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Union Road project advances with eminent domain vote

Tammy Cheek
tcheek@farragutpress.com

The long-planned Union Road improvement project moved forward Thursday as the Farragut Board of Mayor and Aldermen unanimously approved the use of eminent domain authority to acquire easements needed for the project.

The vote came during the board's Dec. 11 meeting.

"The purpose of this item is to improve the acquisition of easements for the Union Road improvements project under the authority of eminent domain," Town Attorney Tom Hale said. "This agenda item seeks the board's approval of the use of eminent domain pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated 29-17-107 with respect to one parcel of a total of 35 tracts that are part of the Union Road project that required some sort of purchasing of property inter-

ests of the adjoining property owners."

Hale said negotiations are now focused on one remaining property, owned by the Troutt family. He recommended approval of eminent domain authority based on the Town's original offer



Hale

of \$61,000 for easements on the Troutt property.

"The Union Road project has been in the works for quite a long time," Hale said, noting it is a federally funded project that the Town has been working on since 2017.

"It's been held up for a number of reasons, but it seems now it's time to move on with it," he said.

See UNION on Page 5A

Excitement builds for Health & Wellness Expo

Shop Farragut accepting vendors' applications

Tammy Cheek
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Shop Farragut/Farragut Business Alliance again is holding its annual Health & Wellness Expo to bring professionals together and provide information, tips and demonstrations.

The event is slated from 1 to 5 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 1, in Farragut Community Center, 239 Jamestowne Blvd.

"I think it's going to be great," Shop Farragut executive director Vic Scott said. "There seems to be a lot of excitement around this event.

"It sounds like it's been a fantastic event in the past," she said. "The community seems to really enjoy it. The vendors have all reached out and are very excited.

"I think we'll have a very full event this year," Scott added. "I think it will be a very eventful show for the community."

She said the biggest difference from last year's event will be the different vendors be-

cause there have been new businesses opening up this year.

While still ironing out activities for the expo, Shop Farragut president Candace Viox said during an FBA meeting Wednesday, Dec. 10, there might be a Jazzer-size demonstration and a fashion show in addition to the vendors booths.

Shop Farragut currently is taking applications for vendors.

"The application is up on the website," Shop Farragut Scott said. "The booth fee link is also on the website, under the programs and events tab on shopfarragut.com

"We got the website updated a couple of weeks ago, and I sent out a big push to all the previous vendors that we had ... to personally invite them back," she said. "Then, I'll be pushing it out to the social media for the public."

"We've got several people who have reached out [as vendors], people who have already sent their applications in,"

See EXPO on Page 2A



Scott



Tammy Cheek

Nathan Dunn and his father, Tim Dunn, lay a wreath at the grave of Army veteran Kenneth Smith Morrison in Pleasant Forest Cemetery following a Wreaths Across America ceremony at the cemetery Saturday morning, Dec. 13.

Laying wreaths to remember

Large crowd attends Wreaths Across America ceremony

Tammy Cheek
tcheek@farragutpress.com

"There's a saying, 'A veteran dies twice,' Marilyn Childress, U.S. Navy veteran and Veterans Heritage Site Foundation president, told a crowd of about 200 people at Pleasant Forest Cemetery who attended a Wreaths Across America ceremony Saturday morning, Dec. 13.

"Once when they physically pass away, and once when no one ever thinks of them, says their name," she added.

As a Navy veteran, "I don't want these veterans to ever ever be forgotten," Childress said. "So

you all are keeping their memory alive today, and I want to thank you so much because it's so dear to me."

"We are here to honor those who have served in some capacity," Pastor Patrick Pence said as he gave the invocation. "We are doing that by laying a simple wreath."

This is the third year, a Wreaths Across America event has been held in Farragut. Volunteers laid wreaths at the graves of 286 veterans, not only Pleasant Forest but also Grigsby Chapel United Methodist, Virtue Church and Union Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

"My wife and I do it every year," said Christian Ayo, an Army veteran who served in Afghanistan and other places from 2001 to 2021. "Sometimes we bring our granddaughters."

Laying a wreath and reading the veterans' names "just means you remember them," he said. "I mean, it's a sacrifice to be in the military."

He added his wife sacrificed, as well, as a military wife.

"We owe it to them to have a good life, a life worthy of sacrifice," Dr. John Bartlett, FHS principal and a veteran of the

See WREATHS on Page 4A

Farragut's traffic system recognized with TML innovation award

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The Town of Farragut was recognized for its traffic management efforts during the Farragut Board of Mayor and Aldermen meeting Thursday, Dec. 11.

Houston Daugherty, president and CEO of Cannon &

Cannon Inc., announced the Town received the Innovation Award in August from the Tennessee Municipal League.

"We are very honored to have partnered with the Town's Engineering Department, bringing an advanced traffic management system to town," he said.

Daugherty said the system

has an estimated savings of more than \$4 million annually in economic value from reduced driver delay and includes 12 miles of fiber that can be used not only for signals but also for future communications.

"All 26 signals now are connected to a central management system," he said. "So, the

Town has taken a big first step toward really automatic traffic control as it's moving into the future.

"Given all the population that's moving here, it's going to become more and more necessary," Daugherty said.

The system also features radar detection at 23 intersections, which he said is more re-

liable than loop detection.

"It's not affected by fog or rain or broken loops," Daugherty said.

