (TNECD) highlights jobs in high demand across Tennessee, including occupations in IT, healthcare, engineering and production, among others.

TNECD's annual Labor and Education Alignment Program (LEAP) report, a regional study of occupations in high demand among employers throughout Tennessee, identifies more than 250 occupations with high employer demand statewide. This year's report also includes an interactive dashboard.

"Even as Tennessee sustains historically low unemployment

rates, employers continue to look for workers to fill highly-skilled positions in a variety of industries," TNECD Commissioner Bob Rolfe said. "In order to sustain Tennessee's strong employment and labor market, we need to continue to train and educate our residents for the jobs businesses are seeking to fill, especially in highly-skilled occupations. With the LEAP report, stakeholders from across Tennessee can better align education and industry."

While nearly every industry group has jobs in high demand, the report focuses on job openings in IT, healthcare, engineering, production, business and financial

operations, and transportation and material moving occupations. The LEAP report also outlines postsecondary programs of study available throughout the state that can prepare students for jobs in these in-demand occupation groups.

TNECD's Center for Economic Research in Tennessee (CERT) used key metrics such as median wage, online job postings, hires and job openings to identify occupations with high employer demand.

Many of the occupations identified in the report are within Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) and IT fields, denoting a skills gap and need for increased postsecondary completions in these areas.

The LEAP report seeks to aid local, regional and state policy decision-making by outlining occupations in high demand and showcasing opportunities to reduce gaps between education and the workforce needs of employers.

Additionally, the LEAP report highlights the opportunities for increased education and industry alignment in terms of workforce development strategies such as work-based learning, internships, co-ops and apprenticeships.

LEAP is a statewide program designed to help postsecondary institutions provide students with the skills and credentials employers need through aligning education and industry. LEAP is the result of legislation introduced by Tennessee Senate Majority Leader Mark Norris and Representative Gerald McCormick.

The 2017 LEAP report is available for download here, <http://www.tnecd.com/research-and-data/publications/>. The interactive dashboard is available here, <http://tn.gov/transparenttn/article/openecd-workforce-leap-report>

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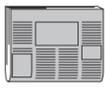
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### ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF

**WHITE HOUSE.** The city of White House is currently accepting applications for assistant fire chief. The purpose of this job is to perform complex professional and administrative work planning, directing, coordinating, supervising and commanding the city fire department; shall provide skilled administrative assistance to the fire chief in all phases of fire department operations. This employee is under the direct supervision of the fire chief. The employee is expected to perform his or her duties according to state laws, city ordinances and the policies and procedures of the fire department. This employee is responsible for administrative and technical work in the direction of employees and activities of the city fire department in the absence of the fire chief. The employee in this position is responsible for the protection of lives and property of the city, for the fire department organization, and direction of fire service functions. Work involves planning, directing, and controlling fire inspection, fire prevention, fire suppression operations, and emergency medical services for the city of White House. The employee is expected to function independently of direct supervision with respect to technical fire procedures and practices. Bachelor's degree in fire science or related field; extensive work experience in firefighting or a related field, five years of which must be in an upper-level management position. Possession of an appropriate driver's license valid in the state of Tennessee. Must be at least 21 years of age. Must have certification for Fire Officer I and Medical First Responder. Must possess a state of Tennessee Fire Inspector certification or have the ability to obtain within 12 months of hire. Starting compensation range: \$50,440.00 - \$61,456.25 annually. DOE. Application deadline: Dec. 14, 2017, at 5:15 p.m. For a complete job description and details on how to apply online, visit: <http://www.city-ofwhitehouse.com/i-want-to-top/apply-for-employment-opportunities>.

### BUILDING OFFICIAL

**FARRAGUT.** The town of Farragut is seeking to fill the position of a building official. This position administers all aspects of the Codes Enforcement Division of the Community Development Department. Specifically, the successful candidate should have excellent communication skills, proficiency in coordinating and managing schedules and projects, management experience in a codes-related environment, and a thorough knowledge of all aspects of the ICC building codes. Applicants should have at least an Associates/Technical degree with coursework in construction/engineering, or related field and extensive experience in engineering, architecture, construction and codes enforcement, or an equivalent combination of education and a minimum of 5 years relevant experience. State of TN Certified Building Inspector Certification is strongly preferred. Supervisory experience in a codes-related environment and MCP Certification is also preferred. Complete job description and required job application are available at [www.townoffarragut/jobs](http://www.townoffarragut/jobs). Resumes may be downloaded. SALARY: \$52,845-\$67,378. (DOQ) annually with excellent benefits package. Open until filled.

