



Tammy Cheek

Benjamin Mullins, Knox BZA chair vice chair

Commission approves access for EZ Stop

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The Farragut Municipal Planning Commission unanimously approved right-of-way improvements Thursday, Jan. 15, for the proposed EZ Stop Convenience Market at 1064 Concord Road, even though most

of the development lies outside town limits.

Commissioners stressed their authority is limited to town-controlled access. “All we are controlling is the access to that property... this development is controlled by Knox County,” Commissioner Louise Povlin said. She added

the historic Village of Concord overlay does not extend to the commercial area, which has long been zoned Neighborhood Commercial — a designation that allows a gas station.

The project includes a 5,000-square-foot EZ Stop Food Mart, a 2,000-square-foot restau-

rant, and a 14-pump gas station at the intersection of Concord Road and Second Drive. Nearby residents had opposed the development, arguing it was incompatible with the historic neighborhood, but the Knoxville-Knox County Board

See EZ on Page 2A

Green Light for phase 3

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West End Center owner Tommy Vann can move forward with Phase 3 of the development after the Farragut Municipal Planning Commission unanimously approved a site plan for a new 9,600-square-foot building Thursday, Jan. 15.

The building, at 171 West End Ave., will sit at the south intersection of West Point Drive and West End Avenue and tie into the existing West End Center. The project also will require modifications to portions of the parking lot and an existing detention basin.

The item had been postponed in November while the applicant — The Architecture Collaborative on behalf of Vann — finalized a stormwater plan. With that now completed, Town Community Development director Mark Shipley said the project is ready, pending several conditions.

One condition still requires action from the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, which must approve a text amendment allowing the building’s facade to meet design requirements by averaging masonry percentages across elevations. Current rules require 75 percent face brick on each exterior wall, but existing West End

See PHASE 3 on Page 2A



Photo submitted

Realizing a sign 60 feet in the air is hard to make repairs or refurbish, workers removed the old Cotton Eyed Joe sign to a workshop in another location.

Cotton Eyed Joe goes LED

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Motorists and patrons of Cotton Eyed Joe might expect to see a new sign at the long-time entertainment venue at 11220 Outlet Drive.

Chuck Ward, owner of Cotton Eyed, is looking to improve its existing sign, so he took the old sign down with plans to replace the neon with LED lighting.

“When you’re getting four or five hundred calls from people complaining ... voicing their opinion about the sign, you want to get it fixed,” he said.

“This sign was put up 33 years ago, and it’s an eyesore. It doesn’t work,” Ward said.

“The neon’s out of it because of the transformers or things of that nature.

“So, we started taking bids about two years ago to redo it,” he said. “And, the gentleman who originally built it came to me and said, ‘I can redo it.’ So that’s who we went with, Tony Saples with Neon Services.

“He came out, looked at it and we discussed a couple quotes,” Ward said. “We decided we’d let (Saples) do it.

“It’s been about six months in the works to take it down just because of the weather, and he’s very busy.

“Finally, this week we got a chance to take it down, and here we are,” he said. “It’s in his shop, getting ready to

be refurbished.

“It will basically look the same,” Ward said. “It will have new skin on it, which will be white, and the letters will be embossed, like they are now, but instead of neon, it will be LED.

“That’s what will last,” he added. “Neon’s just very hard to take care of because it’s exposed. It’s right out in the middle of the weather all the time.

“If a bird flies into it or if it rains real hard, it can break,” Ward said. “If it gets wet, it can cause it to short out. And there are so many moving pieces to it. There may be six different sections of neon in

See COTTON EYE on Page 2A

Keeping Warm, Part 3 of 3

Utility aid offered for winter heating costs

Tammy Cheek
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Heat shortages and rising utility costs can put individuals and families at risk during the winter — especially when heating systems fail or budgets fall short.

Utility providers such

as Lenoir City Utilities Board offer assistance programs to help customers facing financial hardship, LCUB public relations specialist Autumn Luna said.

“These programs are designed to assist customers who may be experiencing financial hard-

ship and are struggling to meet their needs,” Luna said. “By collaborating with community partners, we aim to offer practical solutions that help promote stability and peace of mind for those we serve.”

LCUB’s Community Assistance Program

provides help with utility bills and, in some cases, medical expenses, food, clothing and housing. Customers apply through Mid-East Community Action. Application packets are available at any LCUB office, and eligibility requires supporting documentation.

Local organizations partnering with LCUB include the Good Samaritan Center of Loudon County, The Salvation Army and Knox County Community Action Committee.

LCUB also operates the Neighbor Aide Program, which assists qualifying households with utility

bills through voluntary customer donations. Contributions are administered by the Good Samaritan Center, and LCUB matches donations up to \$1,000. Donations may be added to monthly bills.

See UTILITY on Page 2A



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from the **Town** by **Wendy Smith**

Getting down to business—addressing areas of improvement in Farragut

Last spring, Town of Farragut residents participated in Polco’s National Community Survey, a benchmark survey that has been administered in towns and cities across the United States. The results of the survey were overwhelmingly positive:

- 97% rank Farragut as an excellent or good place to live;
 - 95% rate their neighborhood as excellent or good as a place to live;
 - 94% rate the quality of K-12 education as excellent or good;
 - 93% rate the overall quality of Parks & Rec opportunities as excellent or good.
- While it would be easy to rest on our laurels, the survey also indicated the areas where residents would like to see improvement:
- Community Design: 61% rate the overall design or layout of Farragut's residential and commercial areas as excellent or good;
 - Mobility: 50% rate the over-

all quality of the transportation system as excellent or good.

