

Plug pulled on Horne-Ford AGORA Town Center plan

MICHELLE HOLLENHEAD

mhollenhead@farragutpress.com

Following several contentious Farragut Municipal Planning Commission meetings, Horne Properties owner Doug Horne has withdrawn his proposal for AGORA (Greek for “gathering place”), a planned Mixed-Use Town Center on former Farragut Mayor Eddy Ford’s 68.31-acre property along Kingston Pike, which is less than a half mile from the Pike’s intersec-

tion with Campbell Station Road.

Horne, a long-time developer and businessman who also owns Republic Newspapers, Inc. (parent company of farragutpress), made the announcement late last week following more than six months of interaction with Town officials and staff on the application process.

Most recently, the FMPC denied Horne’s rezoning request for the 68.31-acre property April 15, noting a prerequisite traffic study had not been completed.

At that time, Horne indicated he would bring the project back for further consideration — but has decided to walk away from the planned development he described as offering “restaurant outlots, medical, office and retail buildings and 101 high-end condo lots, along with 200 upscale multi-family units inside the condo lots.

“You will notice the high-end condos surround the

See CENTER PLAN PULLED on Page 2A

USTL, ACU kudos for Briggs, Lafferty

Briggs’ support of term limits earns recognition

STAFF REPORTS

editor@farragutpress.com

State Sen. Richard Briggs (R-District 7, which includes Farragut) “was honored with a plaque for his support of term limits on Congress,” stated a press release from U.S. Term Limits, “the nation’s oldest and largest pro-term limits group,” which presented the distinction to Briggs at the Capital in Nashville earlier last week.



Briggs

Aaron Duket of USTL presented Briggs the “Champion of Term Limits” wood plaque, which reads, “In recognition of a steadfast commitment to restore citizen government through term limits, Briggs has pledged to support House Joint Resolution 8, which passed through the lower chamber in April.

“The convention bill does not set the specific length of term limits; rather, it simply

See BRIGGS HONOR on Page 2A

89th rep ‘the state’s most conservative’ in House

STAFF REPORTS

editor@farragutpress.com

State Rep. Justin Lafferty (R-District 89, which includes Hardin Valley) recently was named the most conservative legislator in Tennessee House of Representatives by the American Conservative Union.

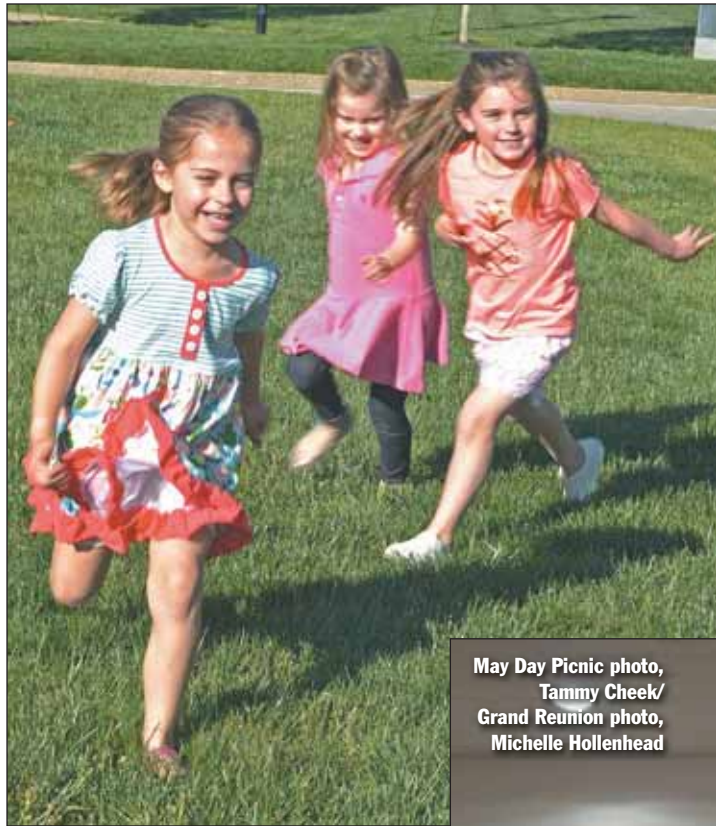
“The ACU’s ratings are based on a wide range of bills that reflect a legislator’s unwavering support of initiatives throughout the 2020 legislative session that have made crucial conservative reforms and that have enhanced Tennessee’s economic prosperity,” a Lafferty office press release stated. “Lafferty received a 97 percent approval rating and boasts a 95 percent lifetime average rating.

“It is a true honor to be acknowledged by the ACU for my conservative voting record,” Lafferty said. “I will continue



Lafferty

See TOP CONSERVATIVE, Page 2A



(Above) A sunny day welcomed families who enjoyed Town of Farragut’s Inaugural May Day Picnic at Mayor Ralph McGill Plaza Saturday, May 1. Cornhole and other games were popular along with snacks, music and a chance to spread out on the Plaza lawn. From left, Ella Fleming, 5; Ella Dalton, 5; and Aerin Geller, 4, enjoy running around. (Right) Jean Adams Weber and Charles “Poor Devil” McCarter, both Farragut High School Class of 1954 grads, were among dozens of alums attending the Saturday, May 1, FHS Grand Reunion in Virtue Cumberland Presbyterian Church’s Fellowship Hall.

See more Grand Reunion photos on Page 8B, West Side Faces.

Young, Grand enjoy Picnic, Reunion



May Day Picnic photo, Tammy Cheek/
Grand Reunion photo, Michelle Hollenhead

Citing Title IX FHS case, Povlin cautions BOMA about grants

MICHELLE HOLLENHEAD

mhollenhead@farragutpress.com

Considering grant donations to Farragut schools and area non-profits, Farragut Board of Mayor and Aldermen have been advised, by one of their own, to be careful in light of a recent court case affecting Knox County Schools spending and centering on Farragut High School.

This was a highlight of BOMA’s Thursday, April 28, in-person meeting in the Community Room of Town Hall.

Grant requests for fiscal year 2022

have come from the Concord Adult Day Enrichment Services program at Concord United Methodist Church, Dogwood Arts Festival, upgrades to the Farragut Middle School boys basketball program’s locker room, Knox County Rescue Squad, Metropolitan Drug Coalition and Second Harvest Food Bank.

However, Vice Mayor Louise Povlin said she was concerned about giving monies to FMS boys basketball, as the school’s girls basketball team might want a similar donation.

“Right now, Knox County Schools (is) spending \$1.5 million to bring the (FHS)

girls softball facility up to the standard of the (FHS) boys’ baseball team’s, even though parents fundraised to build the boys facility,” she said about a successful Title IX lawsuit, introduced by a few softball program parents, mandating KCS to spend accordingly. “I don’t want to get into a similar situation, where the girls team might feel we should donate to their program, too.

“What I think would be fair would be for the middle school to establish an Education Foundation, like the high school has, for donations to be given, then distributed,” she added.

Mayor Ron Williams suggested this year’s Intro to Farragut class members could donate time to help spruce up the FMS locker rooms, noting previous classes had “paint parties” at both Farragut Primary and Farragut Intermediate schools.

“We’ve not done the middle school, I think our plan this year could be to do that,” he added.

After further discussion, BOMA agreed to donate: \$27,000 each to FHS, FMS, FIS and FPS; \$12,000 to the FHS

See TOWN GRANTS on Page 2A

business

“It’s exciting. I’m truly passionate about what I do. ... We understand the importance of creating a memorable experience that will represent your special event,”

-Sandy Saah, co-owner of a new business putting extra flair into special occasions. (Read story beginning on page 5A)

community

“It helps students to turn experiences from personal struggles into motivation to go on in their careers and make a difference for future generations,”

-Linnea Johnsen, a local high school student who knows all about adversity, thankful for some extra educational help. (Read story beginning on page 3B)

sports

“We are going to do things with class. We’re going to do things with character ... with commitment ... I want to develop championship habits,”

-Korey Mobbs, a high school coach ready to take on a big challenge at a school used to program success. (Read story on page 7B)



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towncalendar

• **Youth ages 12 and under are invited to 37th Annual Bob Watt Youth Fishing Rodeo Saturday, May 15,** at Anchor Park (11730 Turkey Creek Road) for a morning of fishing and competing for prizes in various categories. This free event will include two rounds of fishing: from 8 to 9 a.m. and from 10 to 11 a.m.

Participants will fish from designated spots along the shoreline. The Town will provide bait (any type may be used), and a limited number of fishing poles will be available for use. Poles will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis; participants are encouraged to bring their own poles. Winners will be contacted after their event and their prizes mailed to them.