### DEVELOPMENT SERVICES/ PLANNING DIRECTOR

**JOHNSON CITY.** The city of Johnson City is seeking a director of development services/planning. This is a high-level, visible management position reporting directly to the city manager. The director will oversee the operations of the Planning, Building Inspection, Permitting, Code Compliance division, and the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization. The role will also support the city's efforts with economic development by working closely with community stakeholders and the economic development council to attract new and diverse businesses. The director must be a service-oriented leader who works collaboratively with staff as well as with other city departments, city commission, neighborhood groups, public or private agencies to seek resolutions that are in the best interest of all parties. Must demonstrate

an exemplary customer service approach to development and permitting. The next development services director should possess the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to oversee the work of all departmental personnel; establish departmental policies, procedures and regulations and ensure proper enforcement. Plan, organize and articulate the department's goals, objectives and levels of service to city departments and the community. Prepare and administer the departmental annual \$1.6M budget and monitor expenditures during the year and make recommendations for budget modifications or additional funds. Ensure compliance with city policies, procedures, and regulations. Present information and recommendations to various boards, commissions and committees. Research and prepare ordinances and ordinance revisions related to development, permitting and code enforcement. Work with the public and developers in answering questions and providing information regarding land use, the development process, building projects, building and housing regulations and code enforcement. Serve as technical advisor to the planning commission, city manager, board of commissioners, and department heads on planning and zoning issues. Establish and maintain a policy of downtown improvement and coordinates that policy with other urban growth policies and zoning policies etc. Make frequent presentations to the city boards and commissions. Manage multiple projects in a fast-paced environment with strong prioritization and organizational skills. The ideal candidate is a professional who is open, honest, of strong moral character, promotes transparency, and has excellent interpersonal and communication skills. A leader who is approachable and energetic with an open management style that supports teamwork and staff development. The ideal candidate must be able to create and sustain an organizational climate that promotes quality customer service in departmental operations. Must have the ability to analyze problems, identify solutions, make recommendations, encourage a creative, balanced approach to solving challenges - The ideal candidate asks how we can, not why we can't. A bachelor's degree in public administration, planning, or a related field and five years of progressive experience is required. AICP certification and master's degree is preferred. Must have knowledge of urban planning and zoning principles, land use and development laws, federal, state, and municipal building codes, GIS, and current and long range planning methods. Must be a city resident or secure residence within the city limits within 12 months of employment. Applications will be received on-line at [www.johnsoncitytn.org](http://www.johnsoncitytn.org) until the position is filled. Salary range \$72,070 - \$116,810. EEO

### EXISTING INDUSTRIES MANAGER/ GRAPHIC DESIGNER/ ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT II

**GALLATIN.** The city of Gallatin Economic Development Agency (EDA) is seeking qualified applicants for the position of existing industries manager/graphic designer/administrative assistant II. This position works with existing industry on personnel recruitment and problem-solving, creating promotional materials for the EDA, along with assisting with day-to-day operations of the office. This is a 40-hour per week, day shift position. Starting rate is \$20.11 per hour + excellent benefits. The successful applicant should have experience in event organization, including arranging venues, catering and audio/visual needs; strong organizational and multi-tasking skills in a fast paced environment; advanced computer skills with a thorough knowledge of Adobe Creative Suites, Microsoft Office, and Excel. Essential duties include working with the executive director to gain a general understanding of all initiatives within the Economic Development Agency, representing the agency, and city when appropriate, at job fairs, completing diverse administrative tasks including; appointment management, meeting and presentation preparation and database management, while maintaining strict confidentiality, and arranging travel needs (including but not limited to hotel, air and registrations) for the agency. Qualified applicants must possess an associate's degree. Bachelor's

degree is preferred. Must have at least five years recent work experience in a related capacity, preferably working directly with executive level positions. For a description and to apply, visit [www.gallatintn.gov](http://www.gallatintn.gov). Open until filled. EOE.

### PARKS & RECREATION / PUBLIC RELATIONS DIRECTOR

**UNICOI.** The town of Unicoi is seeking resumes for the combined position of Parks & Recreation Director and Public Relations Director. Duties include organizing all festivals, events and parades, design and distribute flyers, work with town related organizations, attend and present activity reports to town meetings, attend conferences, some overnight travel required, visit town businesses, 4-year accredited college degree in Parks and Recreation or related field is required. Starting pay is \$35k-\$40k DOQ. Send resumes with cover letter no later than Dec. 22, 2017 to: Mayor Lynch, PO Box 39, Unicoi, TN 37692 or e-mail; to: [unicoitownhall@comcast.net](mailto:unicoitownhall@comcast.net)

### PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

**SHELBYVILLE.** The city of Shelbyville is accepting applications for the full-time position of planning and community development director. The planning director will be responsible for daily administration of all planning and zoning activities, including comprehensive planning, and the administration of subdivision regulations. The planning director will also implement and manage municipal projects related to the development of this growing community. The ideal candidate will have at least a bachelor's degree in urban planning or a related field (master's degree preferred), and 3-7 years city planning experience. Salary based on qualifications and experience (anticipated range \$51,848.00 - \$64,530.00). Applications and a copy of job description may be picked up at city hall during normal business hours. Applications must be returned to City Hall Administration Office, 201 N. Spring Street no later than 4 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 15, 2017. The city of Shelbyville is an equal opportunity employer and a drug free workplace. Successful Applicants required to pass background check, physical and drug screen. For more information, visit our website: [www.shelbyvilletn.org](http://www.shelbyvilletn.org)

### POLICE CHIEF

**JOHNSON CITY.** The city of Johnson City is seeking a committed public safety professional to lead and manage a modern, full service agency dedicated to policing our city with a highly engaged and community-involved approach. Under the general direction and supervision of the city manager, the chief plans, organizes, directs, coordinates and evaluates all activities of the Johnson City Police Department. The police chief will be privileged to lead a dedicated staff of 149 sworn officers and 32 civilian employees. The chief will manage the non-union police department's \$13.5 million budget and oversee the entire operations. The department is nationally accredited and is organized into three divisions: administration, criminal investigations, and operations. Areas of responsibility include: patrol, criminal investigations, canine, drug task force, EOD, minimum security jail, special operations, community policing, school resource, and SWAT. The candidate must possess the following critical success factors: strong interpersonal and communication skills (both verbal and written); experience presenting to elected officials and public speaking; ability to motivate and inspire staff to build on past successes; demonstrated ability to develop and achieve long-range planning and budget goals; comprehensive and broad knowledge of the principles and practices of modern police administration; Requirements include a bachelor's degree in a related field (criminal justice, public administration, or equivalent) from

an accredited university or college. A minimum of seven to 10 years of command level officer experience in a similar-sized department at the captain level or above. The city operates under the Commission-Manager form of government with a city manager appointed by a five-member city commission. Applications will be received online at [www.johnsoncitytn.org](http://www.johnsoncitytn.org) until the position is filled. Salary range \$72,069 to \$116,810. EOE.

### PUBLIC WORKS STREETS AND ROADS SUPERVISOR

**WHITE HOUSE.** The city of White House is currently accepting applications for public works streets and roads supervisor. This position is responsible for the supervision of public works streets, right of way maintenance and construction, garbage and brush removal and public works and sanitation staff. This position requires an employee to perform technical environmental work to maintain compliance with the city of White House's Stormwater Program, Streets Program, MUTCD Program and Sanitation Program. Work includes managing a diverse staff by prioritizing projects, assigning work tasks, using equipment, maintaining records, monitoring work quality and work schedules, insuring crew safety, training of employees, and providing performance feedback. The employee directs and participates in performing various landscaping and horticultural functions, building maintenance tasks, street maintenance tasks, solid waste functions, stormwater maintenance and the operation of various types of construction equipment. Employee is responsible for procurement of materials, work orders, and record-keeping for each project. The Supervisors work subjects the employee to inside and outside environmental conditions, extremes in temperatures, and hazards associated with equipment operation including fumes, oils, gases and mists. Work is supervised by the Public Services Director for adherence to instructions and established standards. Independent judgment is required when making decisions with a significant degree of accountability. Coordination is exercised with other professional, technical and support personnel. Tact and courtesy are required in frequent contact with property owners, consultants, contractors, the general public and other City staff. A high school diploma or GED. Substantial skilled experience in: construction, maintenance or repair to include some lead experience and the operation and maintenance of a backhoe, excavator, track loader, motor grader etc. A valid Tennessee Commercial Driver's License (C.D.L.) appropriate to the assignment is required. (Minimum - Class B with A57 Endorsement. Preferred - Class A) Starting compensation range: \$18.78 - \$22.88 hourly (\$39,062.40 - \$47,590.40) annually DOE Open Until Filled For a complete job description and details on how to apply online, visit: <http://www.cityofwhitehouse.com/i-want-to-top/apply-for-employment-opportunities>.

### STORMWATER CREW LEADER

**WHITE HOUSE.** The city of White House is currently accepting applications for stormwater crew leader. This person is responsible for supervising and participating in the work of a crew performing stormwater construction and maintenance, landscaping, R-O-W maintenance, and public facility and infrastructure maintenance and repair. An application may be obtained by visiting [www.cityofwhitehouse.com](http://www.cityofwhitehouse.com) or at the human resources office located at 105 College Street, White House, TN 37188. Return applications to the human resources office or faxed to 615-616-1058 or emailed to [humanresources@cityofwhitehouse.com](mailto:humanresources@cityofwhitehouse.com). Starting Compensation range: \$16.29 - \$19.85 hourly DOE Open until filled. EOE.