We want residents to know that we listened to this feedback. Here are two projects that are under way in 2026 to address these challenges.

Farragut’s Community Development Department will update the Town’s Comprehensive Land Use Plan this year. The plan was last updated in 2012 and was intended to serve the community through 2025, said Community Development Director Mark Shipley. He will soon start the process of hiring a consultant to evaluate existing conditions and engage the public on future land use-related priorities.

In addition to considering how available land should be developed, the updated plan will address the Town’s existing transportation infrastructure — both roads and shared-use paths — and determine if there are opportunities to enhance efficiency and promote different

transportation options.

“We want to put together recommendations for the coming years in a comprehensive way instead of just adding more lanes.”

There’s no denying increased traffic is an issue in Farragut, along with the rest of Knox County. A recent University of Tennessee study reports Knox County had a net population growth of nearly 30,000 people from 2020 through 2024, and this data doesn’t include growth in Loudon County, which further impacts Farragut roads.

The Town’s Advanced Traffic Management System (ATMS), which was completed in spring of 2025, has improved drive times along the Kingston Pike corridor. But the Town of Farragut will take advantage of additional technological advances this year to make our intersections even more efficient. An adaptive signalization pilot project will include



Photo submitted

Community Development Director Mark Shipley (left) helps residents during a public input session. Public input will be solicited this year as part of an update to Farragut’s Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

the four Kingston Pike intersections between Campbell Station Road and West End Boulevard. This pilot project will enable Farragut’s connected traffic signal system to better respond to unpredictable variations in traffic, assistant Town engineer Eric Schindler said.

While the ATMS utilizes signal timing patterns that were determined to be the most efficient for different times of day, assuming typical traffic flows, the adaptive technology

can make changes in real time to those timing patterns when backups occur.

“It’s not magic. Kingston Pike is a heavily-traveled corridor,” Schindler said. “But we’re constantly striving to improve traffic flow in the Town of Farragut, and this is an additional upgrade.”

The Town plans to offer the National Community Survey again next year. We hope to improve our marks in community design and mobility in 2027.



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KOC hand surgeon Dr. Robert Ivy retires

Staff Reports

editor@farragutpress.com

Knoxville Orthopaedic Clinic recently announced Dr. Robert Ivy retired at the end of 2025 after 31 years as a hand surgeon.

During his tenure, he also served many years as president of KOC.

“Ivy has made a lasting impact on the Knoxville community, including patients, physician colleagues and staff,” a KOC press release stated.



Dr. Ivy

“Dr. Ivy’s wisdom, compassion and leadership demonstrated what it means to be a KOC surgeon,” said Dr. Jay Crawford, fellow KOC surgeon and current president of Knoxville Orthopaedic Clinic. “He has helped shape our medical practice into what it is today.”

Ivy joined KOC in 1994 as a specialist in the treatment of hand, wrist and elbow disorders after completing his training. He earned his bachelor’s degree from Stanford University and was awarded the esteemed Justin Potter Medical Scholarship to Vanderbilt School of Medicine.

Also, Ivy completed a surgical internship and four-year

residency at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, followed by a fellowship in hand and microvascular surgery at the Indiana Hand to Shoulder Center in Indianapolis.

“Throughout his career, Dr. Ivy has dedicated himself to his patients, spending countless hours in the operating room,” the press release stated. “He was selected by his peers for the ‘Best Doctors in America’ recognition and consistently was voted a Cityview magazine ‘Top Doc’ by the community he served,” it stated.

However, Ivy expressed that recognition is not what drove his commitment.

“I have thoroughly enjoyed my career, and it has been a genuine privilege to serve my patients and the East Tennessee community throughout the years,” the surgeon said.

“It has been an honor to have Dr. Ivy at KOC for so many years, and we wish him a very happy and relaxing retirement,” Crawford said.

For patients seeking an orthopaedic hand expert, Ivy recommended his partners who are fellowship-trained hand surgeons.

That team includes Dr. Douglas Calhoun, Dr. David Cooper, Dr. Andrew Harris, Dr. Elizabeth McBride, Dr. Joshua Moss, Dr. Kristen Plotze, Dr. Benjamin Rogozinski and Dr. Nicholas Yetter.

Learn more about all of KOC’s experts and services online at KOCortho.com.



Photo submitted

Blue Ridge Yoga patrons enjoy not only camaraderie but also helping to give back to the community \$200,000, a \$100,000 increase since 2121.

Blue Ridge Yoga gives back to community

Tammy Cheek

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Family and patrons of Blue Ridge Yoga celebrated a new milestone in giving back to the community \$200,000, a \$100,000 increase since 2121.

