



Photo courtesy of Jeanne Dotts Brykalski

Carol and Les Dotts, who were murdered in their Village Green home Feb. 3, 1995, are pictured with their only child, Jeanne Dotts, when she was a youngster. Today, Jeanne Dotts Brykalski and her husband, Robert "Bry" Brykalski, are fighting to keep one of her parents' murderers in prison.

## Brykalski fights parole for 1 of her parents' murderers

**MICHELLE HOLLENHEAD**

mhollenhead@farragutpress.com

Jeanne Dotts Brykalski and her husband, Robert "Bry" Brykalski, have been living a never-ending nightmare since the Feb. 3, 1995, murder of Jeanne's parents, Les and Carol Dotts, in their Village Green home.

Although the three killers — David Leon Scarbrough, Thomas Paul Gagne Jr. and Harley Watts — ultimately were caught and convicted, having confessed, the couple is facing a second parole hearing for Scarbrough Thursday, Dec. 9.

Watts was paroled in 2001. He had received a plea bargain by agreeing to testify against Scarbrough and Gagne, who also remains incarcerated, in exchange for being tried in juvenile court.

Scarbrough, currently incarcerated in Morgan County Regional Correctional Facility, was denied parole in 2015, thanks in part to the Brykalskis, who are taking on the task yet again.

"I am very concerned if he is released. What if he wants retaliation?" said Jeanne Brykalski, who has an online petition dedicated to keeping Scarbrough jailed, which has more than 2,000 signatures. "I have testified against him and fought against his release for years.

"Also, he is young and healthy and could still do a lot of damage if he were released," she added. "I don't want anyone to go through the nightmare we have over these last 26 years."

Jeanne described Scarbrough and Gagne as "already well on their way to becoming violent

See **FIGHTING PAROLE** on Page 5A

## Calming kindness in midst of serious accident



Left photo Michelle Hollenhead/above photo submitted

**(Left)** Andrea Hernandez-Gomez holds up the Liz Claiborne jacket a good Samaritan left with her sister, Regina, following a Nov. 10 vehicular accident, which also involved the girls' mother, Monica Gomez. The family is hoping to find the individual and return the jacket. **(Above)** The damage done to Gomez's vehicle.

## Gomez grateful for handful of citizens offering help during family distress

**MICHELLE HOLLENHEAD**

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Sometimes during the greatest chaos, kindness and community are most evident, something a Choto woman discovered following a Nov. 10 traffic accident.

Many local residents stepped up.

Monica Gomez was driving her youngest daughter, 13-year-old Regina, home following an evening dance class when their car was struck at the intersection of Concord Road and South Campbell Station Road.

"It is a path we take every single day," Gomez said. "The accident happened in seconds."

While Regina was unhurt and able to exit the vehicle, Gomez was pinned inside.

"I could hear my daughter telling me we had had an

accident," Gomez recalled.

Immediately, passersby began stopping to offer assistance, one of whom was able to convey to Gomez's husband, Tomas Hernandez, what had happened. "He was at the airport and on his way back from traveling for work," she said.

"The individual not only spoke to my husband (via the vehicle's Bluetooth), but he reassured me help was on the way," Gomez added.

Rural Metro first responders were indeed quick to arrive, as their main station is located about a mile from the crash site.

"I feel very grateful the first responders were already very near," she said. "They were there in just a couple of minutes."

Gomez had to be extricated from the vehicle. In the meantime, other area residents had stopped to offer

assistance. One in particular.

"One nice lady offered my daughter her coat to wear, and she stayed with my daughter while they worked to get me out of the car," she said. "I remember seeing her when they put me in the ambulance.

"Another couple stayed with her, too," Gomez added. "In that moment, I was very confused and didn't get any names."

Gomez praised "everyone" who helped in the accident's aftermath.

"The ambulance driver reassured me my daughter was in the front seat, and a police officer made sure I got my license back," she said.

"All people were very kind and patient," Gomez added. "I feel very grateful that God sent so many

See **STEPPING UP** on Page 4A

### business

"We want to be the next best thing to home. ... We have three hot meals served a day with our farm-to-table dining program. We partnered with local farmers, and we incorporate fresh food wherever we can. ..."

**Will Brewer, vice president of corporate communications for a special community soon to open.**  
(Read story beginning on page 3A)

### community

"After you play a game, you've invested so much emotion and thought into it, you can usually meet up with the (other) player afterward and have a whole discussion about the game,"

**Justin Li, president of a growing, and competitive, club at a local high school.** (Read story beginning on page 3B)

### sports

"These three were good wins. ... We're still turning the ball over too much. But to be able to execute down the stretch, make free throws and get stops, those (last) two games were good for us,"

**Jason Mayfield, head coach of a team earning a regular season championship.** (Read story beginning on page 1B)



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# KCSOreports

• At 3:02 a.m., Monday, Nov. 29, Knox County Sheriffs Office units responded to reports of a vehicle accident at Interstate 40/75 westbound at Watt Road. A green Nissan Frontier crashed into the inside wall of the Interstate, with major damage to the front, passenger and driver's side. AMR was escorting the driver (suspect/eventual arrestee) to the ambulance. Suspect "was so unsteady on his feet he was unable to walk without assistance. (He) had a strong smell of alcoholic beverage emitting from his person," a KCSO report stated. "When asked about the accident, (he said), 'you can speak with my attorney' and refused to answer any questions. Due to (suspect's) level of intoxication, he was not administered field sobriety tests. (He) was read Implied Consent form and initially consented to a blood draw, but withdrew his consent after signing at the time of the blood draw." Suspect, who refused medical care, was taken into custody.

See KCSO REPORTS on Page 4A

## St. John Court traffic meet Dec. 8

A public meeting regarding traffic calming on St. John Court starts at 5 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 8, in Farragut Town Hall, 11408 Municipal Center Drive. For more information, contact Brannon Tupper, assistant Town engineer, at btupper@townoffarragut.org or call 865-966-7057.

# towncalendar

Upcoming Town of Farragut holiday happenings:

### Letters to Santa

This fun tradition continues this year, and children may drop their letters off in Founder's Park beginning Nov. 22.

The last day to send them is Dec. 20, and letter-writers are urged to include a return address so Santa can write back.

### Celebrate the Season

Cancelled last year due to COVID-19, Celebrate the Season is described by Town staff as "a great way to get in the holiday spirit," and takes place from 4:30 to 7 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 2, in Farragut Community Center (239 Jamestowne Blvd.).

Children can have photos taken with Santa and participate in cookie decorating and face painting.

A holiday movie also is part of this free evening of fun.

### Holiday painting classes

Take part in several holiday-inspired, step-by-step painting classes offered at Farragut Community Center (239 Jamestowne Blvd.). Classes include a "Snow Much Fun" snowman painting on Saturday, Dec. 4, and a "Red Truck Christmas Tree" on Saturday, Dec. 18, depicting an antique red truck carrying a fir tree.

All classes cost \$35 and all materials are provided by the instructor, including the 16-inch by 20-inch canvas.

Register for classes at townoffarragut.org/register, in person in Farragut Community Center or by calling 865-218-3376.