Each session has a limit of 75 participants. Register children individually, for one session only, by Wednesday, May 12, at townoffarragut.org/register. Town of Farragut is still accepting community donations for the event, including youth and adult spincast (push button) rod and reel combos in good working condition, line, hooks, bobbers and sinkers. Farragut businesses also are encouraged to consider donating items to be used as prizes for participants.

Special thanks to the Watt family, and to East Tennessee Scale Works for the use of scales and Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency for stock-

ing the lake. Fishing rodeo will be held rain or shine; however, in the case of severe inclement weather, check Farragut Parks & Rec on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter for the status of the event. For more info, contact Special Event and Program coordinator Brittany Spencer at bspencer@townoffarragut.org or 865-218-3378.

• **Individuals or groups can reserve the gym in Farragut Community Center, 239 Jamestowne Blvd.,** either the entire gym or a half court for basketball, pickleball, kickball, dodgeball or lap walking. Available times are from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Mondays; from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesdays; from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Wednesdays and Fridays, and from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Thursdays. Cost is \$2 per person for a half court. There can be no more than six people per half court in your party.

Gym users must call 865-218-3376 at least one hour before arrival to reserve a spot. Users can pay over the phone or at the front desk when they arrive. If not able to attend, you should cancel at least 15 minutes before the session starts. After two no-shows, users will no longer be able to reserve the gym. Everyone must sign up for a free membership the first time they use the Center. For more information: visitfarragutparksandrec.org/programsandevents.

Center plan pulled

From page 1A

upscale apartments,” Horne said of the AGORA plat. “Also, this plan extended Jamestowne Boulevard through the property and shows a possible future connection to South Campbell Station Road.”

Horne had a vested interest in the project and property, having developed Kohl’s shopping center and its surrounding neighborhood, Glenn Abbey, along with building lots coming off Kingston Pike, including Farragut Post Office. Horne Properties also developed the land for Town Hall.

“So the Farragut Town Center should naturally be beside the Town Hall and Post Office,” Horne said.

Ford’s property has been on the market for some time, and more than a dozen years ago had been eyed as Farragut’s Town Center location until the 2008 housing and market depression derailed those plans.

“We believed (Ford’s property) was the best location for the Mixed-Use Town Center with the most amenities for the Farragut community,” Horne said. “What occurred to stop us was the Board of Mayor and Alderman meeting and decision in October 2020 to change the Land Use Plan that had been in effect since 2012

that (would allow) multi-family units in a Mixed-Use Town Center proposal.

“The actual language change to the Land Use Plan was ‘a Mixed-Use Town Center development plan, which includes high-density residential is intended to be located only in the area bound by South Campbell Station Road, Concord Road and Kingston Pike.”

As a result, “only one property — the Biddle property — qualified for multi-family in a Mixed-Use Town Center proposal,” Horne said. “This was a strike at downgrading the value of the Ford property for development and was rescinding and reneging on the Land Use Plan in effect since 2012.

He referred to a “text change” in the October 2020 Land Use Plan, adding it was “a move by the Board of Mayor and Alderman to reward the Town Center location to one property without fair consideration to the Ford property.”

Horne said he still plans to pursue the senior apartment project just north of Ingles.



Horne

Town grants

From page 1A

Education Foundation; \$3,000 to CADES; \$5,000 to Second Harvest and Knox County Rescue Squad; and \$4,000 to the Metropolitan Drug Coalition.

It left to be determined how much to give to Dogwood Arts, which had requested \$15,000.

The fiscal year 2022 budget is scheduled to come before BOMA for first reading during its Thursday, May 27, meeting.

KCSOreports

• **At 6:25 a.m., Sunday, May 2, a complainant called Knox County Sheriff’s Office Teleserve Unit to report a burglary** to her 2018 Kia Forte at a Lanesborough Way residence. Complainant advised she last saw her unlocked vehicle around 3:30 p.m., Saturday, May 1. At 5:55 a.m., May 2, complainant said she woke up hearing an alarm and went to check on her vehicle after noticing the interior light on from inside the house. Complainant further advised she noticed the center console had been opened and items taken with a total value listed at \$306 (\$300 perscription sunglasses and \$6 in cash). Complainant said she did not notice any damage to the vehicle’s interior. Complainant also said she is unsure if the apartment complex has video surveillance over the parking area.

• **At 2:10 p.m., Tuesday, April 27, a complainant called KCSO to file a report on a theft** that occurred at a Chapel Grove Lane residence. He advised an unknown suspect took his mail from his mailbox. He was out of town and the Post Office was holding his mail. He advised he spoke with his mailman, who advised him he did put a stack of mail in his mailbox the day before. When the suspect checked his mailbox the mail was missing, and all he had was that day’s mail.

Top conservative

From page 1A

to reflect the views of House District 89 by supporting legislation that promotes the conservative ideals and beliefs that have helped Tennessee become a leader in the nation on all conservative fronts.”

According to its website, the ACU believes “the Constitution of the United States is the best political charter created by people for governing themselves.”

As for the entire Tennessee House and State Senate, this Conservative Union gave the General Assembly an overall conservative average of 66 percent for 2020.

Briggs honor

From page 1A

starts a discussion among the states on what the ideal term limits of Congress members should be,” the release stated.

“Under Article V of the U.S. Constitution, the states have more power to amend the Constitution than the Congress does. In this situation, Congress would have a conflict of interest to propose term limits on itself. Recognizing this, the Founders assured the states could both propose and ratify amendments without the approval of Congress. HJR8 leverages this power so the states may act in the best interest of the people.”

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Unmasking mask issues a Town, County effort

Lee’s signal opens Farragut, Knox Co. to maskless options

MICHELLE HOLLENHEAD
mhollenhead@farragutpress.com

Farragut officials moved quickly last week following announcements from Gov. Bill Lee and Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs relaxing mandated mask policies, and Town administrator David Smoak announced “masks are now optional in the Town of Farragut and live meetings are resuming” as of Wednesday, April 28.

“Given Gov. Lee’s recent Executive Order (80) and Knox County’s guidance, Town of Farragut facilities will now allow individuals to make a personal choice on wearing a mask,” Smoak added.

“However, as citizens are still getting vaccinated, the Town will continue to follow social distancing regulations through the month of May to protect the public, staff and elected officials.”

The actions of both Lee and Jacobs were same-day swift Tuesday, April 27, and seemingly unexpected.

Lee issued Executive Order 80, which not only ended statewide public health orders, it also ended the authority to issue mask requirements in the 89 counties under the state health department’s guidance

“A widely available vaccine changes everything and it’s a new season in Tennessee,” Lee stated. “I am not renewing any public health orders because COVID-19 is no longer a health emergency in our state. Remaining executive actions will address a few lingering economic and regulatory issues. We have never had a statewide mask mandate, and I am removing authority from local officials to issue mask requirements.

“I have asked mayors in our Big six counties to remove any remaining mask mandates and business restrictions before Memorial Day weekend,” he added. “This is about trusting Tennesseans, using the tools we have at our disposal to move on from crisis management and back to life and back to business.

“Tennessee is moving forward thanks to her people.”

See **OPENING UP** on Page 4A



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Board of Ed mask mandate plan unclear: chair Horn

MICHELLE HOLLENHEAD
mhollenhead@farragutpress.com

While the Town of Farragut and Knox County followed the lead of Gov. Bill Lee last week in lifting COVID-19 restrictions and mask mandates enforced for more than a year, Knox County Board of Education has yet to address the situation after it failed in a 4-4 vote to pass the agenda for its special-called meeting Friday morning, April 30.

Officials had announced the special-called meeting early Wednesday, April 28, and failed to approve the agenda as presented, which included revising Policy C-240 regarding face coverings and another item, which would have suspended the typical BOE requirement for two readings before passing policy amendments, which would have allowed the mask policy to expire at the end of the school day last Friday.



Horn

Board chair Susan Horn, who represents the 5th District (which includes Farragut and West Knoxville), said she was surprised when four of the eight Board members present refused to approve the agenda.

“After the governor put out his statement (that public health mandates would be ending), and Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs put out his press release on Tuesday (ending the enforced mask policy in Knox County),” Horn said the Knox County Law Office recommended the BOE have a called meeting to discuss the mask policy.

“Our secretary polled the members, and every one but one said they would be there,” she said. “We only had one who said she could only be there until 10:30, but I expected everyone would be there.”

Eight of nine Board members arrived for the 10 a.m. meeting, with four apparently blindsiding the others in their decision to shut down the topic.

