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From toys to special mentor, combat tests



Town's own USAF fighter pilot, Lt. Col. Watson, with family, friends celebrating 21+ years service

ALAN SLOAN
editor@farragutpress.com

Flying model airplanes fascinated Ryan Watson as a child.

That early passion, which helped point Lt. Col. Ryan “Bolt” Watson in the direction of becoming a combat veteran fighter pilot in the U.S. Air Force — four tours in Afghanistan and Iraq in the late 2000s — had two other key elements making up this Farragut resident’s character.

He would develop a special bond with now retired USAF Col. Rick Kuhlman, the man who became Watson’s most cherished military mentor as a University of Tennessee Air Force ROTC volunteer instructor. That bond began in 1999.

They cemented their relationship thanks to another, and even more important, mutual passion: living as devoted Christians.

How to best cement their military and Christian bonds?

“When you graduate from pilot training, you actually break one set of pilot wings (insignia), and you give one part or half of the wings to someone else,” Kuhlman said. “The ceremony is called ‘the Breaking of the Wings.’

“And the tradition is they will be joined again in eternity,” the retired colonel added. “And so Ryan gave me half of his wings, or the half that was broken, and it’s in my house on my wall in my family room.”

Celebration, humility

Kuhlman was among roughly 60 family members, friends and military colleagues on hand as Watson retired from the military late last month after roughly 21-and-a-half years of service.

“I was active duty for 15 years, and I was in the Air (Force) Reserves for two years,” the new retiree said, before his final service years as a 134th Operations Squadron refueling pilot at McGhee Tyson Tennessee Air National Guard Base, which is alongside the airport in Alcoa,

Watson’s final TnANG flight found his wife, former USAF 2nd Lt. Emily Watson, and their children — Asher, 16; Micaiah, 15; Canaan, 13; and Judah, 11 — among those viewing the emotional landing, which came at the base on a sunny Wednesday afternoon, Jan. 29.

“Overwhelmed, I would say,” the 43-year-old said about his emotions roughly 30 minutes after landing during an on-base celebration gathering.

“When I landed I didn’t think it was going to be as hard as it is,” Watson added. “Very emotional, just thinking about all the people who have been there for me, who have supported me to get me to this point.

“I really enjoyed the brotherhood

that is the military — I’m definitely going to miss that part of it.”

However, “If it wasn’t for all of them, I wouldn’t be here,” said Watson, who rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel in TnANG after attaining the rank of major as a fighter pilot.

“It’s 21-and-a-half years, and I get

all the attention today,” he added. “But because of them is the reason why I’m here. If I didn’t have all their support, then it wouldn’t have been a successful 21-and-a-half years, that’s for sure.”

“Humility is key,” Kuhlman said

See CELEBRATION on Page 3A

Homeless population growing in Farragut, West Knox: FWKCC Speaker Series voices

TAMMY CHEEK
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The stigma of homelessness and lack of affordable housing challenge those without homes, law enforcement and the community.

Business and community leaders heard from Tracey Williams, CEO of Volunteer Ministry Center; Katie McIlwain, director of outreach ministries for Cokesbury United Methodist Church; Erin Read, executive director

of Knoxville-Knox County Office on Housing Stability; Capt. Brad Hall, Knox County Sheriff’s Office West Precinct; and Capt. Tracy Hunter, Knoxville Police Department.

Their discussion came during Farragut West Knox Chamber of Commerce’s Speaker Series: Building Solutions – Tackling Housing & Homelessness Together, in Cokesbury United Methodist Church’s Connection Center, 9919 Kingston Pike, Knoxville, Tuesday, Feb. 18.

“Ultimately, we’re going to leave here wiser than we first came in,” said Rebekah Hurst, executive vice president, chief credit officer and community reinvestment act officer with one of the event’s sponsors, Tennessee State Bank.



Hill

“There’s been a big demographic or migration shift (of the homeless population) toward West Knoxville. The homeless population has moved west. Why?” asked Speaker Series’ emcee, Halerin Hilton Hill, radio and TV talk show host of WBIR-TV Channel 10’s “Anything is Possible” show.

“We definitely have seen the shift in terms of where homelessness has concentrated geographically,” said Reid, whose

office was established to prevent and respond to housing instability and homelessness in the county and Knoxville. “I think 10 years ago, really, downtown Knoxville was one of the only places you would have seen a significant homeless population.

“... What we’ve been seeing is really two things: one is that as encampments have become more visible, (as) Knoxville Police Department ... has been

See HOMELESSNESS on Page 3A

Rescheduled CUMC Black History events

• Due to inclement weather last week, Concord United Methodist Church rescheduled its WordPlayers’ Theatre Company performance of “Walk, Don’t Ride,” a part of its Black History Month celebration, to begin at 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 26.

“This performance is recommended for ages 10 and up,” a CUMC press release stated. “A love offering will be collected that evening to support the Word-

Players Theatre Company, and childcare/children’s activities will be available for younger attendees.”

Two weeks later, the Rev. Harold Middlebrook will share his first-hand experiences as a pastor and leader during the Civil Rights Movement. That also begins at 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, March 12.

A former pastor in Atlanta, Memphis and Knoxville, Middlebrook played an active role in civil rights orga-

nizations and was a close friend of Civil Rights legend the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.. He was present at the Lorraine Motel in 1968 when Dr. King was assassinated.

All CUMC events and services are free and open to the public. Wednesday Community Care nights include children’s and student activities, and all worship services are family-friendly.



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Pickleball new site another step closer to reality

TAMMY CHEEK

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Pickleball players are another step closer to having pickleball courts at Mayor Bob Leonard Park.

Farragut Municipal Planning Commission voted unanimously during its Thursday, Feb. 20, meeting to approve pre-bids site plan designs for the courts at MBLP off Harrison Road.

"I'm super happy to see this move along, seeing it get finished," Planning Commissioner Ron Pinchok said after the vote. "It's a win-win for a lot of people."

When asked if the action needed to go before the Board, Community Development director Mark Shipley said "the Board already dealt with it at their level."

The most recent plan, which FMPC approved, is projected at \$1.3 million.

"After additional public input and Board presentations, the final complex will be a nine-court complex with lights, between-court fencing, external fencing, a shade structure outside the complex and two (Americans with Disabilities Act) parking spots, totaling .98 acres of disturbed land," said Ron Oestreich, Town's Park & Recreation director. "The Harrison Road side parking lot at Mayor Bob Leonard Park is less than 100 yards from the new pickleball complex and has plenty of parking to accommodate all of the activity for the park, including pickleball."

"The specific location for the complex is where the current grass rectangular field is along Harrison Road," he added. "We'll be moving that rectangular field to the open space behind the sand volleyball courts."

"This pickleball complex will have two ADA parking spots and paths that will tie into our existing pathways. The front walk will have gates and a French drain between the sidewalk and the external fence. Again, those will all tie to our pathways."

Oestreich said the lighting includes 36 LED lighting system through LSI Industries with 20-foot poles.

The plans to build the pickleball courts at Mayor Bob Leonard Park were decided as

a solution to complaints about the McFee Park tennis/pickleball complex.

"For the past several years, Farragut Parks and Recreation has received multiple noise complaints from the Brass Lantern residents bordering the McFee Park tennis/pickleball complex," Oestreich said. "Members of the Brass Lantern (Homeowners Association) have attended both Parks and Athletics Council meetings and Board of Mayor and Aldermen meetings, requesting the Town stop pickleball at McFee Park."

Pickleball players also attended the various Town meetings, pleading their need for a place to play.

"Staff worked with residents and players to implement a reservation-only system of play for both pickleball and tennis," Oestreich said.

At the same time, he suggested the Board consider building a complex at MBLP, which the staff then directed him to pursue. After conducting several community input sessions, staff chose Ross/Fowler, which designed the McFee complex, to design the new complex at Mayor Bob Leonard Park.

Subsequently, the Board approved a capital investment program allocation of \$1.45 million for the project for the fiscal year 2025.

Oestreich said the initial design was for eight courts with a 25-car parking lot, coming in at \$1.3 million. But after presenting the plan to the Parks and Athletics Council and hearing from pickleball players, the staff was asked to consider some additional amenities and a 12-court complex.