Using yoga classes and other fundraisers, owner Jessica Mishu and her staff have raised funds for such organizations as Girls on the Run, American Cancer Society, Empty Stocking Fund, The Tennessee School for the Deaf, Shangri-La Therapeutic Riding Academy, Smoky Mountain Service Dogs, Bridge Refugee Center and numerous other local programs.

In 2021, Schrieber said the studio’s commitment to giving back was publicly recognized when Farragut West Knox Chamber of Commerce surprised Mishu with a ribbon-cutting celebration marking \$100,000 raised for the community. Farragut Mayor Ron Williams presented a proclamation on behalf of the Town, recognizing Blue Ridge Yoga’s generosity and naming the business “a model of servant leadership within a small business.”

“The proclamation noted since opening its doors, Mishu and her staff have consistently demonstrated a passion for supporting other local organizations and embodying the yogic principle of seva, or selfless service, in the way they do business,” Schrieber said.

“From the start, the studio was rooted in the idea that a small business could play an active role in strengthening the community it serves,” she said.

“Now, 10 years later, Blue Ridge Yoga has donated more than \$200,000 to local nonprofits throughout the Knoxville and Farragut areas raised through donation-based classes, benefit workshops and community-centered events that allow students to support meaningful causes simply by showing up to practice,” she said.

Blue Ridge Yoga, 623 N. Campbell Station Road, has “become known not only as a place for physical and mental wellness but also as a hub for service,” Schrieber said. Over the years, the studio has supported a wide range of organizations, including Young Williams Animal Center, Girls on the Run, American Cancer Society, Empty Stocking Fund, The Tennessee School for the Deaf, Shangri-La Therapeutic Riding Academy, Smoky Mountain Service Dogs, Bridge Refugee Center and numerous other local programs.

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Julie Blaylock, Farragut West Knox Chamber of Commerce president/CEO, praised the studio for its consistency — particularly during challenging periods. She noted, “Blue Ridge Yoga continued its charitable efforts even through the COVID-19 pandemic, never stepping away from its commitment to service.”

Mishu, who has lived and traveled in many parts of the world, said the generosity of East Tennessee is what made this approach possible.

“I picked the perfect place in the world,” she said. “The way this community comes together to support one another is unmatched. I’m so grateful for our students, our staff and every organization we’ve partnered with over the years.”

As Blue Ridge Yoga reaches its 10-year milestone, Schrieber said the studio’s impact continues to be felt beyond the mat.

“For many in the Farragut and Knoxville communities, it represents what a locally owned business can be when wellness, connection and service intersect — creating a space where personal growth and community support go hand in hand,” she said.

To learn more about upcoming donation-based classes and community fundraisers, visit www.yogaknoxvilletn.com/events

businessbriefs

• Rather & Kittrell has announced the promotion of Hannah Whatley CFP, AIF, to senior advisor, Nathan Smith to chief of staff and Thomas Beahn, CFP, to advisor.

Whatley will continue working with Rather & Kittrell clients as they pursue successful financial futures. She is a certified financial planner professional and an accredited investment fiduciary. She also currently serves on the board of the Historic Tennessee Theatre.

Smith will continue to be actively involved in the management of client portfolios and

will continue to lead RK’s investment committee. He will be adding responsibilities for the firm’s overall operations, client service and company financials as part of the RK executive leadership team. Smith joined the Rather & Kittrell team in 2015 as portfolio manager.

Beahn will continue to work with Rather & Kittrell clients as they pursue a successful financial future. He joined the RK Wealth Management team in November 2024 as an associate advisor. Thomas collaborates with senior advisors to help clients make informed financial decisions.

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BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Water Into Wine hosted the Knoxville Ice Bears for a meet and greet on Tuesday, January 13th. Avid fans gathered for the chance to collect autographs, take photos and enjoy one-on-one moments with many of the hockey team’s players. Mike Murray, President/CEO/Owner, joined the team and the opportunity for a photo with Candace Viox, owner of Water Into Wine. The night was a memorable experience for fans and hosts alike.

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Letter to the Editor

To the Editor,

There has been growing confusion around public records and the use of email file formats, such as MSG and EML. Recently, the Town Attorney and Alderman LaCroix suggested these files are unsafe or easily manipulated. That claim is misleading and distracts from the real issue, preserving the integrity of public records.

MSG and EML files are original email files. They are not documents recreated later or compiled for convenience. They are the actual container that holds an email exactly as it existed when it was sent or received. A simple way to think about it is a sealed envelope. Everything that belongs with that email lives inside that container.

That container includes:

- The sender and recipient
- The date and time
- Routing information showing how the message traveled
- Attachments
- And hidden technical data, known as

metadata, that verifies authenticity

All of this information exists together inside one structured file¹.

This matters because metadata is how authenticity is verified. Metadata shows when an email was created, whether it was forwarded, how it moved through mail servers and whether it has been altered. This is why digital forensics professionals preserve emails in their original MSG or EML format when accuracy and integrity matter².

Converting an email to a PDF, however, fundamentally changes the records.

A PDF is not an email. It is a flat visual snapshot of what someone chose to display on a screen at a specific moment. When an MSG or EML file is converted to PDF, much of the underlying structure is lost. Metadata is removed or hidden. Routing details disappear. Attachments may be separated or omitted. What remains is something that *looks* like an email but no longer contains the full electronic record³.