Pedestrians also were considered in the project, Daugherty said, with 11 new curb ramps installed along with other upgraded

See TRAFFIC on Page 7A

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from the Town by Wendy Smith

A look back at 2025

Most of the time, the Town of Farragut focuses on looking forward: setting goals, accomplishing goals and setting new goals. But the end of the year is a good time to look back and revel in achievements, so let’s review these 2025 accomplishments.

Farragut Town Hall renovations: Town Hall reopened in April after a 17-month renovation project. The biggest change was moving the Town’s reception area upstairs and moving the Knox County Clerk office downstairs. There were also updates to the boardroom, the staircase in the rotunda and the layout of Town offices.

Advanced Traffic Management System (ATMS): The ATMS project was completed in the spring. It allows the Town’s 26 traffic signals to be controlled from Town Hall, and as part of the installation, consultants created timing plans to enable traffic to flow with peak efficiency. Data

shows that travel times have improved during AM peak, midday peak and PM peak for both eastbound and westbound traffic on Kingston Pike through the center of town.*

Street resurfacing: Each year, the Town of Farragut assesses public roads to prioritize those that need resurfacing, and work is completed on as many roads as the budget will allow. In fiscal year 2025 (July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025), the Town resurfaced 9.99 miles at a cost of \$114,162 per mile, which is less per mile than the previous two years.

Additional parking at McFee Park: In September, the Town cut the ribbon on a 127-spot permeable paver parking lot and a pavilion that serves as a trailhead for the Adaptive Mountain Bike and Hiking Trail. The parking lot will accommodate trail users, as well as visitors, to a future dog park that is expected to open in summer 2026.

Interior renovations at the Campbell Station Inn: Improvements to the historic Campbell Station Inn have been happening gradually since it was purchased in 2012, and interior renovations were completed this fall. Improvements include the refinishing of original wood floors, new paint, new bathrooms and the addition of a dumb waiter, which allows food to be brought to the first floor from the basement for events. In January, the inn will open as a visitor’s center, gift shop and small event venue.

Pickleball complex at Mayor Bob Leonard Park: The Town cut the ribbon on a new nine-court pickleball complex at Mayor Bob Leonard Park on Tuesday, Dec. 16. The complex includes lights, fencing, a shade structure and a paved entrance from Harrison Road with two accessible parking spaces.

Stormwater maintenance:



Photo submitted

Farragut Mayor Ron Williams speaks to the 2025 Introduction to Farragut class in the newly renovated boardroom at Town Hall.

The Town’s Stormwater Maintenance Program protects Farragut’s infrastructure. This ongoing program has resulted in the repair of 18 pipes over the past two years.

Program growth at the Farragut Community Center: In July, August and September, the average monthly participation in community center programs was 1,209 – a new record! The most popular programs in 2025 include art classes, home school open gym and ballet.

Building permits and inspections: Since Jan. 1,

the Town has issued a whopping 458 building permits (including 120 for residential renovation and 115 for new residential). They have also completed 4,359 inspections – 3,432 for residential and 927 for commercial.

**While we’re proud of the ATMS, the Town will continue to address traffic flow in 2026. Our Engineering Department is participating in a pilot program with Swarco, a traffic technology company, to incorporate adaptive technology into our signals along the Kingston Pike corridor.*

Expo

From page 1A

she said, warning that space is very limited, so “its first-come, first-served basis.

“Spots will be held as people pay their booth fees this year,” Scott added.

As far as vendors go, “I expect we’ll probably have in the 40 to 50 range,” she said. “Last year, it looks like we had approximately 45 vendors, and that doesn’t include the food truck we had.

“Depending on who signs up and who takes advantage

of extra space, we could possibly do a bar [exercise] demonstration; we could possibly have an intro yoga class,” Scott said. “It just kind of depends on what vendors we have and what availability they have to do extra talks or events.

“So as the vendors start to

trickle in, we can get a better idea of who were going to have, and we will be able to determine how we’re going to be able to take advantage of extra space,” she said.

While there is a \$100 fee for vendors, attending the event is free and open to the public.

“We’re also still taking sponsors as well,” Scott said. “Sponsorships start at \$500,” she said, adding there also are \$1,000, \$1,500 and \$2,000 levels available.

To register a booth or inquire about sponsorships, visit Shop Farragut’s website.



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KCSO policereports

• On Dec. 8, 2025, a Farragut woman reported that a check was stolen from the outside drop box at the Farragut Post Office, located at 11409 Municipal Center Drive. The incident occurred between Nov. 14 and Nov. 26, 2025. The check, originally made out for \$115 to Waste Connections of Tennessee, was later discovered to have been fraudulently altered. Upon checking her account on Dec. 5, she found the check had cleared for \$17,900. A visit to her bank revealed the check had been washed, the payee changed and it had been either cashed or deposited into another bank. The original date and signature were

the only unchanged elements. The woman also reported suspicious phone activity around the same time. Her son received two calls from someone claiming to be with the bank fraud department asking for her number. He did not provide it. The complainant later received notification of a data breach from a medical office, where her son is listed as an emergency contact. Her daughter-in-law, an employee of the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, traced the caller’s number to a known scam or fraud listing. It is unclear whether the phone calls and data breach are connected to the theft.

• On Dec. 9, 2025, at 3:08

p.m., a complainant reported her 2020 Acura RDX was stolen from her Eisenhower Street residence while she was speaking with neighborhood children. She stated the vehicle was left unlocked with the keys inside. The suspect remains unidentified. A report was filed with the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) through LEIDs.

