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## Roughly 2 years to finish is Merit's build goal



Renderings courtesy of Buddy Heins/vice president, Merit Construction, Inc.

(Above) An aerial rendering of the new Farragut elementary school, kindergarten through fifth-grade. (Below) A rendering of the new school's front reception desk.

### 'To start in earnest May 5,' new Town K-5 school has '720 day' build period; plan is to open Aug. 2027: Heins

**ALAN SLOAN**  
editor@farragutpress.com

The new Farragut elementary school plans got the unanimous blessing of Knox County Board of Education Thursday, April 10, clearing the way for construction of the \$43.7 million school to begin early next month along what will be an extension of Village Commons Boulevard near Boring Road behind Ingles.



"We're expected to start in earnest May 5," said Buddy Heins, vice president of Merit Construction, Inc. — low bidder on the project. "It'll take about two years; I think we proposed a 720 day construction period."

If that deadline is met, the new school would open for the start of the 2027-28 school year with the capability of teaching up to 1,400 students kindergarten through fifth grade. "It will be the biggest elementary school that Knox County Schools has ever built, and it's also going to be a state-of-the-art elementary school," said Lauren Morgan, District 5 Board of Education representative (including Farragut schools).

With the current Farragut Primary and Farragut Intermediate schools also becoming K-through-fifth upon the new school's opening, each will take on new names. "That definitely going to be an interesting topic," said Morgan, adding renovations to FPS and FIS buildings "began this time last year with bathrooms." Knox County Schools "has a Naming Committee ... there's a whole process they go through in looking at

See CONSTRUCTION on Page 5A

## Traffic calming in Thornton Heights big BOMA topic; 'homework' a need

**TAMMY CHEEK**  
tcheek@farragutpress.com

Traffic calming concerns in the Thornton Heights subdivision sparked discussions among Farragut Board of Mayor and Aldermen members, during their meeting Thursday, April 10, of whether they should revise their current policy.

"I'd like to see a change in the policy, specifically in the parental responsibility zones, that would allow neighborhoods to request speed-calming measures without the need of a speed study," Alderman Drew Burnette said.

"We've got to make cut-throughs uncomfortable," he added.

"I'm perfectly fine with slowing down the traffic in the parental responsibility zone," Vice Mayor Scott Meyer said. "If we do a different zone for the parental responsibility zone, it makes sense."

"I think we'll have to do some homework on our end to come up with a modified policy," Town administrator David Smoak said. "Basically, what I'm hearing is look at the PRZ, probably lower the threshold for the speeding that is occurring in the neighborhood."

However, "another question might

be: if it doesn't meet those thresholds, will you still be Ok with the neighborhood having a vote?" he asked.

Another issue then arose: There are no sidewalks in the neighborhood that is, for the most part, a parental responsibility zone, which is determined by measuring the shortest route from a student's residence to bus drop-off locations.

"That's a big issue," Mayor Ron Williams said about the lack of sidewalks. "We need to look at what we need to do sidewalk-wise because a

See CALMING on Page 2A



Alan Sloan

### Bubbly Pre-Easter fun

Arionna Smith, 2, enjoys a little bubble machine during First Farragut United Methodist Church's Easter Jam Saturday morning, April 12. (See related West Side Faces photos, Page 6A).



### FHS graduate Petr praised for bringing horses, therapy together at STAR

• A 1975 graduate of Farragut High School had a dream: combining her two passions of helping those who were physically and/or mentally disadvantaged with a love of horses.

Coming up with an idea that was scoffed at — said to be too dangerous, even by many around her at the University of Tennessee while in post-graduate studies there in 1987 — Lynn Petr thought combining horses, even riding horses, with those physically and mentally disabled — along with those, especially our military veter-

ans, who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder — would be a rewarding experience for both the disabled and their families. She acted upon her instincts.

Thirty-eight years later at Shangri-La Therapeutic Academy of Riding, hundreds turned out during STAR's annual Bridles & Blue Jeans fundraiser Saturday, April 12, to praise Petr, STAR founder/executive director emeritus, upon her retirement in 2025, in addition to their donations. (See extended feature on Petr in our April 23 issue)



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## Calming

From page 1A

lot of these streets, when you look at them, are quite narrow. "I think it's time to start looking at the zone and start looking at what we can do ... so kids are on the sidewalks and not on the streets," he added. "It's been the policy of the Town to try to put sidewalks in these parental responsibility zones," Smoak said. "The Town of Farragut has had a traffic-calming policy for roughly 20 years now," he added. "It was last updated in May 2023. "The Engineering team follows the policy whenever there's a request from neigh-

borhoods or areas in Town when speeding is an issue ... to see whether or not there are warrants that are met in order to move forward with any traffic-calming measures." Eric Schindler, assistant Town engineer, explained why the Thornton Heights area did not meet the policy's warrants. "Right now, the only initial disqualification comes from road classifications," he said. "Only local streets and local collectors with greater than 50 percent residential frontage are eligible. "The current threshold that we use for eligibility for traffic calming is when an 85th percentile speed of greater than 10 miles per hour over the posted

speed limit is seen," Schindler added. "We've done three studies in Thornton Heights, starting in 2016-2017," when the focus was Thornton Drive, where speed cushions subsequently were installed. In 2024, "We had a request for the remainder of the subdivision, so we did studies everywhere else in the subdivision," Schindler said. "At that time, we didn't see any evidence of speeding." Earlier this year, Schindler said the Engineering team did a follow-up study to compare it to the 2024 study. "We wanted to see if there was any change in traffic flow," he said. "It looks like a

majority of the vehicle traffic that's generated through the subdivision is not generated from Concord-Thornton; it's generated elsewhere in the subdivision. "Roads with the highest daily traffic were Hughlan Drive — between Towne and Concord (roads) — Loudon Road and Thornton Drive — between Roane Drive and Kingston Pike," Schindler added. Based on the average daily traffic of Thornton Drive and Hughlan, "it can be inferred a majority of any cut-through traffic comes via Towne Road, Loudon Road and Thornton Drive between Roane Drive and Kingston Pike," he said. However, Schindler said

the traffic studies showed no evidence of any significant change "even with the installation of speed cushions on Thornton Drive." "I think you guys did a good job on this," said Mayor Ron Williams, but he questioned the results since the neighborhood is a school zone area. "Should we be more concerned about the speed that you have in that zone?" he asked. "You've got kids that are walking in the street now because there are no sidewalks, so should we look at it from the standpoint .... what the speed zone should be for an area (with) kids walking in the street as opposed to a blanket thing you've got now?"