However, a plan with those additions "was priced out at over \$2.1 million, mostly due to disturbed land exceeding 1 acre and, thus, requiring stormwater mitigation," he said.

"After sharing this with the Board, it challenged Ross/Fowler to get as many courts as they can and keep the amenities the players have asked for, but stay under that 1-acre

threshold," Oestreich said.

The project includes one bid alternate to resurface the tennis and pickleball courts at McFee Park to eliminate the pickleball courts and add back the tennis-only lines.

"The complex has entered construction documents phase and is currently out to bid," he said. "You'll have a pre-bid meeting on March 20."

The McFee bid opening will be 2 p.m., Thursday, April 3, in Farragut Community Center.

"We will take this to BOMA at the Thursday, April 24, meeting," Oestreich said.

Planning Commissioner Louise Povlin asked about the timing to resurface the tennis courts at McFee Park.

"It would be around the same time of the new (MBLP) courts opening," Oestreich answered. "We don't want them to have an overlap where there are still pickleball playing at McFee when there's pickleball playing at Mayor Bob (Leonard Park). It might be a one- to two-week lag. I'm not sure how long it's going to take to resurface."

For MBLP's new courts and the McFee project, a five-month construction project is projected, with a finish date of Sept. 30. "We're hoping for it to be faster than that," he added.

"Hopefully, the timing works. We do have tennis (players who) use the tennis courts."

Regarding the courts' lines, he explained it is not pulling

up taped lines, as the lines are embedded in the surface. The resurfaced tennis lines also will be embedded into the court surface.

"The new courts will have that as well," Oestreich said. "It will be a beautiful complex."

Concerning MBLP, "Have we had any conversations (about parking) with Two Rivers Church?" Commissioner Noah Myers asked. "It's pretty obvious to me that there are going to be a lot of folks that are going to park in Two Rivers parking lot, and they are going to walk across the street to the pickleball courts."

"It may or may not be an issue," he added. "Our peak times are going to be different."

However, "to be good neighbors ... we should reach out to them," Myers said. "The other thing I think we should consider is doing a sidewalk tie-in across the street, at our expense."

"We're in uncharted territory because we're in another county, another jurisdiction," he added. "But, I do think, at minimum, we should have conversations with Two Rivers Church ... it's a win-win for everybody."

Oestreich said Town staff has not had conversations with the church, but other MBLP sports groups use the church parking lot.

"I agree they would be a good partner," he added.

KCSO reports

• **At 1:18 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 20, Knox County Sheriff's Office units were dispatched to a Roane Drive residence in regard to a domestic disturbance.**

Victim said his uncle assaulted him while he was in the bathroom. Victim said the suspect "shoved him and slapped/punched him while he was in the shower," the report stated.

Suspect said the victim "was being disrespectful and took the bathroom while he was using it," the report further stated. "The suspect said nothing became physical, only verbal."

"There were no signs of injury or physical altercation on the suspect or victim."

Victim was given a Family Crimes Blue Card and advised of his rights.

"Both parties refused medical treatment and both parties refused to separate," the report stated.

• **At 11:51 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 18, a theft was reported after being viewed at Belk, 11387 Parkside Drive.**

"Suspect took a necklace, a pack of bras and other merchandise into a fitting room," the report stated, before she exited the store with the necklace and pack of bras without paying for them.

Total value of loss was listed at \$116.



Oestreich

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Photo submitted by Emily Watson



(Left) The wedding of Emily Watson, left, and then U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Ryan Watson, right, in June 2005, also included his mentor, Retired USAF Col. Rick Kuhlman and his wife, Beverly Kuhlman. (Above) The Watson family in a T-38C Talon II at Randolph AFB, Texas, as then U.S. Air Force Maj. Watson was in the 435th Fighter Training Squadron about 10 years ago. Ryan is with Micaiah, 4, and Canaan, 3. Emily is with their other two boys, Asher, 6, and Judah, 1.

Celebration

From page 1A

about Watson. "He's very good at what he does, but he doesn't say anything about it. You just see it in the way he is.

"He's a wonderful father and a very devoted husband," the retired colonel added.

Moreover, "he was a leader, and I really saw that in him," Kuhlman said. "And I wanted to encourage him to step out and lead, which he did. And he became the wing cadet commander and did a really good job at that, when he was in the Air Force ROTC.

"And then I went down to his graduation from pilot training, which was down at Laughlin Air Force Base in Texas," he added. "... He came to my retirement, which was in 2003."

Watson will become a full-time passenger jet pilot for

Delta Airlines, based out of Atlanta, which he's been doing part-time since 2015.

Early passion, influence

Looking back on his earliest years of influence on his flying passion, "I'd say primarily it was my grandfather," Watson, growing up in Hendersonville, said about Bill Watson. "He passed away right as I graduated college. But growing up, he flew model airplanes. He built them himself.

"And so as a kid, I would help him build model airplanes, and we'd go out and fly them," the retiree added. "Then he would take me to air shows in Smyrna, and we'd watch all the airplanes and go crawl around all the airplanes.

About flying, "I thought, 'wow, that would be really fun, I would love to do that.' And, oh, by the way, serve my country at the same time."

ROTC, overall mentor

After graduating from Beech High School in 1999, Watson said upon first "showing up to the University of Tennessee," he recalled asking, "you can join the ROTC and maybe fly for the Air Force?"

"I met Ryan when he came to the University of Tennessee," Kuhlman said. "I worked with Air Force ROTC as a volunteer, and I was still in the Air Force Reserve, and I was stationed down at Dobbins Air Force Base, our Air Reserve base in Marietta, Georgia.

"And so I would take the cadets through the obstacle course, or confidence course, down there at Dobbins Air Force Base. And Ryan was part of that contingent, as was his future wife, Emily. So both of them were part of the ROTC unit that came down there."

"He was my mentor when I

was going through ROTC, always was very encouraging, very supportive," Watson said of Kuhlman, adding that becoming a pilot "is something he never got to experience."

Kuhlman downplayed his influence on Watson's career, adding "he already had all the ingredients to be successful, and I was just one of the people that recognized that and wanted to remind Ryan that was who he is and that he had those qualities."

There's also a civilian connection. "Then I had a business that was on the (Cumberland) Strip (on the UT campus)," Kuhlman said. "So I would see a lot of the cadets often, and I would see Ryan. ... And then he was also involved in an ROTC Bible study that met once a week.

"He was very serious about his faith."

Final thoughts

Also speaking highly of Watson were two of his friends.

"I've known Ryan for about six years now; he's a great guy," said Jesse Simonian, owner of CrossFit 865 in Lenoir City, where Watson often works out. "I'm happy for him and this accomplishment."

"We're super proud of Ryan and his whole family," Farragut Alderman Drew Burnette said. "It was just special for us to get out to the base here and get to honor him on his final flight into retirement."

In addition to Watson's parents and step-parents (see photo on page 1A), also attending the celebration was his his 97-year-old grandfather-in-law, Retired U.S. Army Col. Hank Miller, a World War II, Korean War and Vietnam veteran who also lives in Farragut (see photo, page 1A).

Homelessness

From page 1A

getting a lot of complaints," she added. "And city public service has been sweeping (dismantling) more camps; and we've also seen a huge increase in our homeless population."

From law enforcement's perspective, "like Erin said, downtown in the city, more complaints were coming about, so people started coming this way," Hall said. "You've got areas that are not developed yet, so you are seeing them move into the wooded areas.

"They can't be seen during the summertime, when the foliage is on, but when the foliage is off, you drive in certain areas and see encampments," he added.

"They are shifting west, but they also shifted north quite a bit and further east quite a bit, so they're more visible," Hunter said. "As we're trying to work on the order maintenance problem and the crime problems that happen, sometimes along with homelessness, then they start dispersing somewhat."

Williams said the shift is more an expansion than relocation "because folks aren't leaving downtown, necessar-

ily, it's just that the population is growing.

"A big part of that is the domino effect," she said. "Once you're priced out of the market, once you're evicted and you can't get into a new home, you're now taking up a spot for someone else, and it just keeps traveling in a domino effect."