“I think they did it as a protest,” Horn said of the four who voted against approving the agen-

See **BOARD OF ED PLAN** on Page 4A

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boardviewalderman
Ready to ‘ramp back up’ Town schedule

After a very unusual and difficult 2020, it looks like the Town’s scheduled activities and events are starting to ramp back up and are getting back to normal.

What was once a church is now the Farragut Community Center and the West Knox County Senior Center, located at 239 Jamestowne Blvd. During the pandemic, the Community Center was open with limited activities and the gym was closed due to flooring issues. The flooring issues have been resolved and the gym is now open for use. New activities are being scheduled and the gym is available for basketball, pickleball, volleyball and much more. All classes held at the Community Center require a free membership and class fees vary. Farragut residency is not required for membership. To find out more, go to farragutparksandrec.org. I might also add that after being closed for about a year, the West Knox County Senior Center re-opened as of April 5 with its regularly scheduled hours.

Rental space at the Community Center includes two classrooms, a middle school-sized gymnasium with a stage and the Assembly Hall – an event venue that includes a pre-function area and a catering kitchen. Groups are now starting to reserve space for events, so now is the time to plan future gatherings.

Here are our upcoming Town events:

- Dedication of the Mayor Ralph McGill Plaza on Friday, May 7

(Mayor McGill was one of the founders of Farragut 40 years ago. He was our third mayor



Alderman
Ron Pinchok

and was very instrumental in the purchase of the historic house located on this property at the corner of Kingston Pike and Campbell Station Road during his term in office.)

- 37th Annual Bob Watt Youth Fishing Rodeo on Saturday, May 15
- Juried Art Show at the community center, June 26-27
- Independence Day Parade on Saturday, July 3 (The parade is a day early this year.)
- Musicfest at West End Shopping Center (Shop Farragut event) July 9 and 10
- Farragut Parks & Rec Homerun Derby on Monday, July 19, at MBLP
- Dog Daze 5 (Shop Farragut event) Aug. 13-15
- Fun with Farragut’s Fleet, Saturday, Aug. 14
- Lawn Chair Concert Series will return. (The exact dates have not been finalized, but will be in late summer and early fall.)

I also want to add that the McFee Park Phase 3 expansion is nearing completion, and we anticipate a special opening of the park sometime in August. I want to thank all of our Parks & Rec staff for the amazing work they do to help make Farragut the fun and exciting place we live in.

One last bit of information I want to share is that we are accepting applications for volunteer committees through May 14. Serving on a volunteer advisory committee, council or board is a great way to share your time, talents and enthusiasm with the Farragut community. There are nine committees and boards, and applications are available at townoffarragut.org/committees or at Town Hall. For more information, call the Administration department at 865-966-7057.

Enjoy all that Farragut has to offer, have a great summer and stay safe.

Opening up
From page 3A

Jacobs, after consulting with Knox County law department, decided to sunset the mandatory mask policy at midnight that same night.

Regarding Lee’s announcement, Jacobs said, “This is a significant development that demonstrates we are another step closer to getting back to normal. I am deeply grateful to (Knox County Department of Health senior director) Dr. (Martha) Buchanan and her team for the uncompromising work they have done throughout the pandemic.

“Thankfully, now they can begin returning to normal business,” he added. “... It is still everyone’s personal responsibility to protect themselves and their families from the virus. We should all be understanding and respectful of how people choose to do that as we move forward.”

Town live meetings details

Town’s Board of Mayor and

Aldermen will meet in-person in the Assembly Room of Farragut Community Center beginning at 7 p.m., Thursday, May 13, for the first in-person meeting since March 2020, and will meet again May 27.

Farragut Municipal Planning Commission will meet Thursday, May 20.

Mayor Ron Williams said BOMA will be voting to change the meeting time going forward to 6 p.m. during the May 13 meeting, which also would apply to FMPC meetings.

Williams broached the

change following the April 15 FMPC meeting, which ran until nearly midnight.

“For the sake of the staff, we are planning to start meeting at 6 for both BOMA and FMPC,” he said.

Meetings will be held in the Community Center through the end of May, he added, then are expected to resume in the Boardroom of Town Hall.

“To be careful, we will go another month and hope to be back in the Town Hall in June,” Williams said, noting physical distancing is still enforced.



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- What an ugly mess at the corner of Kingston Pike and Admiral Road. I can’t believe the developers got permission to absolutely ransack that corner intersection, cut down all those beautiful hardwoods, redbuds and dogwoods and just leave a mess. And for what: another strip shopping center that will be half empty? Please, enough of this.

I ask the Town of Farragut, the Board of Mayor and Aldermen to please put a moratorium in place: no further spec building in the Town of Farragut unless you’ve got 75 percent or more committed tenants in place; otherwise, these are just going to join with the other half-empty retail areas around Town. Much rather have the trees.

We respectfully ask our readers to follow the following Presstalk rules when submitting their opinions:

- Please keep calls to a 90-second maximum (call 671-8255 24 hours a day, seven days a week);
- Please keep e-mailed Presstalks to 250 words maximum (editor@farragutpress.com);
- Libelous and malicious comments will not be published;
- Profanity will be edited out;
- Comments will remain anonymous;
- Names of individuals or businesses may not be published (including public figures) depending on the issue.

Board of Ed plan
From page 3A

da: Board members Daniel Watson, Jennifer Owen, Kristi Kristy and vice chair Virginia Babb.

The Board had a regularly-scheduled work session Wednesday, May 5. Its regular monthly meeting will be Wednesday, May 12.

“What is ironic, though, is that several Board members commented we had already spent so many hours discussing this, but since it wasn’t handled today, it just means it will probably be discussed at least two more times: (at the May 5 workshop) and (next) week (during it’s regular Board meeting).”

It has since been added to the May 12 agenda.

“I have heard from parents and teachers on both sides of

the issue,” she added. “Just like the rest of the country, we are very divided.

“But the parents I have heard most from are asking me, ‘If our governor and our mayor have lifted the mask mandates, who or what gives the school system the authority to mandate a mask for my child?’ And, I don’t have an answer for that.”

During its April 14 meeting, the Board voted to sunset the mask policy as of Aug. 1, requiring all summer school students to continue wearing masks. Next fall, the mandates would be a decision for Superintendent Bob Thomas.

“At this time, the Board policy will sunset on Aug. 1 unless the Board takes action before then,” Carly Harrington, director of public affairs for Knox County Schools, stated in a press release April 30.

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Editorial Department Alan Sloan, Editor218-8880 editor@farragutpress.com	Advertising Department Cara Ford, Advertising Manager218-8878 cford@farragutpress.com
Tammy Cheek, Writer218-8873 tcheek@farragutpress.com	Laura Sayers, Account Executive218-8879 lsayers@farragutpress.com
Michelle Hollenhead, Writer218-8890 mhollenhead@farragutpress.com	Charlene Waggoner, Account Executive218-8877 cwaggoner@farragutpress.com
Production Department Tony Christen, Production Manager.....218-8872 production@farragutpress.com	Linda Tirban, Classified Display, Service Directory218-8881 linda@farragutpress.com
Cindy Wilfert, Designer218-8872	
Receptionists/Circulation Department	
Leslie Wiens218-8871 Monday, Wednesday, Thursday receptionist@farragutpress.com	Terry Ware218-8871 Tuesday, Friday receptionist@farragutpress.com

Editor email: editor@farragutpress.com **Website:** www.farragutpress.com

Phone: 865-675-6397 **News Fax:** 675-1675 **Advertising Fax:** 675-6776

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business
briefs

• **Mike Brown, president/CEO of M&M Productions USA**, recently was selected to be a member of a chief executive advisory board in Knoxville by Vistage Worldwide Inc. Brown joins more than 300 senior executives, business owners and CEOs across Tennessee who are Vistage members. Brown has had a vision for his business since he created it as a teenager in 1988 — growing it from a D.J. service to a nationally recognized production company featured on the Inc. 5,000 list, which celebrates the fastest-growing private companies in America.



Brown

• **Local EXIT Realty affiliated offices have announced** the recent addition of new members to their teams: **Darcel Booker and Chris Wrede** with EXIT Realty Momentum, 900 S. Gay St., Knoxville; **Ronda Reed, Gaby Mammanna, Megan Collins, Heidi Baker, Tristan Upchurch, Roger Dykes and Natalie Wallace** with EXIT Real Estate Professionals Network, 9821 Cogdill Road, Knoxville; **Tim Krantz** with EXIT TLC Realty, 149 Kelsey Lane, Lenoir City; and **Sarah Goins and Deedra Blevins** with EXIT Atomic Realty, 140 W. Tennessee Ave., Oak Ridge.