# from the Town by Wendy Smith

## Town staff itself is 'renovated'

This is the last week that Town Hall staff will work out of the Farragut Community Center. It's been 16 months since we packed up our offices and moved in with the Parks & Recreation Department. Now that we're getting ready to move back, it's with a mix of emotions. It may sound crazy, but I think the staff has been renovated along with Town Hall. When you take people out of private offices and mash them into rows of cubicles or small offices with coworkers, it creates a strange cocktail of personalities. For instance, the Communications and Tourism staffs, a talkative group of creatives, have been working elbow-to-elbow with the Finance team. I have no doubt that our staff accountant and accounting technician know more about Instagram reels than they ever wanted to know. In the same way, codes in-



Photo courtesy of Town of Farragut

Town of Farragut staff have been working in close quarters at Farragut Community Center during Town Hall renovations.

spectors, administrators, planners and engineers all worked within earshot of each other's phone calls at the temporary annex behind the community center. If they didn't understand the role of other departments before, they do now. That's been the beautiful

thing about this little hiatus from normal. Michelle Pence, Town of Farragut Human Relations director, has long had the goal of inter-departmental relationships among the staff. She knows that it helps mo-

See COLUMN on Page 3A

## KCSO reports

Though farragutpress contacted Knox County Sheriff's Office Monday, April 14, in attempt to obtain reports, we did not see any delivered as of deadline at 10 a.m., Tuesday, April 15. However, look for these Reports in our Wednesday, April 23 issue.

## Town Concord events

- Knoxville's Own Heartland Quartet will perform in Concord Presbyterian Church, 11000 Second St. in Old Historic Concord, beginning at 11 a.m., Sunday, April 27.
- Annual Farragut High School Grand Reunion returns to Virtue Church Fellowship Hall, 725 Virtue Road, from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m., Saturday, May 3. A \$5 donations is requested from all attendees. Enjoy coffee and donuts while getting caught up "on the latest" with fellow classmates who all attended FHS at the Old School location near the corner of Kingston Pike and Concord Road (through 1975-76 school year). A few prize drawings also will be part of the festivities. Yearbooks and other memorabilia dating back to the 1950s, 1960 and 1970s will be available to view.

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# Letter to the editor

## Wanting attendance for FMPC 'road' item 6

If you live on the following roads in Farragut: Allen Kirby Road, Boring Road, Boyd Station Road, Evans Road, Herron Road, North Campbell Station Road (north of I-40/75) and Red Mill Lane, you should make plans to attend the Farragut Planning Commission meeting on April 17 to learn of Town plans for your road's future. The meeting will be at the Farragut Community Center at 6 p.m. (Agenda item No. 6)

Our Town does not inform residents, other than public notices in the farragutpress in the back of the paper. You will not receive a letter from the Town warning you about these proposed road changes.

You may not want to have the traffic lanes of your road widened so much that speeding will increase on your road. You may object to an 8-foot minimum pedestrian/bicycle greenway in your front yard that may extend past the right-of-way requiring eminent domain purchase of your land. There is currently a lawsuit for the proposed greenway along Turkey Creek Road for these reasons.

The Farragut Planning Commission is on record explaining that wide roads mean more speeding. Some of the proposed road widening (to be) discussed on April 17 is excessive and unneeded.

In my opinion, this appears to be a way to install greenways as part of Multi-Modal Road projects, which some in the Town government believe is a way to get around a new state law forbidding eminent domain for park acquisitions. Greenways are linear parks. Widening of any road requires a great deal of time and inconvenience for construction. If you want your road left alone, please take the time to attend this meeting.

Mike Mitchell, Farragut

### Letter to Editor rules

- All Letters to the Editor from any citizen must have a minimum four-week period between publication — not to exceed 600 words — and must not have inaccurate information, such as wrong statistics, from which to form an opinion. We also reserve the right to reject publication based on factors to include, but not be limited to, threats, name-calling and foul language.

### Presstalk rules

- Keep calls to a 90-second maximum (call 865-671-8255 24 hours a day, seven days a week);
- 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 (including public figures) will not be published.

## Column

From page 2A

rare when all employees can see the big picture of operating the Town rather than being focused on the work of one department.

Working in a silo reduces productivity and creates a fragmented workplace culture.

Town administrator David Smoak is one of the staff members who could hear all annex activity from his desk.

"It's been a great social experiment for people who don't normally interact to get to know each other in a way that doesn't happen in a traditional office space," he said.

"The challenge is to figure out how to keep these new re-

lationships going."

A couple of weeks ago, several staff members enjoyed an impromptu lunch of food left over from a community center event. I was struck by how much mingling between departments took place.

Staff from multiple departments were seated together at most, if not all, tables. At previous staff events like the fall picnic and holiday party, departments generally stuck together.

I think we'll maintain these new relationships when Town Hall reopens. The redesigned office space will allow Finance, Communications, IT, Community Development and Engineering teams to easily interact with each other.

There are multiple small and large meeting areas throughout our upstairs space that will enable us to work more collaboratively. The new layout, paired with better working relationships, should increase both efficiency and morale.

As much as we've enjoyed our compulsory camaraderie, it will be good to have office doors again. We're very much looking forward to getting back to Town Hall.

"Overall, everybody had a positive outlook, but I think they're ready to have their own space again," Smoak said.

We look forward to serving the community from Farragut Town Hall starting Monday, April 21.

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## Moss celebrates 30th at Hallmark

**TAMMY CHEEK**  
 tcheek@farragutpress.com

For April Moss, the 30 years she's spent at Katy's Hallmark in Farragut has been more than a job — it is her life.

Moss, store manager for 22 years, has worked with three owners, dealt with COVID-19 and still is going strong as she approaches her 30th anniversary at this store.

Patrons will be able to congratulate her during an anniversary party from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Friday, April 18, at the store, 11527 Kingston Pike, in Village Green shopping center.

"It's never felt like work to me," Moss said, reflecting on the years with Hallmark with tears starting to glaze her royal blue eyes. "It's always just been an extension of my life."

"And, I told her we always have fun," said store staff member Judy Jutze, who has been with the store for 22 years. "We're always laughing."

"I love the customers," Moss said. "The customers have become my friends. The employees are my friends, my family."

"It's always felt like home to me, from the beginning, when I started here, and it's the place that brings me the most

peace," she added. "She cares about it," store merchandise buyer Rene Mackley said of Moss and Hallmark. "She cares about the customers and she cares about the employees."

"The customers all know her when they walk in," Jutze said.

"She's sweet to know about (the customers') families," Mackley said of Moss. "The husbands and wives will come in shopping for anniversary cards at different times."

"April has been a good mentor to all the college girls who have worked here," she added. "She encourages them in school, and she's been a good help to them."

"She's a generous person," Jutze said of Moss. "For our birthdays, she gets us something, for Valentine's Day, Easter, Christmas. She's always thinking of us. And, the gift is something she thought of, personal."

"Which is what Hallmark's all about," Mackley said. "Hallmark is a company based on sentiments, and that's really who April is. She's sentimental and she cares about people. That's why it has worked all these years."

