

REMEMBERING KNOX COUNTY'S FALLEN *Heroes*

— Memorial Day | May 25, 2026 —

FARRAGUTPRESS WEDNESDAY, MAY 20, 2026 • 1



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World War I

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We must never forget why we have and why we need our military. Our armed forces exist solely to ensure our nation is safe, so that each and every one of us can sleep soundly at night, knowing we have 'guardians at the gate.'

~ Lt. Col. (Ret) Allen West,

Retired U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel and former Member of the U.S. House of Representatives

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Tammy Cheek

Village Green resident David Nelson described the conditions of Turkey Creek as an “atrocious” during Farragut Board of Mayor and Aldermen’s Thursday, May 14, Board meeting.

Residents voice spill frustrations

Tammy Cheek

tcheek@farragutpress.com

Village Green residents described dead wildlife, foul odors and fears for their children and pets during a Farragut Board of Mayor and Aldermen meeting Thursday, May 14, after a sewer spill contaminated the North Fork of Turkey Creek.

Resident David Nelson, whose home backs up to the creek, called the environmental damage “an atrocity.”

“I could spend three minutes describing the wildlife I’ve seen in that creek over the last 32 years, and it’s brought a joy to my family,” Nelson said. “And, to hear there was a total loss...”

Nelson said dead fish, crawfish and worms filled the creek after the spill. He also described gray sludge coating rocks along the shoreline.

“As a resident, when will we know ... when it will be safe for them to go back in the creek?” he

asked, referring to children and pets.

Resident Matthew Rekers said the creek has long been part of daily life for his family.

“I’ve got five kids; we have six dogs,” Rekers said. “They run, jump into that creek. My kids have tried to drink out of that creek.”

Rekers said he witnessed widespread wildlife death after the spill.

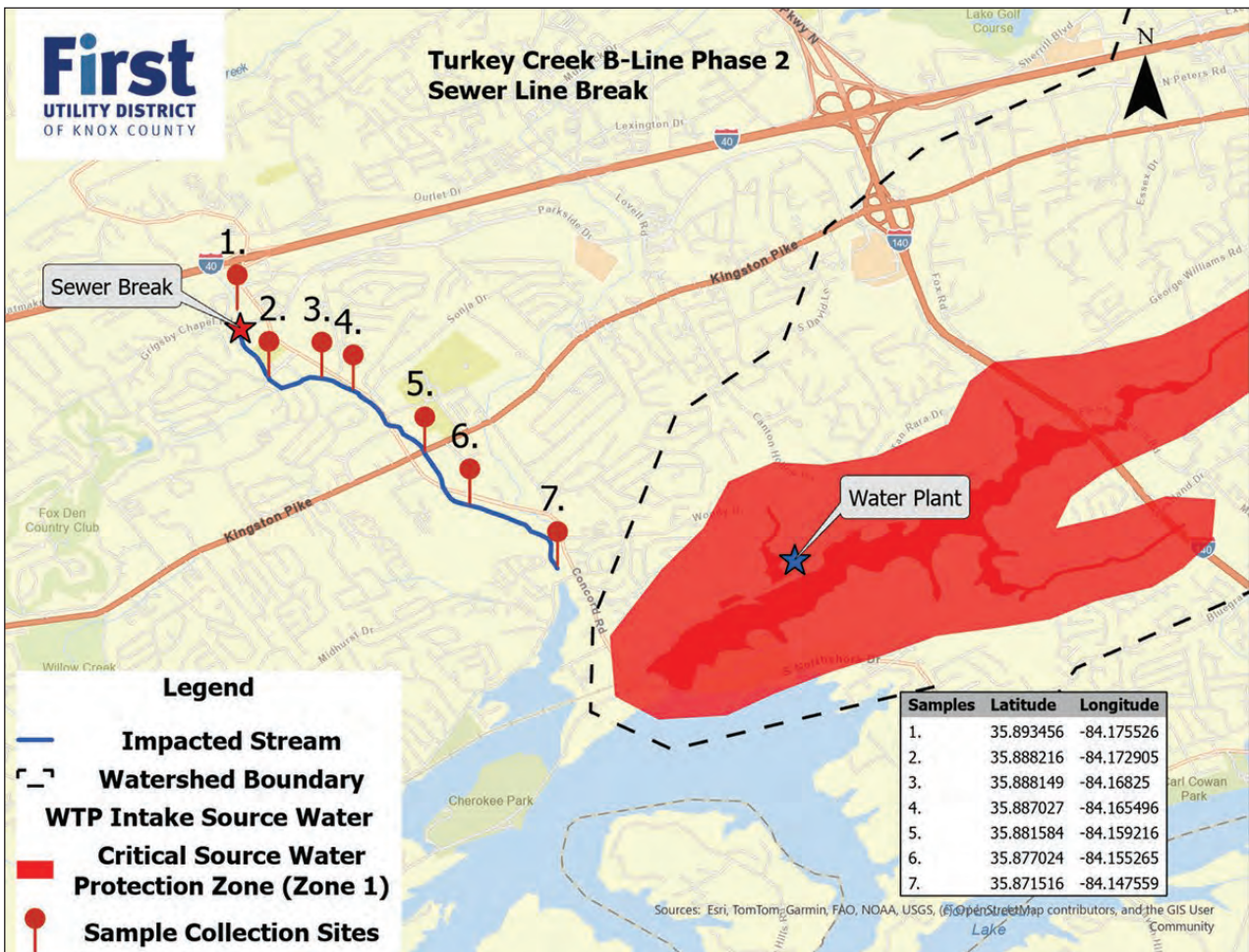
“It had wiped out all the wildlife, all of it. It’s dead,” he said. “Crawfish crawling out dying, fish dying. My kids burying those fish.”

His wife, Kayla Rekers, said in a separate interview the family first noticed a sewer smell Saturday evening, May 9. The next day, their children found dead fish, crawfish and other aquatic life in the creek.

“Everything that was in the creek is dead,” she said. “And the moss has completely turned gray where it touched

See VOICE on Page 4A

Farragut officials seek answers after spill



Map provided by FUD

“For explanation in the provided chart, First Utility District included the mean, median and maximum values for the E. coli counts in the 2025 monthly sampling dataset for the creek at the Grigsby Chapel sampling location,” Edwin Deyton FUD engineering supervisor explained. “The creek sample data are inherently variable. For example, the average E. coli count was 229.8 MPN (most probable number per 100 mL sample), while the standard deviation was 171.8 MPN. E.coli counts can vary significantly from day to day, and even hour to hour, depending on factors, such as rainfall, temperature, stream flow, wildlife activity and runoff within the contributing drainage area. Given this natural variability, fluctuations in E. coli counts are not unexpected and are consistent with trends observed during routine sampling.” See E. coli count chart on Page 4A.