"In 2018, across the entire city and county, on an average day, we would see 1,000 people accessing homeless services," Reid said. "That is now up to 2,300 on an average day, accessing homeless services."

Moreover, "Over the past five years, rent has grown by over \$500 a month," Reid said. "We have definitely not kept pace with that.

"... I do think that substance misuse and mental illness are some of the most visible aspects of homelessness in our community, but what I can tell you is that when you look at the data, they are not the main drivers of homelessness in the community," she added.

Julie Blaylock, FWKCC president/CEO, said, "I'm pleased to announce today the Chamber will be able to donate \$500 to two member non-profit entities: Volunteer Ministry Center and CUMC Connection Center."

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Tuesday, March 11
5:00 pm
Business After Hours
Southern Bell Event Center, LC

Tuesday, March 18
11:30 am
Lunch & Learn
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Saturday, May 3
Chamber Gala
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Thursday, July 31
Speaker Series,
Randy Boyd
The Venue

Thursday, September 18
Golf Tournament
Avalon

A little food, a little business

Save the date, 8th Annual Taste of Loudon County Business Expo

TAMMY CHEEK
tcheek@farragutpress.com

LOUDON COUNTY — Samplings of food and businesses from Loudon County will highlight the 8th Annual Taste of Loudon County Business Expo presented by Knoxville TVA Employees Credit Union.

The event will take place from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Friday, Feb. 28, in The Venue at Lenoir City, 7690 Creekwood Park Blvd., Lenoir City.

"We are always excited to host this event for our members and for the community," Loudon County Chamber of

Commerce president Rodney Grugin said. "It provides a great opportunity for our members to showcase what they have to offer Loudon County and the surrounding area.

"It is very rare to be able to have 55 business members and 11 restaurants and food vendors under one roof at the same time, and we all have fun when it happens," he said.

"Loudon County (community) is a great supporter of the Chamber of Commerce and has embraced this event since the beginning and is one of the most popular events that we host," Grugin said.

Last year, he said the attendance was between 350 and 400 people.

"We expect to meet or exceed those numbers this year," Grugin said.

Entrance for the Business Expo is free for everyone while to experience "The Taste," the cost is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children under the age of 12.

Tickets are still available for "The Taste," which are available in advance online at [www.loudoncountycham-](http://www.loudoncountycham-berofcommerce.com)

berofcommerce.com and at the event.

The concept of the Taste of Loudon County portion of the event is "to showcase our membership," Grugin said. "This includes our business members, as well as our restaurants and other food businesses.

"It is a major draw for attendees to not only see what our member businesses have but to also have a sampling of the great food that our member restaurants provide," he said. "We have 11 food vendors scheduled to participate this year."

They include: Jersey Mike's, Family Brands, Calhoun's at the Marina, Freddy's Frozen Custard & Steakhouses, Riverside Coffee Shop, Smoothie King, Honey Baked Ham Company, Wampler's Farm Sausage, Bluestem Hollow, KFC of Lenoir City and Shoney's.

With the Business Expo, "we have filled all the available spaces that we have with 55 member organizations and 11 food vendors for a total of 66 Loudon County Chamber of Commerce members participating," Grugin said.

"They will see a sampling of our members ranging from financial institutions to retail and service businesses."

The first Business Expo event took place in 2018, and "we have held it every year since," he said. "We knew we had many different businesses as members, and we wanted to be able to highlight some of each type. Plus, if you have food, people will come.

"We were even able to have it just prior to the COVID shutdown in 2020, so this will be our eighth consecutive year," Grugin added.

"This is a fabulous event for not only our member, but for the entire community" the president said. "It brings people together that might not otherwise cross paths and by doing that, we are doing our job as the Loudon Chamber of Commerce: Connecting people and highlighting our membership."

Also, "(Attendees) will learn about all the exceptional businesses right here in their own community, along with enjoying food from multiple organizations in one place," Grugin added.

"Loudon County (community) is a great supporter of the Chamber of Commerce and has embraced this event since the beginning and is one of the most popular events that we host,"

~ Rodney Grugin, President Loudon County Chamber of Commerce

Some pictures from the 2024 Taste of Loudon County Business Expo





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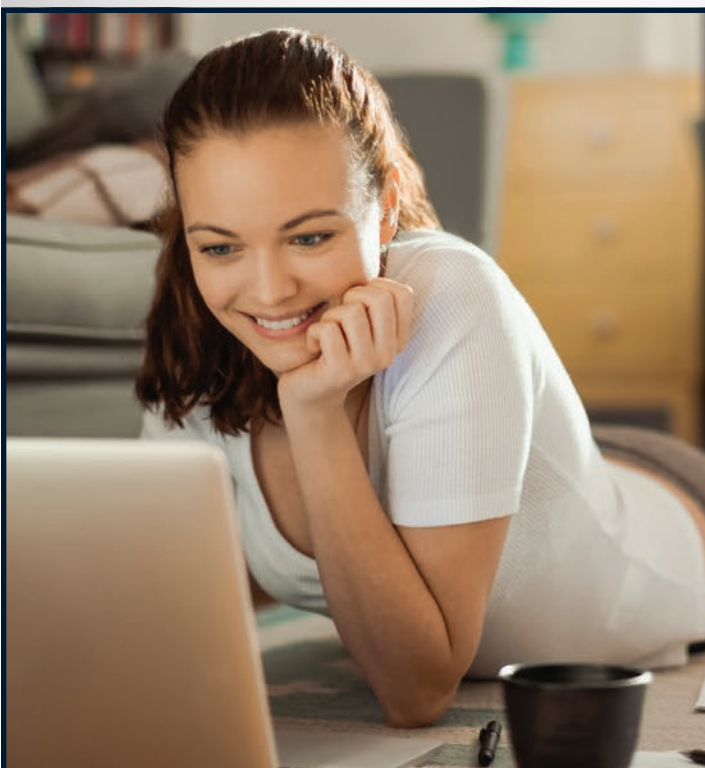
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Tammy Cheek

PayMore West Knoxville franchise owners Varniraj “Jack” Patel (front row, far left), Mukesh “Mack” Nayi (second from right), along with another partner, Gary Desai, (second from left), gathered with Nayi’s nephew, Vandan Nayi (with scissors) and niece, Deryanshi Nayi (with scissors), and staff, including senior buyer Quentin Furlong (far right), junior buyer Ryan Bradford, (not pictured), lister Asia Anderson (back row, far right) and Farragut West Knoxville Chamber members for a Chamber-sponsored ribbon cutting at PayMore, 113 Lovell Road, Tuesday, Feb. 11.

Unique concept

PayMore buys, sells unwanted electronics

TAMMY CHEEK

tcheek@farragutpress.com

Anyone wondering what to do with all of his or her used technical devices now can take them to PayMore West Knoxville, a new business that opened at 113 Lovell Road, near First Watch in Lovell Place shopping center.

Jack Patel, Mack Nayi and Dignesh Patel, have partnered to open the franchise in Turkey Creek.

“I want to welcome PayMore West Knoxville to the Farragut community,” Farragut West Knoxville Chamber of Commerce president/CEO Julie Blaylock said during a Chamber-sponsored ribbon cutting at the store Tuesday, Feb. 11. “This is a really unique and interesting concept, and the franchisees are going to tell you exactly how unique and interesting it is.

“It’s one of the fastest-growing franchises in the United States,” she added.

“We buy and sell electronics items, electronic accessories,” Nayi said. “That includes phones, laptops, gaming consoles, drones and cameras.

“We are excited to be here,” he added. “We plan to open five stories in five years.”

The partners have been in the retail and hotel businesses for 22 years, Nayi said.

Also, “we did a little research as we got in,” Nayi said, noting

See PAYMORE on Page 7A

businessbriefs

• **Weichert, Realtors - Advantage Plus** recently announced the addition of **Arlyn Cuccia** to its team of agents. Cuccia provides dedicated service to clients in Knoxville and surrounding areas.

As a Weichert affiliated agent, Cuccia has access to in-depth training programs, the latest technology and the most powerful sales and marketing tools in the industry to help provide her clients with superior real estate service.