• On Dec. 10, A convenience store district manager reported that a store manager of a North Campbell Station Road location left the business with the nightly deposit and did not take it to the bank, the report states. The district manager also told deputies the employee had not returned to work.

• On Dec. 11, 2025, at approximately 2:56 p.m., officers responded to a theft call at a warehouse store located on Kingston Pike in Farragut. The loss prevention employee reported that a member concealed \$102.46 worth of merchandise in a bag attached to her wheelchair. She proceeded to the self-checkout but did not scan the concealed items before exiting the store without payment.

When stopped and she was found in possession of the unpaid merchandise. She was issued a misdemeanor citation (No. 167783) and formally trespassing from all of the warehouse store properties. Her initial court appearance was

scheduled for Jan. 8, 2026. The merchandise was recovered by the office.

• Deputies responded Dec. 14 to a reported theft at the at Kingston Pike convenience store location. According to the report, a silver or gray SUV pulling a small trailer parked in front of the store’s propane case between 3:50 and 4:05 a.m. Surveillance showed an unknown suspect walking between the propane case and the vehicle twice. Store staff reported propane tanks were missing but could not confirm the exact number. Each tank was valued at \$70. The case remains under investigation by the Knox County Sheriff’s Office

Wreath
From page 1A

U.S. Marines, said about the veterans interred in the cemetery in his keynote address.

He read a letter from the late President Abraham Lincoln to the Massachusetts mother of five sons, “who died gloriously on the field of battle.”

“Here, we stand today, looking over a series of stones and monuments,” Bartlett said. “And, on each of these, many, many stories are etched in the single representation of a name, date and a dash.

“Today is another reminder that it’s the dash that counts,” he said. “Among these final

resting places are names, like the second governor of Tennessee and Revolutionary War veteran, Archibald Roane; David Campbell, Revolutionary War veteran and founder of Campbell Station; Corp. Clay Clayborne and Private Frits Clayborne, members of the 369th Infantry regiment in World War I’s Harlem Hellfighters ... as I stand her, right in back of me today ... you’ll find a Revolutionary War veteran who served with George Washington at Valley Forge.”

Along that same path, Bartlett said, there is a marine who served in Afghanistan.

In Farragut’s cemeter-

ies, “you’ll see veterans who served in every American conflict ... you’ll also see veterans who raised their right hand but never saw the field of battle but still sacrificed themselves for their country,” Bartlett said. “As you lay a wreath today, you’ll say the veteran’s name aloud. Saying a veteran’s name aloud during the wreath ceremony ensures they are never forgotten,” he said.

Reflecting, “the Veterans Heritage Site Association is so excited to see that this is our third year [holding Wreaths Across America in Farragut],” Childress said. “I started trying to get this accomplished four years ago, and with the

help of Chris [Sheffield], the Town of Farragut and Dave Stinnett at Pleasant [Forest] Cemetery, who was really instrumental also in making sure we were getting this tak-

en care of.”

“Over 22,000 wreaths are being placed, today, in Knox County,” she said. “You all are part of that.”



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Union
From page 1A

Alderman Drew Burnette asked whether there were any additional concessions the Town could offer the property owners.

“Is there anything else we can entice them with, even further slope easements, keeping certain trees?” Burnette asked.

Town engineer Darryl Smith said staff had explored multiple options.

“We moved the shared-use path from 8 feet to 3 feet off the back of the curb,” Smith said. “We’ve looked at moving the road farther to the south, but that’s going to have a bigger impact on the other side of the road, so there’s really nothing else we can do at this point.”

Alderman Alex Cain asked whether delays could jeopardize the project’s federal funding.

“Is there a point we could lose the federal money?” Cain asked. “If we didn’t start the

project by a certain time, is there an issue?”

“I don’t think there’s an issue,” Smith said.

Alderman Joe LaCroix said he had driven Union Road and questioned whether the need for improvements could be definitively established.

“I think it needs something,” LaCroix said, “but during your analysis on the need for the improvement, can you definitively determine that there’s something that needs to be done?”

“We can’t leave it the way it is, not for long,” Smith said. “Right now it needs to be rebuilt because of the condition of the road. It also has very limited sight distance in some locations that this project will take care of.”

LaCroix also asked whether residents in the surrounding neighborhoods supported the project.

“I think so, yes,” Smith said.

Vice Mayor Scott Meyer, who lives in the area, said the road poses safety concerns.

“I live in one of those neighborhoods, and I can tell you that the road needs to be improved,” Meyer said. “My kids drive on that road, and it’s extraordinarily dangerous.”

Mayor Ron Williams said he had spoken with a historian about Union Road’s origins.

“He said it was handed to him that it was an Indian trail,” Williams said. “It became a wagon trail, then they put gravel on it. Then they paved it. It’s never been engineered as a road, and if you drive down it in a rain event, you can tell that because water is going wherever water

wants to go.”

Williams added that sight distance is poor in several areas.

“If somebody’s speeding, you may have an accident,” he said. “It’s very narrow in places. It does need to be improved, and I think the drainage improvements, particularly along that stretch right there, are needed.”

“All the people I talked to along that road are happy that we’re doing it, except for the Troutts,” Williams said.