• **PYA managing principal of Valuation Services Carol Carden** recently was elected to the American Health Law Association board of directors. Carden is a longtime member of AHLA, most recently serving on the Women's Leadership Council.



Carden

• **Harry Y. "Hap" McSween Jr., chancellor's professor emeritus** of University of Tennessee, Knoxville, College of Arts and Sciences, recently was elected to the National Academy of Sciences. He is one of 120 members from around the world newly named to the academy, which recognizes distinguished and continuing achievements in research.



McSween

• **Master Services, along with sister companies Klaus Roofing Systems by Master**

See BRIEFS on Page 6A

Coming up roses, peonies

Sandy Floral Design offers walls for all special occasions

TAMMY CHEEK

tcheek@farragutpress.com

Sandy Saah and husband, Alexander Saah, have launched a new event rental business, Sandy Floral Design, catering to weddings and other special events.

The business, with a showroom at The Julianna, 9111 Hunter Valley Lane off Northshore Drive, provides clients with a highly curated rental collection of silk floral walls.

"Sandy Floral Design is the first and only business in the entire state of Tennessee that offers couture silk flower walls, so we feel it is a much-needed niche," said Sandy, the designer, who added, "No two walls are alike; they each consist of different flowers."

Clients can choose from roses, orchids, peonies and hydrangea among many others.

"I handcraft the walls with only the highest quality of silk flowers," Sandy said. "My husband and I travel to different states to get our materials."

She designs the walls for weddings, bridal showers, rehearsal dinners, baby showers, birthday parties, corporate events, fundraisers and rehearsal dinners among others, as well as for home and office interior customers.



Photo submitted

Alexander and Sandy Saah, owners of Sandy Floral Design, launched a new business off Northshore Drive to bring luxury to weddings and other special events in the area.

The Saahs launched their silk floral wall business April 9.

"I feel good (about the business)," Sandy said. "It's exciting. I'm truly passionate about what I do."

Sandy is the mastermind behind the floral design while Alexander masterminds the architectural structures. Together, they make the perfect team as a husband-and-wife duo.

The idea came about after the Saahs' own wedding.

"My husband and I got married this past August in Philadelphia, where I was born and raised," Sandy said. "We had a floral wall at our wedding, and we absolutely loved it — it truly transformed the entire room."

See SANDY FLORAL on Page 6A

Travel advisors help navigate COVID

TAMMY CHEEK

tcheek@farragutpress

With summer approaching, people already are making travel plans for upcoming vacations.

However, travelers need to be aware of travel restrictions outside of the United States, warned Jim O'Brien, owner and travel advisor with his home-based Achieve Your Dream Travel in Farragut.

"There are limitations," he said. "Various nations around the world had put a stop to non-essential, leisure travel."

"On the first of February, the government of France issued a prohibition for leisure or non-essential travel to the French overseas territories ... French Polynesia (such as the islands of Tahiti and Bora Bora)," O'Brien added.

Jamaica had changed its restrictions, he said, "so if by chance (a traveler) contracted COVID while they were in Jamaica, they would be quarantined by the Jamaican government wherever the Jamaican government wanted to put them for upward of two weeks," he said.

"But there are other countries (such as Mexico) where they have gone way out of their way to do everything they possibly can to provide top customer service to their clients," O'Brien said.

That included providing COVID testing in hotels and resorts before clients board an airplane to the United States. Within 24 hours, he said the client gets the results, and some resorts are allowing guests who test positive to stay at the hotel for up to 14 days at no cost.



O'Brien

Europe has faced a year-long travel ban to those countries, but Ursula von der Leyen, president of the European Commission, stated in a recent press release this week it "will accept, unconditionally, all those who are vaccinated with vaccines that are approved by (the European Medicines Agency)." She added the three vaccines approved for use in the United States — Pfizer/BioNTech, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson—have all been approved for use in Europe, and travel may be possible this summer.

On the other hand, O'Brien said the U.S. State Department

and Center for Disease Control have issued an update, increasing its number of countries to Level 4 (Do Not Travel) to about 80 percent of countries worldwide — that includes Canada.

"The COVID-19 pandemic continues to pose unprecedented risks to travelers. In light of those risks, the Department of State strongly recommends U.S. citizens reconsider all travel abroad," the State Department stated on its website updated April 28.

Along with COVID concerns, there are other considerations, such as medical and travel insurance. As such, O'Brien warned and advised people to use a travel advisor to get the

See NAVIGATE COVID on Page 6A

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Sandy Floral

From page 5A

“It really provided a luxury experience,” she added. “The floral wall was a spectacular way to create a focal point at our wedding, and our guests loved it.”

As such, “I wanted to give future brides the same experience I had,” Sandy said. “I also expanded my silk floral wall line to cater to all special events, providing floral walls in a variety of different sizes and colors for any occasion.”

The concept behind Sandy Floral Design is flowers that never fade, Sandy said.

“I have worked with some of the top floral designers in the country to perfect my floral walls,” Sandy said. “My silk floral walls are handcrafted from the highest quality of silk florals.”

“My husband and I travel to different states to get our materials,” she added.

“Here at Sandy Floral Design, we understand the importance of creating a memorable experience that will represent your special event and encourage your guests to capture the

moment. Renting a flower wall for an event will elevate your space and bring your event to a whole new level of excitement and engagement.”

Sandy also specializes in event planning and weddings since she is fully in the event industry. Aside from floral designing, she also is the owner of Makeup by Sandy, as well as a facility consultant at The Julianna, an event venue in West Knoxville.

Attending West Chester University, Sandy obtained her bachelor’s degree in business administration in 2019.

She differentiates herself, Sandy said, from the average florist with her custom silk floral walls. With her signature obsession to detail, Sandy said she works closely with each client to identify their needs, minimize costs and exceed expectations.

Sandy Floral Design walls are available by appointment only. Current and potential customers can send an e-mail to info@ssandyfloraldesign.com or call 865-385-1624.

She also is available on Facebook and Instagram at Sandy Floral Design.

Networking highlights oysk3 Architects



Steve Young and Cara Knapp, left, welcome Carrie and Andrew Parrot to a Farragut West Knox Chamber of Commerce networking, hosted by oysk3 Architects, 1545 Western Ave., Thursday, April 15.

Tammy Cheek

Navigate COVID

From page 5A

best trip experience.

“When people contract with a travel advisor, what they’re contracting for is the knowledge and the experience and the contacts that travel advisor has within the travel industry to help ensure whatever the client has in mind,” O’Brien said. “Whether that be an ocean cruise, river cruise or whatever; that travel advisor will match a particular per-

son or couple with the travel provider that basically would meet whatever their particular desires are.”

Achieve Your Dream Travel is a boutique business, working with friends, family and referrals.

While many travelers try to plan on their own, O’Brien advises they use a travel agent to help them avoid pitfalls.

“People who are unfamiliar with the travel industry have a tendency to believe that it’s more expensive for them to

use a travel advisor to plan their travel,” he said. “In some cases, that may be the case (where an extra charge is involved because of extra effort involved).”

However, with a majority of the trips, travel advisors are compensated with commission payments from travel providers, such as cruise lines.

With the apparent widespread success of the vaccines in the United States, domestic trips are not seeing the same pitfalls, he observed.

Briefs

From page 5A

Services and Junkluggers of East Tennessee, hosted their inaugural “Employee Fun & Wellness Day” Friday, April 16.

Event included a MEDIC Blood Drive, seminars from Jan Seiber, a nutritionist with University of Tennessee Medical Center; Elizabeth Hall with Food City and Erin Reed with Knox County Health Department. Vendors set up interactive booths.

• Fresh Kale Bath Company and Lily Pad Daycare, both in Knoxville, recently were awarded technology makeovers as part of the Comcast RISE program. RISE supports BIPOC-owned small businesses that include Hispanic and Asian-American owned businesses among others. The makeover includes a TV campaign with a TV commercial production or consulting services from Effectv; computer equipment, Internet, voice or cybersecurity from Comcast Business; or a monetary grant.

• Weigel’s stores, “born of East Tennessee’s oldest local dairy since 1931” according to a company press release, is celebrating its 90th anniversary. Kickoff campaign of “90 Years for Us, 90 Days for You” started Monday, May 3, and runs through Aug. 1. It will highlight daily prizes for Weigel’s guests and employees, with a special birthday celebration June 18.