Tammy Cheek

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Farragut leaders expressed frustration, concern and urgency during a Board of Mayor and Aldermen meeting Thursday, May 14, following a sewer pipe break that contaminated the North Fork of Turkey Creek.

Aldermen and Town officials discussed cleanup efforts, public safety and long-term environmental impacts after residents reported dead aquatic life and strong odors in the creek.

“I think our entire community is outraged by what’s happened,” Alderman Joe LaCroix said.

Alderman Drew Burnette said he believed stronger measures were needed around the contaminated creek.

“I think FUD should come down there and block everything so nobody can get to that water,” Burnette said, adding he wanted ongoing water-quality readings published for the public. “I’m just not seeing the activity that I think we should be seeing from the other agencies; so I think we have to step in and have a point person ... in the absence of their leadership, we need to step into that role as much as possible and get that information out to the community.”

Alderman Alex Cain agreed with Burnette, adding, “It just seems like when you go by there, there’s nothing being done other than waiting for the water to flow through the creek,” Cain said.

Mayor Ron Williams suggested First Utility District use water hoses and chemicals to help flush and clean the creek.

Town administrator David Smoak said the Town’s stormwater coordinator responded after staff members learned of dead fish in the creek Friday, May 8. He said Town employees traced the problem upstream near Grigsby Chapel Road, where FUD crews had been working on a sewer line project.

Town staff then contacted First Utility District



Photo submitted

The Rekers family, who live at the north fork of Turkey Creek, found dead fish, such as this one, in Turkey Creek after the Friday, May 8, sewer pipe break, which caused a spill of sewage pollution into Turkey Creek.

and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation.

Smoak said the Town has implemented internal changes to improve emergency communications and escalation procedures after hours and on weekends.

He added TDEC and FUD were monitoring bacteria levels in the creek and would determine when it is safe for the public to return.

After reaching out to FUD, Edwin Deyton, its engineering supervisor, responded, “First Utility District of Knox County is using a standard EPA-approved enzyme substrate test to measure concentrations of E. coli in Turkey Creek following the sewer leak.

“E. coli is a reliable indicator of fecal

See ANSWERS on Page 4A

Celebrating graduates



Jake Nichols

Farragut High School graduate Ethan Ericksen celebrates with a classmate after graduating from Farragut High School on Sunday, May 17, at Bill Claibo Field. See more graduates on Page 5B.



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GOING THE EXTRA MILE FOR YOU



from the Town by Wendy Smith



Popular program at FHS leads kids to careers in construction

It's no secret that many families choose to live in Farragut because of its excellent schools. According to the Farragut High School website, the school offers 61 Advanced Placement and honors courses and has produced 68 National Merit Finalists over the past five years. But if that's all you know about FHS, you're missing an important part of the story: the breadth of the school's programs.

I have long been intrigued by the construction classes offered at FHS; and a couple of weeks ago, I had the opportunity to visit. I wasn't prepared for the scale of Richie Patton's "classroom." More warehouse than workshop, the space is packed with tools and materials, including the remains of a cinder-block structure where students once practiced installing plumbing and electrical systems. It had to be torn down, Patton said, because it wasn't large enough for his classes, and space is at a premium.

"We need every inch of space we can get," he explained.

That's because the classes are maxed out. There is a waitlist for the program, which offers training in five trades: carpentry, electrical, HVAC, plumbing and masonry. The introductory course, Fundamentals of Construction, teaches students how to use hand and power tools, read construction drawings and practice safety on and off the jobsite. The second and third levels provide more in-depth training in residential and commercial construction.

After completing the program, students are prepared to begin entry-level trades jobs. Others, like senior Sam Souther, continue pursuing construction careers through higher education. In the fall, she'll study construction management at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. She is one of 13 seniors in the program who plans to study a construction-related field in college, including three who earned full-ride scholarships.

Souther entered high school intending to pursue architecture and initially chose the

construction program because it seemed related. Eventually, she discovered she was more interested in construction itself. That's not surprising, considering her school accomplishments include building a porch swing, winning first place on a plumbing team and helping construct a tiny home for a homeless veteran.

"I picked construction management because it's the most hands-on," she says. "I want to be in the field while things are being built."

Patton was hired six years ago to launch the school's construction program, and in 2022, it became part of the Academy of Agriculture, Construction & Leadership. Knox County Schools' 865 Academies were created to prepare students for life after graduation, whether that means enrolling in college, enlisting in the military or entering a high-wage, in-demand profession.

Patton was a project manager for an electrical contractor when he learned about the opportunity to start the construction program at FHS, and he hasn't looked back. He said the students have become like family, and he has hosted holiday dinners in the picnic area outside his classroom. Teaching, he said, has been a blessing.

FHS assistant principal Cara Vaughn isn't surprised by the popularity of the construction program.

"I believe that students love this course because it removes the distractions of technology and allows them to focus on being creative. Also, the students adore Mr. Patton," she said. "Students get excited about learning, but they also get excited about being in his class and being part of the community he has built."

Patton even attends after-school dance recitals and senior nights to cheer on his students, she said.

One of the reasons Patton enjoys teaching trades is that these skills will always be needed.

"These trades are never going away. There will always be a need for them," he said. "It's something AI can't replace."

Virtue Road project enters land acquisition phase

Tammy Cheek

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Land acquisition negotiations are expected to begin soon for Phase II of the Virtue Road Multi-modal Improvement Project.

During its Thursday, May 14, meeting, Farragut Board of Mayor and Aldermen unanimously approved a contract with Johnson Mirmiran & Thompson Inc. for appraisal and negotiation services related to right-of-way acquisition for the project.

Town engineer Darryl Smith said the project includes reconstruction of Virtue Road from 1,200 feet south of Needlegrass Lane to Willow Cove Way on Boyd Station Road.

"The Town's design consultant has completed right-of-way plans for the project, and we have been given notice to proceed with the right-of-way acquisition phase," Smith said.

He added the project is funded through federal Surface Transportation Block Grants with an 80/20 federal-local funding split and must com-

ply with requirements from the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Local Programs Development Office.

"We completed the process of issuing a request for qualifications and selected JMT Inc. as our preferred consultant based upon their qualifications," Smith said. "The contract is for negotiations, with appraisals to be subcontracted. The total fee for services will be \$249,600, including reimbursable expenses."