Meyer said the slope and drainage easements would ultimately improve the Troutt

property and emphasized that the construction easement is temporary.

“We’re not taking anyone’s property,” Meyer said. “We’re doing some improvements, and then it’s going back to the resident.”

“I think that is accurate,” Hale said. “But keep in mind there are other damages we are willing to pay to cover the trees, a fence that’s going to be removed. There is some impact on the back of the remainder of the property.”

Meyer acknowledged the discomfort surrounding the use of eminent domain.



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Congratulations to Merik Cameron, a second grader from Farragut Primary School, for winning the Good Neighbor Character Award presented by Mansour Hasan, State Farm Agent. Merik was chosen for this award by demonstrating the trait of honesty. “Merik is a great student and person,” said his 2nd grade teacher, Mrs. Mack. “He works hard, is a good friend, and follows directions. While he possesses many great qualities, I love that Merik is honest. I can always count on him to do the right thing and to tell the truth.” Thank you for being such a great example, Merik!



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New tastes of Mexico

Cobians bring unique ice cream shop to Turkey Creek

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Carlos and Marisol Cobian have brought new tastes of Mexico to Turkey Creek in Farragut with the opening of Palenteria Azteca ice cream shop.

“This is something new for a Mexican [business],” Carlos said.

Located at 11615 Parkside Drive, the shop offers fresh-made ice cream, agua frescas and shakes, but so much more. This winter, customers can indulge in pork or chicken tamales, birria nachos and ramen, street corn (esquites), marucha loca soup and more.

“This is homemade ice cream,” Marisol said. “We have homemade popsicles (palatas). We use the more natural fruits to make the ice cream and the popsicles.

“We have fresh waters, agua frescas, which are flavored waters — natural, too, with just fruit, sugar (and water),” she said.

There also is the classic banana split.

Additionally, there are mangonadas, fresca con cremas (strawberries and fresh cream),

milkshakes, limonadas (fresh lime water), michi-aguas, bionicos (fruit and fresh cream with granola or pecan topping), rasparados, jarritos preparados (crushed ice covered with fresh fruit and chamoy, a sour salsa, not spicy) and monstro preparados (a preparado with Monster energy drink), among others.

About the milkshakes, “we can make any milkshake from any ice cream you choose,” Marisol said.

With limonada, “sometimes we have combination with cucumber and chia.”

She said the rasparados are new on the scene.

“It’s different,” Marisol said. “It’s like an icee but it’s natural. We have a lot of flavors: vanilla, coconut, tamarind, pecan, mango, (but) the most popular is the strawberry.”

Additionally, “we have snacks, for example the walking taco, bionicos, Dori-Locos (coming with pecans, cucumber and pork skins) and esquite (street corn),” she said.

The menu also includes cheese nachos, acai bowls, eloto preparado — street corn with hot Cheetos — papas, marucha loca, tosti-elote, chicharon preparado, paleta preparada,



Tammy Cheek

Carlos and Marisol Cobian have brought new tastes of Mexico to Turkey Creek in Farragut with the opening of Palenteria Azteca ice cream shop at 11615 Parkside Drive, Farragut.

chocob-bananos (chocolate-covered bananas), tortas (sandwiches) and more.

“For the seasons, we have different things,” Marisol said. “For example, right now for the winter, we have hot chocolate, birria (seasoned meat) ramen and birria nachos.”

They also have pumpkin spice popsicles this winter, as well as tamales, mini pancakes

and rice pudding.

Carlos, who also owns Dos Agaves in Turkey Creek, said he was approached by the owners of the former business in that location, Island Finn Poke, about opening a business in that location.

“It’s a nice area here, and we have a lot of friends here,” he said.

Considering a new venture, “My husband thought, in Farragut, we need something more Mexican for the people, so people can try new things — meals and snacks, new flavors,” Marisol said.

Palenteria Azteca is open from noon to 8 p.m., Sunday through Thursday, and from noon to 9 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

LazyDays RV acquired

Motorists traveling along Snyder Road in Farragut are seeing an empty lot at LazyDays RV at 11730 Snyder Road. According to a Campers Inn RV representative, the recreational vehicle business recently was acquired by Campers Inn RV of Knoxville, located in Strawberry Plains.

Attempts for more information, as of press time, were unsuccessful.

Tammy Cheek



businessbriefs

• Old National Bank, which has a branch near Farragut, has announced Jeremy Cook has joined Old National Bank as its new business banking director for Knoxville. In addition to this role, Cook also will serve as market president for Knoxville, further strengthening the bank’s leadership presence and community commitment in East Tennessee.

Cook brings more than 17 years of banking experience, most recently serving as senior vice president at Pinnacle Financial Partners. His background includes leadership roles at Clayton Bank & Trust, BB&T and SunTrust

Bank, where he demonstrated a strong commitment to client success, team development and community engagement.

• Knoxville Bar Association held its annual meeting Friday, Dec. 12, when the president’s gavel was passed from Jonathan Cooper to Knoxville attorney Rachel Park Hurt, a member of the Knoxville law firm Arnett, Baker, Draper & Hagood, LLP. Also, Cooper, the outgoing president, presented his President’s Awards to KBA Professionalism Committee co-chairs James Stovall and Chancellor John Weaver and to KBA executive director Tasha Blakney.