• Knoxville now is the No. 1 city in the Southeast and one of the top cities in the nation for solar power investment, as a result of Knoxville Utilities Board and Tennessee Valley Authority, according to Chris Hansen, TVA vice president of Origination & Renewables.

TVA recently announced the selection of Origis Energy to develop a 200-megawatt solar farm in Clay County, Mississippi, to support Knoxville’s renewable energy needs. KUB’s investment in the project helped enable 50 megawatts of new battery storage technology that will increase power grid resiliency.



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REMEMBERING MY MOTHER

This is my 1st Mother’s Day without my Mom.
I am so grateful for the Mother God blessed me with, all the Memories and Joy I feel when I think about my life with her in it.
She was the “Best” Mamaw too, loving my daughters so well.
Mom I truly Love you and Miss you!

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HERE'S MY STORY....

At the early age of seven, I recall my father, grandfather, and great grandfather talking about politics, business, and especially real estate. All three were in the real estate business in some sort of fashion. My great grandfather, Robert Toole, invested in a lot of lands (Toole's Bend, Wallace Road, Northshore, just to name a few). My grandfather, Bobby Toole, invested in commercial real estate all over Knoxville. At one time he owned more commercial real estate than his peers. My father, Richard Toole, did most of the construction side of things. He was a hard worker, building apartments, condos, and homes. He helped his father, Bobby Toole, in the everyday management of the real estate.

Fast forward to my Senior year in high school (1993) I got into real estate, not wanting to, but was pushed per say. I was going to be a Veterinarian, as I have a love for all animals. People who knew me called me "Ellie May" because I rescued all sorts of animals and brought them to the farm, in Rocky Hill. I worked for a few real estate companies in town and never felt it was where I needed to be. Fast forward to 2007, I started L.T. Properties of Knoxville, right before the market crashed, to help clients lease their homes before they lost them due to the crash in 2008. I took on managing HOA's for the next 11 years. Once I sold the HOA business, I focused on managing rental properties and selling homes. I then started my own real estate firm in 2018, Prestigious Properties of Knoxville LLC. I always dreamed of having my own firm and before my grandfather died he told me to not work for anyone and in order to have job security you work for yourself. I took his words and turned my dreams into reality. Nothing was ever given to me. My father nor grandfather helped me financially but mentored me to get where I am today. They brought me up very tough, independent, and business savvy. I always said my business degree didn't teach me about business, experiences and my father did. What's funny now is he calls me for advice. Which makes me proud that he can lean on me now for real estate answers.

Then life happened.... I was diagnosed with Chronic Lyme Disease in 2020. I knew something was wrong with me. I stayed sick and doctors could not figure out what was wrong. Then I found two wonderful women that are functional doctors who diagnosed me with this disease. After a year of treating the disease with supplements, I went to Idaho to get treatment. I will say it was very hard to work as hard as I do being so sick. I realized then that life isn't all about working so hard, but more efficiently and effectively. I knew my family needed me well, as did my clients. When I came back from treatments I decided to focus more on my designing passion. I have been remodeling homes for clients for years and I decided that my heart and soul loved that more than any of my other businesses so I can focus on my passion and use my creativity in turning people's visions into reality. I enjoy designing homes and it's always made me happy making the world more colorful.

Don't get me wrong, I still love real estate. I love working with people and making them happy. I primarily work with investors who buy a home from me and I remodel it to either flip it or rent it out. So I am still in real estate, but from every stage of it. I am definitely what you would say "doing all things real estate". I have a passion for it and I thank my father, grandfather, and great grandfather for instilling that in my seven-year-old brain, even though I didn't think I would be here today. I give thanks to God for giving me the strength, dedication, and courage to become an entrepreneur. A woman owning multiple businesses is rare, so I appreciate the gift God gave me. It wasn't easy getting here.

I hope my story gives inspiration to those who are looking for a career choice and not sure where to begin. Real estate is by far the best choice I ever made. Even when the market crashes, it always comes back around...so I would say "stick it out...this too shall pass".



Laura Toole, Broker/Owner
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Thomas is new CCS AD

MICHELLE HOLLENHEAD
mhollenhead@farragutpress.com

Concord Christian School recently hired Lincoln Thomas as its new athletic director.

A Greenville native and “proud Vol For Life” as a 1993 University of Tennessee graduate, Thomas most recently served as assistant athletic director at The King’s Academy in Seymour.

Don Snider, CCS head of school, had been interim AD while the school had searched for “the right fit,” said Lorna Keeton, CCS director of marketing and development.

“I am excited to hire someone with Lincoln’s depth of experience and proven track record in areas of athletic administration,” Snider said. “It is our desire that athletic teams at Concord are very competitive while exhibiting the highest levels of sportsmanship.”

“I believe under coach Thomas’ leadership that both of these goals will be prioritized and achieved,” he added.

Thomas, who also has a master’s degree from David Lipscomb University, has a 24-year career in education and mentoring that included seven years serving in various capacities at Grace Christian



Thomas

See **NEW CCS AD** on Page 7B

Nation’s No. 1 twice: Dance Dawgs



Photo submitted

Earning 2020-21 national crowns in Large Varsity Pom and Game Day events — for a second straight season — Bearden High School dance team members, in no particular order, are Anna Snyder, Emma Mañalac, Sydney Hawkins, Katherine Newman, Chloe McCord, Ali Berg, Abigail Drum, Natalie Adkins, Leah Cho, Ella Klenck, Olivia Roddy, Julie Horn, Ella Williams, Ruby Fisher, Madeline Taylor, Kenzie Bankes, Jordan James, Journie Kishmarton, Avery Duncanson and Abigail Abrams. Not pictured are head coach Hannah Keathley, technical coach Kathryn Brasfield, choreographer Katie Fear Lane and team sponsor Rebecca Nutter.

2nd straight season as US best in Pom, Game Day

STAFF REPORTS

editor@farragutpress.com

Bearden High School’s dance team program has gone back-to-back from coast to coast — winning two national titles in one season for a second consecutive year after this season’s 20-member team competed in Universal Dance Association’s National Dance Team Championship virtually, accomplished against talented teams from across the country in Large Varsity Pom, Jazz and Game Day divisions.

Bearden won national championships in Large Varsity Pom and Game Day, while earning second place in Large Varsity Jazz. Having won three national titles in Pom and two national crowns in Game Day division in program

See **THE BEST** on Page 2B

Collins, Ads junior, 2nd in region decathlon, heading to state meet

STAFF REPORTS

editor@farragutpress.com

Easily qualifying for the TSSAA Large School Track & Field state meet later this month in Murfreesboro, Mason Collins, Farragut High School junior, finished second in the Large School Section 1 decathlon at Morristown West High School Monday and Tuesday, April 26-27.

The decathlon consists of 10 events scored

together spanning two days.

“We knew Mason had a shot at qualifying for state going into it,” FHS head coach Chris Allison stated in a press release. “Mason started Day One off well in the first event and did great.”

Though not scoring a point in one event, “Mason then went into ‘compete mode’ and managed to place second at the end of the last day, just 120 points out of first place without one of his events,” the coach also stated.



Mason Collins

Kelly Cup/region LAX champs in Warrior fashion



Photo courtesy of Monica Rogers

Big CAK victory on rival’s field; then playoff win

In a showdown of No. 2-state-ranked Christian Academy of Knoxville and No. 3-ranked Webb School of Knoxville in boys lacrosse, CAK (team and coaches photo left) hit the road and beat the Spartans for the first time in program history Saturday, April 24 — earning a region title and the Kelly Cup (awarded to the Best Team in Knox County).

While the Warriors dominated Pope John Paul II 13-1 in a first-round playoff game, Boyd-Buchanan beat Webb to set up the Buccaneers’ playoff trip to CAK Friday, May 7.

Seniors DeFranco, Lovell, Montross help FHS girls LAX end strong, 15-8

ALAN SLOAN

editor@farragutpress.com

A decisive home victory against a district rival was a nice way, if making the playoffs wasn’t in the cards, to end the 2021 girls lacrosse season.

Farragut took control of its match against Christian Academy of Knoxville in the final eight minutes of the first half, then slowly increased the margin after halftime for

a 15-8 victory at the FHS Lacrosse Field Tuesday evening, April 27.

Led offensively by senior Megan DeFranco’s seven goals and three assists, Farragut finished the 2021 season 8-5 overall and 5-2 in district.

“We had one hard loss that kind of held us back” from making the playoffs, versus Knoxville West, “but we had a really good season; we played some tougher teams and we

played well against those tougher teams,” said FHS head coach Pam Hill, a long-time lacrosse youth coach who helped start the Farragut program in 2015. She finished her first season as Lady Ads skipper.