This is where the misunderstanding

occurs...

An original MSG or EML file is not casually editable. Meaningful alteration requires specialized technical knowledge and software, and even then, changes tend to leave detectable inconsistencies or corrupt the file. That is precisely why investigators rely on native email files, the structure makes improper changes easier to detect, not easier to conceal⁴.

PDFs are different. They are designed for presentation and sharing. They are widely editable, easily re-saved, and changes can be made without obvious signs to the average viewer. Once an email has been converted to PDF, the original electronic evidence is already gone. So, when the Town Administration claims that providing native email files is a security risk, the logic is backwards. If anything, unnecessary conversion creates risk, because it removes the very information that allows records to be verified as complete and authentic.

Public records laws exist to promote transparency and trust. That goal is best served when records are provided in the form in which they already exist, not altered, flattened, or reformatted in ways that obscure important details.

If we care about accountability, accuracy, and public confidence, we should insist on preserving records as they are not settling for simplified versions that tell only part of the story. If the town has nothing to hide then they should have no problem giving me the records in their natural state.

Sincerely,
Kim Parks, Farragut

Footnote Sources

1. Internet Message Format, RFC 5322 – defines the structure of EML email files
2. Swailes Computer Forensics, Email Evidence: Why Metadata Matters
3. CoolUtils, What Is an EML File?
4. Aryson Technologies, Analyzing EML Files for Forensic Investigations

Reports
From page 3A

tain the suspect's name, address and phone number from hotel management. Hotel management confirmed video footage

of the incident is available and will be released to law enforcement.

On Friday, Jan. 9, Knox County Sheriff's deputies were dispatched to a burglary call at a

Queensbury Drive residence. The complainant reported his ex-girlfriend entered his home without authorization and stole cash and household items. The complainant told deputies the female suspect entered

through a side door using a keypad earlier in the day. The suspect was not authorized to be at the residence. Once inside, she took approximately \$150 in cash from the kitchen and a pillow and bedspread

valued at \$150 from the master bedroom. The complainant showed deputies security footage that appeared to show the suspect taking the items. He was provided a link to upload the footage to law enforcement.



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Farragut High School students wore wigs in the student section during the FHS basketball game against Rhea County on Tuesday, Jan. 6. Pictured from left are Jake Harris, Riley Turner, Brooklyn Morris, Gianna Velusio and Emma Descamps.

Sports fans unite!

From the basketball court to the swimming pool, there have been plenty of familiar faces at different athletic events across the Farragut area in the past few weeks. Several pictures were captured at the Farragut-Rhea County District 4-4A matchups on Jan. 6, as the Admirals won both games against the Eagles. That night also featured a special honor for Farragut senior K.J. McNealy, who broke the Lady Admirals' 23-year-old program rebounding record held by 2002 graduate and former coach Alex Munday. Then fans smiled for more photos at the Lenoir City-Hardin Valley basketball games at Lenoir City High Friday, Jan. 9, as both Panther squads defeated the Hawks in two separate battles. Finally, plenty of swimming fans gathered at UT's Alan Jones Aquatic Center that Sunday, Jan. 11, as Farragut and Hardin Valley squared off for a Senior Day dual meet in Knoxville.



HVA cheerleaders smile before the start of the Lenoir City-Hardin Valley basketball game. Clockwise from left: Maya Daugherty, Brynlee Thomas, Legend Rivers, Anna Benko and 2-year-old Aspen Williams.



Fans await the start of the Hardin Valley-Lenoir City basketball game. Pictured from left are Andrew Hamblet, Carolina Hamblet, Leighanne Hedges and Mark Hedges.



Lindsay Lewis, left, and husband Jeff Lewis smile for a photo during the Hardin Valley-Lenoir City basketball game.

Photos by Jake Nichols



Chris and Melinda Webster smile for a photo during the Farragut-Hardin Valley dual swim meet.



Sue Kim, Jesse Carver and 2-year-old Namari Owens smile for a photo while taking in the Farragut-Rhea County basketball game.



Brody Appling, Dominic Vanacker and Aiden Vanacker smile for the camera during the Farragut-Rhea County basketball game.



Jim Knight, Stephanie Knight and Eliza Knight smiled for a photo during the Farragut-Hardin Valley swim meet.



Jake Nichols

The Farragut swim program celebrated its Senior Day during its meet against Hardin Valley Academy Sunday, Jan. 11. Pictured from left are FHS coach Marlee Sanders and seniors Aydan Skelton, Hisato Kurosaki, Stephen Xiao and Adam Webster.



Jake Nichols

From left, Hardin Valley Academy swim seniors Marley Molchan, Cole McIntosh and Hayden Hall during the Farragut-HVA meet on Sunday, Jan. 11, at Allan Jones Aquatic Center.

Admirals
From page 1B

Cleland led the men’s high school side in this event at 55.65 seconds, and FMS sixth-grader Sam Vineyard led the middle-schoolers at 31.34 seconds in the 50-yarder.

Caroline Hackett won the women’s 100-yard freestyle event with 58.15 seconds, and HVA’s Scarlett Lamie won the middle school edition at 1:08.34.