## TENNESSEE FESTIVALS

### Now - Dec. 30: Jackson

*Christmas Under the Stars*  
Experience beautiful Christmas light displays, including characters like Santa Claus, Rudolph, and a giant Nativity scene at the Jackson Fairgrounds for only \$10 a car. All proceeds benefit the STAR Center. Tuesday -Sunday 5:30-10 p.m. For more information contact [events@star-center.org](mailto:events@star-center.org), or call 731-554-5173

### Now - Dec. 30: Union City

*Let It Glow Lightshow*  
Hop in the car and head over to Discovery Park of America to see thousands of twinkling lights on display, and sing along to your favorite Christmas songs with the custom radio station. Sponsored by the city of Union City, the event is closed Mondays, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Day. For more information, go to <http://discovery-parkofamerica.com/event/let-glow-christmas-light-show/2017-11-26/>

### Dec. 15-16: Memphis

*Holiday Concert Weekend at Graceland*  
Celebrate the holiday season with a very special weekend at Graceland featuring three festive live concerts at Graceland's new Elvis Presley's Memphis entertainment complex. For more information, go to [www.graceland.com/events/holiday-concert-weekend.aspx](http://www.graceland.com/events/holiday-concert-weekend.aspx).

### Dec. 16: Cornersville

*Christmas at Lairdland Farm*  
Visit an antebellum mansion decorated for Christmas. A portion of the mansion was converted into a Civil War Museum containing both Union and Confederate artifacts, clothing and uniforms, soldiers' personal items, and numerous other pieces from the Lairdland owners' private collection. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the current owners were awarded a certificate of merit by the Tennessee Historical Commission for preservation and restoration of the historic property. For more information, call 931-363-2205 or visit [www.lairdlandfarmhouse.com](http://www.lairdlandfarmhouse.com).

### Dec. 31: Chattanooga

*New Years Eve Party on the Bluff.*  
Welcome 2018 at the Hunter Museum, featuring an open bar, hors d'oeuvres, music, dancing, midnight champagne toast, and the best views in the city. Named one of the Southeast's top New Year's Eve parties by *The Atlanta Journal Constitution*. For more information, go to <http://www.huntermuseum.org/events/nve-partyonthelbluff-2017>

### Dec. 31: Greeneville

*Midnight On Main*  
Fourth annual celebration to ring in the New Year. Two blocks of Main Street will be filled with music, dancing, food and other festivities for all ages beginning at 7 p.m. DJ Joe Prokop of Big Show Entertainment will lead the lively street party, which is free to the public. A highlight will be the ball drop by Greeneville Light & Power System during the countdown to a spectacular midnight fireworks show. For more information visit [www.facebook.com/TownofGreeneville](http://www.facebook.com/TownofGreeneville)

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## City officials discuss road to recovery one year after wildfires

### FIRE from Page 1

new normal. My entire life is a new normal."

Teaster said also she and many others felt a renewed sense of faith in her community because of the disaster.

"I learned Pigeon Forge is very resilient, and that the business community and the residents of this town can come together. They fully supported our city," she said. "They brought food, gave shelter, and the lodging folks gave free rooms. We had places for the Red Cross to set up. Everybody – and I mean everybody – stepped up to the plate. We received donations from literally all over the country. We received things from as far north as Chicago and as far west as California. For two or three weeks, people came forward and supported Pigeon Forge, Gatlinburg, Sevierville and our whole community."

In particular, Teaster said city employees went above and beyond the call of duty.

"I saw my public safety employees, especially, come together as I had never seen before," she said. "They worked absolutely diligently and wonderfully together. They didn't miss a beat, and I am so very, very grateful for them. The remaining departments also stepped up to the plate. They cut trees out of the roadways and whatever else they could do to help for three or four weeks. It was a team effort, and they all did a very good job."

Ogle said Gatlinburg city employees also did whatever they could during the disaster.

"Everyone – from first responders to city employees, personnel and management –

did everything they could to the best of their ability and with the information that we had to save lives and save property," Ogle said. "It took all of our employees pulling together. There was no 'this isn't my job' or 'this department needs to do it.' We really wanted to make sure the non-first responder employees received due recognition, so we have been doing a few employee appreciation luncheons to thank them. They showed a dedication to this city that I will be eternally grateful for."

Ogle said she learned early on that disaster recovery takes time and patience.

"Our Congressman, Rep. Phil Roe, said to me during those early days 'Cindy, this is a marathon not a sprint,'" she said. "I can tell you, I'm a sprinter, not a marathoner. I want to go to it and get it done. Recovery is definitely a marathon and not a sprint. You also have to keep as much of the media noise out as you can so you can focus on what you need to do. We had PR people handling most of that and if I needed to know something they told me. However, I didn't even start reading the local newspaper again until the middle of January. You have to stay as focused as you can, and you have to lean on God, your family, your staff, management team, and administrative staff. You realize you are really blessed when you go through something like this."