"And that's why, when you



Tammy Cheek

Katy's Hallmark manager April Moss, center, will celebrate 30 years with the store, 11527 Kingston Pike in Village Green shopping center, Friday, April 18. She is joined by long-time staff member Judy Jutze, left, and store merchandise buyer Rene Mackley.

come here, you stay," Jutze said.

"She takes pride in the store, like it's her house," Mackley said. "She stays after work to straighten and vacuum. She always wants everything to be perfect."

Moss started with the store, when it was Lissa's Hallmark, when she was hired in April 1995.

"I was actually 15," she recalled. "I couldn't even drive to the interview. My grandfather came up and rode with me because I didn't have a driver's license."

"The original owner actually

didn't want to hire me," Moss added. "She thought I was too young. I never worked anywhere before. (But) the ladies who worked here convinced her that it would be a good idea to hire me, that I would be a good fit."

"And, here I am, 30 years later. I outstayed them — the original owners."

Moss was promoted to assistant manager of the store in 1997. She left in 1997 but returned as full-time store manager in 2003.

"(The owners) called me and said, 'I want you back,'" she recalled and laughed.

The original owners sold the business in 2011, and then it became Linda's Hallmark, which was sold in 2023. Then it became Katy's Hallmark.

"Each owner has taught me something different about the business, but getting used to the way a new owner likes to do things or their policies, that's been a little bit challenging from owner to owner," Moss said. "All three owners have been in the business for a very long time, but each has a different way they like to do business."

"And COVID taught me that I did not need to retire early."

## Laser hobby evolves into Memories and Trinkets

**TAMMY CHEEK**  
 tcheek@farragutpress.com

A hobby translated to a business for Farragut couple Scott and Pamela Milliken, who recently launched Memories and Trinkets in their home.

The couple is ready to make unique personal gifts: a laser rose for a mother or a money tree for a graduate.

Scott, a technologist at Oak Ridge National Laboratories, always had gadgets.

"I bought a laser engraver and I made this little lamp for the Masons," he said. "I thought this would be a nice little conversation or a desk-top piece. Masons are always searching for light."

"A lot of people showed some interest in it, and Pam has always been doing marketing for the last 15 years," Scott added. So, he asked Pam about their "trying to do something together ..."

"So, my hobby became her business."

"We actually had our first show Saturday, April 5, right

outside of Nashville," Pamela said.

And, "we did one sale to the Lenoir City High School swim team," Scott said. "They wanted to give their graduating seniors end-of-the-year gifts, so we made customized ornaments for them."

The couple creates one-of-a-kind, personalized and customized gifts using a laser. Those may be tree ornaments, plaques, picture frames, bottle gift tags, memorials, signs and even a money tree for graduates.

These items can be for anything from graduations to anniversaries, holidays, weddings, sports, patriotic, memoriums, school events and home decorations.

"We try to focus on things that are not just laser-cut because there are a lot of people who have lasers and who do that kind of stuff," Scott said. "We're focusing on things that have that extra finish added to them, so you don't just get pieces that are unfinished."

"They are painted," he added. "We've added some extra details to them. We're changing up the tones to the stains. We're changing up the colors."

Also, "we can customize things to whatever color you want, like for your school or whatever sports team or whatever your tastes are," Scott said.

For instance, he took a photo frame and used colors of his nephew's ball team as a keepsake.

"We can do engraving as well," Pamela said, showing a plaque from their Anniversary Endless Love series.

"We can put quotes, either ones we come up with or what someone has and wants to put on there that's more specific to them," she added.

With plaques, "you can either hang it or place it on an



Tammy Cheek

Farragut couple Scott and Pamela Milliken have made a laser hobby a business with Memories and Trinkets, in which they make customized gifts and keepsakes.

easel," Pamela said. For more about Memories and Trinkets, visit [www.memoriesandtrinkets.com](http://www.memoriesandtrinkets.com) or call 865-272-9726.

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**Construction**

From page 1A

school names," she said. "... Of course, they will take community input."

Total building square footage, Hines said, is 144,255, featuring 66 classrooms in addition to a gymnasium, media center and cafeteria, plus "a small playground." The company also would construct all driveway and parking areas.

The main public/parent entrance will be from Village Commons Boulevard, with

the school's Boring Road entrance/exit "for buses and staff only," Morgan said. "That was the last I heard about that."

Overall, "I'm very happy how it's gone," the District 5 rep said about the new school plans. "Everything is moving along just as Knox County Schools said it would."

"... We had a lot of good community engagement," Morgan added.

As for Merit, "We're delighted to be involved," Heins said. "Merit Construction builds a lot of schools — probably more

than anybody else around (Knoxville).

"There's a big need, and we're very excited to help the

community fill those needs."

Merit became low bidder on the project as decided "through the Knox County Purchase Of-

fice March 4," Heins said.

Funding will be through part of Knox County School's 5-Year Capital Plan.

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## Pre-Easter Fun at First Farragut United Methodist Church

Scores of children, ages 1 and up, joined their parents, siblings and other family members to take part in First Farragut United Methodist Church's Easter Jam Saturday, April 12.

In addition to gathering eggs, children enjoyed bounce house fun and sidewalk chalk art among other activities — with machines shooting bubbles everywhere to the delight of many tots — on a bright, sunny morning at the church, 12733 Kingston Pike.