The men’s event saw a first-place finish for Webster at 52.96 seconds while Hung won for the middle school with 59.87 seconds.

Hardin Valley’s Katie Dutrow paced the Hawks in the women’s 500-yard freestyle at 5:14.65, and Hall won on the men’s side, 4:58.91. HVA also won the women’s and men’s high school 200-yard freestyle relays at 1:47.56 and 1:37.72, respectively, while Farragut Middle won the men’s middle school version, 2:00.07.

Farragut senior Aydan Skelton won the women’s 100-yard backstroke with a time of 1:09.90 while Saffles claimed the middle school’s 50-yard edition at 30.78 seconds. The men’s version saw a win for FHS junior Jake Rohan at 59.82 seconds, and Dutrow won the women’s 100-yard breaststroke at 1:12.28. FHS freshman Petr Ievlev won the men’s event, 1:10.19, and HVA’s Hyunseong Hong won in the 50-yarder with 34.87 seconds.

Farragut won the women’s and men’s open 400-yard freestyle relays at 4:28.75 and 3:59.71, respectively, while HVA won the middle school’s mixed 200-yard freestyle at 1:48.97.

Between heats, the FHS and HVA programs each took time to recognize their seniors.

“This senior class is special to me because they are the first class that I’ve gotten the opportunity to coach in some capacity all four years,” Farragut coach Marlee Sanders said. “They have each been such an integral part of our team, scoring over 600 combined points since their freshman year. Each of our seniors are multi-year state athletes, and being able to witness their personal achievements both in and out of the pool is something I’ve really enjoyed.”

Hall, the reigning 200-yard freestyle state champion, echoed Sanders’ thought on the Hawks’ side.

“I’m just really glad to be out here one last time,” he said.

Hawks shock Wildcats, 70-63

Ken Lay
Correspondent

Hardin Valley — Hardin Valley Academy boys basketball coach Andy Arendt has been waiting for his young team to mature.

The Hawks, one of the area’s youngest teams, have battled through a roller-coaster ride of a 2025-26 campaign. But they took a big step forward at home Friday night when they overcame a nine-point half-time deficit to notch a victory over one of the state’s most successful and tradition-rich programs.

Hardin Valley persevered and toppled Oak Ridge, 70-63, in a District 4-4A contest

at HVA.

“We grew up tonight and this was a big win for us,” Arendt said. “We played harder than they did and we were tougher than they were, and that’s what I told the players and the coaches in the locker room.

“This is a big win for us against a coach like (Oak Ridge’s) Aaron Green. He’s a great coach, probably the best in the state.”

The game was tight in the first quarter as the Hawks (12-8 overall, 2-4 in the district) and the Wildcats (11-7, 4-2) matched baskets. Oak Ridge, however, was able to seize the upper hand when Justice West buried a shot at the buzzer as time expired in the opening

frame.

From there, Oak Ridge was able to build on the momentum that the first-quarter buzzer-beater established. The Wildcats had a 30-24 advantage late in the second half but another last-second bucket, this one a jumper from beyond the 3-point arc, by Josh Amos, made the score, 33-24, at the halftime break.

The Hawks clawed their way back into the game as they outscored Oak Ridge, 20-11, in the frame and tied the game with a buzzer-beater of their own, a two-pointer by Hunter Ratcliff.

Over the final eight minutes of the contest, Hardin Val-

See HAWKS on Page 3B

Lady Wildcats take down Hawks, 49-43

Ken Lay
Correspondent

Hardin Valley — Hardin Valley Academy’s girls basketball team found itself in a precarious position at halftime in its game against Oak Ridge Friday night.

In a battle between two of the area’s youngest teams, the Lady Hawks faced a 16-point deficit after the second quarter.

They battled but came up short in a 49-43 District 4-4A loss to Oak Ridge at HVA.

“We did a good job digging ourselves a nice hole but we

almost got out of it,” Lady Hawks’ coach Jennifer Gallo-way said.

The game was tightly-contested in the first quarter with the Lady Wildcats (6-10 overall, 3-3 in the district) clinging to a slim 10-7 advantage, but Oak Ridge went on a tear in the second stanza as it used a 21-8 run to extend its lead to 31-15 by halftime.

The Lady Wildcats were hot after the break and led 38-18 and appeared to be headed to an easy victory midway through the third quarter but the Lady Hawks (9-10, 2-4) had

other ideas.

Hardin Valley made three 3-pointers in the third frame and clawed its way back into the contest and had the deficit down to 39-28 when Gracie Edwards knocked down a long-range jumper with 13.8 seconds remaining in the period.

Oak Ridge built its advantage back up to 43-30 by the end of the period.

The Lady Wildcats scored first in the fourth quarter as Evaiya Mitchell converted a midrange jumper with 6 min-

See LADY on Page 3B



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As the 2026 election season approaches, farragutpress is providing political candidates with an opportunity to share their message directly with readers through candidate profiles published in the newspaper.

- Each candidate may submit one profile, and the written content should be 400 words or fewer.
- One photograph may accompany the profile.
- While the newspaper will not alter the substance or message of submitted profiles, it reserves the right to make spelling and grammar corrections as needed / AP style.
- All submissions will be reviewed by the Publisher prior to print deadlines to ensure they meet established standards.
- Candidates need to provide contact information with their submission in case clarification or follow-up is necessary.