On the advice of FEMA officials, Ogle said the city and county also created a nonprofit organization, Mountain Tough, to help with long-term recovery needs. Officials from Bastrop, Texas, who had experienced wildfires in the past helped Gatlinburg officials set up the 501c3.

"All of the cities and the county contributed money to ensure all of the money taken through Mountain

Tough goes to those in need," Ogle said. "Dolly Parton's fund contributed a balance of about \$2.3 million that they had. Our Gatlinburg Relief Fund is doing the same thing. The goal is to help meet those unmet needs of the community. This organization allows us government folks to do the government stuff we need to do – both related to the fires and not – but still help those in need. There are certain things government can and can't do, and we wanted to do what was best for our community."

Teaster said the city as a whole and, in particular the Pigeon Forge Fire Department under the direction of Fire Chief Tony Watson have taken steps to make sure they are prepared for future fire-related disasters.

"We are improving upon our communications with our community," Teaster said. "We also just adopted the Firewise program, which has only been around six or seven years itself. We are one of the smallest communities to have adopted that program. We have a wonderful fire department, and our goal is to keep improving on the good things we already have."

As the city moves forward, Ogle said the city has also taken steps to prepare for future disasters.

"We are in the process of expanding our emergency notification system, and received approval from FEMA to do the iPhone alert locally through our Sevier County Emergency Management Agency," she said. "We are getting an AM radio station that can be tuned to in case of emergency. We have purchased satellite phones for any future situation where communications may go out. We have made and are continuing to make improvements to our emergency response functions."

Teaster said visitors have al-

ready been coming back to the area.

"Visitation has been down through the summer, but we are well on the road to recovery," Teaster said. "We have seen healthy growth in September, October and November. We will end the year on a real positive note."

In addition to rebuilding homes lost in the fires, new commercial construction has also returned to the area.

"We had four major commercial developments planned before the fires," Ogle said. "Fortunately, the fires did not discourage that. Of the four, three have been completed and opened: two hotels on Airport Road and the Anakeesta multi-attraction development. Another hotel is still under construction in the downtown area and will open next spring."

On Nov. 28, the city of Gatlinburg and Sevier County held a memorial event at Rocky Top Sports World to honor the one-year anniversary of the fires. At the ceremony, the city unveiled the schematics for a permanent memorial to be erected in honor of both first responders and those who lost their lives in the fires.

"It will be located on the north end of town," Ogle said. "There will be a pedestrian bridge constructed over the river that runs through town. The parkway side will be a tribute to the first responders and then you cross the bridge into a much more quiet setting. That will be where the memorial to those who lost their lives will be placed. The city has some right-of-way along the river in this particular location, and so we will be creating a walking trail that will go north down by the river."

The town of Pigeon Forge also recently unveiled a tribute wall at its Patriot Park to honor the first responders who came from communities around Tennessee to help in fire suppression and recovery efforts.

"We had 64 fire departments from across the state come into town last year, and we wanted to find a way on the first anniversary to thank all of them," Teaster said. "Many of them were volunteers from their communities and they were here for several days. We believe that, most likely, Pigeon Forge would have suffered much worse without their assistance or help."

Some 225 firefighters worked for five days across the area to beat back the flames. A lunch to thank the first responders was held earlier in the day. More than 200 first responders were honored at the surprise unveiling, which was held as part of the kick-off to Pigeon Forge's annual Winterfest.

"This is not just about the firefighters," Pigeon Forge Fire Chief Tony Watson said at the ceremony. "This is about the whole community out there and what it means. I'm so proud to be a part of this community."

## NATIONAL BRIEFS

The average American is expected to rack up more holiday debt than in previous years with some shoppers still paying off last year's debt. NerdWallet's 2017 Consumer Holiday Shopping Report analyzed spending and behavior trends of more than 2,000 Americans aged 18 and older. The survey found 56 percent of those who shopped for last year's holidays incurred credit card debt, an increase of 48 percent the previous year. Baby boomers tend to spend the most but also pay it off the soonest while Millennials, who spend the least, often end up paying off their debt later. Of the Americans who shopped during the 2016 holidays, 27 percent did not have a budget and 24 percent went over their budget. The

average American spent \$660 on holiday shopping last year and 60 percent of respondents said they planned to spend as much or more this year.

Hate crimes are on the rise in the U.S. for the second straight year, according to information recently released by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The amount of hate crimes reported rose five percent between 2016 and 2015 and 10 percent between 2015 and 2014. African Americans were the target in about half of the incidents based on race, ethnicity, or ancestry while Jews were targeted in half the attacks based on religion. The amount of religious-based attacks against Muslims also rose 19 percent between 2016 and 2015, and has doubled since 2014. Incidents targeting gay men account for almost two-thirds of reported

hate crimes perpetrated based on gender and sexuality.