About DeFranco and her other two seniors who played their final high school game for FHS April 27, “Chloe Lovell, she actually stepped in at the last minute as goalie, and she has done a phenomenal job for

us the whole season,” Hill said. “Her save percentage is huge.”

Senior Sassy Montross “has been instrumental in our (defense) the whole time,” the coach said. “She’s played (defense) her whole career as far as I know. She did really well.”

DeFranco “plays the whole field, she plays mid(field), attack and (defense),” Hill said.

“All three of our seniors, it’s going to be a hard time without them next year.”

Mackenna Hill, Zoe Butler and Maci McWhirter each scored two goals for Farragut, while Kirra Benchabbat and Kylee Mori popped home one goal apiece. Benchabbat and McWhirter also had assists.

“We have a lot of girls who do a lot of different things,” the Lady Ads skipper said.

The Lady Warriors, led by head coach Holly Kelly, end

See **GIRLS LAX** on Page 7B

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Combo no-hitter leaves Webb 10-9

STAFF REPORTS
editor@farragutpress.com

A two-girl no-hitter allowed Webb School of Knoxville softball to finish with a winning regular season record after a 14-4 home victory against Friendship Baptist Academy Friday evening, April 30. The Lady Spartans finished the regular season 10-9 overall, 6-6 in the district.

Jamie Sharp and Maddie Ladd combined to pitch the no hitter while Bryn Lawson was four-of-four at the plate with three RBI and three runs scored. Hannah Bruce doubled and tripled with three runs scored. Kylie Bridwell added three hits while Mason Dunlap and Jeneva Mitchell connected for two apiece.

Clinching fourth-place in the district with what head coach David Moore said were “two big wins” earlier last week, Webb hosted its annual Strikeout Cancer game versus district foe Concord Christian, both teams wearing mostly pink, winning 5-3.

Sharp got the complete-game victory while giving up just two hits. The Lady Spartans took a 1-0 lead with Mitchell’s first-inning inside-the-park homerun. But Concord took a 3-1 lead with a two-run double by Autumn Phillips in the third inning, along with a run-scoring double by Lexi Esteppe.

Webb came back with four runs in the bottom of the fifth. Megan Gilbert lead off with a bunt single. Mitchell followed with a single before Ladd ripped one by the right fielder for another inside-the-park homerun. Dunlap then drove in Bruce.

Thursday night, April 29, Webb beat FBA on the road 8-3 to clinch a region trip. Sharp got the win by striking out 13 while also chipping in with two hits that included a double.

Mitchell has two hits and three stolen bases while scoring three runs. Bridwell belted a three-run homer. Lawson also had two hits and an RBI.



Photo submitted

Hosting its annual Strikeout Cancer softball game Tuesday evening, April 27, Webb School of Knoxville (**above**) joined Concord Christian School to wear lots of pink — symbolic of the ongoing battle to beat cancer, especially breast cancer. The Lady Spartans edged the Lady Lions 5-3 in a key district battle.

The Best

From page 1B

history, Bearden also repeated as TSSAA Large Pom and Large Jazz state champions in 2020-21 after also winning state in both last season. Five of the eight BHS seniors will graduate in June as the most decorated performers in program history, having helped deliver five national titles and

six TSSAA state crowns. “The NDTC is the only national-level dance team championship that is endorsed by the National Federation of State High School Associations, the national service and administrative organization for high school athletics and fine arts programs in speech, debate, theater and music,” a BHS dance team press release stated.



Photo courtesy of Susan Kolhstedt/Susan Kolhstedt Photography

‘King’ of FHS LAX Senior Night

Farragut boys lacrosse recognized its only senior, Grant King, during the program’s Senior Night ceremony at Farragut High School Lacrosse field Monday, April 19, as the Admirals blew past Pi-geon Forge 17-1. Pictured alongside parents Nancy and Hank King, he will graduate with honors and has accepted an academic and athletic scholarship to attend Lander University in Greenwood, South Carolina, and play NCAA Division II lacrosse. “His plans will include working toward a major in business accounting and a minor in pre-law,” a family press release stated. “His future includes completing law school and becoming a successful attorney.” Due to an early season injury, King missed most of his senior season as a player, “but was able to encourage and coach the team during the mid-season,” the release further stated. “He ended his (senior) regular season with 14 points overall.”

Ads senior leadership key to '21 success



Photo courtesy of Jack Tate/FHS sports information

These baseball seniors helped FHS finish the regular season 29-4 and win the District 4-AAA league (13-1). They were recognized on Senior Night at John Heatherly Field prior to the Maryville game April 28. From left are Hunter Merrick, Angus Pence, Parker Evans, Tanner Kim, Hudson Seigler, Bryce Burkey, JT Sudderth, Jake Wurms, Frankie Musco, Trevor Wade and Jake Dallas. Not pictured: senior Carson Mitchell was warming up as starting pitcher for the MHS game.

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Photo submitted

Country music artist Matt Stillwell will be performing his “Hometown House Party Tour” concert at Concord Christian School Friday, May 7, to mark Elementary School Field Day.

‘Home’- ward

Matt Stillwell brings ‘House Party Tour’ concert to CCS

MICHELLE HOLLENHEAD
mhollenhead@farragutpress.com

Country music artist Matt Stillwell is bringing his “Hometown House Party Tour” to Concord Christian School from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Friday, May 7.

The event will celebrate CCS’s Elementary School Field Day, as well as concluding a “successful school year,” said Lorna Keeton, CCS’s director of marketing and development, who has come to know Stillwell and his family through joint membership at First Baptist Concord.

A native of Sylva, North Carolina, Stillwell has been touring nationally for more than a decade, building a strong fan base, with the unwavering support of his wife, Lindsey Stillwell, who works at CCS Preschool, and their daughters, Carolina and Ruby, who attend CCS.

Originally, Stillwell thought baseball would

be his future, having been a baseball star at Western Carolina University, then a top 25 program. “Baseball was my world, but fate and a shoulder injury ultimately sidelined my baseball plans,” he said.

That’s when music began to take center stage.

After graduating from Western Carolina, Stillwell moved to Knoxville and began working for life-long friends Benjie and Heath Shuler, both of UT Vols Football fame, at Heath Shuler Real Estate.

“I had recorded a gospel project with Cooter Daniels at his 5th & Gill Studio here in Knoxville, and began singing on most weekends,” he said. “I loved it, but that didn’t work too well with selling real estate obviously.”

Stillwell had a “moment” one Sunday night at

See STILLWELL on Page 5B

Richey Scholars Part 1: Johnsen, an HVA senior, is 1st focus among 3 locals

TAMMY CHEEK
tcheek@farragutpress.com

Three Knox County Schools students with local ties recently were chosen as recipients of the Evan Richey Memorial Scholarship.

Tina Richey, mother of the scholarship’s namesake, the late Evan Richey, a Hardin Valley Academy graduate, said four \$2,000 scholarships were awarded, three of which went to Linnea Johnsen of HVA, and Mason Motley and Christine Sprague of Farragut High School.

Johnsen will be the focus this week’s issue, with Motley and Sprague featured in upcoming issues.

Tina and Mark Richey established the schol-

arship in memory of their son, who lost his life to osteosarcoma on the day he received his high school diploma in 2019.

Adding two scholarship this year, “The scholarship winners were chosen based on several criteria,” Tina Richey said.

“We look at classes they have taken, such as Advanced Placement and Honors classes, and we also put weight in their



Johnsen

See RICHEY SCHOLARS, Page 6B

‘Surprised’ to be val, Hu

STAFF REPORTS
editor@farragutpress.com



Hu

Becon Hu is valedictorian for the Knoxville Christian School’s Class of 2021.

He had the highest grade point average among his 13 classmates, and will be speaking at the school’s graduation ceremonies starting at 10 a.m. Saturday, May 8, in West End Church of Christ.

“Valedictorian wasn’t my goal to be honest,” Hu said. “It was kind of a surprise. The reason I study hard is that I have always wanted to be a doctor and I know that requires a lot of studies.”

Hu, whose given name is Shurui, adopted the name Becon when he moved to Farragut from China four years ago, specifically as an exchange student to attend high school in the United States.

His host parents are Jeremy and Contessa Kendricks of Farragut, of whom he said, along with his host siblings, “are like my family now.”

While at KCS, Hu has been involved with the Knights basketball team, Cyber Patriots, Student Council and the National Honor Society.