Candidates may email their political profiles to editor@farragutpress.com

Deadline for profiles is Friday by 12 p.m. prior to the following week's publication.



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Jake Nichols

After leading the Maryville Rebels for almost two decades and spending nine years in the college ranks, legendary coach George Quarles has returned to his native East Tennessee to lead the football program at Webb School of Knoxville.

Quarles ready for ‘fresh start’ at Webb

Jake Nichols
jnichols@farragutpress.com

George Quarles has not yet personalized his new office inside the Lee Athletic Center at Webb School of Knoxville. Two Spartan football helmets sit under a television, and on the white board, players’ last names are scrawled in black marker with each group separated by class. The decor is minimal, yet Quarles appears right at home in his new digs. After leading Maryville to 11 state titles in 18 years as head coach and spending almost a decade with three different col-

lege programs, the Jefferson County graduate is ready for a fresh start in a setting that is all too familiar. “The biggest thing to me is the mountains,” he said with a smile. “Whether it’s down Alcoa Highway or Pellissippi going back toward Maryville, just seeing those mountains calms me down and makes me feel good. “It’s just the right time for me to come back and do this. And we have so many friends that live here, so that’s been a good part for us. It has been really nice to be back home.” In his return to East Tennessee, the 58-year-old is tasked

with leading a Webb program that is looking to return to prominence in Division II-AA. He comes armed with fresh knowledge, having seen firsthand the dawn of the transfer portal in assistant roles at Furman (his alma mater) and Austin-Peay with two years as head coach at East Tennessee State sandwiched in-between. Quarles said the evolution of the college game made him appreciate the purity of the high school ranks that much more. But his start at Webb comes right as the portal effect seeps into the prep level, too.

See QUARLES on Page 5B

Celebrating 100 year milestone of Faith Lutheran member Elmer Syler

Tammy Cheek
tcheek@farragutpress.com

Faith Lutheran Church celebrated a milestone of one of its members: the 100th birthday of Elmer E. Syler. “One hundred years is not just a longevity accomplishment; it’s that [he] has seen and witnessed life for which you have no personal reference,” church member Stephen Dean said. “Just as Elmer is a man at how life has changed since he was born, you should be amazed how little you understand about the life he lived.” “There must be something following me [to keep me alive],” Elmer said. “There’s something in my life I haven’t done yet.” At the church service, state Rep. Jason Zachary presented Elmer with a flag that flew over the state capital and a proclamation in his honor for his “faith, patriotism and courage.” Additionally, Elmer received a proclamation from Lenoir City Mayor Tony Akins and Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs, a letter from the Air Force and a letter from U.S. President Donald Trump. In wishing Elmer a happy birthday, Trump wrote, “I also extend my personal gratitude for your unwavering service to our country. The grit, tenac-



Syler

ity and extraordinary bravery you have displayed throughout your life continue to inspire generations of Americans.” “He’s a very humble man,” said Elmer’s daughter-in-law Donna Syler. “He’s one of the best fathers-in-law.” “With Elmer, every Sunday, it’s a teaching lesson,” said friend George Herbold, who drives Elmer to church and back. “We drive 13 miles one way and 13 miles another way, so it’s always a teaching lesson about the Depression, how he grew up, how they didn’t depend on anybody else but themselves. “And, with the war ... what he did and what he saw,” Herbold said. Dean presented a seven-and-a-half-minute video of the centenarian’s life. Elmer was born Jan. 8, 1926, three years before the Great Depression started. One of nine children in the Syler household, he was raised in Baltic, Ohio, at his grandfather’s farm. “My dad worked in the sawmill,” he recalled. Dean related in the video that Elmer’s father got 90 cents an hour for that work. Elmer remembered on cold mornings, he would go downstairs to the cook stove to get warm before doing his chores. He was 15 at the time of the Japanese army’s attack on Pearl Harbor. Three years later, Elmer was drafted into the U.S. Army, becoming part of the now non-existent Army Air Corps as part of the 325th

See SYLER on Page 5B

Community Worship Night to unite churches, life-affirming organizations

Staff Reports
editor@farragutpress.com

First Baptist Church of Concord will host a community-wide Worship Night Sunday, Jan. 25, in the Student Center/Gym of its church, 11704 Kingston Pike, bringing together churches, pro-life organizations and community members from across the 865

region for an evening of worship, prayer and unity. Doors open at 5:30 p.m., with worship beginning at 6 p.m. The evening will feature live worship, personal testimonies, a message from Pastor John Mark Harrison and focused prayer for the greater Knoxville communities, particularly around the value and sanctity of human life.

“Organizers emphasized the event is not a fundraiser or political rally, but a gathering centered on faith, worship and prayer,” a FBC press release stated. “Attendees will also have the opportunity to connect with local life-affirming organizations that serve women, families and individuals throughout the region.” “This night is about unity,”

organizer Breanne Houston said. “We’re coming together simply to worship the Lord, pray for our city and seek God’s heart for life, healing and hope in our community.” The Worship Night is open to the public, and individuals, families and church groups are encouraged to attend. For more information, visit www.concordonline.org.