Opioid abuse has killed more veterans than the Iraq, Afghanistan, and Vietnam wars combined, leading veterans and advocates to focus on ways to help those suffering from addiction. Veterans are twice as likely as non-veterans to die from accidental overdoses of painkillers with veterans experiencing higher than average levels of chronic pain. U.S. government and healthcare officials have been struggling to stem the epidemic of overdoses, which killed more than 64,000 Americans in the 12 months ending last January alone, a 21 percent increase over the previous year, according to the Centers for Disease Control. About 65,000 Americans died in Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

## No loan is too large or too small



The city of East Ridge closed a \$4.9 million fixed-rate loan with the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund to finance interchange improvements. In the picture are from left to right: J. Scott Miller, city manager; Mayor Brent Lambert; and Diane Qualls, finance director. Standing are Steve Queener and Linda Mooningham, TMBF representatives.



The town of Signal Mountain closed a \$3 million fixed-rate loan to finance the construction and equipping of a new fire station. Pictured are Mayor Chris J. Howley and Carol White, finance director; and TMBF representatives Steve Queener and Linda Mooningham.



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# Mayor Norman touts Manchester's economic, tourism growth

BY LINDA BRYANT

*By just about any measure, the city of Manchester is on the rise.*

*Since 2000, the municipality of 10,500 has grown at a rate of almost 37 percent. And since 2002, when the Bonnaroo Music and Arts Festival first set up stages on a nearby Coffee County farm, the city's reputation has grown not just regionally, but nationally and internationally.*

*Lonnie Norman, a lifelong Manchester resident now serving his third stint as mayor, has witnessed the town's various phases of development, including periods of time when there was little or no growth.*

*Since 2012, the city and county have seen millions of investment dollars — and the jobs that accompany them — coming from national and international companies. Tourism dollars, not even counting the huge amount generated by Bonnaroo every year, are on the increase because the city is becoming a popular spot for state and regional sports tournaments and because it's so close to state parks and lakes. And there are plenty of other highlights that make Manchester a city to praise.*

*For example, the city's schools are considered top-notch. In fact, Coffee County Central High School ranked No. 12 in Tennessee by U.S. News & World Report, no small accomplishment for a school competing with large public schools in Nashville, Memphis, Chattanooga, and Knoxville.*

*Norman, a retired jet engine technician, served as a city alderman from 1984 to 1991 and held the mayoral seat for the first time from 1991 to 1995. He took a break from city government for a few years and was elected to be an alderman again in 2000, a seat he held until 2012.*

*The desire to be mayor struck again in 2012, so Norman, who was then retired, ran successfully for mayor in 2012 and was re-elected again in 2016.*

*He is the city's first — and to date only — African American mayor.*

*"Lonnie has been involved in the city for so many years that he pretty much knows everything that has happened," said Donnie Lovelady, local businessman, and lifelong friend. "He's had his hands on the pulse for 30-something years."*

*"The thing about Lonnie is that he doesn't want anyone to be mistreated and he is always there when you call him," Lovelady added. "I remember one time, I think it was during his first term, we had a Sunday morning flood. The creek beside one man's house was stopped up and about to flood his house. Before he could figure out what he was going to do, Lonnie was at his front porch in a pair of boots, and he'd already called the street department to go over there to clean out the creek."*

**TT&C: Tell us a little bit about your background in Manchester and Coffee County.**

**Lonnie Norman:** I was born and raised here. I've been here all my life. I went to grade school here in Manchester and went to Tullahoma for high school. When I got out of high school, I was already working for a man who ran a car dealership. Then I started to work for AEDC (Arnold Engineering Development Center) and I stayed there until I retired. I went back to school for four years and became an instrument technician. Then I went to lead manager and then to a supervisor. We tested jet engines, and I was there until I retired.

**TT&C: You have served as an alderman and mayor. What motivated you to get involved with public service?**

**LN:** Manchester is my home so it just made sense to me that I'd want to give back to the place I'm from. I wanted to do something to make Manchester better. I thought I could make a difference. I still do.

I am currently in my third term as mayor. The first time I ran for public office was in 1984. I ran for an open alderman seat. I ran for mayor in 1991. I served a four-year term as mayor. I took a break for three or four years and didn't run for office. I came back in 2000 as an alderman. I stayed there until 2012 and then I ran for mayor again. I was re-elected in 2016.

**TT&C: In recent years, Manchester has attracted some significant business investment. Can you tell us about some of your most notable manufacturing investments?**

**LN:** The city owns about 300 to 400 acres in an industrial park within the city limits. When we bought this property, we leased it to a farmer, but the land still belongs to the city. We now have a couple of plants in the Manchester Industrial Park, so things are moving along well. We have a cheese plant, Great Lakes Cheese, that employs 200 to 250 people with decent paying jobs of \$15 to \$20 an hour. [In 2012, Great Lakes Cheese, an Ohio-based company with nine manufacturing facilities nationwide, invested \$100 million in a 330,000-square-foot super plant in Manchester.]