Photos by Alan Sloan



Adelynn Kendrick, 2, in a bounce house



Cade Roberts, 5, and his dad, Justin Roberts, enjoy sidewalk chalk art



Rosie Morris, 2, slides down



Hudson McMullan, 5, and sister, Sloane, 2, after their hunt



Juniper Unser, 4, and her dad, Logan Unser



Bodhi Warnick, 2, is excited about his egg hunt alongside dad, Matt Warnick



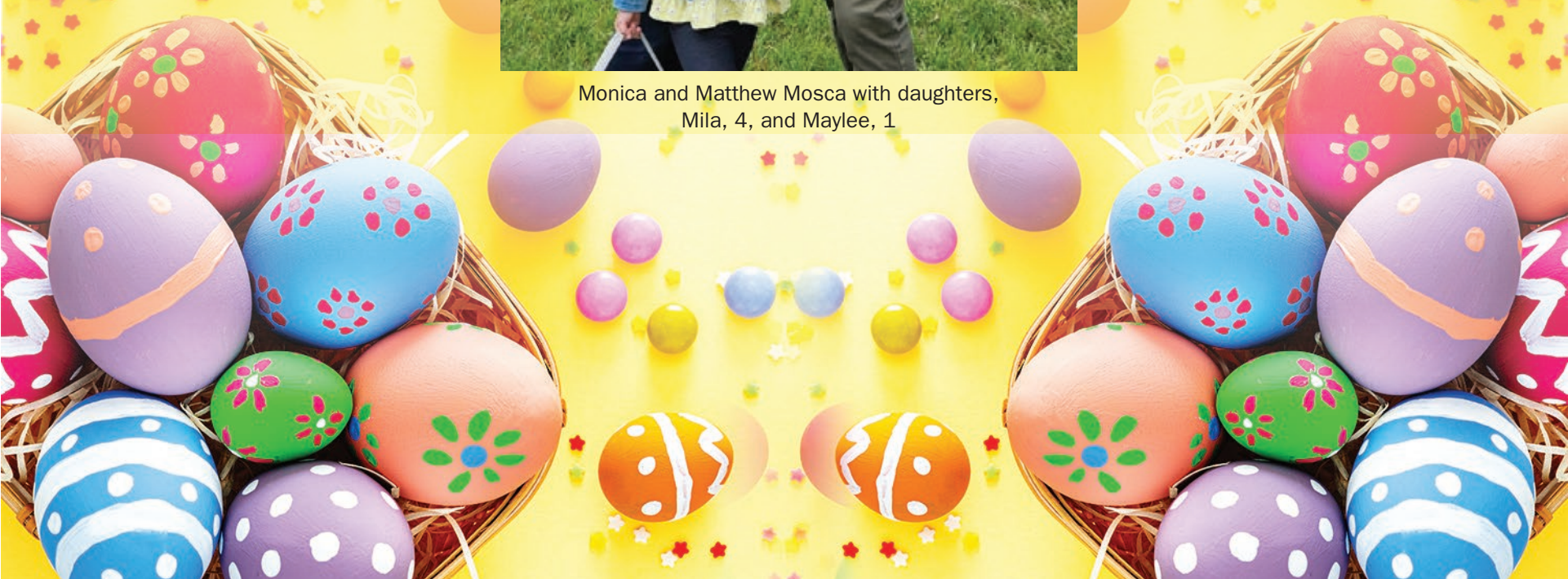
Britany Charnley and her daughter, Vera, 2



Monica and Matthew Mosca with daughters, Mila, 4, and Maylee, 1



Hadley Banks, 5, with her eggs alongside parents, Brandon and Serena Banks





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## Dawgs rally vs. Ads at The Ballpark for 8-inning win

**BILL HOWARD**  
Correspondent

It was yet another great ballgame between long-time rivals Bearden and Farragut, this time in extra innings Monday night, April 14, in The Ballpark at Farragut.

In the top of the eighth with the score tied 5-5, the Bulldogs had runners on first and third with two outs. Tyler Cline hit a bloop single just beyond first baseman Travis Brummitt Jr.'s glove, scoring Bearden's

Sammy Greene with the go-ahead run.

The 6-5 score held up as the Admirals went three-up, three-down in the bottom of the inning.

The District 4-4A win, which improved the Dawgs' record to 22-5 (6-2 District), avenged BHS's 11-5 home loss to Farragut on March 26. FHS fell to 17-7, 6-2.

"Credit to them, they did a good job on the mound mixing it up and keeping us off balance," Garrett Copeland, Admirals' skipper, said. "That's a good team. We gotta step up to the challenge."

"It's just nice to play well," Bearden head coach

Dave Prichard said. "We dug a 6-0 hole last time and never got a chance to play baseball. This is a good win for our guys and it's good to see them battle back."

The battling back Prichard referred to came in the fifth inning, which the Bulldogs entered down 4-0. Farragut got a single run in the first inning when Neyland Williams scored on Jackson Zeller's sac fly.

In the second, Jake Harris' grounder scored Owen Stelzer from third with the bases loaded to make it 2-0.

**See DAWGS-FHS on Page 2B**

## Osborne's track-field boys, Lady Ads shine in Farragut Invitational

Other locals also stellar at Bill Parker Track

**STAFF REPORTS**

editor@farragutpress.com

Four area teams joined Farragut High School to compete in Farragut Invitational Saturday morning and afternoon, April 12, on Bill Parker Track inside Eddie Courtney Stadium.

Plenty of champions and top three finishers came from both the Lady Admirals and FHS boys, along with similar success in certain events for Knoxville Catholic, Webb School of Knoxville, Bearden and Christian Academy of Knoxville.

In addition to other Knox County teams, participants included Oak Ridge and Campbell County high schools.

Retiring FHS head coach Chelsea Osborne was honored for years of service during the Invitational. (See/read details, along with team Senior Day photos, in a future farragutpress issue)

### Boys results

- 100-meter dash: Joel Bishop, Bearden, champ (11.36);
- 400 dash: Chase McAvoy, Farragut, second; Chandler Thompson, KCHS, third;
- 800 run: Evan Beeler, Farragut, champ (1:53.60); Reid Bannister, KCHS, second; Tanner Coggin, FHS, third;
- 1600 run: Radek Molchan, KCHS, champ (4:20.48); Cade Duncanson, KCHS, second;
- 3200 run: Sam Shagan, FHS, second; Andrew Mansfield, CAK, third;
- 110 hurdles: Silas Fulford, CAK, second; McAvoy, FHS, third;
- 300 hurdles: Fulford, CAK, champ (40.39); Evan Fisher, Bearden, second;
- 4 X 100 relay: Farragut third;
- 4 X 400 relay: FHS champs (3:25.82); KCHS third;
- 4 X 800 relay: Farragut champs (8:16.46);
- High jump: McAvoy, Farragut, champ (6-foot-5); Cooper Jones, Bearden, second;
- Long jump: Bishop, Bearden, second;
- Pole vault: Gavin Bailey, Bearden, champ (13-0); Devin Young, CAK, second; Tyler Martin, Farragut, third;
- Discus: Bryce Thompson, FHS, champ (171-2);
- Shot put: Thompson, Farragut, champ (59-11); Jakob Ovalles, FHS, third;

### Girls results

- 100-meter run: Lacy Young, Webb, champ (12.41); Juliet Biden, KCHS, second;
- 200 run: Young, Webb, champ (25.11); Ava Barczak, FHS, second;
- 400 run: Biden, KCHS, champ (1:00.02); Barczak, FHS, second; Christie George, Farragut, third;
- 800 run: Carolina Areheart, Webb, champ (2:18.28); Ariana Vargas, Webb, second;
- 1600 run: Areheart, Webb, champ (5:04.01); Drew Gerken, KCHS, second;
- 100 hurdles: Payton Sipos, KCHS, champ (14:80); Caroline Hilliard, Bearden second; Jillian Hurley, KCHS, third;
- 300 hurdles: Sipos, KCHS, champ (45.89); Ryleigh Howe, Farragut, second; Katherine Cabaniss, FHS, third;
- 4 X 100 relay: BHS champ (52.76); CAK second (52.87);
- 4 X 200 relay: Farragut champ (1:50.92);

**See INVITATIONAL on Page 2B**



Photo by Tony Cox

Farragut's Chase McAvoy, center, leads in the 110-meter high hurdles during a recent competition at Oak Ridge High School. Also pictured are Ads Logan O'Brien, left, and Dane Skinner.