### "Twas the Night with No Parents"

A new event offered at Farragut Community Center from 6 to 9 p.m. Friday, Dec. 17, "Twas the Night with No Parents" will provide pizza, games, crafts and a movie for kindergarten through fifth-grade children.

Cost is \$10 per child, and pre-registration is required at townoffarragut.org/register.

Organizers are promoting the event as an opportunity for parents to do some last-minute shopping, wrapping or relaxing before Christmas week arrives.

### New Year's at Noon

An early commemoration of the end of the old year and commencement of a new one will take place in Farragut Community Center from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Friday, Dec. 31.

The event is designed for the whole family and offers "snacks, crafts, refreshments, games and a noon New Year's countdown at a perfect time for everyone to celebrate," according to a press release.

All participants need to be individually registered to ensure all materials can be prepared.

Cost is \$2 per child, ages 16 and younger, and free of charge for adults.



Wish list to Santa; happy family in Light-Park tunnel



(Above) Enjoying Countdown to Light the Park activities at Founders Park in Campbell Station — while giving Santa their Christmas list — Monday night, Nov. 22, are Caroline Rosas, 4 (pink coat), and Alexandra Rosas, 6.

(Left) In the new Light the Park tunnel of lights over a Founders Park sidewalk are Meredith and Jordan Cummings and their daughter, Ivy, 3.

Photos by Alan Sloan

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# Morning Pointe of Hardin Valley to open in January

TAMMY CHEEK  
tcheek@farragutpress.com

Morning Pointe of Hardin Valley is on schedule to open in January 2022 at 2449 Reagan Road.

While no firm date has been set for the opening, this will be the company's seventh Knoxville assisted living and Alzheimer's memory care community.

Will Brewer, vice president of corporate communications with Morning Pointe Assisted Living/Independent Healthcare Properties Inc., said he expects the campus to open around the first of the year.

"Morning Pointe is pleased to be expanding in the Knoxville market with our campus in Hardin Valley," Greg A. Vital, a MP founder along with Franklin Farrow, stated in a press release. "Between the economic impact of Oak Ridge,

access to healthcare resources and the continued growth of Knoxville and the University of Tennessee, East Tennessee has certainly been a wonderful place to expand our footprint of providing the highest level of senior resident care for generations to come."

The initial phase on the 20-acre campus will feature single-story assisted living and a memory care community with 80 apartments.

Future phases will include an independent living community and dedicated Alzheimer's Memory Care facility.

"We want to be the next best thing to home for seniors," Brewer said. "We want to make sure that we have three hot meals served a day with our farm-to-table dining program."

"We partnered with local farmers, and we incorporate fresh food wherever we can," he added. "We have special



Photo submitted

Ben Stiefel, executive director, and Megan Dunaway, community relations director, stand by to welcome residents of new Morning Pointe Hardin Valley, 2449 Reagan Road, when it opens in January.

life-enrichment programming with activities to keep their minds fresh."

Moreover, "We partner with all types of volunteer organizations, churches and schools," Brewer said. "We really particularly love what we call 'inter-generational programming.' That's where we connect school-aged children to come in and do special activities with our residents."

"We do have a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week nursing staff for

medication management and physical therapy," he added.

"We make sure the senior residents are cared for."

Among its features, the facility will have a library; gaming room; a private dining room, where residents can enjoy a private event with loved ones or sit in the dining room with everyone else; several landscaped courtyards and covered porches; and housekeeping and linen services.

Brewer said Morning Pointe

of Hardin Valley will join a community also including facilities in Lenoir City and West Knoxville, and will be one of its 36 communities in Tennessee and four other Southeastern states.

He added the company, headquartered in Etowah (McMinn County), is preparing for its 25th anniversary next year.

For more information, visit online at [morningpointe.com/hardin-valley/](http://morningpointe.com/hardin-valley/) or call 865-343-0081.

# A WSJ 'Who's Who in America,' Roback is international

TAMMY CHEEK  
tcheek@farragutpress.com

From working on a building project in Amman, Jordan, to meeting the late Princess Diana in Paris, longtime Farragut Realtor Zafer "The Motel Man" Roback has had his share of international experiences — not to mention teaching martial arts in colleges and coaching high school football.

Last month, his achievements were spotlighted in a worldwide publication when Roback was chosen for the

Marquis Who's Who for the 2021-22 Lifetime Achievement Award in the Wall Street Journal.

"I am known as 'The Motel Man' worldwide. I sell and manage motels," the 82-year-old said. "I'm very excited that they would nominate me



Roback

to get me into 'Who's Who.'

"... It's been a good life."

Roback, who is with The Real Estate Office, said he got a call from someone at the Wall Street Journal who told him, "We've been investigating you. We want to let you know you have been nominated to be put in Who's Who in America ... you've done so much in your life."

Born in New York City, his family moved to Knox County in 1945, when his father went to work in Oak Ridge.

After Roback graduated from

East High School, now Austin-East, in 1959, he enlisted in the U.S. Army, where he went into Army intelligence before going to South Korea.

There, "I was in charge of their intelligence program," he said. "I took up judo, karate,

aikido and jujutsu."

After leaving Korea, Roback attended Army Intelligence School at Fort Holabird then moved on to Camp Kilmer in central New Jersey and attend-

See ROBACK-WSJ on Page 5A

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boardviewmayor  
Reflecting on recent years growth

With 2022 just around the corner, I was asked to give an update on some of the major changes in our Town during the current administration. I will list some that are finished and many that are still under way. The groundwork started with the demolition or renovation of the many derelict buildings and properties that had fallen into disrepair. It was important that we put this program in motion first.

Three of the Kingston Pike/Campbell Station corners were transformed with the addition of Starbucks, 35 North and the Mayor Ralph McGill Plaza. The old Lutheran Church was repurposed into a community center/senior center after we purchased the property.

The old Ingles complex had a major renovation that finished up right before COVID hit, and now has P3 Sportsplex as the first tenant. The Court Café finally came down to make way for what they say will be a Food City complex.

We now see steel beams coming up out of the ground on the Top Golf property on Outlet Drive, and along with that comes the removal of another billboard. The Elliott's Boots building was rebuilt and an AFC Urgent Care and Dunkin' drive-through were added.

Across the street, the BP made way for a Tire Discounters. The abandoned U.S. Golf building came down and was replaced by a climate-controlled storage warehouse.

A new Dollar General store and a second building in the shopping center that houses Anytime Fitness are a jumpstart to the west end. The east end saw another old building go away and yet another billboard come down when O'Reilly Auto Parts was built.

We saw the repurpose of a vacant building when Pep Boys moved across the street.



Farragut Mayor  
**Ron Williams**

Renovation of the former Outlet Mall building brought it up to green standards and it now houses Sitel, a long-term tenant the brings solid entry-level jobs to our Town.

The last vacant property that needed to go was the abandoned Kroger complex. You can currently see a tremendous amount of underground pipe going in to handle stormwater drainage for the new project by CHM Development. Steel will be coming out of the ground in the next few weeks as the Aldi gets started. With four restaurants and many small shops on the way to our future Town Center, it will be a great, walkable destination.