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT



Double Your Donation day at Second Harvest Food Bank of East Tennessee

The 15th annual Double Your Donation day for Second Harvest Food Bank of East Tennessee was held on December 4th, 2025. Thanks to generous donations as well as matching gifts from their sponsors, enough money for over 5 million meals was raised. This will go a long way to help families facing food insecurities at the coldest months of the year.

Second Harvest Food Bank of East Tennessee services 18 counties in our region and distributes food through multiple hunger-relief programs and 780+ community partners. For more information visit secondharvestetn.org



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Traffic
From page 1A

pedestrian infrastructure.

Daugherty presented Mayor Ron Williams with a framed copy of the Tennessee Municipal League article recognizing the project.

Williams also praised the Parks and Recreation and Public Works departments for their work on Countdown to Light the Park at Founders Park at Campbell Station and the skate rink at Mayor

Ralph McGill Plaza. He also thanked the Arts and Beautification Committee for its work on the Town's Celebrate the Season event and "all the participants and other folks who were involved in the third annual Christmas Parade."

"This time of year, our staff goes all out to provide some special events that our residents look forward to," Williams said.

Alderman Drew Burnette also recognized the committee

that organized the Christmas parade.

"It's gotten bigger and better every year," he said. "At least a few of those ladies — Stephanie Thompson, Toni Scott, Julia Goodrich — and a bunch of other moms have poured their heart and soul into organizing this parade."

For those who attended, "it was absolutely phenomenal, especially with Santa's Village at the end," Burnette said. "I'm very thankful for these ladies who put this on and hope

they keep going."

Alderman Alex Cain echoed Burnette's comments, adding, "The parade was amazing ... great turnout."

Williams also noted the Town's tourism group hosted an open house at Campbell Station Inn.

"It was an opportunity for all our residents to come out and see the restoration of the inside of the house before we move in the furniture for it to become the welcome center," he said.

The building will include a history room and event area on the main floor, with tourism offices on the second floor. The official opening is Jan. 8, 2026.

"I was at the open house the other day. The building is amazing," Cain said. "The work we've done, keeping the character and history of it, too, of Campbell Station Inn."

However, he added, "I don't know if anyone else noticed it, but I could swear the building's haunted, too."

Merry Christmas

Many Blessings in 2026!

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FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH’S
Cookie Walk
& Craft Fair

Hundreds attended Faith Lutheran Church’s annual Cookie Walk and Craft Fair in the church, 225 Jamestowne Blvd., Saturday, Dec. 6, to pick out choice holiday cookies and crafts.

Before getting cookies, attendees browsed the booths offering wood-work, wreaths, handmade Christmas cards, and goodies from Faith Lutheran’s youth group.

One crafter, Joyce Anderson, made her wreaths while she had cancer. Now, “thanks to God, I’m cancer free,” Anderson said, but she still makes wreaths.

Photos by Tammy Cheek

Left: Sisters Cadence, left, and Cortlyn Titsworth sell items for Faith Lutheran Youth



Above: Faith Lutheran’s Larry Koran greets attendees



Above: Church volunteer Joanne Sills

Left: Sylvia Moore finds a cookie

Below: Elsie Baum, left, and Gina Bond with Two Big Girls Honey sell honey



Above: Lisa Savage, left, and Michelle Portman



Above: Faith Lutheran Youth’s Ava Daut, left, and Scarlett Parrott



Above: Volunteer Judy Bryant with cookies

Left: Dalton McCartney

Bulldogs sweep tourneys

Ken Lay
Correspondent

KNOXVILLE — High school basketball, at its core, is a tournament sport, and Bearden High School boys basketball coach Jeremy Parrott takes opportunities to put his teams in tournament situations.

Last week, Parrott and the Bulldogs played four games in five days, and Bearden won all four of the contests, all against quality competition, in impressive fashion

“The biggest takeaway from all of this is that we played multiple games over back-to-back days,” Parrott said. “Basketball is a tournament sport and in (postseason) tournaments, you have to play on back-to-back days.”

With last week’s four victories, the Bulldogs kept their perfect record intact, improving to 12-0 overall and 3-0 in District 4-4A.

On Saturday night, Dec. 13, Bearden defeated Austin-East, 82-50, in the Battle of the Ville at Knoxville West High School.

The Bulldogs had a balanced scoring attack against the Roadrunners (6-7) as four Bearden players posted double figures in the scoring column with Justin Nordin leading the way with 26 points.

Sean Capshaw added 14 points while Brendan Murphy had 12 and Damian Collum finished with 10.

“We’re getting production from all over the floor,” Parrott said. “We have several guys scoring but we’re trying to prepare to make changes on the fly and that’s what helps us about playing back-to-back games on multiple days.”

The Bulldogs opened the Battle of the Ville on Friday night, Dec. 12, with a win over Fulton, prevailing, 67-45, over the Falcons at Austin-East High School.

Nordin led Bearden with 19 points. Murphy and Carson Asbaty, a transfer from Knoxville Catholic, scored 13 points each while Capshaw finished with 12.

On Thursday, Dec. 11, the Bulldogs received a visit from district newcomer Rhea County and promptly routed the Golden Eagles, 87-37 as five Bulldogs scored 10-plus points in the contest.

Asbaty led the way with 19 points. Capshaw chipped in with 16. Collum had 13 while Nordin had 12 and Murphy finished with 12.

On Tuesday, Dec. 9, the Bulldogs outlasted Hardin Valley Academy, 86-78, in a district road game.