Alderman Drew Burnette asked whether affected residents had been contacted.

"They have not [been contacted by the Town], but they will be before [JMT] talks to them," Smith answered.

Alderman Joe LaCroix said the Town previously spoke with affected property owners while the project was in the design phase.

"Once again, we're going to reach out to them before [JMT]," he added.

Smith said the Town previously sent notices before a public hearing on the project.

"We had a terrific pub-

lic hearing on this project," he said. "Quite a few people showed up for it."

Smith said JMT is expected to begin work following approval of the contract and must complete the work by May 31, 2028.

"The schedule for the various meetings and presentations as outlined in the basic services shall be agreed upon by the client and contractor before beginning work," he said.

In a proposal submitted to the Town, JMT stated it would serve as Farragut's agent throughout the right-of-way acquisition process, from initial contact through final transmittal for each parcel.

"We will comply with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, the TDOT Right of Way Manual and the TDOT Local Government Guidelines for the Management of Federal- and State-Funded Transportation Projects," JMT senior real properties specialist Emily Hooper stated.

Briggs at Concord-Farragut Republican Club



District 7 State Sen. Dr. Richard Briggs shared information about the Tennessee General Assembly's latest legislative session, bills passed and the new congregational map, which recently was drawn, with Concord-Farragut Republican Club members when they met in Fruition Café Thursday night, April 7.

Photo submitted

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Farragut approves first reading of 2026-27 budget

Tammy Cheek

tcheek@farragutpress.com

Town of Farragut's 2026-27 budget received initial approval with a 4-0 vote from Farragut Board of Mayor and Aldermen during the Board's meeting Thursday, May 14.

The budget includes funding for a new economic development coordinator position and an additional \$15,000 for Farragut Business Alliance/Shop Farragut. The ordinance still requires a second reading before taking effect for the fiscal year beginning July 1 and ending June 30, 2027.

"The staff did a great job," Alderman Joe LaCroix said. "It was a long, drawn-out process. It was a lot of work on their part."

Before the vote, Farragut Business Alliance/Shop Farragut president Candace Viox asked the Board to increase funding for the organization, which operates through a volunteer board.

"We are a non-government volunteer board," Viox said. "We share important information and content for our businesses."

Viox said Shop Farragut promotes local businesses through social media, a business directory, the Town Sam-

pler contest and community events, such as the Health and Wellness Expo, Dog Daze and Harvest Fest.

To continue offering those events and services, Viox said costs have increased significantly.

"Our rental infrastructure for events have increased by over 200 percent," she said.

"They do a great job — Harvest Fest and Dog Daze," Alderman Drew Burnette said. "I think, given the economy and the scale ... I think it's a fair and reasonable ask."

"The events are amazing," Alderman Alex Cain said. "We have people from all over the country."

According to Town administrator David Smoak, proposed FY 2027 General Fund revenues total \$19,225,404, fueled largely by projected increases in local and state sales tax revenue.

Smoak said local sales tax revenue is expected to increase 2.5 percent to \$11,032,897, accounting for 57.3 percent of the Town's total General Fund revenue.

"A second major revenue source is State Sales Tax," Smoak said. "This tax is distributed from the state of Tennessee to local governments and is based on the Farragut

population base, which is currently estimated at 25,242, according to the Tennessee State Data Center."

State sales tax revenue is projected at \$3.3 million, and overall General Fund revenues are expected to increase by 7.9 percent over the FY 2026 budget.

General Fund expenditures are proposed at \$13,161,660, an 8.2 percent increase over the FY 2026 budget.

The proposal includes a 3 percent cost-of-living adjustment for employees and potential merit increases of up to 3 percent based on performance evaluations.

"The cost to implement the COLA and merit package for personnel is \$396,000," Smoak said.

Employee health insurance costs are projected to rise 7 percent, adding \$106,520 to the budget. To offset some of the increase, the employer-employee contribution split would change from 90/10 to 88/12.

"This adjustment will reduce this overall health insurance increase to the budget by \$34,584," Smoak said. "The overall increase for COLA, merit and employee health

See BUDGET on Page 4A



Photo submitted

Farragut Parks and Recreation director Ron Oestreich, left, and Historic Resources coordinator Kristi Vining received the Project Excellence Award for Farragut Museum's History Hour and the Publication Excellence Award for its history booklet from Dr. Warren Dockter, PhD.

Farragut Museum scores double honor

Tammy Cheek

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Farragut Museum recently won two awards from East Tennessee Historical Society — Project Excellence Award and Publication Excellence Award — during ETHS's annual Awards of Excellence's awards ceremony Tuesday, May 5, at East Tennessee History Center in Knoxville.

Since 1982, ETHS annually has recognized individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions to the preservation, promotion and interpretation of the region's history.

"After Town Hall renovations, the Farragut Museum reopened in April 2025, and the staff and Museum Committee have worked really hard to create new marketing materials, new programs, new displays and new events to improve the museum and generate awareness and excitement surrounding the museum," Town Historic Resources coordinator Kristi Vining said.

"The museum celebrates the history of our area and Admiral Farragut, and we enjoy sharing our story," she added. "Since reopening, we have greeted out-of-town visitors, longtime residents, new residents, school groups and civic organizations, and we are passionate about making sure everyone has a good experience."

"We have space for a rotating exhibit and we've highlighted veterans, Farragut sport stars, Farragut artists and currently we have a display on the history of churches in Farragut," Vining said. "I think the awards are just a way for the Farragut Museum to be recognized that we are

going in the right direction. I am proud of what we have accomplished, and I am looking forward to what's to come for the Museum."

Farragut Museum also was the recipient of three Awards of Commendation from Tennessee Association of Museums during a recent conference in Union City. The museum was recognized for its sports exhibit in the temporary exhibit category, the history hour in the Public Programming category and its history booklet for the Papers/Periodicals/Poster category.

For the ETHS awards, eligible projects included exhibits, lectures, conferences, publications, print and broadcast media, teaching excellence and lifetime achievement. Including Farragut Museum, 36 awards were presented this year to recipients representing 15 East Tennessee counties, as well as two out-of-state recipients.

Other recipients in Knox County included: Ashley Wachter — Project Excellence Award; Barbara Boulton and Gay Hobt Morton, Tennessee Association of Museums Volunteerism Award; Debra Pack Gilberstadt and Deborah Miller Lindsey, Publication Excellence Award; East Tennessee PBS, History in the Media Award; Front Page Foundation, Project Excellence Award; John Becker, History in the Media Award; Kharmon Anderson, Publication Excellence Award; McClung Museum of Natural History and Culture, Project Excellence Award; Patricia Rutenberg, Teaching Excellence Award; and Ray Hill, Publication Excellence Award.