A major expansion will soon be completed at the 52-acre McFee Park. The new section will include tennis/pickleball courts, as well as a multi-purpose sports court and a dog park, in the future. A grant for a third turf field, along with a new ADA restroom facility, was a great upgrade for Mayor Bob Leonard Park.

A grant also helped Anchor Park with a new ADA restroom facility. Our Public Works Department built a performance stage at Founders Park, and this year, Light the Park was expanded to feature more than 100,000 lights.

We updated Town Hall with ADA restrooms in anticipation of the Blue Cross Healthy Place behind Town Hall. You may have noticed the sidewalk upgrades and crosswalks across Town as well as our yearly paving projects. TDOT's Concord Road project is finally approaching completion, and the second phase of the Virtue Road project and the Kingston Pike/Watt Road intersection improvement are set to be completed in the spring.

Be sure to read the farragutpress article on the redesign of Campbell Station Road at I-40/I-75. This project is important as we go forward with our next generation red-light control system.

Yes, it is a lot to keep up with, but when you have a great staff and surround yourself with good committees, you see results happening on every corner.

KCSO Reports

From page 2A

- At 4:25 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 27, a complainant called KCSO Teleserve Unit

to report a vehicle theft from Weigel's, 610 N. Campbell Station Road. Complainant said an unknown suspect stole his 2017 Dodge RAM 1500 pick-up. Value of vehicle was listed at

\$25,000. Complainant said his vehicle was unlocked and the keys were inside. "Complainant advised he was in the store only a couple of minutes ...," a KCSO press release stated.

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presstalk

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• On Thanksgiving Day the Town of Farragut was introduced to a new term on the Nextdoor media outlet. The term "shadow government" was a term most of us in East Tennessee have never heard. This is a term that implies a negative connotation that is made in reference to concerned citizens who speak up on Town issues. This term was used by the Mayor of Farragut. If Farragut is the second best city to live in Tennessee, we should hope for better manners from our Town leader.

New Presstalk rules

• Effective with publication of the Nov. 11 issue of farragutpress, no names of any public figures or other persons will be allowed in a Presstalk submission.

• Also taking effect with our Nov. 11 issue, all Presstalk submission must have identification (for farragutpress purposes only; no names will be published with any Presstalk submission).

Ongoing Presstalk rules

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

- Please keep calls to a 90-second maximum (call 865-671-8255, 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.

Stepping up

From page 1A

people around us on that day."

Gomez had some cracked ribs. X-rays taken days after the accident revealed a broken collarbone that recently was surgically repaired. She is now recuperating at home.

Like her husband, Gomez is a native of Mexico. The couple lived for a time in Brazil before moving to the Knoxville area four years ago with Regina and their other two daughters, Andrea and Elisa.

The family has had time to reflect on the kindnesses

shown following Gomez's accident and is hoping to find the woman who provided the navy blue Liz Claiborne-quilted coat for Regina.

"I would like to return it, and thank her for what she did," Gomez said, adding she also would like to take donuts or other treats to the first responders who helped.

"I would love to recognize them. We just want to thank everyone, from our family, for what they did for us."

Anyone with information about the jacket owner may e-mail Gomez at monygonmez76@gmail.com.

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Fighting parole  
From page 1A

career criminals on the night they viciously murdered two kind, loving, innocent people.”

The convicted pair, along with Watts, who was 13 at the time and served as a lookout, were seeking homes to rob and found the Dotts’ home empty, as the couple had gone out to dinner.

Unfortunately, they came home to find Scarbrough and Gagne inside, and both were shot and killed.

Down through the years, the Brykalskis said they have encountered harassment from the killers’ family members, and a counter online petition Scarbrough’s family has started, which champions his defense, “is filled with false information,” Jeanne Brykalski said.

“Some of the felons’ friends and family posted comments on the 2015 change.org petition I created for his first parole hearing, and recently on Facebook (they condemned) me for fighting Scarbrough’s parole and told me I ‘had’ to forgive him, and to ‘quit picking on him,’” she added.

“One stated that (Scarbrough) was a ‘child’ when he made a ‘grave mistake.’ (He) was 17 days away from being 19 years of age — he was an adult.”

Looking to clarify, “A mistake is knocking over a glass of milk, forgetting to give someone a phone message or breaking your grandmother’s favorite plate,” Jeanne Brykalski said. “What the offender and his accomplice did was a deliberate choice.”

To sign the online petition, visit <https://www.change.org/justiceforlesandcaroldottsdenydavidscarbroughparole2021> before Dec. 6.

Parole protest letters also can be sent to [victim.witness@tn.gov](mailto:victim.witness@tn.gov) in addition to the petition.

As part of the request, the Brykalskis are asking parole not be considered again for Scarbrough for at least six more years.

“David Leon Scarbrough has never shown any remorse for destroying my family, for murdering two people who worked hard all their lives, were actively involved in their community and who lived their lives by presenting a positive example, not only for me, their daughter, but for my friends as I grew up and became an adult,” Jeanne Brykalski said.

“I do not have to accept their murders and just ‘move on.’ ... Some things in life are not excusable or forgivable — like murder.”

Roback-WSJ  
From page 3A

ed Rutgers University. He was honorably discharged from the Army in November 1962.

“I went up to Cumberland College in Williamsburg, Kentucky, which is now University of the Cumberlands,” Roback said.

He started a judo program there to pay for his tuition.

While at Cumberland College, Roback met his future

wife, Ann Faulkner from Duff, Tennessee, to whom he’s been married for 55 years.

She taught at Ball Camp Elementary School and Concord Christian School.

The Robacks, who have lived in Farragut’s Village Green subdivision for 55 years, are parents of four children and two grandchildren.

After Roback graduated in August 1965, he started traveling worldwide, meeting such famous people as Princess Di-

ane and Dodi Fayed, Filipino past president Sergio Osmeña, Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia and former President Donald Trump.

“I have been all over the world and back,” he said.

Roback, who coached football at Farragut High School in 1966 and Doyle High School the following year, has worked in real estate for 50 years and in insurance for 15 years.

He also taught judo at the University of Tennessee.