Photos by Tony Cox

Farragut tennis players Michelle Lian, a senior (top), junior Lukas Bukovsky (above) and senior Parker Fitzgerald (right) competed in a non-District 4-2A match versus Anderson County at Jaycee Park in Clinton Thursday, April 3. The FHS boys won 8-1 while the Lady Admirals triumphed 6-3. Both Farragut teams have been especially strong in district play this season (girls 7-0 and boys 6-1).



## New coach encouraged as FHS girls tennis 7-0 in district; boys 6-1

**STAFF REPORTS**

editor@farragutpress.com

Unblemished and outstanding, that's a simple way to label the District 4-2A play of new tennis head coach Joan Swanson's Farragut Lady Admirals (7-0) and FHS boys (6-1) through mid-April.

Looking ahead just a bit, "I'm hoping both of these teams can make it all the way to the state playoffs," Swanson said.

### Lady Admirals

About her girls, "They beat Maryville 7-2, they beat Bearden 9-0; they're just a strong team," Swanson said. "There's a lot of depth to this team. ... This is a very diverse group. All 12 members of my girls team can play any spot willingly, happily."

In singles, No. 1 player for the Lady Ads is junior Isha Patel; No. 2 is sophomore Ella Ye; No. 3 features junior Alexandra Vallova; No. 4 player is junior Anika Patel; No. 5 is junior Sophia Chen; and No. 6 features "a very strong, consistent, steady freshman," Olivia Wu. No. 7 also is a freshman, Cindy Li.

As for FHS girls doubles, "one of my strong seniors is Rachel Le," Swanson said, as Le pairs at No. 3 doubles with junior Riley Turner.

No. 1 doubles are the Patel Lady Ads (no relation), while No. 2 doubles is Ye and Wu.

Rounding out the roster, while also looking to contribute, are girls players Michelle Lian (senior), Gianna Pelusio (junior) and Anna Guiseppa (sophomore).

"I could take any of my 12 players, and they could eas-

**See FARRAGUT TENNIS, Page 2B**

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# New FHS flag football coach has UT, UK, Ga.Tech ties

## STAFF REPORTS

editor@farragutpress.com



Curtis

G.W. Curtin has been hired as new Farragut High School flag football head coach.

Teaching in the FHS business department, Curtin served as an assistant coach for the inaugural

Lady Ads team in the fall of 2024.

Playing football for the Kentucky Wildcats during the 2007 season when UK upset eventual national champ LSU, Curtin later was named captain of the 'Cats Rugby team before transferring.

He graduated from University of Tennessee, and also attended

Georgia Tech, where he coached the Women's Rugby team.

Curtin was head coach of a U.S. women's football team for 2 years in the Netherlands.

Prior to arriving at FHS two years ago, Curtin spent one-and-a-half years in Ukraine after the war with Russia began: three months

on his own, then more than a year working for a non-profit group delivering food and medicine (more than 30 million meals total) while helping to get refugees out of that war-torn nation.

He also sponsors two FHS clubs: Speech/Debate and Youth in Government.

## Farragut tennis

From page 1B

ily play No. 1 on other teams," Swanson said.

Overall, Swanson's girls "are passionate, they're supportive, dedicated, respectful, dependable," the coach said.

### Farragut boys, assistant

For Swanson's boys, No. 1 is junior Leyton Lu; No. 2 features senior Parker Fitzgerald; No. 3 is senior Jackson Neal; No. 4 player is senior Derek Diaz; No. 5 is junior Lukas Bukovsky; and No. 6 "is a very strong freshman, Skyler Meade."

Meade, in fact, "is undefeated in all matches this season," Swanson added.

In addition, "I have very strong back-up players who can fill those singles spots," the coach said about juniors Kori Faulkner and Albert Liu, along with "strong doubles partner" Kaelan Tonnos, a junior.

Also adding depth are juniors James Nguyen and Evan Conger, sophomore Lucas Hu and freshman Jackson Slayden.

Overall with the boys, "There's a lot of depth to this team, too," the coach said. "I anticipate they'll go far, not only in district but possibly to Sectionals."

Swanson said she's been assisted by her husband, Jim Swanson.

## Invitational

From page 1B

• 4 X 400 relay: Catholic second; CAK third;  
• 4 X 800 relay: FHS second;  
• High jump: Jillian Hurley, KCHS, champ (4-10); Isabelle

Blain, Bearden, second;

• Long jump: Amelia Wedemeyer, CAK, champ (15-7.75); Ada Becker, FHS, second; Lily Johnson, Bearden, third;  
• Triple jump: Johnson, CAK, champ (30-5);  
• Pole vault: Katie Edmunds,

Farragut, champ (11-0); Peyton Edmunds, Farragut, second; Anh Dink, FHS, third;  
• Discus: Scarlett King, Farragut, third;  
• Shot put: Annie Steele, FHS, champ (31-2).

## Dawgs-FHS

From page 1B

Two more in the third — an RBI double by Zain Kureshi-Smith which scored Brummitt, and Stelzer's sac fly, which scored Kureshi-Smith — made it 4-0 Admirals after three.

Bearden roared back with five in the top of the fifth to lead 5-4. Cline opened the inning with a single, then went to second when Cameron Cooper walked. Evan Cope's bunt resulted in an errant throw to first, which scored Cline and advanced the runners.

The next four batters then drove in runs: RBI singles by Grayson Wright and Matt Schroeffel, a fielder's-choice grounder by Logan Benko and a sac fly by Gavin Bergeron.

Farragut tied in the bottom of the sixth when Harris' grounder scored pinch runner Brayden Alexander. The Admirals loaded the bases with

no outs to open the inning, but could push across only the one run.

"Offensively, I thought we had some chances we didn't take advantage of late in the game," Copeland said in reference to the sixth.

A scoreless seventh led to Cline's game-winning hit in the eighth.

Dawgs pitcher Charlie Loftin entered the game with no outs in the third inning and went the distance, giving up three hits and one earned run. He struck out two and walked three. "We can fight, we've got it in us; we can produce for sure. We just gotta have the confidence," Loftin said.

"Our whole game is pressure," Prichard said. "The first four innings we created no pressure. The team that can create pressure is the team that's gonna advance to the Regionals (from the District 4-4A Tournament)."

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## FHS past

With Grand Reunion soon, Old Schooler looks back

**MATTHEW MCFEE**

FHS Class of 1977-Special

(First of two parts)

Before there was the Town of Farragut, before there was Turkey Creek shopping and a Parkside Drive, before there were businesses side by side lining Kingston Pike from Dixie Lee Junction to West Hills, there was a rural tight-knit farming community with a single redlight and a school in Concord, Tennessee, on the banks of the Tennessee River.