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Farragut approves park contracts

Tammy Cheek
tcheek@farragutpress.com

Contracts for planning the McFee Park property and construction bids for the dog park at McFee Park received unanimous approval from Farragut Board of Mayor and Aldermen during its Thursday, May 14, meeting.

The Board approved a professional services agreement with Tunnel-Spangler & Associates to develop a master plan for the new park at a cost of \$134,340.

The Town purchased 70 acres on the west side of McFee Road near the intersection of Boyd Station Road in 2023 for \$5.5 million for future park development. In 2025, Farragut was awarded a \$2.75 million federal Land and Water Conservation Fund grant to help fund the park, with construction of recreation facilities expected to begin by 2027. Of the 70 acres, 15 acres were donated by the property owner.

"In keeping with Land and Water Conservation Fund grant required timelines, the Town of Farragut is seeking a qualified firm to work closely with the Town, residents and stakeholders on a master plan for the 70-acre Town-owned property at the corner of McFee and Boyd Station roads," Town Parks and Recreation director Ron Oestreich said.

"The project will include public input and conceptual planning for a roundabout property entrance off McFee and Boyd Station roads, internal park roadways, parking, pedestrian and bicycle circulation and at least one permanent restroom facility,

consistent with Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation grant requirements and applicable local plans," he said.

"The master plan will guide future development, preservation, phasing and programming of the park, ensuring compliance with TDEC standards, local regulations and community priorities," Oestreich added.

He added 12 firms submitted proposals through the request-for-qualifications process.

"After extensive research and discussion, the selection committee unanimously chose Tunnel-Spangler & Associates to lead us through this process," he said. "TSW has the most inherent knowledge of our local needs, a wealth of experience in all areas of our study and worked well with the Town on a past project."

The bid proposal includes \$98,180 for planning services and additional services — including renderings, a topographic survey and an operational assessment — bringing the total to \$134,340, according to Oestreich.

"This is \$15,660 under budget," he said. "TSW estimates project completion within six months of notice to proceed."

"We're excited to be here," TSW project manager Brandon Sutton said. "TSW has a history of working with Farragut on past projects ... we're no stranger to public engagement in our work."

In other park business, the Board unanimously approved a \$252,800 contract with Skilled Services to build a two-stall restroom building with a storage room at the entrance to the dog park at McFee Park.

Resident Jaron Densky, who also lives along the creek, said neighbors warned him about the contamination when he returned from a trip.

"When I checked it out, the smell was dreadful," Densky said.

Densky also expressed frustration over trees removed during First Utility District's sewer project, saying replacement trees had not been planted.

planned projects for FY 2027. Projects include Enterprise Resource Planning software upgrades for the Community Development department, upgrades to park facilities, McFee Road improvements, adaptive traffic signal upgrades and infrastructure work related to the new Farragut Elementary School.

Other projects include improvements at the Grigsby Chapel Road-St. John Court intersection, construction of a roundabout at Watt Road near Mayor Bob Leonard Park and Turkey Creek Road multimodal improvements.

"By far the largest of our CIP funding next year, and in the future, is going into transportation and infrastructure projects," Smoak said. "The total next year is planned at \$6,427,000."

Funding for the Capital Investment Program includes a \$7 million transfer from the General Fund, \$1,078,000 from CIP reserves and \$600,000 in federal or state matching grants.

Letter to the editor

Dear Editor,

Farragut voters will soon decide whether they want to maintain a small town atmosphere or continue to push for more urbanization. Farragut voters will elect a new Mayor and one Alderman in both the North Ward (above Kingston Pike) and the South Ward (below Kingston Pike). Early voting will run from July 17 through August 1 and the final Election Day is August 6. Voters should ask the candidates which direction they want the town to go.

Town of Farragut was chartered in 1980 with the vision of preserving small town character with a priority for low-density housing and a limit of two-story building height. In recent years, elected officials have taken a different direction, approving zoning variances to allow massive four-story apartment complexes in what are now Anchor 934 apartments at Biddle Farms and Farragut Junction apartments at S. Watt Rd. Ask yourself whether those projects are consistent with small town living.

The new development has its roots in the New Urbanism design concept. New Urbanism operates on the premise that standard single family home subdivisions have an excessive "carbon" footprint. It calls for high-density development with the hope that more people will travel on foot or bicycle and reduce the use of cars for transportation. How many people think it is suitable to cross congested roads like Kingston Pike, Campbell Station Road or Parkside Drive by foot or bicycle while carrying groceries or retail goods?

Get to know the candidates for Mayor and Aldermen and ask them if they want to preserve Farragut's small town heritage or move toward further urbanization. You get to decide the town's future by the choices you make. People who don't vote are allowing others to decide for them. Let's get a record turnout for Farragut elections in July and August!

~ John Steinberger
Knoxville

Answers

From page 1A

contamination and is commonly used to evaluate water quality," he said. "This is the same testing method used by FUD to monitor treated wastewater effluent discharged to Fort Loudoun Lake under FUD's existing NPDES Permit.

"Sampling is being conducted daily at seven locations along approximately 1.5 miles of Turkey Creek, [as shown on the attached map], he said. "Testing begins at a point upstream of the sewer main break to establish background conditions and continues downstream to where the creek enters Fort Loudoun Lake.

"The ongoing monitoring program is intended to track stream conditions and evaluate recovery following the release," Deyton said. "FUD has maintained historical test data for E.coli counts within the stream, and the counts from Kingston Pike south to Fort Loudoun Lake have returned to historical levels. Counts between Grigsby Chapel to Kingston Pike are declining daily."

Sample Location #	E.Coli Count (MPN/100mL*)	
	5/16/2026	5/17/2026
1	261.3	648.8
2	1986.3	1203.3
3	2419.6	1732.9
4	1732.9	980.4
5	461.1	325.5
6	435.2	195.6
7	198.9	106.3

*Most Probable Number of Ecoli per 100-mL sample

Baseline Bacteria from Historical Sampling (2025, monthly)

Average Bacterial Count =	229.8 MPN/100mL
Median Bacterial Count =	231.4 MPN/100mL
Max Bacterial Count =	648.8 MPN/100mL

Town attorney Tom Hale said TDEC has the primary authority to enforce corrective action and oversee remediation efforts.

Board members also raised concerns about environmental restoration and damage caused during the sewer project, including trees removed along the creek corridor.