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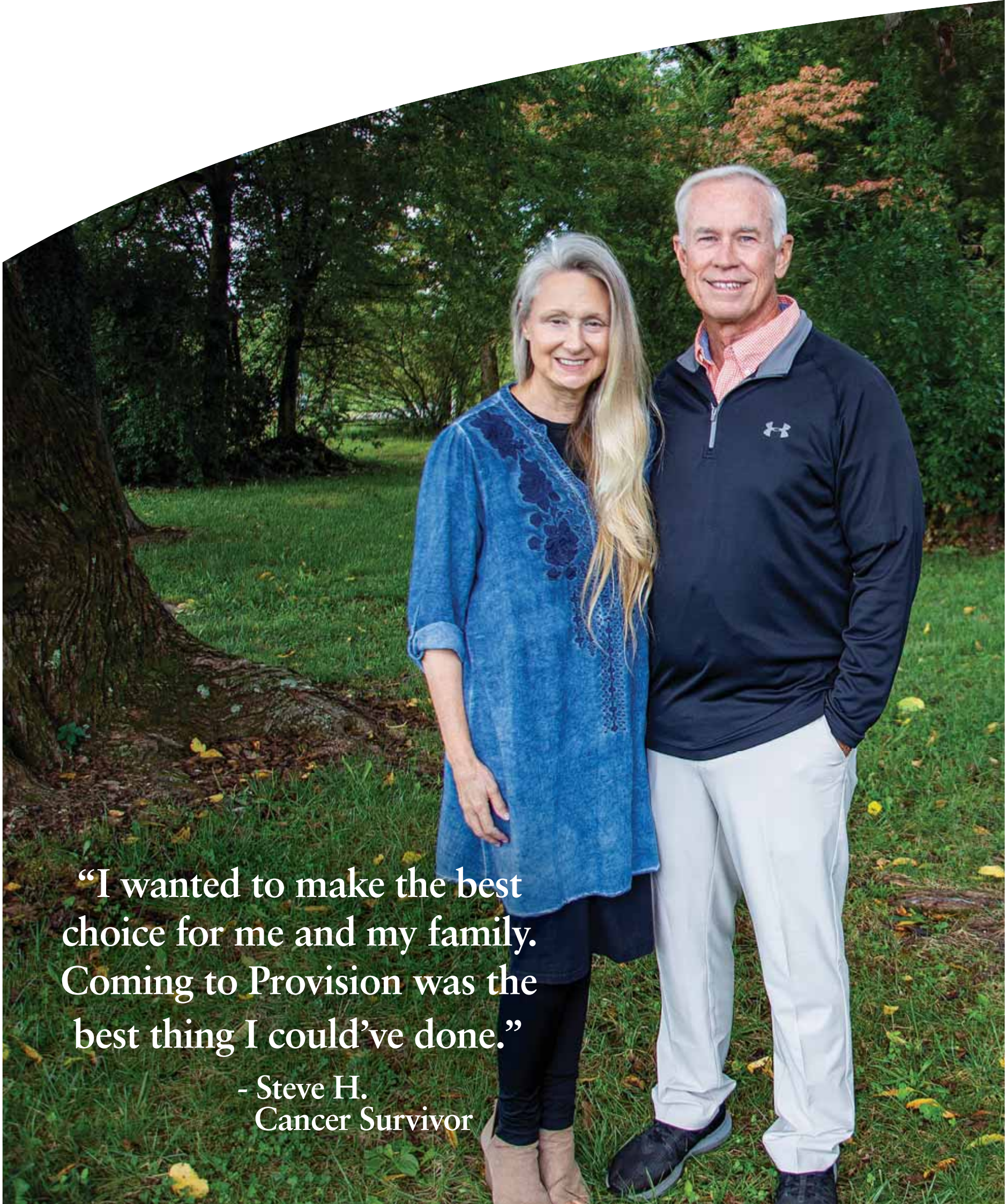
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**JOSH HEMPHILL TEAM**

Led by MVP Jose, CCS boys tops among 8 in Alcoa tourney

**STAFF REPORTS**  
editor@farragutpress.com

**ALCOA** — Led by senior point guard Jose Rodriguez’s Most Valuable Player performance during the eight-team Alcoa Thanksgiving Classic — averaging 23 points, 10 rebounds, seven assists and four steals in the Lions’ three-game sweep — Concord Christian School was crowned champions following a 61-59 win against Providence Academy in the title game

Wednesday, Nov. 24. The Lions began this week with a 5-1 overall record.

A rebound basket in the closing seconds by senior Chase Morgan was the difference in the championship game, led by Rodriguez’s 27 points followed by senior Juan Rodriguez with 16 and Morgan nine.

Rallying from a 12-point deficit against Providence to claim the crown, “Our guys played tough,” CCS head coach Michael Wilkins said. “Going into the tournament we knew there was some tough teams.”

The Lions drilled East Hamilton 71-54 in the semifinals Tuesday, Nov. 23.

Jose led the way offensively with 24 points, followed by junior Noah Gilder scoring 17 and Juan adding 14. “Noah Gilder hit some big buckets,” Wilkins said.

Junior Jake Blankenship scored 12 and “slowed down their point guard to disrupt their offense.”

Defensively against EHHS’s 6-foot-10 Cade Pend-

See CCS NO. 1 on Page 2B



Alan Sloan

The final two points of FHS Admirals senior guard Dillon Atwell’s game-high 39-point performance against Fulton in the Belle Building Group Farragut Thanksgiving Tournament consolation game in Farragut’s Lynn E. Sexton Gymnasium Saturday evening, Nov. 27. However, the Falcons won on a last-second shot 66-65.

Despite Atwell, Ads suffer 3-OT loss, then last-second tourney setback vs. Fulton

**ALAN SLOAN**  
editor@farragutpress.com

Maybe it was just a Thanksgiving Day hangover after a 4-0 start to the 2021-22 season, but Farragut varsity boys basketball suffered a three-overtime loss, by 1 point, to Morristown East, then a day later fell to perennial Class AA power Fulton on a last-second shot, 66-65.

And both games were at home in Lynn E. Sexton Gymnasium, as the Admirals finished fourth while hosting the eight-team Belle Building Group Farragut Thanksgiving Tournament. This tourney began Monday, Nov. 22, with a 59-51 Ads victory against Christian Academy of Knoxville despite a game-high 18 points from CAK senior forward Nathan Benton.

Defeated 86-85 in three-OTs by the eventual tourney champ Hurricanes Friday, Nov. 26, Farragut then lost to the Falcons in the consolation game Saturday, Nov. 27 — despite a game-high 39 points from Admirals senior guard Dillon Atwell, who scored a team-leading 25 versus MEHS.

“We’re playing real good basketball teams, and it’s just a matter of us executing better down the stretch,” Farragut head coach Jon Higgins said. “We’re there, we’re giving ourselves chances.

See ADMIRALS on Page 2B

‘Belle’ of the ball: FHS girls champs



Alan Sloan

McCall Willis, Farragut senior post (32), goes up for a short jumper in the paint against tight Livingston Academy defense on both sides during this championship game of the Belle Building Group Farragut Thanksgiving Tournament in FHS’s Lynn E. Sexton Gymnasium Saturday night, Nov. 27. The Lady Admirals held on for a 50-46 victory.

**ALAN SLOAN**  
editor@farragutpress.com

Despite second-half rallies by Fulton in the semifinals and Livingston Academy in the championship game, Jason Mayfield’s Farragut Lady Admirals made enough big plays late to become a tournament champ on its home floor.

Holding off previously unbeaten Livingston 50-46 behind a game-high 15 points from senior wing Avery “Ace” Strickland and 13 from senior wing Ashlyn Sheridan, Farragut won the Belle Building Group Farragut Thanksgiving Tournament title game in Lynn E. Sexton Gymnasium Saturday night, Nov. 27.

Tied with the Lady Falcons the day before after three quarters, the Lady Admirals (4-2 record starting the week) pulled away in the final eight minutes to win 60-49 as led by Sheridan’s 23 points and Strickland’s 15.

“These three were good wins, especially the last two, Fulton and Livingston,” said coach Mayfield, whose team opened tourney play with a 57-35 victory against Providence Academy Monday night, Nov. 22, led by Sheridan and Strickland with 14 points each.