Not too long after we got Great Lakes Cheese, the first company to locate in the park, we attracted another company, Aspen Technologies, an auto parts supplier. The company made a commitment to Manchester; they employ 50 to 60 people so far. [Aspen Technologies is a Michigan-based company that supplies parts to General Motors, Ford, Toyota, Honda, Fiat Chrysler, Nissan, BMW, and Subaru. The company invested \$5.1 million in their new plant in 2014.]



Manchester Mayor Lonnie Norman



Manchester Mayor Lonnie Norman and other members of the Manchester Area Chamber of Commerce present the Champion of Commerce award to State Rep. Janice Bowling, R-Tullahoma. Norman said building relationships with state lawmakers and officials is essential to ensure his community's needs are met.

Another important company, Tennessee Tool & Fixture, came here about six months ago. They will be hiring soon and are bringing 50 to 60 people with jobs of \$20-\$25 an hour. [The Canadian manufacturer, which makes molds and castings for the automotive industry, is investing \$6.5 million in their first U.S. plant in Manchester. They renovated an existing building at 852 Interstate Drive. This deal involves a 20-year PILOT (payment in lieu of tax) lease agreement.]

**TT&C: How do you attract business and industry to Manchester and Coffee County, to begin with? How do you separate yourself from the pack?**

**LN:** Recruiting business and industry is a very competitive process. And like other things that get done in the city, being successful and doing it right takes time and patience. I tell prospects all the time that I'm not asking them to come to Manchester so that I can just drop them, walk away, and forget about them. I'm going to be here to support and help business and industry as long as I'm in the office, and I'll do all I can to get that support from other agencies and organizations.

It takes a great deal of collaboration over time to complete these kinds of deals. You have to take the long view and rely on the trust you build up with people. We are lucky to have good relationships and coordination with all sorts of organizations — The Coffee County Industrial Board, the Coffee County Commission, the Manchester Board of Mayor and Aldermen, Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (TDEC), and other key regional and state groups. Besides the Manchester Industrial Park, we have the Coffee County Joint Industrial Park and the Coffee County Interstate Industrial Park. We have room to grow, and we have access to a quality workforce. These are big selling points.

**TT&C: It sounds like you stay focused on communication with key players to get the job done in Manchester. Can you say more about how you develop those critical relationships?**

**LN:** A significant part of my job involves working with county and state government. If there's something that's important and needs my attention, I'll drive to Nashville. If it's about roads, I meet with TDOT people and tell them what we need. They usually listen. I meet and talk with the county mayor once or twice a week.

And, of course, you have to have good communication with everybody and realize you can't get your way all the time. That's key. And when you don't get your way, there's no sense in being mad about it. I believe in doing the right thing and if things don't go your way this time, maybe they will the next time. It's about keeping the faith.

**TT&C: Bonnaroo is a world-famous music festival and brings well over 80,000 to Manchester and Coffee County every year. The direct and indirect economic impact is fairly massive — estimated at over \$51 million, including more than \$3 million in tax revenue for Manchester and Coffee County. What's your relationship with the organizers? Just how important is Bonnaroo to Manchester?**

**LN:** I've got their phone number, and I certainly call and talk to them all the time. Bonnaroo is like anything else that's big, well-known and talked about. Some people complain, and some people like it and appreciate it. As a whole, Bonnaroo is good for us. Organizers don't come in and just try to take things away or make money and be gone. They spend a lot of money with the city, and they really give back to the community. For example, they work with the high school here. They give grants to community organizations — about a quarter million dollars so far. A couple of years ago they bought the high school band new uniforms.

Bonnaroo helped out at the Manchester Recreation Complex when it came time to repaint and update. The city had originally budgeted for it but had to take it out of the budget. I was determined to get that money somehow because the repairs were something we badly needed. So I called Bonnaroo and told them what we needed. They agreed to give us \$10,000 a year so that we could get the job done. It ended up amounting to about \$30,000.

expanding or improving services, businesses, and destinations that improve quality of life.

We have good schools that we've been able to grow successfully and plenty of offerings in the community that make it a great place to live — Willowbrook Golf Course, Old Stone Fort State Park and a new arts center. There are so many positive things. We are very close to the Duck River, Elk River, Tims Ford, Normandy Lake, and Woods Reservoir.

The Manchester Tourism Committee does a really good job of promoting the city so our profile as a tourism destination keeps growing. I'm proud of how hard the committee works. One example is that they have attracted a lot of baseball and softball tournaments that are really making a difference to our reputation as a regional destination.