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Wed: Cultivate (7:00 PM)

"Winning Souls and Changing Lives for Jesus Christ is a Total Family Ministry"

Quarles

From page 4B

“It’s kind of what high school football has become,” Quarles said with a shrug. “I don’t know if I like it or not, but it is what it is.”

That could play to the advantage of a Webb program that dealt with a thin roster and plenty of injuries last year. Those effects led to a 1-9 campaign, resulting in former coach Don Mahoney’s departure just two years removed from back-to-back 10-win seasons.

The move prompted Webb to inquire about Quarles’ interest when he was in the midst of his second season as Austin-Peay’s tight ends coach. Initially, Quarles waved off the approach; but once he visited the campus and connected with the Webb administration, the idea became reality.

“At first, I didn’t think it would work out since I was trying to finish my retirement, and I kind of dismissed it,” Quarles admitted. “They called back and had something worked out, so I came up the day before Thanksgiving. Had a great interview and felt like this could be something that might work. Then I brought my wife and sons back probably a week and a half later to make sure the commitment level was there to be successful and win games and do it the right way.”

Upon their return, one of Quarles’ sons pointed out that Webb’s campus looked like Furman University. Beyond the place, though, it was the people who sold him on the job.

“There’s a great commitment from the president all the way down,” he said. “We felt a genuine excitement about us being here. And the facilities are second to none.”

After officially starting Monday, Jan. 5, Quarles is looking to put the rest of his staff in place before spring practice while building a roster to compete in a tough East Region in Division II-AA.

The first step in that process is easy. Mahoney — who led Tennessee’s offensive line under Butch Jones before going to Webb — is staying on to coach the Spartans’ front five.

“I think it says a lot about him that he’s willing to come back,” Quarles said. “Those guys love him, so I’m really excited about that. And I think it says a lot about the culture at Webb that he wants to come back, too.”

Quarles noted he wants to move deliberately with the hiring process of other staffers.

He did, however, emphasize the need for a skilled defensive coordinator since he wants to run and call the offense like he did at Maryville and Furman, where he was an associate head coach.

“People have asked me what kind of offense we will run,” he said. “I don’t know. I want to see what we can do. I want to see where we are at different positions before I say that we will do one thing or another. You have to fit your system to what your players can do, not the other way around.”



Photo by Tammy Cheek

State Rep. Jason Zachary, far left, honored Elmer Syler, second from left, with a proclamation for Elmer’s 100th birthday at a Faith Lutheran Church service Sunday, Jan. 11. Joining them were Elmer’s son and daughter-in-law, Mark and Donna Syler; niece, Bonnie Cline; and Cline’s son and daughter-in-law, Elmer and Maria McElreath.

Syler

From page 4B

Glider Infantry.

“The 18-year-old carried an automatic rifle,” Dean stated.

Elmer rode gliders that crash landed in France and Normandy, where he fought as part of the invasion in Normandy and in the Battle of the Bulge, receiving a Bronze Star for his gallantry.

Dean stated in the video El-

mer told him he felt a force on him.

“I believe it was the hand of God,” he told Dean.

After meeting his wife, Catherine, she led him to become a Lutheran when they married. She died in 2013. They had

three children.

He moved to Lenoir City about 10 years ago to be closer to family. Along with attending Faith Lutheran, he still takes walks and rides a stationary bike at a fitness center.

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FARRAGUT BOARD OF MAYOR & ALDERMEN MEETING

THURSDAY, JANUARY 22, 2026 AT 6:00 PM

- I. Roll Call, Silent Prayer, Pledge of Allegiance
- II. Approval of Agenda
- III. Approval of Minutes
 - A. October 9, 2025
 - B. November 13, 2025
 - C. January 8, 2026
- IV. Mayor’s Report
 - A. National Wear Red Day Proclamation
 - B. Presentation of the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2025 by Travis Lowe, CPA with Pugh CPAS
 - V. Ordinances & Resolutions
 - A. Ordinances
 - 1. First Reading
 - a. Approval of Ordinance 26-02 (recommended for approval by the Planning Commission as Ordinance 25-20), on first reading, an ordinance to amend the Farragut Code of Ordinances, Appendix A - Zoning, Chapter 3, Section XII. - General Commercial District (C-1), Sub-section F. Mixed Use Town Center, 3., Building Facade Requirements, to provide for new buildings to follow the Town of Farragut Architectural Design Standards, as amended, for the Town Center Subarea and remove refer-

- ence to the Town Center Design Requirements (The Architecture Collaborative, Applicant)
- b. Approval of Ordinance 26-03 (recommended for approval by the Planning Commission as Ordinance 25-21), on first reading, an ordinance to amend the Farragut Code of Ordinances, Appendix A - Zoning, Chapter 3, Section XVII. Office district (O-1), Subsection B. Permitted principal and accessory uses and structures, to add “Interactive Sports Analysis Services” as a permitted use and to include a definition for “Interactive Sports Analysis Services” in Chapter 2 of the Zoning Ordinance (Christian Miller, Applicant)
- c. Approval of Ordinance 26-04 (recommended for approval by the Planning Commission as Ordinance 25-22), on first reading, an ordinance to amend the Farragut Zoning Map to rezone Parcel 05501, Tax Map 152 and Parcel 055, Tax Map 152 (12232 Turkey Creek Road) from Agricultural (A) to General Single-Family Residential (R-2) (Midtown Legal, Applicant)
- d. Approval of Ordinance 26-05 (recommended for approval by the Planning Commission as Ordinance 25-23), on first reading, an ordinance to amend the Farragut Code of Ordinances, Chapter 24, Subpart B., Article 3 - Vested