"My concern is they went in there with a skid steer excavator, and whatever tree was in

the way, they knocked it down," Williams said. "Most of the time, when that kind of thing happens, they need to go back and fix what they tore up."

Cain asked whether remediation would include physically cleaning the creek and restoring aquatic life after reports of sludge and widespread wildlife loss.

Smoak said many remediation decisions would depend on guidance from TDEC.

Voice

From page 1A

the water."

Kayla Rekers said residents initially struggled to determine whom to contact about the spill and said they received little direct communication afterward.

"They haven't come to the residences," she said. "They haven't put up signs on our doors, mailboxes or anything."

Budget

From page 3A

insurance is estimated at \$467,936."

The budget also includes personnel changes totaling \$431,130, including the addition of an economic development coordinator at a cost of \$115,936.

"These changes are designed to support service delivery demands, organizational alignment and operational efficiency across departments," the budget report stated.

Resident Kimberlie Parks opposed creating the economic development coordinator position.

"That is not a job for a Town employee," Parks said. "That is a private sector job ... the only difference between what this job description has and what we already currently have with the FBA is ... to recruit people.

"That is not the Town's job," Parks added.

The Capital Investment Fund includes \$8,778,000 in

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Letter to the Editor rules: Must not exceed 400 words · Include name, address & telephone number to be verified · All letters to the Editor from any citizen must have a minimum four-week period between publication · Must not have inaccurate information, such as wrong statistics, from which to form an opinion
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Call 865-675-6397 or email editor@farragutpress.com with questions.

Find our 2026 policy for submission of political profiles at farragutpress.com.



Leadership breakfast to highlight hero's legacy

Tammy Cheek
 tcheek@farragutpress.com

Rather & Kittrell, a fiduciary financial advisory firm at 11905 Kingston Pike, Farragut, is hosting an opportunity for businesses and the public to learn more about leadership attributes as it hosts its inaugural Business Leadership Breakfast from 7:30 to 9 a.m., Friday, May 22, in The Sunsphere at the Worlds' Fair Park in Knoxville.

"We found, as we were growing, we needed to share some of our leadership and some of our values with our newer members, and we needed to do it in almost a classroom or a structured format," said Tim Eichhorn, partner/senior advisor at Rather & Kittrell who organized the event.

"We wanted to make sure we had a chance to do it our way, to do it the way we felt leadership and accountability can help our clients, help our firm grow," he said. "That blossomed into saying, 'This mes-

sage is pretty valuable, actually, and wouldn't it be a good idea to somehow multiply it for some of our business leaders, for us and our homes, for our schools and our communities as a whole?"

"So, we came up with this idea of this leadership breakfast," Eichhorn said.

The breakfast is open to the public, and there is no admission charge, but those planning to attend are asked to register at <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/zufkyvg>

The event benefits the East Tennessee Veterans Memorial Association, of which Eichhorn, a former Marine, is a member. While there is no charge to attend, people will have an opportunity to donate to ETVMA, which maintains the memorial.

"Our speaker is Chris Edmonds, a local pastor and son of Master Sgt. Roddie Edmonds," Eichhorn said. "Chris is the author of a book on his father."

The late Roddie Edmonds, who died in the 1980s, was a World War II veteran who posthumously received the Congressional Medal of Honor at the White House last March.

"Chris received it on behalf of his father," Eichhorn said. "Those actions he was cited for were (while being) in a World War II German prison camp.

"Young, 24-year-old Master Sergeant Edmonds was the senior leader of about 800 soldiers in the camp," he said. "The Germans had called them out in formation on a given day in January 1945 and they demanded all the Jews in the group of 800 step forward and be identified.

"And, Master Sergeant Edmonds stepped forward, and his response was 'We are all Jews,' which, of course, frustrated the Germans and wound up saving the lives of those soldiers," Eichhorn related. "So if you think about it, the way I translated that and the way I'm approaching this breakfast, is we all face personal and

Business Leadership Breakfast



We all face personal and business decisions under varying degrees of pressure. MSGT Edmonds' exploits in a WWII prisoner camp reveal his moral compass, bearing, and courage as hundreds of lives were at stake. His story will inspire and challenge you.

Date: Friday, May 22, 2026

Time: 7:30 am - 9:00 am

Location: The Sunsphere
 Worlds Fair Park-Knoxville, TN

To Register:

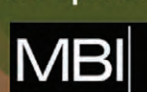


Keynote Speaker:

Chris Edmonds

Chris Edmonds is the son of Knoxville native and Congressional Medal of Honor recipient, MSGT "Roddie" Edmonds. Chris is the author of "No Surrender" a book about his father's extraordinary acts of valor in the final days of World War II.

Event Sponsors:



business decisions under varying degrees of pressure.

"Our goal is to talk in the community about leadership, and Master Sergeant Edmonds is an example," he said.

Rather & Kittrell is looking

at Edmonds' exploits in that prisoner of war camp to see his moral compass.

"Chris had been on a journey for 10 years to get this Con-

See LEADERSHIP on Page 8A

Shop Farragut 'gaining momentum'



Jake Nichols

Members of the Shop Farragut/Farragut Business Alliance board offered some tasty treats during the organization's Biz Mixer at the Farragut Community Center on Tuesday, May 5. From left: Wanda Malholtra, Anita Dunford, Candace Viox, Ashley Lynch, Debby Funk and Michelle Austen.

Jake Nichols
 jnichols@farragutpress.com

On Wednesday, April 8, Ashley Lynch was named the new executive director for Shop Farragut/Farragut Business Alliance.

Less than a month later, Tuesday, March 5, Lynch greeted business owners from across the Town at the organization's March Biz Mixer.

The event was held at the Farragut Community Center and offered a chance for Lynch to greet the people she has already made a steadfast effort to get to know.

"They love Farragut; they want to be more involved; and they want to participate in Shop Farragut in all ways," Lynch said of the feedback. "It's been very humbling, very welcoming. Everyone has been really sweet to me, really nice and informative, and I'm learning as I go."

During her introduction, Lynch noted the organization's website is "under construction."

Her overall approach, however, is not.