Made up of multi-generational families who mostly farmed to survive by growing crops, raising livestock for meat, eggs, milk and wool, they were supportive of each other.

Many of them had roots here prior to the Civil War and they raised their families in brick colonial homes, near creeks and springs. There was a small township, with



Photo submitted

A wide-angle campus photo of the Old Farragut High School, located near the intersection of Kingston Pike and Concord Road. This was the FHS home until moving across the Pike and roughly two blocks west beginning with the 1976-77 school year.

a post office, church, several businesses, an undertaker and the railroad depot marking Concord. At the corner of Concord Road and Kingston Pike back in 1909, a school was established by the High School Board of Knox County.

A dedication quote from the fifth graduation class's Farragut Yearbook of 1912 attests to the vision for the school: "who by their business sagacity, their devotion to the cause of education and their prophetic vision of future education needs of rural communi-

ties, have made it possible to present attainments of this school."

The school, which was named after Admiral David G. Farragut, was established at the corner of Concord Road and Kingston Pike in 1908. The members of said board were: SL Baker, Dr WS Ogle, JH Burkhart, WB Cooper, MW Wilson, Dr JD Collier and WT McFee.

My grandfather Fred and grandmother Ellen Belle Russell were in Class of 1912 and were instrumental in the

growth of Concord's community. My father (Alfred McFee, Class of '49) and his four siblings all had attended Farragut High — and some years back during the '70s gathered at the cafeteria on the first Saturday of May for decades.

They, along with many of their classmates, would gather there all morning over coffee and doughnuts to reminisce about their glory days attending Farragut High while growing up in the Concord community.

(Part two next week)

## Teachers laud Wilson after his perfect ACT

STAFF REPORTS

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

Sam Wilson, a senior at Farragut High School with a 3.96 grade-point average, recently earned a perfect 36 ACT score.

A member of the Improv team and Book Club at FHS, Sam is going to attend Mercer University in Macon, Georgia, where he plans to study creative writing.

"Sam is a delight to have in class; he is insightful and brings a depth of knowledge to classroom conversations that sparks others to inquiry," said Julie Dorsey, FHS social studies teacher.

"Samuel is a thoughtful and



Wilson

See PERFECT ACT on Page 6B

## National trips earned by FMS math, science teams



**Above left:** Farragut Middle School's MATHCOUNTS team, from left, Elena Wu, Ethan Du, Jaishen Jiang and Andy Gu, brought home the first-place trophy at the state competition. **Above right:** Farragut Middle School Science Bowl coach Kathy Browning, far left, stands alongside her team, from left, James Ha, Jayden Han, Jiashen Jiang, Elaina Wu and Arya Khule after they won the state/regional competition and earned a trip to nationals.

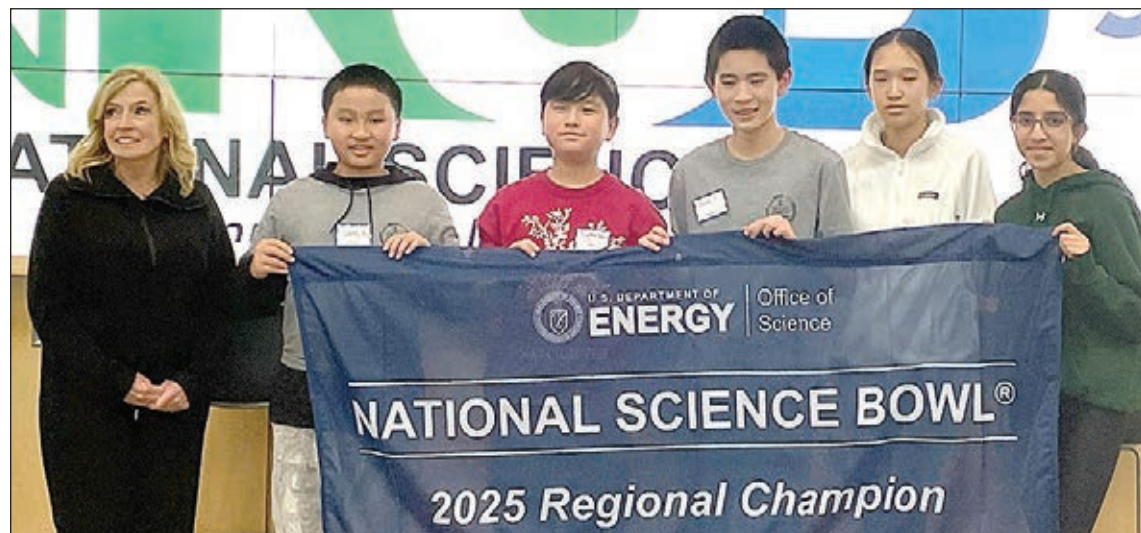


Photo submitted

**TAMMY CHEEK**

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

Two Farragut Middle School teams are going to separate national competitions in Washington, D.C., to display their knowledge of math and science this spring.

"Both of our teams won first place at the state level, and we'll be taking separate trips to the national competitions," said Kathy Browning, coach for the Science Bowl team.

Representing Tennessee in those competitions are James Ha, Jayden Han, Jiashen Jiang, Elaina Wu and

Arya Khule, who make up the Science Bowl team, and the MATHCOUNTS foursome of Elaina (on both teams), Ethan Du, Jalshen (on both teams) and Andy Gu.

"We're really excited to go to nationals," Arya said. "We've worked hard." "We're studying every week, study-

ing at home at after school," James said. "We're really trying to get at least top 10 or top 20."

"Overall, we're just really excited." Browning said the Science Bowl team will be headed to the Walter E. Wash-

See NATIONALS X 2 on Page 6B

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• **Farragut Lions Club Cruise-In Car Show, in Dickie's Barbecue Pit parking lot** at 11483 Parkside Drive — had to be postponed until 6 p.m., Saturday, April 19 — was previously set for April 5 before weather issues.

Cars and trucks of all styles, makes and models are welcome at the Cruise-In without charge. There also is no charge simply to drop by.

For added entertainment “beginning at dusk,” FLC member Ashley Lynch is providing a roughly 18-by-30-foot screen for a movie, the 1970s classic “American Graffiti,” for all to enjoy.

Cash donations will be used “to go back into the communities of Farragut and West Knoxville,” FLC president Tyler Hunsaker said. “We’re trying to raise funds to do more vision screenings for children, and also bringing forward diabetes awareness to the community.”

Based on his Mayor’s Choice judging selections, Farragut Mayor Ron Williams will award cash prizes to the top three vehicular participants near the end of the show.

Dickie’s will be providing both food and drinks with a visit to their restaurant.