Asbaty scored 23 points while Capshaw had 21. Nordin scored 16 and Murphy added 14.

Despite seeing his team win in impressive fashion out of the gate in 2025-26, Parrott is still looking for more from his squad.

Lady Admirals

From page 1B

Branam and two free throws by KJ McNealy – the lead was 15, 42-27, with barely four minutes left. The game seemed comfortably in hand.

Not quite. LCHS cut it to seven, 44-37, with a 10-2 run, but there were only 41 seconds left at the end of the run, and the Lady Admirals were able to draw fouls and then run out the clock.

“It was pretty much in hand,” Mayfield said. “I never felt nervous about it ... just trying to get out of there with a win.”

Hawks

From page 1B

tough 78-70 district loss on the road against league newcomer McMinn County Friday night, Dec. 12.

But they didn’t appear to be battling fatigue from the road as they opened a 21-2 lead late in the opening frame and held a 26-9 advantage by first quar-

Admirals

From page 1B

na come out and play better in the second half,” Burris said.

The Panthers’ offense did come more to life in the third quarter. LC slowly chipped away at the Admirals’ lead, hitting from long range four times and cutting the halftime gap to 13 at the end of three, 57-44.

The teams traded baskets to open the fourth, and FHS led 59-46 with 6:53 to go. If Lenoir City still had any comeback hopes, the next three minutes squashed them. In that time, the Admirals outscored the Panthers 8-3, and led

67-49 with under four minutes left.

Burris substituted widely late in the game.

“When you’re a good team, you’re gonna put a game away when you have a chance,” Burris said. “We didn’t necessarily do that.”

Four Admirals scored in double figures, three of them – Parker Lane, Dan Lanning, and Reid Vining – with 17. Matthew Dickens added 13. Hunter Click and Benjamin Barr each got 15 for LCHS.

As usual, Vining’s presence on the boards was every bit as important as his contribution on offense, as the senior post battled constantly for rebounds.

to within 51-26 with 6 minutes, 41 seconds left in the third quarter.

Caleb Murray led the Hawks with 14 points. Mike Fritts scored 12 points and Jax Sparks finished with 10. Kymani Smith and Brad Mezoo scored nine points each.

HVA opened the week with 78-70 district loss to Bearden at home.

Ladies go 3-for-3

Ken Lay
Correspondent

COOKEVILLE — It was a busy week for the Bearden High School girls basketball team as the Lady Bulldogs won three games in dominant fashion.

Bearden (10-1 overall, 3-0 in District 4-4A) closed out last week with a win over a defending state champion in the Midstate Saturday, Dec. 13. The Lady Bulldogs had little trouble with Memphis Business Academy as they posted a 73-35 victory at a tournament in Cookeville.

“They have a good program and they won a state championship in a smaller classification,” Bearden coach Justin Underwood said. “But we played really well.”

In Saturday’s win, it was the Lady Bulldogs’ trio of guards who shouldered the bulk of the offensive load. Senior and Missouri signee Natalya Hodge scored 24 points while Emma Rainey added 19 and Riley Hunt finished with 12.

“I think we had a good week. We played three games in six days,” Underwood said. “Nat, Emma and Riley, any of them can take over a game.”

“We’re at our best when we share the ball and we share the ball well and in Cookev-

ille, I think we did a good job offensively,” Underwood said, “We usually have two, three or four girls score in double figures and then we have our post players that do a good job getting us opportunities, second opportunities.”

On Thursday, Dec. 11, the Lady Bulldogs picked up a district victory over league newcomer Rhea County. Bearden routed the Lady Eagles, 74-33.

Hodge scored 33 points and Hunt added 17. In its three district games against Oak Ridge, Rhea County and Hardin Valley Academy, Bearden has defeated the three opponents by an average of 33 points.

In addition, the Lady Bulldogs, have won nine consecutive games since losing to West Ridge on Nov. 22. They would later avenge their lone loss of the season over the long Thanksgiving holiday weekend.

Bearden opened last week with a road district win as it toppled Hardin Valley Academy, 60-36.

“I thought Hardin Valley and Rhea County were very similar teams,” Underwood said. “They both have good guards who can shoot well and they have a good post player.”

Hodge had 33 points against the Lady Hawks while Hunt added 17 and Rainey finished with eight.

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Lady Hawks put up valiant effort

Ken Lay
Correspondent

Knoxville — A slow start proved problematic for the young Hardin Valley Academy girls basketball team on Saturday afternoon, Dec. 13.

But the Lady Hawks fought through their struggles and put up a valiant effort against Alcoa, one of the area's top teams in a 62-47 loss to the Lady Tornadoes at the Turnkey Hardwood Classic at Webb School of Knoxville.

Alcoa (5-1) darted out to an 18-8 lead in the first quarter and never trailed after the opening frame.

But the Lady Hawks (4-6) were playing their second game away from their home court in less than 24 hours.

Despite the loss, Hardin Valley coach Jennifer Galloway was upbeat following the game, which was contested at the Haslam center.

"Alcoa is a great team and they're very, very physical and I felt like that we responded to that" Galloway said. "We did a lot of good things.

"We're getting better at different things. They put pressure on us and we started to attack and there were times when we did well."

Alcoa extended its advan-

tage to 34-18 by halftime but HVA didn't wilt or go away.