Cuccia

• **BarberMcMurry Architects** recently promoted **Katie Lowery, NCIDQ, RID, and Abby Farr, NCIDQ, RID, WELL, AP, LEED GA, to associate.**

Lowery joined BarberMcMurry in 2014 and has become a senior interior designer, leading multiple efforts within the firm to strengthen the design process and culture. She is a University of Tennessee graduate. Lowery serves on the firm’s branding and design committees.



Lowery

Farr has been with the firm five years, most recently as interior designer. She graduated from Auburn University and is a WELL Accredited Professional and LEED Green Associate.

Farr has championed initiatives in the office, including Black Turtleneck Sessions, a monthly design dialogue, and is a member of the firm’s culture committee.

• **BarberMcMurry Architects** recently named **Andrew S. Newman, AIA, LEED AP, as the firm’s newest partner.**



Farr

Over the past four years at BarberMcMurry, Newman has quickly risen to senior associate while serving as the firm’s Digital Practice manager and a senior project manager.

“His leadership in Building Information Modeling has advanced the integration of technology and craft, reinforcing BMA’s commitment to thoughtful, well-executed design,” a press release stated. “He has served as leader of the Associate Group and is a member of the Design Process & Culture committee, playing a key role in multiple innovations.”

• **Morning Pointe Senior Living** has several new certified medication aides: **Jordan Dessaint**, Morning Pointe of Knoxville Assisted Living; **Latoya Gallaher** and **Jessica Doyle**, The Lantern at Morning Pointe Alzheimer’s Center of Excellence, Knoxville; **Celeste Davis**, Morning Pointe of Hardin Valley Assisted Living and Memory Care; **Remi Day**, Morning Pointe of Powell Assisted Living; and **Gabby Vanderriff**, The Lantern Alzheimer’s Center of Excellence, Powell.

Feb. 28 last day for Town’s River Dog

TAMMY CHEEK

tcheek@farragutpress.com

With a new opportunity for its owners, River Dog Bakery in Farragut will be closing its doors at 11422 Kingston Pike on Friday, Feb. 28.

“When we opened the River Dog Farragut location nearly two years ago, branching out from the original River Dog Bakery in Bearden, we were excited to bring the River Dog brand to this wonderful community,” Sonja Hawk, who co-owns River Dog Farragut with her husband, Chris, stated on the shop’s social media page.

“From the very beginning, you, our customers, have been the heart and soul of this journey,” she further stated. “Your kindness and support have been the most uplifting part of being here.

“However, a professional opportunity has come our way that we simply couldn’t turn down. Coupled with our commitment to spending quality time raising our three young — and quickly growing — children, we’ve realized we can no longer dedicate the time and energy needed to keep this location thriving.”



Tammy Cheek

River Dog Bakery Farragut, which opened June 14, 2023, is closing its doors Friday, Feb. 28. However, the owners said that will not affect the River Dog Bakery shop in Bearden, which bakes the dog treats in that store.

She wanted to clarify that the original River Dog Bakery in Bearden “is not, and will not, be impacted in any way. They will continue their 20-year tradition of serving and treating your pups and kitties with love and care.

“We want to let you know that our last day of business at the River Dog Farragut location will be Friday, Feb. 28,” Hawk stated. “Until then, we’ll

remain fully stocked with your favorite River Dog treats ... We’ll also continue baking our signature birthday and celebration cakes through the end of the month.”

On a personal note, “Many of you we’ve gotten to know personally, and we’re honored to call you our dear friends,” Hawk stated. “As the saying

See RIVER DOG on Page 7A

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT



Second Harvest

136,000...that’s the number of bags filled with kid-friendly foods for children across the region in nearly 300 public schools and programs that Second Harvest Food Bank of East Tennessee will be able to fill based on the funds raised in the 2025 “Pack the Bag” campaign. Thanks to the public, corporate sponsors and many other organizations, Second Harvest is able to fund this program at no cost to the child or schools involved.

For more information about this initiative and other hunger-relief programs, please visit www.secondharvestETN.org.



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Chamber welcomes new businesses, networking



Tammy Cheek

Ange Quist (with scissors), creative marketing coordinator/show director for Ad Solutions Media & Design, cut the ribbon for the home-based business during a Farragut West Knox Chamber of Commerce event in Farragut Community Center Tuesday, Jan. 21.



Tammy Cheek

Dr. Joe Caroccio (with scissors), owner of Atlantic Rehabilitation Center, prepared to cut the ribbon on his physical therapy office surrounded by his wife, Karol (to Caroccio's right), his son, Thomas (to his left), and daughter, Juliana (to Karol's right), during a Farragut West Knox Chamber of Commerce-sponsored event at the office, 9309 Kingston Pike in Cedar Bluff, Friday, Feb. 14.

PayMore

From page 6A

Nashville has three stores.

"It was my dream to be a computer tech guy," he added. "I wanted to do something ... helping communities."

In addition to buying and selling, Paymore recycles old electronics for free.

"Every household has lots of stuff," Nayi said.

Regarding computers, Patel said, "before we purchase electronics, we wipe out (the data). We make sure it is clean before we sell it to the franchise."

"People love it so far in the four months (since it opened)," Nayi added about the business.

However, the shop cannot accept printers, as there are no places to recycle them, he said. They also do not take computer monitors and televisions.

"Right now, we've been getting mostly the gaming consoles — X-Box and PlayStation 5s," Jack Patel said about items being brought in. "So, we've been selling a lot of gaming consoles."

Computers and new phones also are popular items.

"We have Pilot phones coming in for trade," Jack said. "People want to sell their old devices and get a new phone."

Another unique feature the

store has is called B to B, or Business to Business.

"Like banks, offices and companies, when they upgrade to a new system, we buy the old computers ... all the stuff, we buy," Jack said.

"So a small business that is upgrading its equipment can walk in with all their stuff and, at least, get a little bit of a return on their investment into new equipment," Blaylock said.

"And, we do have an option for paying cash (or) we have store credit," Nayi said. "We can give a gift card."

For anything purchased, "we have a 30-day warranty," he added.

The store has two screens customers use to buy something. "If we don't have it here, they can look up on that screen" and find it, Navi said. "We will ship it free and have a 30-days warranty."

"There's camera equipment; there's power tools," Blaylock said. "There is everything that you can possibly imagine that's electronic."

Paymore is open from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday; and from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday; and from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday.

For more information, call 865-777-1117, e-mail dpatel@paymore.com or visit online at www.farraguttn.paymore.com

River Dog

From page 6A

goes: 'Don't be sad it's over; be glad it happened.' We're so incredibly glad it happened — with all of you who supported us along the way.

"Thank you for allowing us to be part of your lives and for

giving us the joy of being part of your pups' lives," Hawk further stated. "We'll cherish these memories forever."

She also said there are no plans to sell to another buyer.

"I am hopeful another similar pet bakery will open in the Farragut area in the future," Hawk said.



Tammy Cheek

JCPenney general manager Michelle Austin, center, welcomed Kathryn Schrader, founder of Strategic Tax & Business Services, and Dr. Al Hazari, co-owner of Postal Annex, during a Farragut West Knox Chamber of Commerce networking hosted by JCPenney, 7600 Kingston Pike, Thursday, Jan. 30.

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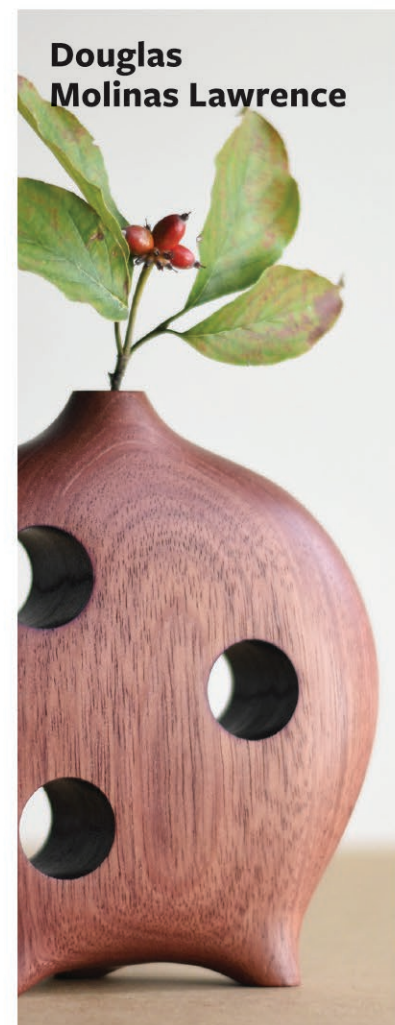
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MVP Hodge has 35; tourney #1 BHS

Lady Ads take 2nd with 4 All-tourney, Lady Dawgs also 4

BILL HOWARD
Correspondent

HARDIN VALLEY — It's often said in sports the best players step up in the big games.