However, “We’re still turning the ball over too much,” he added. “But to be able to execute down the stretch, make free throws and get stops, those (last) two games were good for us.”

While standout senior point guard Keeleigh Rogers has missed the start of the season with a lower leg injury — but could be back by mid-December — freshman point guard Annie Priest, the starter, scored seven in the title game after pumping in 11 against Fulton.

“I told them after the game, ‘We’re going to get better before Keeleigh comes back,’” Mayfield said. “... And when Keeleigh comes back we’ll be even better.”

“I definitely think there’s room for improvement without Keeleigh,” Sheridan said. “But since she’s been out, I definitely think we have stepped up all around as a team and made ad-



Strickland

See CHAMPS on Page 2B



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# Webb 2nd in FHS tourney

**ALAN SLOAN**  
editor@farragutpress.com

Beating Chattanooga powerhouse Hamilton Heights 67-58 behind standout junior wing Lukas Walls' 24 points, then edging perennial Knoxville power Fulton in the semifinals 62-60 without Walls, Webb School of Knoxville was 4-0 heading into the championship game of Belle Building Group Farragut Thanksgiving Tournament Saturday night, Nov. 27.

But the explosiveness, shooting touch and offensive patience of Webb was more than matched by the size, defense and patience of Morristown East — plus standout senior guard Micah Simpson's game-high 36 points.

While the Spartans badly missed having the 6-foot-3 Walls, out with the flu, "Morristown East was just better than us," Webb head coach

Ricky Norris said about a 70-57 MEHS win, as the unbeaten Hurricanes (6-0) rebounded from a 31-28 halftime deficit with a 13-0 run to begin the third quarter and never looked back.

"We cut it to six and had a three-point shot) to cut it to three, but missed it," he added.

However, "This tournament was great for us," Norris said. "I can't imagine a more challenging stretch than Hamilton Heights, Fulton and Morristown East ... I think we found out a lot about ourselves."

Webb fell Saturday despite a team-high 18 points from sophomore guard Brandon Winton (16 versus Fulton). Senior wing Luke Lentz added 10, while senior guard Jaylon Green scored nine and senior wing Devin Mixon had eight. Eighth-grade wing Shavar Young scored six.

Against Fulton, Lentz led in scoring with 22 after pumping in 16 versus Hamilton Heights.



Head coach Michael Wilkins (far right) alongside his Alcoa Thanksgiving Classic champion Concord Christian School Lions. Photo submitted

## CCS No. 1

From page 1B

leton, a Belmont signee, "Jose took the task of guarding Pendleton and held him to five

points," Wilkins said. Concord opened the tourney with a 71-64 win against Austin-East Monday, Nov. 22, as Juan tossed in 30 points followed by Jose with 17.

## Champs

From page 1B

justments and been very flexible with it all." Though saying she feels more of a responsibility to score overall with Rogers out, especially driving to the basket, Strickland added, "I feel like our team has really stepped up and we've done really well."

In addition to Priest, May-

field also praised the second-half play of junior point guard Annalise Bishop Saturday.

"Annalise collected herself (in the second quarter) and came back and played a phenomenal rest of the game," he said.

As for Livingston (5-1 record leaving Farragut), "That's a really well-coached team," Mayfield said. "They were a sectional team (Division I Class AA) from last year."

## Admirals

From page 1B

We've had a really good chance to win both of these games.

"For whatever reason, we're just not executing down the stretch," Higgins added.

"We've got to be better at closing games," Atwell said, adding about his big offensive games, "When they need me I'm willing to step up ... I want to win so badly."

About Atwell, the coach said, "I thought he played extremely

well. He battled hard. He took a hard fall (vs. Fulton), but came back in there and led us."

Despite going 1-2 last week, "I'm pleased with our fight," Higgins said. "... Our problems right now are very fixable."

Against Fulton, Ads senior guard Ryan Neal scored 11. Isaiah Smith added eight.

Versus MEHS, Smith scored 19, senior wing Elisha Brabson added 15 (ankle injury versus Fulton, status unknown at deadline), junior post Dallas Carbaugh 11 and Neal 10.

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Alan Sloan

## FYF 'catches' Rocky Top win

Farragut Youth Football 8th-Grade Team went 1-1 in Battle at Rocky Top at Lenoir City High School Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 20-21. Losing to a team from Akron, Ohio, 8-0 Nov. 20 despite this catch by Tyreek King, FYF defeated TN United 18-14 Nov. 21. "Max Garfield caught about a 50-yard pass to set up Tyreek King a few plays later, from about 40 yards out, to give Farragut the lead," FYF coach Ty Haley said. Late in the game, TN United "reached the 1-yard line" when "a host of Admirals attacked, popping the ball out." Corey Manuel recovered for FYF to ensure a dramatic victory.



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Tammy Cheek

Farragut High School Chess Club president Justin Li brings back this club to FHS after its activities stopped in 2020.

# Chess club rises

After COVID killed club, new members’ interest ignites at FHS

TAMMY CHEEK  
[tcheek@farragutpress.com](mailto:tcheek@farragutpress.com)

Farragut High School Chess Club, led by president Justin Li, is back in action. Although the COVID pandemic halted the club’s activities, Li decided to revive the chess club. “I’d say my love for the game inspired me,” said Li, who has been playing chess since the fourth grade. “I really hope that the chess club can be more inclusive for everyone. “I know a lot of people look at chess as this genius game, that you have to be really smart to play,” he added. “But, through my years, I realized anyone can play chess. It’s not something super elite. Saying he most enjoys the friends he makes with the club, “I think it’s something everyone can enjoy,” Li added. “After you play a game, you’ve invested so much emotion and thought into it, you can usually meet up with the (other) player afterward and have a whole discussion about the game. And what I’ve found is through the game you

meet so many awesome people and make so many more connections you never would have made if you didn’t play.” Li was introduced to chess by his father, who asked the boy if he wanted to play a game. “Even though he crushed me, I still had a lot of fun,” he recalled. “I got a coach in the fifth grade, and then I won regionals that same year. That really just kick-started my entire interest.” Li’s U.S. Chess Federation rating is about 1,600, which he describes as an average tournament player. Now a junior, Li recalled the school had the previous chess club when he was a freshman, but “during COVID, I think they stopped activities. I picked it up again this year. “I thought it would be really awesome if I could get a bunch of my friends to play with me, and what started as a friendly club became much more,” he added. “I realized we could actually start a (school-sponsored) club.” While it has 50 members in the club’s group

See FHS CHESS CLUB on Page 6B

# 5,000 seniors need holiday adoptions

MICHELLE HOLLENHEAD  
[mhollenhead@farragutpress.com](mailto:mhollenhead@farragutpress.com)

Farragut’s own Ashley Lynch is working to ensure senior citizens throughout East Tennessee receive the gift of love this Christmas. Through her non-profit organization, Send Senior Citizens Love, Lynch is overseeing Send Seniors Christmas Love, with a goal of 5,000 recipients. The campaign kicked off Nov. 16 and will continue through Monday, Dec. 20. “We want to take care of every senior from Knoxville to Johnson City,” said Lynch, who noted the drive covers the communities of Knoxville, Farragut, Sevierville, Jefferson City, Johnson City and Greeneville. The event is not a new one, as during the last three years Lynch worked with Home Instead Knoxville, the Pinnacle at

See ADOPT A SENIOR on Page 6B



Photo submitted

Angel Trees supporting Send Seniors Christmas Love are located throughout the Pinnacle at Turkey Creek properties.