• **Farragut Lions Club wants to spread the word about getting every child screened** who might have a vision problem. “Vision problems affect one in 20 preschoolers and one in four school-age children,” a Tennessee Lions Club press pamphlet stated. “Untreated eye problems can worsen and lead to other serious problems, as well as affect learning ability, personality and adjustment in school. ... When a child goes blind, it’s often a lifetime sentence.

“Perhaps more unsettling, nearly 50 percent of childhood blindness is avoidable,” the pamphlet further stated. To get your child screened, call Tennessee Lions headquarters, 615-690-8644.

Farragut Lions also ask that Farragut and area citizens bring old glasses to the car show Saturday evening, April 19 (see previous planner item in this section for details) or to a bin at Visionworks Doctors of Optometry, 10930 Parkside Drive.

“And Northshore (Jefferson) YMCA has been taking donations for us as well,” FLC president Tyler Hunsaker said. “And we’re going to be putting a (used eye glass) box at Island Fin Poke,” 11615 Parkside Drive in Farragut.

• **MEDIC blood donors** through Saturday, May 10, will receive a ticket to Soaky Mountain Waterpark. Donations in March were lower than expected, and donors are encouraged to donate.

Appointments can be made online at [www.medicblood.org](http://www.medicblood.org), via the MEDIC app, or by calling 865-524-3074. Walk-ins are welcome, including the 11000 Kingston Pike Farragut location.

## On to ‘Worlds’ for Webb FIRST Robotics



Photo submitted

After winning a Regional Engineering Inspiration Award at the FRC Magnolia Regional in early March, Webb School of Knoxville’s FIRST Robotics team 1466 is heading to the World FIRST Robotics Championship this month in Houston.

### Houston-bound is 1466 after Regional award; RoHAWKtics strong

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

Webb School of Knoxville’s Robotics 1466 team is gearing up to compete in the World FIRST Robotics competition, which takes place Wednesday through Saturday, April 16-19, in George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston.

After winning a Regional Engineering Inspiration Award at the FRC Magnolia Regional in early March, “this award includes an automatic berth to the world championship,” said Cathy Dowhos-O’Gorman, associate director of communications for Webb School. “Also at the Magnolia Regional, our Spartans advanced to the finals, where they captained the sixth seeded

alliance and finished fifth overall.”

The team also competed in the Smoky Mountain Regional’s FIRST competition, which was Thursday through Saturday, April 3-5, in Sevierville Convention Center.

“Team 1466 also put in a strong performance, but did not advance to Saturday’s finals,” Dowhos-O’Gorman said.

#### RoHAWKtics 3824 success

Hardin Valley Academy’s RoHAWKtics team 3824 did make it to the Smoky Mountain Region playoffs for a short time.

“The 2025 Smoky Mountain Regional was one for the books, not only for our team, but for everyone who participated,” said Brandi Kinkead,

See **TOP ROBOTICS** on Page 5B

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2RC.tv/WorshipAtHome  
9:30 | 11:00A  
f i t /TwoRiversTN  
Web: 2RC.tv | P: 865.777.2121  
275 Harrison Ln., Lenoir City, TN 37772

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Email: [newcovenant@newcovenantbc.com](mailto:newcovenant@newcovenantbc.com)  
Website: [www.newcovenantbc.com](http://www.newcovenantbc.com)