In the girls' championship game of the 4-4A District Tournament at Hardin Valley Academy, Natalya Hodge exemplified that axiom. And then some.

The junior point guard, named tournament Most Valuable Player, poured in 35 points to lead No. 3 state-ranked



Underwood

Bearden High (29-4) to a 56-43 win over archrival Farragut Monday night, Feb. 24.

"We knew we were gonna come out here and play our style of play and just hoop," Hodge said. "That's all we needed to do was hoop."

Time and again the Lady Bulldogs' "hooping" — led by



Bearden team photo by Alan Sloan/ Farragut action photos below courtesy of Tony Cox

(Above) The Bearden Lady Bulldogs celebrated a District 4-4A Tournament championship at Hardin Valley Academy Monday night, Feb. 24, after a 56-43 win against rival Farragut. (Below) Lady Ads junior wing KJ McNealy, left, and senior guard Jaci Neubert, right, both go up for driving baskets during a Farragut rout of Maryville in the 4-4A tourney semifinals Friday night, Feb. 21, at HVA.

Hodge — held off Farragut's attempts to come back after the Lady Admirals fell behind early.

"They beat us; they played better than we did," Jason Mayfield, FHS head coach, said. "We had a bad start to the game. We fought our way back but couldn't get the lead and be effective (enough) on offense."

Senior guard Kendall Anne Murphy scored 15 for Bearden. Junior guard KJ McNealy got 14 for Farragut. Lady Ads sophomore post Trinity Curry added 12 points.

BHS jumped to a 7-0 lead barely two minutes into the game, and led 13-5 with 3:58 left in the first quarter. Farragut cut it to four, 15-11, with 1:22 left, but Bearden closed the quarter with seven straight to lead 22-11 at the end of one.

The Lady Bulldogs led by 13 in the second period, and appeared to have the game in hand. But seven straight by FHS made it 29-23 with 1:44 left

See TOP TWO on Page 2B



Third place in tourney for HVA girls; beat MHS

ALAN SLOAN
editor@farragutpress.com

HARDIN VALLEY — Steady as it goes for the Hardin Valley Academy Lady Hawks basketball team, coming out of a super top-heavy District 4-4A Tournament with a third-place finish.

Jumping ahead of No. 4 tourney seed Maryville 37-19 at the half of the tourney consolation game Monday night, Feb. 24, the No. 3-seeded Lady Hawks (15-17 overall) struggled offensively in the third quarter and saw the Lady Red Rebels rally.

Another Maryville push cut the lead to five, 48-43, with 54 seconds to play. But behind All-District 4-4A and All-Tourney honoree Kendra West, senior point guard, Hardin Valley held off MHS for a 53-44 victory.

In fact, it was West's 18 first-half points that sparked the big lead. "I thought Kendra did a good job running the team," said HVA head coach Jennifer Galloway, as West ended with a game-high 25 points. "She wanted the ball in her hands."

"I'm really proud of our team," West said. "I think coming out in third place is really good for us."

Overall, "I felt we were very disciplined defensively," Galloway said. "In the second half we had some trouble — not necessarily putting the ball in the hole — but just getting attempts. They changed a little bit defensively and we turned it over a few times."

Other Lady Hawks scorers were senior wings Ava Claire Wrather and Bella Buccola, and Kamiyah Love, senior post, who each ended with eight. Kamryn Butcher, senior guard also named All-Tournament, scored seven, with Holly Lindsey adding a free throw.

Though Lady Red Rebels guard Zoe Harrison led her team in points with 14, "I thought Kamryn did a phenomenal job guarding (Harrison)," Galloway said.

As a Region 2-4A No. 3 seed, HVA will travel to Campbell County, 3-4A runner-up (7 p.m., Friday, Feb. 28).



Photo courtesy of Jack Tate/ FHS sports information

Lane's 25 = 1,000+

Leading his Farragut Admirals to a 69-53 victory against rival Hardin Valley Academy in the District 4-4A Tournament opening round at HVA Thursday night, Feb. 20, junior All-District point guard Parker Lane scored 21 of his game-high 25 points in the second half. This stellar performance put Lane past the 1,000 career-point mark.

Late Dawgs push overcomes Farragut fast start; semifinal win set up BHS-Mville final

ALAN SLOAN
editor@farragutpress.com

HARDIN VALLEY — Once again it was Bearden's depth of scoring talent and perimeter pressure defense that made a big difference, this time turning back Farragut's red-hot start that kept the Ads ahead into the final quarter.

In the end, however, one offensive cog was especially vital, as the Bulldogs pulled away in the final 90 seconds for a 72-64 victory in the District 4-4A Tournament semifinal Saturday night, Feb. 22, at Hardin Valley Academy.

Sean Capshaw, 6-foot-1 junior forward, scored a game-high 30 points. "Sean is capable of doing that ... he was just able to make all of his open looks," BHS head coach Jeremy Parrott said, as his top-seeded and No. 3-state-ranked Bulldogs improved to 27-4. "I'm really proud of him tonight."

Bearden played No. 3 seed Maryville, which pulled a mild upset in beating No. 5 state-ranked Knoxville West (21-5) in the other Feb. 22 semifinal. That showdown Tuesday night, Feb. 25, at HVA came after deadline. (Visit farragutpress.com for game details)

Other top individual efforts

The No. 4-seeded Ads fell to 18-13 despite a game-high 29 points from Farragut standout senior wing Dom VanAcker, an All-District honoree who earlier this month eclipsed the 1,500-point career scoring mark.

"Our guys played great, they battled," Admirals skipper JP Burris said. "The effort was there all night."

Early on, "They were really exploiting us by shot-making," coach Parrott said about Farragut.

Three All-District Bulldogs contributed offensively: senior JaMichael Blair Jr. scored 12, senior guard King Hubbard 10 and junior point guard Justin Nordin nine.

See BOYS, FHS-BEARDEN on Page 2B

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Jones fired as BHS football coach; state Comptroller finds 'deficiencies' with f'ball boosters

ALAN SLOAN

editor@farragutpress.com

Seeing an increase in the level of talent at Bearden High School during Josh Jones' three years as football head coach — while beating Farragut for a second straight season last fall for the first time since the Bulldogs program won three in a row in that fierce rivalry from 1999 through 2001 — also saw his 2023 and 2024 Dawgs reach the Class 5A state quarterfinal playoffs.

Despite all that success — a 25-13 overall record with Bearden — Jones was fired as head coach, it was announced Tuesday, Feb. 18.

Morgan Shinlever, BHS athletic director, released a short statement attributed to "BHS administration:"

"Josh Jones is no longer serving as the head coach of Bearden High School's football program.

"The school has decided to go in a different direction this year and will start the hiring process for a new head coach ahead of the 2025 season."

Attempts to reach Jones for comment were unsuccessful.

State Comptroller-BHS Football Boosters

While no connection has been made to Jones' fir-

ing and cited Bearden Booster Club mis-steps in how it handled various duties, which prompted a state Comptrollers Office investigation and subsequent report noting "deficiencies," the firing did come shortly after the report was released.

In a release from "Knox County Board of Education officials: The Office of the Comptroller of the Treasury conducted an investigation of selected records of the Bearden High School Football Booster Club, and the results are presented herein.

"... The Office of the Comptroller of the Treasury investigated allegations of malfeasance related to the Bearden High School Football Booster Club. The investigation was initiated after Knox County Schools system officials reported questionable transactions.