# It’s beginning to look a lot like ‘Christmas Vacation’

Sonja Drive resident Adam Pianpiano got a jump start on the holiday season last week when he put the finishing touches on an outdoor depiction of “Cousin Eddie” and various props associated with the classic comedy film “Christmas Vacation.” Pianpiano said he had just bought the 1968 Winnebago for personal use and had the idea to tie into the popular film — of which he is “a big fan” — when upon receipt he told the delivery man “to just put it in the yard.” The other props he bought or built to complete the display.



Michelle Hollenhead

# CUMC to host Santa

STAFF REPORTS  
[editor@farragutpress.com](mailto:editor@farragutpress.com)

In addition to “Celebrate the Season” in Town Hall, Santa Claus also will be the special guest for “Breakfast With Santa” in Concord United Methodist Church, 11020 Roane Drive, from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m., Saturday, Dec. 11. Along with everyone enjoying a tasty, hot breakfast, children can have their photos made with Santa. Tickets, which are \$6 each, may be purchased at [concordunited.org/events](http://concordunited.org/events).



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• **Marking the 80th anniversary of Japan's bombing of Pearl Harbor** on Dec. 7, 1941, which brought the United States into World War II, Frank Galbreith's annual "A Day of Infamy" address, which out-

See **PLANNER** on **Page 7B**

# CADES says 'thanks' at Center

**MICHELLE HOLLENHEAD**  
[mhollenhead@farragutpress.com](mailto:mhollenhead@farragutpress.com)

Alzheimer's disease robs so much from both patients and their caregivers, but in Farragut there are friends and partners who are making a difference, many of whom were honored and thanked for their contributions recently when Concord Adult Day Enrichment Services held a reception for "Friends of CADES" in Farragut Community Center.

CADES operates out of Concord United Methodist Church, serving nearly two dozen individuals daily and offering many projects, programs and exercise to help combat the effects of Alzheimer's.

An April fundraiser "was very successful," program director Genna Minihan said. "People were so generous, and we wanted to thank them with the reception."

"We also combined it with an art show of pictures painted



Michelle Hollenhead

CADES participant John Dougherty and his wife, LeAnn Dougherty, right, with University of Tennessee Women's Athletic director emeritus Joan Cronan, who was an honored guest during a recent Friends of CADES event in Farragut Community Center.

by our CADES participants." Among the honored guests was Joan Cronan, University of Tennessee Women's Athletic director emeritus who chairs the Pat Summit Foundation, See **CADES THANKS** on **Page 6B**

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# Make Someone Smile with T-shirts at Farragut High — even if masked

## STAFF REPORTS

editor@farragutpress.com

Smiling is something that may have been in short supply over the last 18 months, but a special Farragut High School club made sure students did just that earlier this fall with the 5th Annual “Make Someone Smile Day.”

FHS counselor Andi Tenry said the long-standing event started when the school’s projectU club —based on the principles of kindness, inclusion and unity and a club she sponsors — began at the high school level five years ago.

“The first year we partnered up with the art department to screen-print shirts and make comment cards,” Tenry recalled. “It was a last-minute, ‘Let’s just try this and see how it goes,’ decision.”

“The last few years we have partnered up with (school’s) National Art Honors Society to design and screen-print (the T-shirts) where members submit designs that are voted on — and this year the winning design was Michael Scott from “The Office,” she added.

In the past, Tenry said printed T-shirts featured Babe Ruth, Dolly Parton and Bob Ross.

“It’s always fun watching what will be submitted and finding out the winner,” she

added. “It keeps growing — and because the kids look forward to it so much, I looked for a sponsor this year and reached out to Wil Glafenhain at Honors Real Estate, who covered all the costs of the supplies and 100 T-shirts.

“I am so grateful that there are businesses and people in the community that are willing to support their vision.”

Tenry said in total, about 150 shirts were screen-printed, and students, teachers and staff could bring their own shirts to be screened if they wished.

“The whole process takes a while. We usually start tie-dyeing T-shirts the week before, and personally wash, tie, dye and then wash and dry again every single shirt before it is screen-printed. The screen-printing takes all day — we start right after school begins and barely finish delivering as the day is ending.

“It is definitely a labor of love, and most students don’t see all the work their peers are putting in just to give away a T-shirt.”

Peers nominate shirt recipients. “The nomination form asks students to send a ‘thank you’ to a classmate that has been a lifesaver to them,” Tenry said. “That is probably my favorite part of the

whole thing — literally making someone smile because a friend took the time to enter them into the drawing,” she added. “Most of the time the student had no idea they had even been nominated.

“This year we went a little further and opened the form up to staff to nominate other staff. It was very uplifting to read the messages teachers were sending to each other.

“... It’s just a really good day. My favorite, actually.”



Michelle Hollenhead

Sophomore Rilee Kate Ragan, left, and senior Gracie Orrico were among FHS National Art Honor Society members who helped with “Make Someone Smile Day” earlier this fall.

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Photo submitted

FHS Chess Club member William Hunter Mullins, a junior, and Emily Xu compete during a tournament at Cedar Bluff Middle School Aug. 28.

FHS Chess Club

From page 3B

chat, about 30 attend the meetings, which occur from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m., the fourth Wednesday of every month, in the classroom of their sponsor, FHS physics teacher Brian Parton, at FHS. Students interested in joining the chess club can come to the meetings.

“It’s open to everyone,” he said. “There is no fee or membership requirement”.

Other officers are vice president of competitions, Jason Lee, a national master; vice president of activities, Ivy

Zhang; historian, Jesse Hoa; and treasurer, Josh Lin.

During their meetings, Li usually gives a presentation on upcoming tournaments or provides chess strategies.

The club also participates in out-of-school tournaments, such as a Cedar Bluff Chess Tournament, which took place early in the school year.

In October, the club hosted its own tourney at FHS.

“Those tournaments haven’t been as big as previous ones,” Li mused. “I think that’s due to COVID, and as we start recovering, I’m sure more people will come out to play.”

CADES thanks

From page 4B

which presented CADES with a \$40,000 grant earlier this year.

The cause is near and dear to Cronan’s heart, as her good friend, former Lady Vols eight-time NCAA championship head coach Pat Summitt, died from Alzheimer’s Disease in 2016.

“When Pat told me she had the disease, it was in the early stages,” Cronan said. “But from the beginning, it was really important to her to be remembered as someone who made a difference in fighting it, and she formed the Foundation.

“We partnered with (University of Tennessee Medical Center) to open the Pat Summit Clinic

(in 2017), and through that and the organization, Pat stays alive — and she is continuing to make a difference,” she added.

“We are thrilled to give CADES one of our grants. It is a very special need they fill. It is hard on caregivers, and CADES does a great job caring for the CADES participants, as well as their caregivers.”

Former CADES executive director Celia Gruzalski said the grant funded the organization’s Bridge program, which began in July offering assistance to families who are on the CADES waiting list.