**Weekly In-Person Services**  
Sun: Family Bible Hour (9:30 AM)  
Sun: Worship Service (11:00 AM)

**Recorded Services**

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9:30 am & 11:00 am  
~~~~~  
**Easter Sunday**  
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For more information go to [www.christcov.org](http://www.christcov.org)

**FARRAGUT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

“Praising God, Serving Others, Growing in Faith”

**PALM SUNDAY**  
April 13  
One service at 10am with brunch at 11am

**MAUNDY THURSDAY**  
April 17 - Worship at 7pm

**GOOD FRIDAY**  
April 18 - Worship at 12pm

**EASTER SUNDAY**  
April 20  
Casual Service, 9am  
Easter Egg Hunt, 10am  
Traditional Service, 11am

All services will be in the sanctuary and live-streamed at [www.fpctn.org](http://www.fpctn.org)  
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10:30 am

416 N. Campbell Station Road  
[www.westgatechurchknox.com](http://www.westgatechurchknox.com)

# HOLY WEEK

**Holy Thursday Service 7 PM**      **Good Friday Service 7 PM**

**EASTER WORSHIP SERVICES**  
Contemporary - 8AM, 9:30AM & 11AM  
Traditional - 9:30AM & 11AM  
*Nursery provided for preschool aged children at 9:30 & 11AM*  
Worship online – [Youtube.com/ConcordUnited](http://Youtube.com/ConcordUnited)

**CONCORDUNITED**  
11020 Roane Drive | [ConcordUnited.org/Easter](http://ConcordUnited.org/Easter)



**Top Robotics**  
From page 4B

RoHAWKtics' lead mentor. "I have never witnessed such enthusiasm, graceful professionalism and all-around joy from 47 different teams. I'm still getting goosebumps when I think of all the excitement that filled the Convention Center that last day.

"The HVA RoHAWKtics finished 21st out of 47 teams, which put us in a great position for an alliance pick in the semifinals," she added. "We were invited to join Alliance 8 with Team 1592 Bionic Tigers (captain) from Florida and 11708 AMP'D Robotics from Pennsylvania.

"This team fought hard and made the winners of their

matches work extra hard to advance. Although we were out in our first two matches of semi-finals, Alliance 8 left it all on the field, and we couldn't be prouder of how these teams performed. We are extremely proud of how well all of the other area teams performed, especially 3966 L&N STEM Academy (Gryphon Command). They were captains of

Alliance 7, leading two other teams all the way to finals.

The finals match "is the best of three matches, and they forced all three matches, which hasn't been common this season," Kinkead said. "What was so amazing was what the win Gryphon Command got in Match 2, winning by one point. The convention center became unhinged, and the roar of the

crowd was deafening."

For HVA, "every season is a learning season," she said. "We set five goals for our team this year, and we met four out of five of those — the last one was getting a ticket to Worlds.

"The greatest challenges with robotics is the technology," Kinkead added. "... And when (it breaks), you're a sitting duck."

# EASTER

## COLORING CONTEST


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**farragutpress**

would like to thank all who participated as well as the prize donors and sponsors who helped make the 2025 contest a success!

Be sure to join in the fun when our Halloween Coloring Contest returns this October!



Left photo submitted | Above photo by Tony Christen

Left: **Ivy Edwards**; Above, front row, left to right: **Alexander McQueen, Isla Clapp, Adalyn Koren, Landon Ball, Ava Reyes**; middle row, left to right: **Ellie Martin, Max Gallo, Malone and Mille Brock**; back row, left to right: **Katherine Manahan, Jennifer Martin** and **Erin Stidham**, Senior Program Director at The Davis Family YMCA; Not pictured: **Ellen Hubrig** and **Zayden Stoddard**

farragutpress Easter Coloring Contest 2025 winners were announced Monday, April 14, with the chosen recipients gathering at the newspaper office for prizes and recognition.

**AGES 4-5 CATEGORY**  
First Place: **Isla Clapp**  
Second Place: **Zayden Stoddard**  
Third Place: **Adalyn Koren**

**AGES 9-11 CATEGORY**  
First Place: **Malone & Mille Brock**  
Second Place: **Ellie Martin**  
Third Place: **Max Gallo**

**AGES 6-8 CATEGORY**  
First Place: **Landon Ball**  
Second Place: **Alexander McQueen**  
Third Place: **Ava Reyes**

**AGES 12-112 CATEGORY**  
First Place: **Ellen Hubrig**  
Second Place: **Katherine Manahan**  
Third Place: **Jennifer Martin**

**SPECIAL NEEDS CATEGORY:** First Place: **Ivy Edwards**

**A Special Thank You to our Prize Donors:**





## Nationals X 2

From page 3B

ington Convention Center on an all-expense-paid trip Thursday through Monday, April 24-28. Then, the MATHCOUNTS team will compete Monday through Thursday, May 5-13, in the Weston Washington D.C. Downtown hotel.

At nationals, the Science Bowl team competes against 47 other teams while the MATHCOUNTS team competes against 224 mathematicians from across the country.

"If we finish in the top 16, we will win \$1,000 for our school," said Browning, a seventh-grade teacher. "If we finish in

the top eight, we get \$2,500 for our school, and if we finish in the top six, we get \$5,000. The top team gets \$10,000.

In MATHCOUNTS, the nine top-achieving national competitors will receive college scholarships totaling \$44,000 across all recipients, according to a MATHCOUNTS competition fact sheet.

"The national champion (Countdown Round winner) will win the \$20,000 Donald G. Weinert Scholarship," the fact sheet further stated. "The Countdown Round runner-up will receive \$7,500.

"The two Countdown Round semifinalists will each receive \$3,000," the sheet also stated.

"The Written Competition champion will receive \$2,500; and the four members of the first-place team will each receive \$2,000."

"I am so proud of this team," Browning said. "I've worked the Science Bowl kids really hard this year. Two days a week (after school), we've had practice, so one (week), they've had to research and learn on their own.

"Then, on the second day, they practice actually clicking buzzers," she added. "The third day, most of them have stayed for MATHCOUNTS."

"They have been coming every week, twice a week, since September, practicing writing

Science Bowl questions and trying to prepare."

"This is a very exciting time for the kids and as a coach," said MATHCOUNTS coach Emma Rester, a seventh-grade teacher.

She also had one sixth-grade team member who qualified as an individual for nationals — in a separate category — Brian Liu, after he competed at the state level.

"This is my first year coaching the MATHCOUNTS team," Rester said. "Everyone's been congratulating me, as a coach, but I just have to tell them,

"I've not done anything to help them," she added. "I've not done anything other than

show up and host practices. "This has all been the kids. It's all been their hard work. They study outside of our practice times. Our kids have put in the hard work to get them there."

To get Science Bowl team ready for nationals, "we are still studying and we're trying to get some of the higher-level physics, chemistry and biology — it's still middle school but higher-level," Browning said.

For the MATHCOUNTS team, "They're working on fluency skills to be able to answer the math questions quickly and just working with the other members of the team, who out of Memphis," Rester said.

## Perfect ACT

From page 3B

articulate student who consistently fosters meaningful discussions in the classroom," said Samantha Perchich, an AP literature teacher at FHS.

"... Samuel's respectful approach to dialogue and his genuine curiosity make him a pleasure to have in class," she added.

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### FARRAGUT VISUAL RESOURCES REVIEW BOARD AGENDA

Farragut Community Center • Large Classroom  
Tuesday, April 22, 2025 • 6:00 p.m.

1. Approval of minutes for the February 25, 2025, meeting.
2. Staff report - wall signs approved in the past month.
3. Review of a primary permanent ground sign for The Church of Jesus Christ and Latter-Day Saints Temple, located at 13001 Kingston Pike.
4. Review of a menu-board sign and facilities for Dunkin' (Donuts), located at 13038 Kingston Pike.
5. Review of a primary permanent ground sign (reface) for Apex Bank, located at 11916 Kingston Pike.
6. Review of a landscape plan for Bruster's Real Ice Cream, located at 11692 Parkside Drive.
7. Review of a landscape plan for the Costco Fuel Expansion, located at 11745 Kingston Pike.
8. Review of a landscape plan for Summit View of Farragut, located at 12823 Kingston Pike.
9. Citizen Forum.

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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# Earth Day

## April 22

*Originally the brainchild of United States Senator Gaylord Nelson, Earth Day began as an environmental teach-in but has since grown into a global day meant to inspire awareness and appreciation of the environment.*

This year, Earth Day will be celebrated on April 22. Because it's right in the heart of the spring season, when many people feel rejuvenated after a long winter, Earth Day is the ideal time for men, women and children to take that extra energy they have in the spring and channel it into eco-friendly behaviors that benefit the environment. To do just that this Earth Day, consider the following tips.

**Take a walk!**

Or a jog or a bike ride. Men and women can help reduce air pollution by walking, jogging or riding a bike to get from place to place. While this might not be doable across the board, particularly for men and women with long commutes, when running errands around town on the weekends dust off your bicycle instead of gassing up the car. If you're taking kids to the park on the weekend, walk or bike to the park. It's a great way to spend time outdoors and benefit the environment at the same time.

**Plant a tree.**

Spring is a time of year when many homeowners get back to working on their yards. When cultivating your green thumb this spring, plant a tree or several trees around the yard. Also, when working outdoors, lessen your reliance on pesticides. It might be difficult to eliminate pesticide use entirely, but whenever possible look for more natural, eco-friendly alternatives to keep your lawn looking lush.

**Turn off the lights!**

Daylight Savings Time now starts earlier than it did in years past. The reason for that is to reduce energy use, which only works when people actually reduce their daily energy usage. If it's still light outside, turn the lights off inside and enjoy a warm spring evening outdoors.

**Go paperless.**

Many banks and credit card companies now encourage consumers to go paperless with their statements as a means to becoming more eco-friendly. Some banks even offer incentives to choose online statements over traditional paper statements. When possible, reduce waste by going paperless with bank and credit card statements.

**Use eco-friendly cleaning products.**

Many household cleaning products pose a threat to the environment by leaking harmful toxins into the air. When spring cleaning this year, choose non-toxic eco-friendly cleaning products that help reduce both air and water pollution.




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