"The investigation was limited to selected records for the period July 1, 2022, through Sept. 30, 2024. The results of the investigation were communicated with the office of the District Attorney General of the 6th Judicial District.



Jones

"... For the period reviewed, club officers improperly wrote 23 checks directly to BHS football coaches without KCS approval totaling at least \$60,000.

"According to club officers, the payments were made to the coaches as salary supplements. ... KCS administrators told investigators they were not aware of the club's direct payments to the coaches nor did they approve them.

"... Two unnamed assistant coaches received the \$60,000 over two school years, according to the Comptrollers report, paying 'Assistant Coach 1' \$22,500 for the 2022-23 school year, then \$32,500 for the 2023-24 school year.

"The coach labeled as 'Assistant Coach 2' was paid \$5,000 during the 23-24 school year."

The Comptrollers' Office summed up four "Deficiencies" by the BHS Booster Club. Those included:

"Deficiency 1: ... Did not properly safeguard and maintain accurate records. Club officers either did not retain or provide investigators with all supporting documentation for meeting minutes, collections and disbursements."

Other "deficiencies:" improper "segregation of duties," not getting two signatures on checks and "failure to submit proper fundraiser approval forms."

Leavell 3rd, Rohn 6th among six state locals



Photo courtesy of Tony Cox

Two Farragut area high school wrestlers placed in the top six during the TSSAA Division I-AA Wrestling Tournament in Franklin, with the two-day tourney ending Saturday evening, Feb. 22. Among six local grapplers at state, Deameion Leavell, Bearden junior in the 165-pound class (28-2 final record), placed third. Farragut senior Dylan Rohn (53-5 final record) finished sixth at 144. (Above) Phillip Stafford-Hedge, FHS senior in the 165-class (44-8 record), was in control at that point in his state tournament match versus Braylon Pelkey of Summit High (26-12 record). The Admirals senior won an 8-6 decision, the second of his two state triumphs. The other FHS wrestler at state was junior Jonathon Laney (one victory at 138). Two Hardin Valley Academy seniors reached Franklin: Brock Connatser (one win at 132) and Jacob Laws (one victory at 126).

Top two

From page 1B

in the half. Bearden led at the break 32-25.

When Curry scored four in a row midway through the third, the BHS lead was cut to 40-36 with 4:09 left. It looked like the game could go either way.

Hodge promptly drained a pair of threes, and the lead was 10, 46-36. The third ended with Bearden ahead 46-38.

Curry's lay-up with 6:07 left in the game kept the Lady Admirals within eight, 48-40. Six straight by the Lady Bulldogs — five by Hodge — put the game away. Farragut scored only five points in the final quarter.

"Obviously she played fantastic," BHS head coach Justin Underwood said of Hodge.

"She continues to impress in situations where different defenses are thrown at her. She balls and she puts her heart into it."

"We gotta put this behind us and move on," Mayfield said. "Friday's (Region 2-4A) game is more important, and each game after that."

Curry and McNealy made the All-Tournament Team from Farragut, as did guards Jaci Neubert and Annie Priest. Murphy, Aisha Patel, Theola Mills also were named from the Lady Bulldogs.

Bearden will host Karns, No. 4 seed from District 3-4A, beginning at 7 p.m. in the quarterfinal round of the Region 2-4A Tournament Friday, Feb. 28. Farragut (22-9) will host No. 3 seed Powell in another quarterfinal at 7 p.m., Friday.

Boys, FHS-Bearden

From page 1B

Senior wing Drew Parrott added eight, including a pair of key three-point baskets. Brandon Murphy scored two and Dominic Mahoney added a free throw. "We had timely shots from different folks," coach Parrott said.

Dan Lanning, Ads All-District junior guard, scored 15, while Parker Lane, FHS junior point guard and All-District honoree, added 13 points.

Other Farragut scorers were Bryce Howard with three and

two points each for Reid Vining and Britton Lewis.

Final thoughts, region

In summing up how his team lost its advantage in the fourth quarter after leading 54-51 with eight minutes to play, "Just too many little mistakes down the stretch ... missed box-outs, unforced turnovers ... not getting to the free-throw line," Burris said. "And that's a really well-coached team."

Regardless of Tuesday's outcome, Bearden will host a Region 2-4A quarterfinal (7 p.m., Saturday, March 1). FHS will be on the road Saturday.

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Large again is National Merit Finalist group from Farragut High

Ten Farragut High School seniors recently were named National Merit Scholarship Program Finalists: Seated, from left, are Eric Zhang, Alex Yan, Hayden Toon and Matthew Wang. Standing, from left, are Palomi Agrawal, Joanna Gao, Sophie Lu, Alisa Bryantseva and Aubrie Conger. Not pictured is Timothy Cho. NMSP is an annual competition for high school students planning to attend college, explained Laura Austin, FHS college and career facilitator. "The 2023 PSAT/NMSQT served as an initial screen of over 1.3 million entrants to the 2025 program," she said. "Less than 1 percent of the test takers are selected as finalists. Farragut High School is proud that 10 seniors were named National Merit Finalists. These academically talented students can continue in the competition for 6,870 National Merit scholarships worth nearly \$26 million."

Tammy Cheek



Magee val, Acosta sal tell their stories from CAK

TAMMY CHEEK

tcheek@farragutpress.com

KNOXVILLE — Christian Academy of Knoxville recently announced its Class of 2025 valedictorian is Jack Magee, and the salutatorian is Tim Acosta.

Jack Magee, valedictorian
 Magee is "dedicated to academic excellence, leadership and service," according to Christa Margene, CAK director of marketing and communications.

A National Merit Finalist with a 4.46 grade-point average, "Jack has excelled in a rigorous course load, earning the distinction of (Advanced Placement) Scholar with honor," Margene said.

He serves as president of the National Honor Society, a Student Government Class representative and captain of both the Scholars Bowl team and CAK's percussion section. A Tennessee All-State



Jack Magee

musician and recipient of the Leonard Bernstein Musicianship Award, "Jack's passion for the arts complements his impressive academic achievements," she said.

Magee has been a member

of the marching band, concert band and school worship team.

"He is an entrepreneur, instructor and dedicated volunteer mentoring younger students through CAK's Teen Advisors and organizing a community blood drive," Margene said.

Magee has attended CAK since his sophomore year.

"CAK has been an incredible part of Jack's journey, helping him to grow in faith and succeed both inside and outside the classroom," his parents, Matt and Brandi Magee, stated in joint release. "The teachers at CAK have been more than educators — they have been mentors who challenged and encouraged him every step of the way.

"Beyond academics, CAK provided Jack with opportunities to grow and lead others in extracurricular activities that have fueled his passions.

"The friendships he has formed here have been invaluable,



Tim Acosta

able, built on shared faith, support and unforgettable experiences," the Magees said. "This school has given him not just an education but a community that will stay with him for a lifetime. We are so thankful for the impact CAK has had on his life and are excited to see where the future takes him."

"CAK has provided me with opportunities that I never

See VAL, SAL CAK on Page 7B

Beware when in the market for weight-loss drugs: Fass

TAMMY CHEEK

tcheek@farragutpress.com

Ozempic, Wegovy, Victoza, Saxenda and other new weight-loss drugs are saturating the market.

Rotary Club of Farragut member Howard Fass, a retired pharmacist, provided information to his fellow members during a recent RFC Wednesday meeting about those drugs so they could make informed decisions about proper use.

"Obesity is a very complex disease, and there are many factors: behavioral, genetic, illness, medical illness. It messes up everything," said Fass, who has a doctorate degree in pharmacy and is board certified in parenteral (intravenous feeding) and enteral (tube feeding) nutrition. While he retired from full-time

See WEIGHT LOSS, Page 8B

Wedding, 1960 ...



Photos submitted by family members



65 years for local Graziano couple

(Near left) Frank and Rosemary Graziano of Lenoir City will celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary Thursday, Feb. 27. The couple has three children, nine grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren. (Far left) Rosemary and Frank were married in New Orleans on Feb. 27, 1960.