"We're going to keep going strong, meeting business and gaining momentum," she said

See SHOP on Page 8A

Drybar cuts the ribbon



Tammy Cheek

Drybar owners, Steve (with scissors) and Sara Uhls (with baby, Tyler), cut the ribbon on their new business during a Farragut West Knox Chamber of Commerce-sponsored event at the salon, 11681 Parkside Drive, on Wednesday, April 29.

businessbriefs

• Weichert, Realtors - Advantage Plus real estate brokerage has announced the addition of Andrew Sullivan to its team of talented agents. Sullivan provides dedicated service to clients in Knoxville and sur-

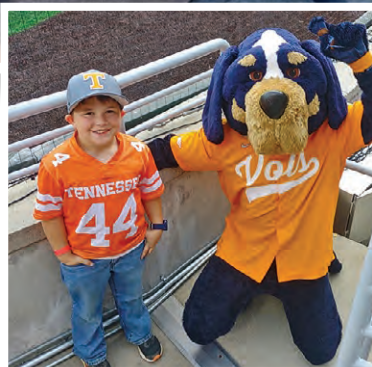
rounding areas.

Sullivan is a seasoned professional with many years of experience across a variety of industries, including business management, entrepreneurship and small business own-

ership. Throughout his career, he has demonstrated a strong ability to identify opportunities, develop innovative solutions and successfully manage

See BRIEFS on Page 8A

farragutpress Spotlight



farragutpress gave away two tickets to the May 8 University of Tennessee vs. Texas baseball game at the recent Farragut West Knox Chamber of Commerce Business Expo held April 22.

Winners Chris and Rhody Dotson enjoyed a night of great baseball, photos with Smoky, getting a baseball signed and creating a lifelong memory as lifelong Vol fans.

Chris Dotson works for Two Lakes Dumpsters based in Friendsville, TN. The owner of the company, Luke Dotson, made a wise decision by putting his business card in the drawing for the ticket giveaway. Mr. Dotson said about the game experience, "You don't know how much Chris and Rhody enjoyed themselves. It's the little things you do for people that will help you in the long run."

farragutpress supports that philosophy and strives to apply it in every aspect of business. From the editorial team and production staff to account executives and customer service, the company has built a reputation centered on community, relationships and doing for others whenever possible.

For farragutpress, supporting local businesses and creating memorable experiences goes beyond advertising. It reflects a longstanding commitment to investing in the people, organizations and communities that make Farragut and West Knox County special.

If you are interested in learning more about farragutpress, contact Kathy Hartman at 865.218.8878 or khartman@farragutpress.com or by visiting farragutpress.com

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A Day of Joy and Community: Carnival Brings Smiles, Games, and Connection

Our recent carnival celebration brought an afternoon full of joy, laughter, and community spirit to our residents, patients, families, and staff. The facility was filled with excitement as residents and patients enjoyed classic carnival games, prizes, festive treats, music, and plenty of opportunities to share smiles and make memories together.

A heartfelt thank you goes to the students from Christian Academy of Knoxville, the Volunteers from Two Rivers Church, the Tellico Village Clowns, and Kimberly from Caris Healthcare for helping make the day such a success. From running booths and creating balloon animals to festive face painting and engaging with residents, their enthusiasm and kindness helped create a warm, uplifting atmosphere. Through games, conversations, laughter, and their joyful presence, each group played an important role in making the carnival truly special.

The event served as a meaningful reminder of the power of community involvement and the happiness that comes from bringing generations and organizations together. We are incredibly grateful for the support, time, and compassion shown by everyone who helped make this carnival a memorable experience for all.



Residents and patients had a wonderful time showing off their colorful creations during face painting with Kimberly from Caris Healthcare! Her creativity and kindness helped bring plenty of smiles, laughter, and carnival spirit to our special day.



The Tellico Village Clowns brought smiles and laughter during their visit as they entertained residents with colorful balloon animals and cheerful fun throughout the carnival celebration!



A special thank you to the students and staff from Christian Academy of Knoxville for helping run carnival booths, assisting with games, and spending meaningful time interacting with our residents and patients throughout the celebration. Their kindness, energy, and enthusiasm helped make the day extra special for everyone involved.

Spring is nature's way of saying let's party



Photos submitted



Shop

From page 5A

to the crowd. “Next year, I fully plan to bring back some old events.”

Lynch and Shop Farragut/FBA president Candace Viox both hinted at the return of “Taste of Farragut” as they spoke.

Also, Viox noted the organization’s social media improvements since Lynch has been in charge, adding she, too, has heard great feedback from business owners across

the Town.

“Everyone has been very excited,” she said. “Our online content has greatly improved with the videos and things Ashley has created, and she’s reached out to businesses so it’s been very positive.”

Going forward, the organization is preparing for its biggest draw of the summer, Dog Daze. Viox said the deposit already has been placed for the event, which will take place Thursday through Saturday, Aug. 13-15.

Briefs

From page 5A

operations in both independent ventures and team environments.

• University of Tennessee Medical Center recently announced it has become a Verified Comprehensive Inpatient Vascular Center by the Vascular Verification Program, a quality program developed by the American College of Surgeons with the Society for Vascular Surgery.

• UT Medical Center recently achieved Magnet recognition for the fourth consecu-

tive time from the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s Magnet Recognition Program, reinforcing its position among the nation’s top hospitals for nursing excellence.

Magnet recognition is the highest national honor for professional nursing practice and is awarded to organizations demonstrating exceptional patient care, nursing leadership and innovation. Fewer than 10.5 percent of hospitals nationwide have earned Magnet recognition, and of these approximately 1.8 percent currently hold four consecutive designations.

Eco Suites Hotel



Tammy Cheek

Construction is under way for Eco Suites Hotel along Outlet Drive, next to Cotton-Eyed Joe’s. A Mitch Cox Construction representative said the extended-stay hotel, for which the construction was started in December, will have 124 rooms. It is planned to open the first of 2027.

Leadership

From page 5A

gressional Medal of Honor in place and finally approved by the president,” Eichhorn said. “Master Sergeant Edmond’s

name will join 15 other Medal of Honor recipients from East Tennessee — those names include Sgt. [Alvin] York, Buck Karnes and Farragut’s Mitchell Stout — already inscribed upon the East Tennessee Vet-

erans’ Memorial at the World’s Fair Park.”

The late Edmonds name will be inscribed as the 16th Medal of Honor recipient on that memorial.



Barbara Lowry,
ABR, CRS

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Jake Nichols

Farragut's Cole Creasman (38) throws toward first for a put-out during Game 2 of the Admirals' Class 4A sectional series with Science Hill

Resilient Ads storm back to state

Jake Nichols
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In each of his two seasons as the Farragut baseball head coach, Garrett Copeland has opened the year the same way: with a harsh dose of reality.

"I tell the guys this program has had a lot of success, but this year's team has done nothing," Copeland said. "We don't have last year's state title, so they carry that chip and want to prove they're just as capable as the group before."

The 2026 Farragut Admirals

will have a chance to do just that, as their quest for a fifth-straight Class 4A state championship will continue after a slugfest sectional matchup with Science Hill.