See KCS VAL on Page 5B

Part of a national title



Contributing to a college cheerleading national championship is Raelee Scarbrough, left, Farragut High School Class of 2020 graduate and former Admirals cheerleader, who along with University of West Florida teammate Cassidy Ketchum holds the national championship trophy — on the beach — their UWF team earned last month.

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• **Tailgating Against Cancer will host 10th Annual Tailgating Against Cancer Golf Tournament at Egwani Farms Golf Course Friday, May 14, in Blount County.** TAC is a non-profit organization dedicated to raising funds for a fellowship in medical oncology with The University of Tennessee Medical Center's Cancer Institute and the UT Graduate School of Medicine.

Founded in memory of Stephen York Coleman, Tailgating Against Cancer finds inspiration in supporting other cancer patients, their families and physicians who take on the battle against cancer.

When fully funded, the Stephen Y. Coleman Fellowship in Medical Oncology will support a fellow in the discipline of medical oncology, the specialty of cancer that treats patients with various forms of medications, including chemotherapy. For more information, visit www.tailgatingagainstcancer.org.

• **Due to the continuing concerns for gathering in person, Knoxville Bar Association encourages any veteran seeking legal help to register for this free clinic.** Legal Advice Clinic for Veterans is from **noon to 2 p.m., Wednesday, May 12**, by having volunteers contact veterans who have pre-registered for assistance. This is a general advice clinic with a wide variety of legal issues, including family law, landlord/tenant, bankruptcy, criminal defense, consumer protection, contract disputes, child support and personal injury among other issues.

KBA is **partnering with** Legal Aid of East Tennessee, which can be contacted by calling 865-637-0484 to request clinic intake. Be sure to identify yourself as a veteran so your call may be routed appropriately. At intake, staff will gather information, including information about the legal issue.

This information will be provided to the assigned attorney, who will contact the veteran by telephone between noon and 2 p.m., May 12.

• **MEDIC Regional Blood Center, the primary provider for blood and blood products for 24 hospitals in 22 counties in East Tennessee and Southeastern Kentucky** (including the major hospital systems in and around Knoxville) has an immediate, critical need for O Positive and A Positive blood Type and A Negative platelets. Locations locally include Downtown Knoxville, 1601 Ailor Ave., and in Farragut, 11000 Kingston Pike.

For location hours, directions and Mobile Blood Drive List: visit medicblood.org/. Appointments are preferred. There is very limited availability for walk-in donors. Appointments can be made online at www.medicblood.org using the donate link or by calling 865-524-3074.

There continues to be a regional blood shortage in East Tennessee and Southeastern Kentucky. MEDIC's O Positive inventory level has been critical for weeks.

MEDIC continues to require all donors to wear a mask or face covering. If a donor does not have a mask or face covering, MEDIC will provide one.

FHS Youth Leadership grads told

From Class of 2021, Class of 2020

Ten Farragut High School students graduated from Youth Leadership Knoxville program Sunday, April 25.. This is a 10-month program begun as high school juniors that connects students, develops leadership skills and gives exposure to community leaders and opportunities for engagement.



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Mallory Deeson, Class of 2020



Yasha Doddabele, Class of 2020



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Wed: Cultivate (6:45 PM)

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Stillwell

From page 3B

a concert where Jill Phillips, a recent graduate of Belmont University in Nashville, was the opening act.

"That particular weekend I had heard about Belmont at least 10 times and then got home and the girl opening had just graduated from there," he recalled. "I sat in the parking lot with Benjie and told him what I wanted to do, and by 3 p.m. the next day I was enrolled in Belmont University and had an apartment in Nashville.

"I enrolled to make my mom feel better about me moving to Nashville, but after one semester I realized I could take lessons from the same instructors for half the price, so I did that for another semester," Stillwell added.

"I buckled down, learned how to write, play guitar and then sing and play guitar at the same time. I treated it like baseball and practiced constantly. Still do. I finally got good enough to start playing live. I would ask my former teammates across the Southeast where they liked to go out, and I'd call that venue and try to get booked. I knew if I played there, at least my friends would come."

They sure did, as did many others.

Soon after, while working a temp job, Stillwell connected with Knoxville native Lynn Hutton. That began a great friendship and creative partnership that continues today.

Hutton is a frequent co-writer of Stillwell's, and also

serves as his producer. He is credited on Stillwell's songs, "Shine," "Hey Dad," "I'm A Vol For Life Y'all" and more.

Stillwell released his "Shine Deluxe" album 10 years ago last week, and it "changed everything," he said. Three songs reached No. 51 on the Billboard Country Charts, and six videos reached the Top 10 on Country Music Television and Great American Country.

That's not bad for a completely independent artist. He runs his own label and manages and books himself.

Stillwell took a personal blow when his father passed away Dec. 13, 2014. Hutton took charge in guiding Stillwell to write a song about the aftermath.

The result, "Hey Dad," based on the conversation Stillwell would have if he could call his father one last time, took the singer into a different direction yet again.

"That song continues to grow everyday, with people emailing, commenting or coming to shows to tell me about their dads," he said. "It's connected in a powerful way and given me a glimpse of the true power of music."

He is releasing a new "Hey Dad (2021)" in June.

Another tune likely familiar to Tennessee fans especially, "I'm a Vol for Life Y'all," is played in Neyland Stadium during football games and on the radio across the state and Southeastern region.

Stillwell's "Hometown House Party Tour" has a unique and relevant story. In 2019, he stripped away his bus

and bandmates, down to just him and his guitar, for the marketing around his song, "Everybody's Got A Hometown." He played from New York City to Los Angeles and everywhere in between right up until COVID-19 hit.

"Twenty shows went away in about 10 minutes," he recalled. "Crazy, but a friend of mine asked me to come to St Louis and ride around on a Christmas float, playing music in neighborhoods for everyone that had just been quarantined. We called it the 'Stay Home Tour,' and it was awesome."

Following that, he doubled down and had a porch concessions trailer built that now serves as his stage, sound, lights and merchandise booth. He carries a generator and is completely mobile, and was able to play safe outdoor shows nationwide in 2020.

Stillwell said he's as busy as he's ever been now, by figuring out a way to continue making a living and bringing his story and music to the people.

"It's part Bluebird Cafe and part House Party," he said of the intimate Hometown House Party Tour.

It will be that same "Hometown House Party" Stillwell brings to CCS Friday, with May 14 a rain date. He hopes to make it an annual event.

To find out more about Stillwell, who is planning new music and is helping give away a wedding at a North Carolina resort, visit his website, www.mattstillwellmusic.net, or on his Facebook and Instagram pages; @mattstillwellmusic.

KCS val

From page 3B

"I have been a part of the basketball for four years," he said. "And I have been in Student Council for three years, and am currently the president."

While Hu has been on the basketball team all four years, he said one of his favorite memories was playing on the team as a freshman.

His favorite scripture is Matthew 20:16, "So those who are last now will be first then, and those who are first will be last."

Hu plans to attend Boston University this fall with a focus on general studies, after which he plans to attend medi-

cal school.

Knoxville Christian School did not name a salutatorian this year, according

to Chase Caples, the school's director of marketing and public relations.

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Richey Scholars

From page 3B

volunteer hours,” she added. “Their essay on how cancer affected them is a major part of the selection criteria.”

Johnsen

About hearing she received the scholarship, Johnsen said, “I was really surprised but also extremely grateful.

“I think it’s great that the Richey family chose to start a scholarship fund as a memorial for their son because it helps students to turn experiences from personal struggles into motivation to go on in their careers and make a difference for future generations,” added Johnsen, daughter of David and Jennifer Johnsen. “I hopefully will go on to become an occupational therapist because I want to help people push past their physical limitations to succeed.

“My goal is to get through college debt-free, so this scholarship will help a lot. I’m planning on attending the University of Tennessee in Knoxville to study biology, and the \$2,000 will go toward cost of tuition.”

Johnsen wrote about a close family member’s cancer and how it motivated her to help

and care for others.

“My mom had a very unique experience with cancer, and the lessons I learned during her battles are relevant to my life and career choice,” she said. “Ever since I was born, my parents had been trying to have another child so that I would have a younger sibling.

“They tried several methods, including adoption, but none had succeeded,” Johnsen added. “Finally, my mom’s doctor told her that she might be pregnant, but the ‘baby’ actually turned out to be a cancerous growth inside her placenta.

”This was very disheartening. But one day during my mom’s chemotherapy session, we got a sudden call from the adoption center, and that’s when I found out my little sister had been born.”