“We have a dedicated staff for that program, who are serving 15 more individuals and their families,” Gruzalski said.

Adopt a senior

From page 3B

Turkey Creek and Mercedes Benz of Knoxville to provide Christmas gifts to more than 2,500 local senior citizens.

Each present was collected, wrapped and delivered by the team. “This has always been a need,” Lynch said. “But in 2020, it was even more of a need with the lockdown of nursing homes. We had many seniors waving out the window at Santa and Mrs. Claus. They

felt connected and remembered and it was such a great feeling.”

Pinnacle at Turkey Creek, again working with the project, put up Angel Trees throughout its properties last week.

“People can pick up ornaments and return the gifts to the management office,” Lynch said. “They can also pick an ornament on the virtual tree and drop the gifts off at (11251 Parkside Dr.).”

Anyone wishing to participate is asked to visit the Send

Seniors Love Facebook page, where links to a virtual giving tree are conveniently listed.

Lynch said there also is a PayPal link on that same page for those wishing to make a monetary donation, or donations can be made at [www.sendseniorcitizenslove.org](http://www.sendseniorcitizenslove.org).

If purchasing gifts, drop off points also are provided at local TVA Credit Unions between Knoxville and Johnson City.

For more information, contact Lynch via e-mail at [ashley.lynch@sendseniorslove.org](mailto:ashley.lynch@sendseniorslove.org).



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Planner

From page 4B

lines details surrounding the tragedy, returns to Farragut. Free of charge and open to the public, “A Day of Infamy” begins at 7 p.m., Monday, Dec. 6, in Farragut Town Hall Boardroom, 11408 Municipal Center Drive.

• **Veterans Legal Advice Clinic** once again will be held in person in Knox County Public Defender’s Office from noon to 2 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 8. Masks are required for all participants. Veterans who are not able to attend the clinic in person are encouraged to continue to use the telephone clinic option. Pre-registration is re-

quired for telephone clinic, and veterans are asked to call LAET at 865-637-0484 to pre-register.

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.

• **Wreaths Across America** honors fallen veterans with wreath-laying ceremonies the third Saturday in December (Dec. 18 this year) at Arlington National Cemetery and in Knox County Veterans cemeteries. For more information, or to sponsor a wreath, visit [www.wreathsacrossamerica.org](http://www.wreathsacrossamerica.org).

• **Arrive early for Pellis-**

**siippi State Community College’s hugely popular Holiday Spectacular**, as seating is limited to the first 37 due to social distancing guidelines — and only one show will be performed this year. The annual concert featuring all eight college ensembles, both vocal and instrumental, will be held beginning at 7 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 2, in Clayton Performing Arts Center on the Hardin Valley Campus, 10915 Hardin Valley Road. This year’s theme is “Joy to the World!”

Holiday Spectacular highlights the talents of more than 150 Pellissippi State students and faculty performing classic winter tunes and carols. “We Need a Little Christmas,” “Mele

Kalikimaka” and “Christmas Time’s a Comin’” are among the seasonal favorites on tap.

Tickets are free and will be issued at the door on a first-come, first-served basis. Masks are encouraged but are not required.

• **Knoxville Children’s Theatre**, 109 E. Churchwell Ave. in Knoxville, will present a live production of “Annie Jr.” this holiday season — in partnership with the Clayton Foundation. The play is based on the popular comic strip and adapted from Broadway’s Tony Award-winning Best Musical.

Annie Jr. features everyone’s favorite little redhead in her very first adventure. The play will be performed Dec. 3-19,

starting at 7 p.m., each Thursday and Friday; beginning at 1 and 5 p.m., each Saturday, and starting at 3 and 6 p.m., each Sunday.

Tickets are available at [knoxvillechildrenstheatre.com](http://knoxvillechildrenstheatre.com).

• **Maryville College’s Division of Fine Arts** will present “A Maryville Christmas” beginning at 7 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 7, in the Clayton Center for the Arts’ Ronald and Lynda Nutt Theatre, 502 E. Lamar Alexander Parkway in Maryville. Tickets, which are \$12, available on a first-come, first-served basis. To purchase tickets, call Clayton Center Box Office at 865-981-8590 or visit [claytonartscenter.com](http://claytonartscenter.com).

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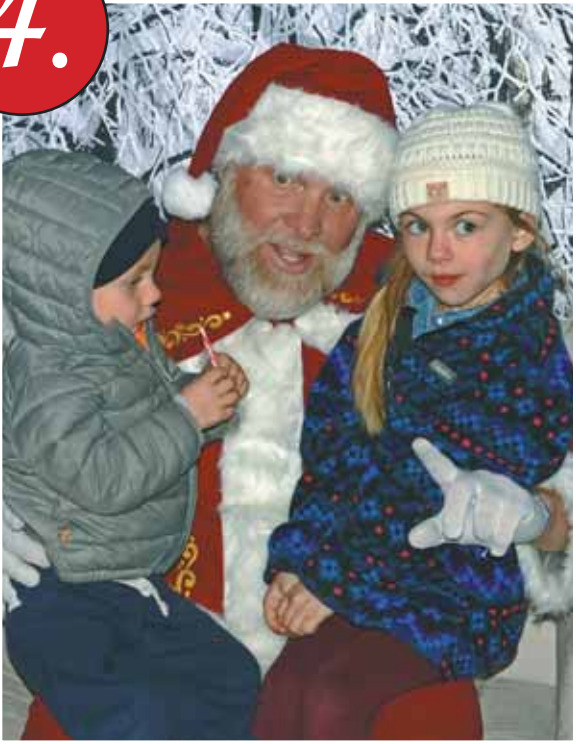
# Light *the* Park

Hundreds of families, many with small children, bundled up and enjoyed music from Farragut youth, both soloist and the 13-member Farragut High School Singers, plus Concord Brass — all of which led up to Santa and Farragut Mayor Ron Williams doing the honors of flipping the switch and illuminating more than 100,000 holiday lights along Campbell Station Road Monday night, Nov. 22.

The occasion was annual Countdown to Light the Park in Founders Park at Campbell Station, as Williams praised the Town’s Public Works department, while addressing the gathering, for their creative work with the lights, which included thousands of new lights this season arranged as ornaments — and a new arched lighted tunnel placed over a park sidewalk.

With the exception of Christmas Day, Saturday, Dec. 25, the lights will be on for all to enjoy nightly — including Mayor Ralph McGill Plaza — from 6 to 10 p.m. through Sunday, Jan. 2.

Photos by Tammy Cheek



1. From left, Nicole Lade; Jeanette Krupski; Lily Rae Chidester, 6, (front) her mom Ashley Chidester with brother, Riker Chidester, 2
2. Garrett Smith, 6
3. From left, Jennifer Troope with friend, Maria Loggins, and son Garrison Loggins, 8
4. Santa (Shawn Austin) with siblings, Elliott Moats, 2, and Adelyn, 5
5. Landon Hohman, 6, with Knox the Fox
6. Chris Brown with son, Sam Wright Brown; dachshund Nala; and Chris’ sister, Melissa Jones
7. Logan and Brittany Simpkins with son, Maverick, 1
8. From left, Rea Dorothy Taylor, 9; mom Jessica Taylor; sister Anne Charlotte Taylor 9; and Jessica’s parents Dorothy and Bill Ballard



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# CHRISTMAS

# Gift Guide



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# Christmas Gifting Tips

It’s beginning to look a lot like the holiday shopping season. The four- to five-week period between Thanksgiving and Christmas is one of the most frenzied times of year, especially for shoppers.