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February is Healthy Heart Month at the YMCA of East Tennessee

February is Healthy Heart Month, a time to focus on the importance of cardiovascular health. At the YMCA of East Tennessee, we're proud to be healthy for the heart of the community, offering resources and support to help you maintain a healthy heart.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, but the good news is many risk factors can be controlled. Regular physical activity is one of the most effective ways to reduce your risk. Whether you're new to exercise or a seasoned athlete, the YMCA offers a variety of programs for all fitness levels, from group fitness classes to personal training.

This month, we launched our Healthy Heart Challenge, encouraging everyone to take small steps to improve their heart health. Participants can track their progress, set goals, and stay motivated to add more cardio to their routine. Walking, running, swimming, or cycling are just a few ways to stay active, and our YMCA facilities provide a welcoming environment to help you succeed.

In addition to physical activity, eating a balanced diet, managing stress, and getting enough sleep are essential for heart health. The YMCA of East Tennessee is here to support you in all aspects of your heart health journey.

Visit your local YMCA today and join us in making Healthy Heart Month a success. Together, we can build a stronger, healthier community—one heartbeat at a time.

Stay active, stay healthy, and remember, the Y is healthy for the heart of the community!



1. Homeschool PE shows their support in keeping a Healthy Heart!
2. Mrs. Stephanie and Simon know that swimming is so good for our Hearts!
3. Amy Holweger cares with all her Heart for the members she protects on the stand.
4. The Lunch Bunch take Heart Health very seriously with their daily exercise!
5. Smokyland Sound Quartet visited Senior Strong and Peddling for Parkinsons classes to lift every Heart with music!
6. YMCA Swim Instructors teach our friends at Boys & Girls Club how to swim, promoting water safety and Healthy Hearts through active lifestyles.
7. We love our Partnership with Tennova Healthcare!
8. Al Lyons and Nolan Nevels know that lifting weights helps maintain Healthy Habits that effect our Hearts!
9. Jared Daughtery and Trey Warren make their pledge to Heart Health by staying active and exercising regularly.

Looking to take your fitness to the next level?



The YMCA of East Tennessee offers personalized training programs tailored to your goals, abilities, and needs. Whether you're a beginner, an athlete, or managing physical challenges, our professional trainers provide the guidance you need.

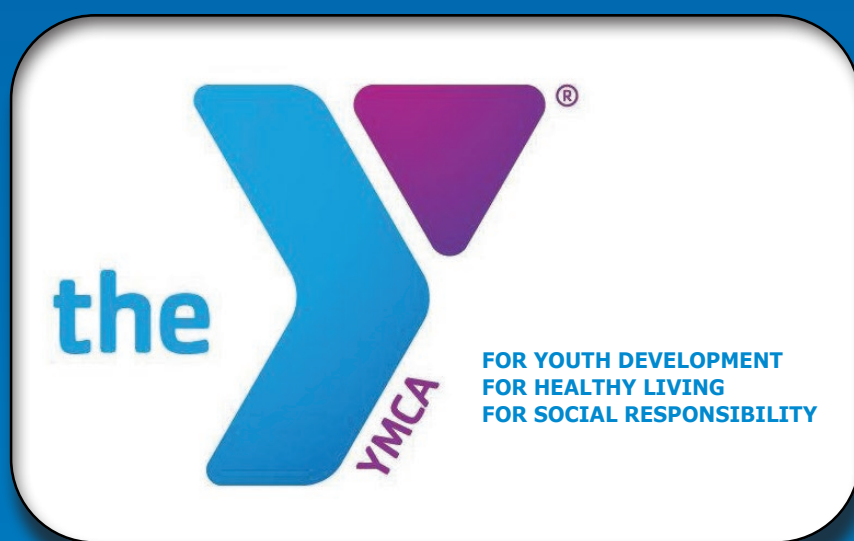
Our certified trainers are both knowledgeable and compassionate. They design fitness plans to help you build strength, improve endurance, and enhance overall wellness. Wherever you are in your fitness journey, our team ensures you stay motivated and achieve lasting results.

As a YMCA member, you also gain access to free Group Exercise classes. These classes provide motivation, variety, community, and accountability—key elements for achieving your fitness

goals. From Water Aerobics and Spin to Power Barre, Senior Chair classes, Les Mills Body Pump and Zumba, there's a class for everyone. Group Exercise at the Y is more than a workout; it's a supportive environment where you connect with others and thrive together.

Fitness at the Y is for everyone. Our trainers accommodate all ages and abilities, offering modifications and personalized support for a safe and enjoyable experience. Discover the benefits of one-on-one coaching and group classes in an inclusive atmosphere.

Visit your local YMCA branch or Davis YMCA today to learn more or get started with personal training or Group Exercise!



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• **Second Harvest Food Bank of East Tennessee's annual "Pack the Bag" campaign once again has made a significant impact**, raising enough funds from the public to provide more than 136,000 bags of kid-friendly foods to children across the region in nearly 300 public schools and programs.

Through Food for Kids, more than 15,000 students across the food bank's 18-county service area receive a weekly bag filled with nutritious foods to help them through the weekend.

This is completely funded by Second Harvest through support from our community. For more information about this initiative and other hunger-relief programs, visit www.secondharvestETN.org.

• **MEDIC Regional Blood Center Hoodie Week continues this week through Friday, Feb. 28**, at all locations, including 11000 Kingston Pike in Farragut, and Mobile Drives.

"MEDIC donors who make a successful donation will receive a hoodie ... and a Texas Roadhouse coupon" through Feb. 28, a MEDIC press release stated. "All sizing is first come, first served. An appointment does not guarantee sizing. Hoodies are available only while supplies last.

Appointments can be made online at www.medicblood.org, via the MEDIC app or by calling 865-524-3074.

• **Knoxville Choral Society presents "A Community in Song," an inspiring evening of choral music** celebrating light, transformation, passion

and the power of community. It begins at 7:30 p.m., Friday, Feb. 28, in Central Bearden Church, 6300 Deane Hill Drive in West Knoxville, for this special performance.

This event features a dynamic collaboration with the 2025 KCS Scholarship Winners and the Knoxville West High School Singers and Chorale, under the direction of Drew Carpenter, showcasing the incredible depth of talent within Knoxville's choral community.

"Under the direction of Dr. John R. Orr, the program will present a rich and diverse selection of choral works, weaving together poetic themes of renewal and connection," a KCS release stated. "Audiences will experience moving repertoire that highlights the unifying power of song, performed by some of Knoxville's most dedicated and talented musicians."

Tickets are \$15, with free admission for students in grades K-12.

• **Knoxville Bar Association, in partnership with Legal Aid of East Tennessee, will host a Debt Relief Legal Advice Clinic** for pre-screened individuals beginning at 8:45 a.m., Saturday, March 8, in the Public Defender's Community Law Office (1101 Liberty St. in Knoxville).

Qualified individuals must live in Knox, Blount, Loudon or Sevier County and be income based. Attorneys will volunteer to conduct initial meetings with the clients to discuss situations/options. Pre-screening by LAET. Sign up by calling LAET at

865-637-0484. Registration cut-off Friday, Feb. 28.

• **City of Oak Ridge Internship Program is a paid, seasonal internship** for those looking to complete an internship to gain professional experience in the field they're studying. Applications for the Summer 2025 are due by April 30. Program begins June 16.

Interns can expect to complete between 20 and 30 hours each week. Pay rate will be determined by departmental placement. The weekly schedule for interns is generally between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Intern schedules can be set to accommodate class schedule.

To apply and to find more information, visit OakRidgeTN.gov/Internships. A fall internship program will begin accepting applications in June. The schedule for high school interns will be based on the Oak Ridge Schools Summer Schedule. A detailed schedule will be posted closer to June.

Lions service recognition



Alan Sloan

Farragut Lions Club members Julia Hart and Norvell Burrow were recognized for their many years of service concerning local FLC endeavors and other public service work during a recent club meeting in Mimi's Cafe, Parkside Drive in Turkey Creek.

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Sun: Worship Service (11:00 AM)

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Wed: Cultivate (7:00 PM)

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Val, sal CAK

From page 3B

would have had at another school," Jack said. "I have grown academically, personally and spiritually, and without a doubt, CAK was the catalyst for this growth.