In Game 1, the Ads scored three runs in the sixth inning to pull off a 5-4 comeback win at TVA Credit Union Ballpark in Johnson City. They lost the second game 6-5 the next day in an 11-inning affair, only to respond with another comeback — this one a 5-2 deficit that flipped to a 7-5 FHS win, locking up the 25th state tournament appearance in program history.

"Our guys, they're resilient for sure," Copeland said. "They are confident in their abilities, and they never really feel like they're out of the game. Things were definitely not going our way in the beginning."

"But I think they have confidence because they stay the course and keep working, and they never get down on themselves or feel like they're out of it. That's a testament to our leadership on the team and the expectations the guys have for

See **RESILIENT** on Page 3B

Dawgs cap historic state run

Jake Nichols
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In its first official season under TSSAA guidelines, the Bearden flag football team made school history. The Lady Bulldogs blitzed through the regular season, racked up three straight postseason victories and claimed the Region 1-AA title to make their first-ever state tournament appearance.

Unfortunately for the Lady Bulldogs, that is where the momentum stopped.

BHS went 0-3 in pool play on Thursday, May 14, and lost to Ravenwood 33-12 in the state quarterfinals on Friday, May 15, to close their 2026 campaign.

Note: For reference, the same Raptors team that defeated Bearden

See **DAWGS** on Page 2B

Irish punch ticket to state

Ken Lay
Correspondent

The 2026 softball season has been a long one for Knoxville Catholic High School.

And it recently got a little longer. But no one associated with the team is complaining.

The Lady Irish won just four games during regular-season competition, double their win total during the postseason, and will be heading to Murfreesboro after doubling their win total during the preliminary rounds of the state softball tournament.

Catholic, thanks to its postseason winning streak, will play at least

See **TICKET** on Page 2B



Jake Nichols

Farragut softball players celebrate after clinching the program's 10th state tournament berth in program history. The Lady Admirals held off Science Hill, 2-0, on Friday, May 15, to book their second-straight trip to Murfreesboro.

Lady Admirals seeking 'redemption' in return to state

Jake Nichols
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Last season, the Farragut Lady Admirals left Murfreesboro with a bad taste in their mouths after going 0-2 to finish the year.

Now, the Lady Ads have a chance at redemption after beating Science Hill, 2-0, in their Class 4A sectional matchup last weekend.

With the win, FHS has qualified for its 10th state tournament in program history, having opened its 2026 stay against Stewarts Creek on Tuesday, May 19.

"It's always a relief that you've accomplished your goal," head coach Nick Green said. "And that was our goal early on, to get back to the state tournament. We really wanted to have a better performance than we did last year. We went 0-2 and didn't feel like we played really well. We

weren't really healthy at the time either, but we wanted redemption from that."

The results from Tuesday's game were unavailable by press time. But if the Lady Ads want to capture their first state title since 2022, they will need the kind of performances they turned in to reach Murfreesboro.

Against Science Hill, FHS found early momentum with a leadoff triple by Camryn Shrader. Taylor Albright followed with an RBI single to score Shrader, putting Farragut ahead 1-0.

It was a stark contrast from the Lady Ads' regional semifinal against Powell two games earlier.

That night, the teams battled for two extra innings — complete with a no-hitter from Hallie Grace Johnson — until Callie Brown hit a walk-off RBI single for a 1-0 win.

See **REDEMPTION** on Page 3B



Jake Nichols

Farragut's Taylor Wolfgram races toward home, capitalizing on an overthrow by Science Hill during the team's Class 4A sectional matchup. Wolfgram provided the final run in the Lady Ads' 2-0 victory.

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Jake Nichols

Bearden junior Caleb Weaver (18) screams in celebration after scoring the game-winning goal to push the Bulldogs past Sevier County 1-0 in their Class AAA sectional matchup on Saturday, May 16, at Radcliffe-Kelly Soccer Complex.

Weaver header, Keener setup seal state trip

Ken Lay
Correspondent

As a goalkeeper, Eli Keener's primary job is to keep Bearden High School's opponents off the scoreboard and he's done that throughout the postseason.

The Bulldogs have surrendered just one goal during the playoffs and that was against rival Knoxville West in the District 4-AAA championship match.

But on Saturday, Keener made a crucial offensive play late in a state sectional match.

The play came on a set piece as he booted a free kick 50 yards to set up the game-winning marker in the Bulldogs' 1-0 victory over Sevier County Saturday afternoon, May 16, which landed Bearden in its eighth consecutive Class AAA state tournament.

Bearden (18-1-3) was awarded a free kick with 1 minute, 47 seconds remaining in regulation after the Smoky Bears were assessed a yellow card. BHS coach Ryan Radcliffe made a decision to let his senior netminder take the free kick.

And it worked. Kenner made a long kick and Caleb Weaver promptly headed the ball into the back of the net in the 79th minute, propelling the Bulldogs to a

victory and a berth in the state tournament, which opened Tuesday, May 12, for Bearden.

The Bulldogs played Cleveland but results were not available at press time. The Bulldogs, however, blanked the Blue Raiders, 4-0, in the Bearden Invitational in March.

"We hadn't been serving good balls all day," Radcliffe said. "And Eli's consistent with his service; and looking at the clock and how much time was left, I thought Eli gave us the best chance to put the ball in a dangerous position."

"And he put it in a great position." Weaver said he had confidence Keener would put the ball where it needed to be.

"I knew he was going to serve a great ball," Weaver said of Keener. "He's an amazing keeper and all his free kicks are amazing."

It was Bearden's third consecutive 1-0 win in the playoffs at Turner-Allender Field.

The Bulldogs blanked Knoxville Halls, 1-0, in the Region 2-AAA Tournament semifinals on Tuesday, May 12, on the strength of a tally by Isaac Martinez.

The Bulldogs won the region title the following night with a 1-0 win over West High as Fadel Hamdin scored the lone marker of that match.

"This is just a surreal feeling," Catholic acting co-head coach Haden Roberts said. "We don't have a good record but we're looking forward to the opportunity to go down there and compete against some of the best teams."

"It's been a lot of fun and we got hot at the right time. Both of our pitchers, Adelyn DeBusk and Isabelle Holleman did a good job with their location and they do a good job changing speeds."

DeBusk started the first game Wednesday in West Tennessee and held the Lady Saints to just five hits while Holleman hurled the nightcap, throwing a five-inning complete game.

She also did some damage at the plate for the Lady Irish as she went 2-for-3 and drove in four runs.