After that, “My mom was still physically sick, but she had found what she was missing the whole time,” the senior said. “My sister was the missing puzzle piece in our family, and this experience all started because my parents had found the compassion to adopt. It continues to remind me about the importance of caring and helping others.”

obituary

Stanley Stokey, 86, of Knoxville, a loving husband, father and grandfather, passed away peacefully April 24. Stan was born May 1, 1934, in Brooklyn. His parents were the late Cyril and Helen Stokey. A true man of God, he faithfully served his country, his community and his church.



Stanley Stokey

Stan served his country in the Army during the Korean War, as well as the Merchant Marines. During the time with the Merchant Marine he developed a love of travel that he kept throughout his life. He later graduated from Vanderbilt University with a masters degree in City Planning.

Stan dedicated his life’s work through serving the community. He made the region a better place to work, live and raise a family for more than 30 years as a City Planner with

Tennessee Valley Authority. He developed a ride-share and express-bus system for TVA during his tenure. He was a member of President Jimmy Carter’s Transportation Task Force and attended both President Carter’s and President Bill Clinton’s Inaugurations.

Stan truly had a servant’s heart. He served his church in many capacities. He was a Trustee for Cokesbury United Methodist Church. He turned retirement into a passion to serve others through Manna House, the church food pantry. There was no child left without Stan registering them for Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library, the non-profit free book-gifting program providing much-needed books to children. He was happiest

when serving others.

Stan is survived by his wife, Diana; children, Paul Stokey and wife, Michele, Edward Stokey and wife, Cheryl, Dennis Sprou, Douglas Sprou, Darla DeRosa and husband, Michael; along with a host of adored grandchildren. The family would like to thank Michael DeRosa for the love and encouragement he shared with Stan in his later years. Stan lives on in the gifts of humility, true kindness and warmth given freely to all he came in contact with.

Consider a gift to Cokesbury UMC in Stan’s memory. Condolences can be left at <https://www.dogwoodcremations.com/stanley-stokey>. A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date with burial at the Veterans Cemetery.

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Mobbs rule: New KCHS Irish football head coach introduced

KEN LAY
Correspondent

KNOXVILLE — A new era officially began for the Knoxville Catholic High School football program last week.

The school introduced Korey Mobbs as its new head coach during a press conference in the KCHS gymnasium Wednesday, April 28.

Mobbs, a Chattanooga native, comes from Lanier High School in Sugar Hills, Georgia, a suburb of Atlanta. He grew up in Georgia after leaving Tennessee at an early age.

He won a pair of region championships at Lanier and compiled a head coaching record of 58-22 in seven seasons (2014-2020).

Previous to being head coach, Mobbs was offensive coordinator at Lanier dating back to when the school opened in 2010.

Mobbs said he and his wife, Mary Mobbs, and their children “couldn’t be prouder to be here. I met with our team a few minutes ago; and as a coach, you always know how kids have been coached and what kind of homes they come from by their body language.

“As I paced around the locker room, I saw their eyes and that validated that this was the right decision,” he added.



Mobbs

But Mobbs said it was tough to leave Gwinnet County. “The reason it was hard is because of the relationships you build in football. It’s not just a game that you play and it’s not just a helmet you wear.

“I look forward to building those relationships with the students, staff, faculty and administration here at Knoxville Catholic High School,” he added.

“I’m happy to be here and I can’t wait to get to work with these young men.”

Mobbs replaces Steve Matthews, who resigned as KCHS head coach last month — having won a pair of state titles in eight years leading the Irish — after being arrested on DUI and drug possession charges.

The new head coach said he hasn’t ruled out retaining some members of Matthews’ coaching staff. “We’ll continue to evaluate that. We have good coaches here, many of whom are still in the building.

“We are going to do things with class,” he added. “We’re going to do things with character and we are going to do things with commitment. It’s an honor to pair those three C’s with Knoxville Catholic.

“I’m honored by you humbling me, by giving me the opportunity to be your football coach. People talk about winning games. I want to develop championship habits. If we do that, the other things will take care of themselves. We are going to wear the green and gold with pride.”

Girls LAX
From page 1B

their season at 7-7 overall, 3-3 in district.

In terms of improving her program, “(Farragut) has a middle school feeder program. If CAK could get a middle school program we’d have some more players and have more experience at the high school level,” Kelly said.

“But we’re working on it,” she added. “Our girls are young, and they do a lot of multiple sports.”

Three Lady Warriors each tallied two goals: Ava Houser, Sydney Jewell and Olivia Keller, with Caroline Rose Ventress and Anna Grace Presley scoring one apiece.

New CCS AD
From page 1B

Academy and a stint as assistant coach and strength coach for Webb School of Knoxville’s high school girls hoops team.

“I love to develop student athletes with an identity in Christ,” Thomas said. “My favorite thing about working with student athletes is the opportunity to guide kids in an athletic setting, helping them achieve greater focus and better understanding that their walk with Christ can positively impact and advance their athletic career in the best ways.”

Thomas and his wife, Natalie Thomas, have four children: twins Emory and Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ellis.



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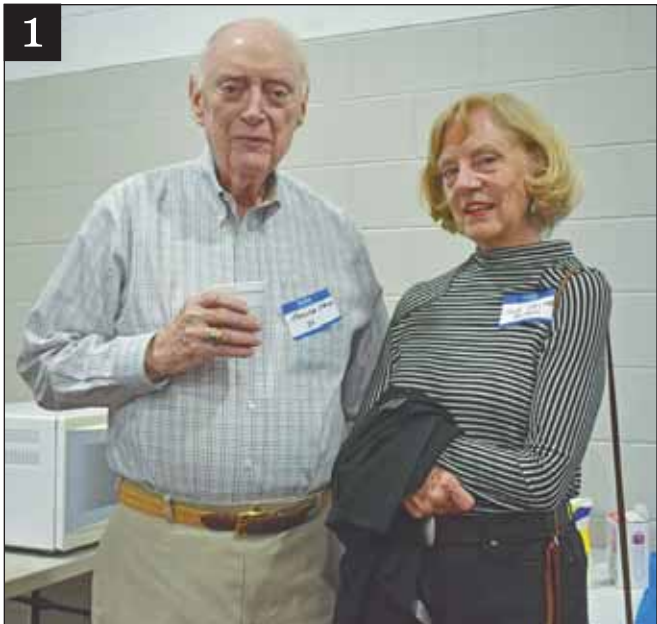
FARRAGUT HIGH SCHOOL

Grand Reunion

Farragut High School alums who graduated from the “old” high school, near the corner of Concord Road and Kingston Pike — which ended with the Class of ’76 — met for the first time in two years Saturday, May 1, in Virtue Cumberland Presbyterian Church for their annual “Grand Reunion.” Dozens gathered for fun, fellowship and reminiscing, making up for lost time since COVID-19 concerns cancelled last year’s celebration.



The Johnson family — which had 14 children — was represented by, seated from left, David Johnson, Class of ’63; Richard Johnson, Class of ’64; and Warren Johnson, Class of ’67. Standing, from left, are Richard Cox and his wife, Kathleen Johnson Cox, both Class of ’60; Jim Jackson, Class of ’55, and his wife, Joyce Johnson Jackson, Class of ’56; and Warren’s wife, Karen Sizemore Johnson, Class of ’70.



1. Noted area historian Malcolm Shell, left, and former classmate Jane Walker Black, both from the Class of ’56.
2. Wayne Smathers, left, Class of ’64 and Gail Armstrong, Class of ’59.
3. Paul Casteel, left, Class of ’54, and Joe Waldroop, Class of ’53.
4. The Hall family is typically well-represented, and didn’t disappoint this year. Pictured are siblings Bettye Hall Humbert, seated left, Class of ’47 (one of the oldest alums attending Saturday), and, standing from left, Earl Hall, Class of ’56; Jerry Hall, Class of ’58; Ken Hall, Class of ’54; and Charles Hall, Class of ’49. Seated right is the siblings’ niece, Linda McKinley, Class of ’64.
5. From left are Doug Horne, Class of ’63, Judy Sewell Herbert, Class of ’59, and John Huskey, Class of ’59.
6. From left, Sue Sumner Goodman, Class of ’64, former Farragut Middle School history teacher Frank Galbraith, Class of ’59 and Betty Blackburn, Class of ’60.
7. Jay Beeler, Class of 1976.
8. From left, Phil Kirby, Class of ’66, Mona Smith, Class of ’62 and Tom Cook, Class of ’61.
9. Kathleen Johnson Cox, left, Class of ’60 and Helen Northern, Class of ’52.



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