The Lady Hawks started fast after the break as post player Audree Rhein scored the first five points of the third stanza and pulled HVA to within 34-23, and the Lady Hawks continued to chip away at the deficit and they trimmed it to 45-35 when Emma Rhoden knocked down a long-range 3-point jumper with 23 seconds remaining in the third stanza.

But Alcoa would answer when Harper Stinnett made a 3-pointer of her own as time expired in the quarter, making it 48-35.

Hardin Valley surrendered the first four points of the final frame and the Lady Tornadoes never really relinquished control of the contest.

Lindsey scored 19 points to lead all scorers. Rhein added 10 points and Alaina Lineberry finished with nine.

Stinnett led the Lady Tornadoes with 16 points. Gwen Carroll and Maddy Stewart had 12 points each.

On Friday, Dec. 12, the Lady Hawks picked up their first District 4-4A win on the road Friday night as they outlasted McMinn County, 69-64.

HVA opened the week at home with a 60-36 loss to district rival Bearden on Tuesday, Dec. 9.



Generations of Farragut baseball fans

Farragut Baseball's Most Senior Fan comes to a championship game. Cardinals won the Fall U10 Willie Mays League recently and there to see it was Al Wiberly age 99, who is surrounded his great-grandson (and Cardinals player) Thomas, his grandson, coach TJ (wearing sunglasses) and his son behind him, coach Greg.

Photo submitted

Remembering the Reason for the Season and wishing our community Happy Holidays!



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Farragut High School student Dylan, right, gives high fives to the school’s men’s basketball players at Anchors of Hope.

FHS All-Star Committee hosts Anchors of Hope

Tammy Cheek
tcheek@farragutpress.com

Farragut High School’s Leadership 3 class members are not only learning leadership skills, they are paying it forward.

The All-Star Committee, consisting of students from that leadership class — Noah Haag, Moses Burnette, Ella Schlomer and Alexa Shrader — organized an activity, the 2nd Annual Anchors of Hope event, in FHS gymnasium Friday afternoon, Dec.12, to give the school’s special education students an opportunity to play basketball.

“This event is about the student body making connections with students who are part of our special education program,” Schlomer said. “It allows for all of the students to shine in their own unique way.”

“Their joy, determination and teamwork inspire all of us,” Burnette said. “These events aren’t about winning; they’re about celebrating every student.”

“The goal for this event is to encourage and love on our special education classmates,” Haag said. “We hope it increases the spirit of community within our school, too.”

“Our student body is very invested in our special ed students, so planning an event where we all get to come together to celebrate them individually has been really fun,” Shrader said.

Haag said the event consists of three stations for warm-ups.

“Following that is a four-quarter game,” he said. “The stations are dribbling, shooting and layups.”

And, “the student body will be able to attend this event during their lunch period and cheer on their classmates,” Haag added.

“Last year’s Leadership 3 students — who were seniors from the class of 2025 — came up with this event,” he said. “Their committee was also called the All-Star committee. The four of us have taken their place,” said Haag, adding the class, led by math teacher Abbey Ellis, consists only of seniors.

“The planning and execution of this event is not for a grade; however, at the end of the semester, everyone in the class makes a portfolio that shows their accomplishments

See ANCHORS on Page 6B



“Crop drop” events

Volunteers helped bag 40,000 pounds of apples Saturday, Nov. 1, on the grounds of Concord United Methodist Church during one of its regular “crop drop” events. Apples were bagged into 8-10 pound increments, which were then distributed to more than 40 pantries and feeding ministries across East Tennessee, according to organizers. **Above:** John Cantrell, age 10, takes a short break during the morning’s activity.

Festival of Lights

Elias and Kelly Mason and their 1-year-old daughter, Della, of Asheville take in the lights at The Cove at Concord Park Friday, Dec. 5, during Knox County’s Festival of Lights.

Tammy Cheek



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‘White Christmas’



Photo submitted

The Palace Players will put on a live musical production of “White Christmas” Thursday, Dec. 18, through Sunday, Dec. 21, at CAK’s new theatre space located at 529 Academy Way. Shows will take place at 7 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday and at 2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Tickets are available at ThePalace-Players.com. Above, the cast is pictured at Light the Park.

press planner

• Virtue Church, 725 Virtue Road, invites the community to a Christmas Eve celebration through its Journey to the Manger Immersive Experience, held on Tuesday, Dec. 24. With a drop-in window between 2:30 and 4:45 p.m., the evening concludes with a traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 5 p.m. Families are encouraged to arrive no later than 3:45 p.m. to allow ample time to walk through the indoor interactive stations, enjoy complimentary hot chocolate and cookies in the

Hospitality Room and then attend the 5 p.m. service if they choose.

• The holidays bring a decline in blood product donations. During December, MEDIC is offering several special incentives and promotions to encourage donors to stop by a center or bus and give the gift of life. Appointments can be made online at www.medicblood.org, via the MEDIC app, or by calling 865-524-3074. Walk-ins are welcome.

See PRESS PLANNER on Page 6B

Project Giving Tree

After raising about \$1,000 for Project Giving Tree, Farragut Middle School’s sixth-grade baseball team spent an afternoon Christmas shopping for families in need, “a great display of teamwork on and off the field,” said one of the parents, Erin Burns Freeman. Team members, from left, at Target Turkey Creek, are: Ace Woodard, Cooper Gerwin, Beckett Ozias, Camden Case, Liam Webster, Grey Roethlisberger, John Clark Freeman, Levi Smalley, Judah Watson, Clifford Walker, Austin Madaychik, Bowen Miller, Garrett Amelse and Everett Manahan. “My son, John Clark, is on the team, and it was wonderful to see the boys come together for such a meaningful cause,” Burns Freeman said.