- Rights in Development Standards, by providing for updated provisions consistent with recent amendments to the Tennessee Code Annotated (TCA)(Town of Farragut, Applicant)
- 2. Second Reading & Public Hearing
 - a. Approval of Ordinance 26-01, on second and final reading, amending the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 General Fund and Capital Investment Program Fund Budget, Passed by Ordinance 25-10
 - B. Resolutions
 - 1. Approval of Resolution 26-01, appointing G. Keith Alley as Farragut Municipal Court Judge
- VI. Business Items
 - A. Approval of Supplement Request from LDA Engineering for Additional Services for Everett Road Greenway Connection
 - B. Approval of a 5K Dolphin Dash for the Farragut Primary School involving streets in the Village Green Subdivision
 - C. Approval of Parental Responsibility Zone Traffic Calming Policy
- VII. Citizens Forum
- VIII. Town Administrator’s Report
- IX. Town Attorney’s Report
- X. Adjournment

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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VISUAL RESOURCES REVIEW BOARD MEETING AGENDA

Tuesday, January 27, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Farragut Town Hall • 11408 Municipal Center Drive

- I) Call to Order
- II) Approval of Minutes
- A) Approval of the December 2, 2025, meeting minutes.
- III) Staff Report
- A) Wall signs approved since the last meeting.
- IV) Business Items
 - A) Review of a primary ground sign for Bank of America, located at 10735 Kingston Pike.
 - B) Review of a primary ground sign for Express Oil and Tire Engineers, located at 11155 Kingston Pike.
 - C) Review of a primary ground sign for Turner

- Homes, located at 11820 Kingston Pike.
- D) Review of a primary ground sign for Ace Pickleball, located at 11130 Kingston Pike.
- E) Review of a primary ground sign for Tri-Star Power Sports & Marine, located at 11470 Outlet Drive.
- F) Review of a menu board sign for Bruster’s Real Ice Cream, located at 11692 Parkside Drive.
- G) Review of a landscape plan for the Concord United Methodist Church, located at 11020 Roane Drive.
- V) Citizens Forum

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obituary

Ms. Sandra Lynn Williams, 86, passed away peacefully on Sunday, December 14, at a nursing home in East Tennessee after a long and courageous journey with dementia.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Margaret Prescott Williams and Hubert Franklin Williams Sr., and her beloved older brother, Hubert Franklin “Snooky” Williams Jr., all of Sevierville, Tennessee.

Sandra was born on November 13, 1939, in Jacksonville, Mississippi, and was raised in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. A lifelong lover of learning, she earned a Bachelor of Science in Education and History from Queens College in Charlotte, North Carolina.

She began her career teaching high school history, including several years at Halls High School and one year in Texas. Teaching young people was always close to her heart, but Sandra later found what she often called her dream job at the Freedoms Foundation in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. There, she served as Director of the J. Ed-

gar Hoover Research Library, became a respected lecturer, and led Christian-based leadership seminars for high school seniors. She felt deeply called to encourage young people to value faith, freedom, and the principles of the Constitution.

Sandra was an avid reader and lifelong student, with a special love for historical and religious books. She enjoyed traveling both in the United States and abroad, always eager to learn more about the world and its people.

From an early age, Sandra professed her faith in Jesus Christ, finding daily comfort and strength in reading her Bible. While her early years were devoted to educating and mentoring young people, her later years were marked by loving devotion to caring for family members in Sevierville and Knoxville.

Sandra lived a life of quiet faithfulness and service. She



was known for her patience, kindness, and steady presence—especially to those who felt overlooked or alone. Though her world became smaller in later years due to health challenges, her home remained a place of warmth, filled with books, antiques, bird watching, and open-hearted conversation. Neighbors became friends, friends became family, and many were touched by her gentle encouragement and care, often during their most difficult seasons.

Sandra will be remembered

as a kind and thoughtful daughter, sister, and friend—someone whose warm smile and gentle spirit made others feel seen, safe, and valued. She had a quiet way of loving deeply and putting others first, and to know her truly was to love her. A faithful child of Christ, Sandra trusted that God would always provide, and He did—calling her home in His perfect timing. Her legacy of love, service, and quiet strength will live on in all who were blessed to know her. She is now in the presence of the One she

faithfully served, and we trust she was welcomed with the words, “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

A graveside service to celebrate Sandra’s life will be held at 3:00 PM on Friday, January 23, 2026, at Edgewood Cemetery (219 S. Gallaher View Rd., Knoxville, TN 37919), with Pastor Jerry McBee officiating. Family and friends are warmly invited to gather and honor her memory together.

Click Funeral Home Farragut Chapel is honored to serve the family of Sandra Williams.

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