"Additionally, the teachers that I have had since arriving here at CAK have poured into me, helped me to grow in wisdom and knowledge, given me sound advice and led me closer to Christ," the senior added. "For that, I am forever grateful to them. CAK has transformed my life for the better, and I cannot wait to see how it impacts me as I grow throughout college and beyond."

Magee has not yet decided where he will attend college in the fall, but he plans to major in neuroscience with future plans to attend medical school and pursue a career as a radiologist or a surgeon.

Tim Acosta, salutatorian

"Acosta excels not only academically, but in his many extracurricular activities as well," Margene said. "Tim is a National Merit finalist with a GPA of 4.44 and a recipient of multiple academic distinction awards during his time at CAK.

"Tim has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to scholarship, earning recognition in subjects ranging from honors geometry to AP chem-

istry and dual enrollment English," she added.

He is a member of National Honor Society and National English Honor Society and has attended CAK since the seventh grade.

Beyond the classroom, "Tim has made a lasting impact at CAK as captain of the Scholars Bowl team, a four-year member of the tennis team and a leader in student mentorship," Margene said. "His senior Capstone allowed him to share his love for learning by assisting with chemistry classes and an elementary school science camp."

Acosta also has served as a middle school Bible study leader, "investing in the spiritual

growth of younger students and on the high school retreat work crew," she said.


"We are thankful for how Tim has matured as a young man while at CAK through the excellent academic instruction taught with a Christian worldview," his parents told Margene in a joint statement. "We greatly appreciate all the faculty and staff who have helped him to develop the gifts God has given him, and we feel confident that he is well-prepared as he starts college and begins the next phase of his life."

Reflecting on his time at CAK, Acosta shared, "I'm grateful for the opportunity that I've had to attend CAK and for all of the lessons I've

learned during my time here.

"I've been blessed with CAK's Christian environment and with teachers who care deeply about both my academic and spiritual growth," he added. "Being surrounded by Christian mentors at CAK has helped to grow my faith, and I am very thankful for the person this school has helped me become."

Acosta plans to attend University of Tennessee, Knoxville, in the Honors Program, where he will major in biomedical engineering and minor in neuroscience, aiming for a career in neurotechnology. He looks forward to "continuing his faith journey by getting involved in a campus ministry."



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203 HELP WANTED

Request for Bids for the Mowing of Woodlawn Cemetery

100 Woodlawn Church Road, Lenoir City, TN 37771

The proposed scope of the work is as follows:
Mowing and weed-eating the property every 7 to 10 days.
In addition, after the weed-eating, all grave markers will be cleaned of loose grass using a blower. No work will be performed on Sundays (all day) or Wednesdays (after 5 pm). Frequency may be adjusted if agreed upon by all parties due to extreme weather conditions. The mowing will be scheduled to start April 1, 2025, and end October 31, 2025; these dates may be adjusted depending on conditions.

We urge anyone desiring to bid on this project to visit the site for an evaluation of the required work before submitting a bid.

The cemetery is located at 100 Woodlawn Church Road, Lenoir City, TN 37771.

Proposals should be submitted in writing to:
<https://woodlawncemeterylc.com/service/> by March 8, 2025.

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FARRAGUT BEER BOARD AGENDA
Farragut Community Center • 239 Jamestowne Blvd
February 27, 2025 | 5:55 PM

- I. Approval of Minutes
 - A. February 13, 2025
- II. Beer Permit
 - A. Approval of Class 7, Brewpub Permit for Dullahan's Irish Pub, 12744 Kingston Pike, Suite 104

It is the policy of the Town of Farragut not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, natural origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability or veteran status pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Public Law 93-112 and 101-336 in its hiring, employment practices and programs. To request accommodations due to disabilities, please call 865-966-7057 in advance of the meeting.



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PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Board of Mayor and Aldermen of the Town of Farragut will hold a public hearing on March 13, 2025, at 6:00 PM, at the Farragut Community Center, 239 Jamestowne Blvd, to hear citizen's comments on the following ordinances:

- I. Ordinance 24-19, an Ordinance to Amend the text of the Farragut Zoning Ordinance, Ordinance 86-16, as amended, pursuant to authority granted by Section 13-4-201, Tennessee Code Annotated, by amending the Farragut Municipal Code, Appendix A., Zoning, Chapter 3., Section III., Rural Single-Family Residential District (R-1), Subsection B., Permitted Uses And Structures, to provide for a Second Detached Single-Family Dwelling Unit under certain conditions.

It is the policy of the Town of Farragut not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, natural origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability or veteran status pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Public Law 93-112 and 101-336 in its hiring, employment practices and programs. To request accommodations due to disabilities, please call 865-966-7057 in advance of the meeting.



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FARRAGUT BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN

Farragut Community Center • 239 Jamestowne Blvd
AGENDA | February 27, 2025

BMA WORKSHOP | Capital Investment Program Workshop FY26-31
5:00 PM | **BEER BOARD MEETING 5:55 PM | BMA MEETING 6:00 PM**

- I. Roll Call, Silent Prayer, Pledge of Allegiance
- II. Approval of Agenda
- III. Approval of Minutes
- A. February 13, 2025
- IV. Mayor's Report
- V. Ordinances & Resolutions
- A. Ordinances
 - 1. Second Reading
 - a) Ordinance 25-03, ordinance amending the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 General Fund, Capital Investment Program & ADA Capital Projects Funds
 - b) Ordinance 25-04, ordinance amending Farragut Municipal Code, Chapter 2 – Administration, Article 6 – Finance, Section 2-299 to replace in the existing section in its entirety with a new ordinance
 - 2. First Reading
 - a) Ordinance 24-19, an Ordinance to Amend the text of the Farragut Zoning Ordinance, Ordinance 86-16, as amended, pursuant to authority granted by Section 13-4-201, Tennessee Code Annotated, by amending the Farragut Municipal Code, Appendix A., Zoning, Chapter 3., Section III., Rural Single-Family Residential District

- (R-1), Subsection B., Permitted Uses And Structures, to provide for a Second Detached Single-Family Dwelling Unit under certain conditions
- B. Resolutions
 - 1. Approval of Resolution R-2025-05, Town of Farragut Capital Assets Policy
 - 2. Approval of Resolution R-2025-04, a Resolution adopting the FY2025-2026 Town of Farragut Strategic Plan
 - VI. Business Items
 - A. Approval of a grant contract between the State of Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation and the Town of Farragut from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for \$2.75 million for the purchase of property on McFee Road.
 - B. Approval of Omnia Contract 01-145, Howard Technology Solutions, for Town Hall Audio Visual Design and Installation
 - VII. Citizens Forum
 - VIII. Town Administrator's Report
 - IX. Town Attorney's Report

It is the policy of the Town of Farragut not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, natural origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability or veteran status pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Public Law 93-112 and 101-336 in its hiring, employment practices and programs. To request accommodations due to disabilities, please call 865-966-7057 in advance of the meeting.

Weight loss

From page 3B

pharmacy work in 2012, Fass still works as needed for Covenant Health Care in Oak Ridge. "If you lose, basically, five pounds, it will help you," he said.

As of 2023, Fass said every state had at least a 20 percent obesity problem. The Midwest was 36 percent; the South, al-

most 35; West, 29; and Northeast, 28.6 percent. In the South, Arkansas, Mississippi and West Virginia were between 40 and 45 percent. He said Tennessee is 37.6 percent obese.

GLP-1 drugs, which mimic the GLP-1 hormone and suppress the glucagon release, are being used to treat overweight or obesity and Type 2 diabetes. They include such drugs as zucadone and biopeptide 1.

Fass said when a person tries to lose weight, lifestyle changes are recommended first: healthy eating by cutting calories, physical activity at least three days a week with

workouts of 30 to 45 minutes and behavior therapy – counseling.

"Basically, for females, (keep calories to) 1,000 to 1,500 a day," he said. "Some of you

may think that's starvation. For males, it's 1,500 to 1,800."

"But say that's not working," Fass said. "The next is oral medications approved by the FDA for weight loss."

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