According to recent research from Needle, an advocate-powered e-commerce company, shoppers report feeling more stress from holiday shopping than they do from family obligations and holiday travel. Eighty-four percent

of consumer respondents in Needle’s survey stated that gift-giving caused them stress. Finding the right gifts for everyone can be particularly challenging. While it may not be possible to remove all of the stressors surrounding holiday shopping, these tips may help make the job more manageable.

**• Outline everyone on your list.** Santa has it right by making a list and checking it twice. Only by writing a list will you be able to ensure you do not forget anyone. Include teachers, coworkers and service people in addition to family and friends on the list.

**• Track deals and coupons.** Sticking to a budget is easier when you utilize tools that help you save even more. Social media, retailer websites and third-party apps also can be great places to find bargains.

**• Protect personal information.** The Federal Trade Commission says to protect yourself financially by shopping only on secure websites with an “https” address. Stick with retailers that tell you what they do with your data and how they keep it secure. Consider creating a separate email address and/or account password for shopping retailers to reduce identity theft and other fraud.

**• Shop early.** Bank of America says one of the easiest ways to overspend is waiting until the last minute to shop and then having to settle for what’s available, regardless of prices. Spread out purchases and begin holiday shopping before prices increase.

**• Be wary of fake coupons.** The internet has made shopping and researching easier but also more complicated at the same time. A deal that seems too good to be true may be just that. Counterfeit coupons are phishing scams that can end up compromising personal information when you click on them.



## Traveling with gifts in tow

When traveling for the holidays, suitcases and other baggage tends to be filled with gifts, decorations and other items like food. Packing for travel can become a little more complicated during this time of year. But these suggestions can help ensure holiday items make it there and back relatively easily.

- Wrap them there**  
One way to preserve the integrity of holiday gifts and ensure they look attractive rather than crushed or ripped is to wrap items when you arrive. Build extra time into holiday travel so that you arrive a day or two early. Seek out a quiet spot and get your wrapping done.
- Ship there or back**  
Depending on your mode of travel, there may be limited cargo space in the trunk or back of the SUV. Also, if you’re taking a long road trip that involves rest stops or even staying over at a hotel, gifts left in a vehicle may attract the attention of thieves. Many

airlines charge fees for extra baggage, which can quickly add up with bulky holiday gifts. Instead, ship gifts to their destination. Pick a shipping rate that fits your budget.

- Make a “small gift” pact**  
Speak with family members and agree to a set gift size (and/or dollar value). A theme, such as limiting gifts to gift cards, perfume/cologne or food, can make this more manageable. Try to avoid delicate items which can break during transit. Small gifts are easily stashed in luggage or boxes to bring home, saving everyone a little stress.
- Remove packaging and wrapping**  
While they may not look as pristine as carefully wrapped boxes, wrap soft clothing items right in wrapping paper or tissue paper to save on space so gifts will take up less space. On the return trip home, break down clothing boxes and remove toys from their cardboard and plastic packaging to make them easier to transport.

## Kids on your list?

**• Speak to Mom and Dad first.** When buying for a grandchild, niece or nephew, shoppers should first ask Mom or Dad for suggestions. Parents will know which types of toys their children like, and they’ll also know the child’s level of maturity. Some kids may not be mature enough to play with otherwise age-appropriate toys, while others may be mature beyond their years and enjoy more complex toys than their age would suggest. Parents will know what makes a good toy and what doesn’t.

**• Learn what to look for on labels.** Toy labels are great sources of information, but shoppers must know what to look for. The American Academy of Pediatrics notes that toy labels include information about age-appropriateness (i.e., “Ages 3 & Up”) as well as directions regarding how to use the toy. If the instructions seem a bit complex for the child the item will be for, look for something else. Children’s toy labels also include additional information that consumers may not be familiar with. For example, toys labeled “ASTM F963” meet the latest safety standards from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. An “ASTM D4236” label indicates the materials associated with the art toy have been reviewed and deemed safe

by a toxicologist. More information about toy label requirements can be found at cpsc.gov. The AAP advises that electric toys should only be given to kids if they include the UL label. That means the toy has been certified by the global safety certification company UL, LLC.

**• Avoid certain features.** The AAP notes that toys that are loud, shoot objects into the air or contain small pieces pose a threat to children. Especially loud toys can damage children’s hearing, while projectiles can increase the risk of eye injuries or choking. Toys with small pieces also pose a choking risk to young children who may try to put the pieces into their mouths.

**• Err on the side of caution.** Consumers who are uncertain about the safety of a given toy, even after reading its label, should err on the side of caution and only give toys they’re confident won’t pose a safety risk. Even toys that may seem safe could be dangerous to kids who might otherwise seem old enough. For example, the AAP advises against giving kids under 12 hobby kits and chemistry sets because such kits may contain dangerous chemicals that even pre-adolescents are not old enough to handle safely.

## Great homemade food gifts

Gifts from the heart are among the most coveted and appreciated come the holiday season. Hobbyists from all walks of life can turn their passions into handmade gifts, but few gifts may be as welcomed as those that can be eaten. Cooking and baking ramps up during the holiday season. People can turn extra time in the kitchen into opportunities to create festive treats that are ideal for gifting. But which items are the best of the best? Even though tastes are singular, these items will appeal to most foodies and others on your gift list.

- Jams and preserves:** Fruit jams and preserves are versatile foods. They are as at home on toast and biscuits as they are as fillings in cookies and tarts. Jams and preserves can be made with relatively few ingredients and work well with seasonal fruits.
- Cinnamon rolls:** Warm, sticky and full of aromatic spice, cinnamon rolls are the perfect comfort foods. These rolls do not typically have a long shelf life, so be sure to present them promptly before they get stale.
- Pancakes (or cookies) in a jar:** If you have a fantastic recipe that you can’t resist sharing, try turning it into a gift.

Measure and package the ingredients into mason jars, tie with ribbons and include directions for preparation and cooking.

- Mini bundt cakes:** Fruit cakes may be a holiday standard, but bundt cakes make for great and traditional offerings as well. Miniature bundts filled with chocolate chips, dried fruits or even those soaked in a favorite boozy-butter glaze can be moist and delicious.
- Chocolate barks or fudges:** Seasonal flavors can come to life in chocolate treats. White chocolate filled with peppermint pieces or dark chocolate and cherry chunks are tasty pairings. Break apart portions of the bark or cut the fudge with cookie cutters and gift inside bags tied with ribbons or in cardboard candy boxes.
- Shortbread cookie ornaments:** Circular shortbread cookies can be decorated with royal icing to look like Christmas ornaments. They can be eaten or even placed on trees to complete holiday decor.

Food gifts are perfect for the holiday season. Handmade treats from the heart show loved ones how just much you care.