**TT&C: Every town and city struggles to keep property taxes low. How is Manchester doing with this issue?**

**LN:** We haven't raised taxes in eight or nine years. We go through a budget process every year, and after we have the new budget — and

Bonnaroo doesn't take place inside Manchester; it's outside the city on a farm that Bonnaroo owns. Our police are used working the festival, and Bonnaroo pays for it. Our police chief gets with the Bonnaroo people and tells them about how much it is going to cost. Then, they send us a check for it. The police work 12-hour shifts and they pay overtime. They even pay for their food.

**TT&C: Few communities, especially one the size of Manchester, have an event like the festival, and Bonnaroo pays for it. Our police chief gets with the Bonnaroo people and tells them about how much it is going to cost. Then, they send us a check for it. The police work 12-hour shifts and they pay overtime. They even pay for their food.**

**LN:** Bonnaroo contributes to Manchester in many ways. A lot of local people work for Bonnaroo. They pay for things that impact the community. For example, they have put more than \$1 million into widening the roads (near the festival to help with access.) They are always adding something.

Now they're talking about adding smaller shows. The shows wouldn't be as big as Bonnaroo with its 80,000 people, but small ones with 25,000 to 30,000 people. And they want to do that two or three times a year. It's not an understatement to say Bonnaroo helped put Manchester and Coffee County on the map. We will continue to work closely with them and anticipate benefits to the community will continue to come from our relationship.

The thing about Bonnaroo is that people [connected to the festival or employed by it] are here all the time because they have to prepare for the festival all year long. They might have 200 to 300 people here working a month or two before and after the show. They stay in our hotels and motels here. It really means a lot to the city.

**TT&C: What are some of the biggest challenges and issues that the city is facing?**

**LN:** I would say its issues surrounding annexation and the cost and time of getting things done. We are being very patient and taking care with each step, but we do get big things done. When I was an alderman, we built the Manchester Recreation Complex. When we built it, it cost \$7-8 million at the time. Some people thought it was too expensive but it was something that the city needed. The recreation complex is just as good — if not better — than any other similar facility in the state.

We have purchased land, a little farm right in the city, that we want to use to build a soccer complex. But it costs so much to do this kind of project successfully that we have to go about it a little bit at a time. We just completed the paving for it.

**TT&C: What accomplishments are you proudest of?**

**LN:** We're very proud that in the last three years we have had three plants come to the city. When those plants are at capacity they will have put more than 500 people to work. We're an innovative and growth-minded city and community. We minimize the tax dollars while offering quality services. I'm proud of the way we're always looking to see how we can better serve our citizens, whether it's improving infrastructure such as sidewalks, sewer lines or

everything has been approved — I put a freeze on things. I tell city departments to focus on their most critical needs. In city government, there can be unexpected costs that you have to be prepared for. You have to constantly keep that in mind.

**TT&C: Is there something interesting or little known about Manchester that people would be surprised to know?**

**LN:** We go from about 11,000 people to 150,000 in three days during Bonnaroo. Manchester is about 1 to 2 percent minority, and I am the city's first black mayor.

**TT&C: How does it feel to be the city's first African American mayor?**

**LN:** I have always felt Manchester is a place where people accept you for who you are and not the color you are. It means a lot to me. How you carry yourself and what you do and how you do it, really makes a difference.

**TT&C: Who helped shape your life?**

**LN:** I could talk to you all day about that. My mom and dad influenced me the most. They were wonderful people. My mom went to school until the 6th or 7th grade and my father went until the 8th grade. When I would leave home, my dad would say be a good boy. And then when I was old enough to work, he would always say be a good boy. So I didn't know any other way to be.

I was very close to a man from Manchester named J.D. Ring. He was like a dad to me. I called him the old man. Everything that J.D. had a key to I had a key to. I started mowing his yard when I was about 12 or 13. I worked for him all through high school. He just took up with me and showed me everything about life. He and another man bought a Ford dealership here in Manchester, and I went to go work for the dealership as soon as I got out of high school. He had two girls and a boy and they were just like my brothers and sisters. His son still runs the Ford dealership.

J.D. was very honest, fair and kind. His family saw the way he treated me so they called me nephew. I called his mother and father the same as the family did. He has passed away, but I still go to the family's house for holidays. When I first wanted to run for alderman, J.D. initially he didn't want me to. He was trying to protect me because he knew how hard politics can be. But in the end, he told me to do it if it was something I really believed in. He was an incredible blessing in my life as well as his family.

**TT&C: Do you have a governing philosophy that guides how you approach your life both personally and professionally?**

**LN:** I always want to treat people like I want to be treated. My door is always open; you don't have to make appointments. There are about 150 people [employed by the city] and they can come in my office whenever they like. At times, I have had to make some very hard decisions, but I've found that if I'm always honest and fair, things will work out. It's part of being a leader to sometimes have to tell people things they don't like, and sometimes they don't like you because of it. You got to know when to step up, and you got to know when to be humble. Whether it's a man in a suit or a man in overalls, you treat them the same.