Erin Burns Freeman

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The WELL (Prayer & Worship)
CHRISTMAS SERVICES
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24TH
HARRISON LN CAMPUS:
1:30P, 3:00P, 4:30P, & 6:00P
*Nursery (ages infant-2yr old) will be offered during the 9:30 and 11:00A service.
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NEW COVENANT BAPTIST CHURCH
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Contact Information
Church: (865) 671-3370
Fax: (865) 966-2072
Email: newcovenant@newcovenantbc.com
Website: www.newcovenantbc.com
Weekly In-Person Services
Sun: Family Bible Hour (9:30 AM)
Sun: Worship Service (11:00 AM)
Recorded Services
[f](https://www.facebook.com/newcovenantbc) [y](https://www.youtube.com/newcovenantbc)
On ZOOM
Wed: Prayer Meeting & Bible Study (6:45 PM)
Wed: Cultivate (7:00 PM)
“Winning Souls and Changing Lives for Jesus Christ is a Total Family Ministry”

ANCHORS
From page 4B

and growth in leadership,” he said. “Last year, I was in [social studies teacher] Mr. [Ben] Collins’ Leadership 2—a class just for juniors,” Haag said. “It was all about evaluating myself as a leader and what I can bring to the table.

“Now in Leadership 3, I’m able to apply my leadership skills in the real world, my school and the community and effectively collaborate with others,” he added.

Also, “this event is a huge group project that takes a lot of planning and teamwork,” Haag said. “Our committee is very energetic.

“We’re dedicated to making this a memorable day for our classmates,” he said. “Everyone in our Leadership 3 class is kind and fun to work with. We work really well together.

“I’ve had so much fun planning this event with our committee. Seeing the smiles on the faces of our special education students is truly amazing,” he said.

PRESS PLANNER
From page 5B

• Tennessee’s Education Freedom Scholarship (EFS) application window for the 2026-2027 school year is open. Families who are already EFS beneficiaries and wish to renew for the 2026-2027 school year can begin submitting their renewal applications now. On Jan. 13, 2026,

the application window opens for students who are not currently receiving an EFS scholarship. All applications must be submitted by Jan. 30. For questions related to all available school choice programs, call 615-741-5158 and select the prompts for Office of Programs and School Choice or e-mail EFS.Questions@tn.gov



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CHRISTMAS

Gift
Guide

FARRAGUTPRESS

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Celebrate the Season

Hundreds — children and their families — gathered to take in the holiday spirit during Town of Farragut Parks & Recreation's annual Celebrate the Season in Farragut Community Center Thursday, Dec. 4.

The event started with a hot chocolate bar in the lobby, followed by a photo with Santa, craft making, cookie decorating, games and writing letters to Santa.

Photos by Tammy Cheek



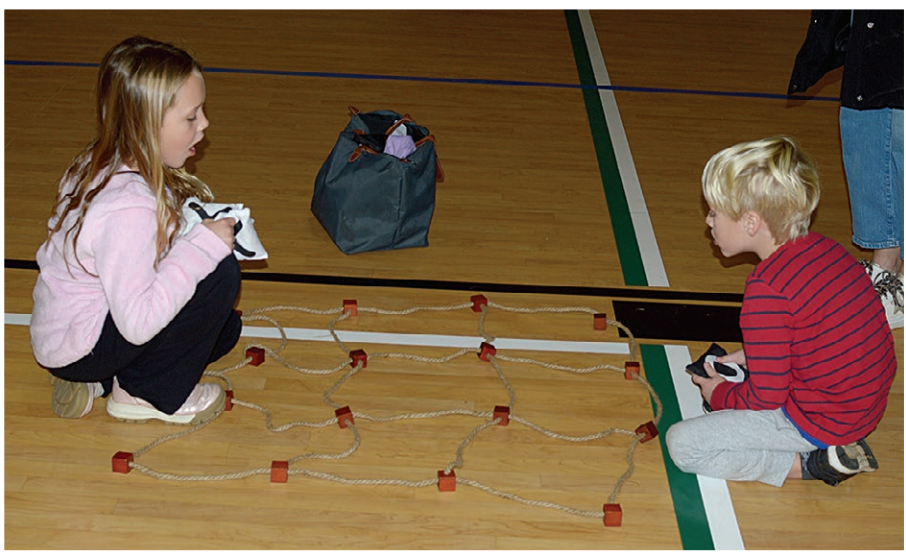
From left, siblings Ada Neill, 2; Lucy Neill, 3; Ezra Neill, 7; and Sophia Neill, 9; with Santa



Evan Lynch, 6, coloring



Max Lall, 8, with Santa



Whitney Emison, 7, playing a game with brother Thomas, 5



From left, Charlie Chiu with daughters, Ellie, 10, and Millie, 8, and Santa (Ron Oestreich)



Riley Myers, 5, and her brother, Sonnie, 3, decorate cookies.



From left, Garrett Box holding Eleanor, 2, and Madeline Box holding Bailey, 4, with Santa



Riley Pilgreen, 2, with mom Brennan Pilgreen