Catholic heads to final four

Ken Lay
Correspondent

For the first time since 2008, Knoxville Catholic High School's boys soccer team is headed to Spring Fling and the State Final Four.

The Irish punched their ticket to Murfreesboro with a penalty kicks shootout victory over Montgomery Bell Academy Saturday, May 16, in Nashville in the state quarterfinals.

The teams played to a 1-1 draw over 80 minutes of regulation and 20 minutes of extra time sending the match to penalty kicks. Catholic won the shootout, 4-3, to advance to the state semifinals, which will open today (May 20).

The Irish will play Briar-

crest Christian School at 3 p.m. EDT at the Richard Siegel Soccer Complex.

In the quarterfinals, Montgomery Bell scored first in the 15th minute of the match. Catholic's Jack Tucker scored the equalizer approximately a minute later.

"They scored in the 15th minute and then we scored about a minute later," KCHS coach Josh Martin said. "That was a pretty exciting time of the match."

Neither of the sides found the back of the opposing net during the remainder of the first half and the teams slugged through a scoreless second half and overtime period.

Catholic would prevail in

the shootout as Tucker, Trevor Belanger, Graham Gibson and Lambros Christopoulos, tallied in the shootout.

Meanwhile, KCHS goalkeeper Tate McCarty made two big saves during penalty kicks to help the Irish win over the MBA, the top-seeded team in the state tournament.

Catholic plays one of the area's toughest schedules and Martin said that slate of games helped prepare for his squad for its deep postseason run.

"This was big for us," Martin said. "In Knoxville, Tennessee, we have great teams all over the city and many of those teams are within 10 miles of us."

"We play a tough schedule and that really helped us."

Dawgs From page 1B

went on to score 27 unanswered points to claim the inaugural TSSAA Class AA state title over Mt. Juliet

The format was very different than what Bearden had been used to through the regular season. While those games had been played on normal football fields, the state tournament games took place at Richard Siegel Soccer Complex with markers every 20 yards.

"I think it's really crazy how different it is," senior Emma Rainey said. "And a bunch of teams we played have been playing for so long, it's amazing that we got there."

Not only did BHS face more experienced squads, several have been playing well before the sport became official under TSSAA regulations.

They also played three games in one day last Thursday and did so while missing all their seniors since graduation was the same night.

BHS coach Zach Scott used one word to describe his team in that stretch: "fearless."

The Lady Bulldogs lost 25-13 against Blackman in their first game, snagging two end-zone interceptions to keep the Blaze at bay. A mere four minutes later, they took the field against West Creek, falling 33-6 with quarterback Nicole Smith-Harris coming up injured.

From there, Bearden lost to Overton High School to wrap up the first day. But even with the loss, the team united at Maple Street Biscuit Company the next morning before taking on Ravenwood in the quarterfinals.

That had been the restaurant Scott pointed his team toward all year, having shown his players a picture of the Raptors eating there after their (unofficial) third-straight



Jake Nichols

Bearden High School senior Emma Rainey (20) and her teammates noted the impact of their first season in TSSAA-sanctioned flag football, adding that the team became "like a family" through a historic 2026 campaign.

championship in 2025.

And while Bearden lost to RHS later on the field, breakfast together will be one of several memories that players will take from a remarkable season.

"The tournament itself was a very cool experience for our girls," Scott said. "I just kept thinking about our first practices in October of 2024 on the soccer field, not even knowing what a hash mark or line of scrimmage was."

"I am so proud of this team,"

added Finley Wright, whose name will be inscribed on the team's leadership award going forward, according to Scott. "We have fought through so much adversity with having our starting quarterback get injured. We truly made a name for ourselves after making it to the state tournament in our first year of playing flag football as a school-sanctioned sport, and the family environment we created with the help of our coaches will never be forgotten."

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Jake Nichols

Farragut's Mason Shelton (4) celebrates during Game 2 of the Admirals' Class 4A sectional series against Science Hill on Thursday, May 14, at TVA Credit Union Ballpark in Johnson City.

Resilient
From page 1B

themselves.”
In the rubber match, the Hilltoppers took 2-0 lead in the bottom of the second, only for Zain Kureshi-Smith to knock a game-tying two-RBI single half an inning later.

SHHS responded with three more runs in the bottom of the third, extending their lead to 5-2, and it remained that way until Mason Shelton belted a two-RBI double in the top of the fifth to bring the Ads with-in one.

They added two more runs in the sixth on a sac fly from Travis Brummitt Jr. and an RBI groundout from Kureshi-Smith, then Aidan Flagg knocked an RBI single in the top of the seventh to mark the final margin.

While FHS stormed back at the plate, Brummitt settled in on the mound. He hit his stride in the bottom of the sixth to retire the side then allowed two runners to reach in the seventh before a celebration-inducing strikeout.

guy all year. It was a tough performance. Things hadn't quite gone the way we had hoped early, and he wasn't missing the zone a ton. They were just hitting balls where we weren't. But even when it got to 5-2, with the offense we have, that's not out of reach. So they kept us in the game; and from the third inning on, he was lights-out. He really got after it.”

This week, the Ads (32-10) took on Collierville (35-10-1) in the opening round of the state tournament at Oakland High School.

The game took place after press time on Tuesday, May 19. But if the Ads need any sort of motivation, they can look back to their celebration last week and their meeting at the start of their season.

“That's the reason we work so hard is for the chance at a state title,” Copeland said. “That's what the cultural expectation of our program is, and it's a good feeling to have a chance to play in the state tournament. It made a long bus ride a lot easier.”

Redemption
From page 1B

“Camryn leading off the game with that triple was huge, setting the tone, and Albright got enough of it to get us on the board in the first inning, getting that off us right away,” Green explained. “Whereas in the Powell game, it kind of lingered the whole time. So that helped.”

So did three straight strikeouts from Johnson, who followed a hit batter in the top of the second by setting down three Hilltoppers in a row to bring the Lady Ads back to the plate.

They rewarded her with two straight singles, the first by Taylor Wolfgram and the second by Brown to send Wolfgram on to second.

Eleena Ralston popped out in foul territory, but not before Wolfgram and Brown stole third and second, respectively. Then Wolfgram raced home for a 2-0 advantage, capitalizing on an overthrow by the Hilltoppers.

The play in question looked like a coincidence. In reality, it was anything but.

“To be honest, we stole that second run, literally,” Green said. “I had seen that in film, where their third baseman



Jake Nichols

Farragut pitcher Hallie Grace Johnson (24) throws a strike during the Lady Ads' sectional win over Science Hill.

was playing in certain sets and thinking, ‘I think we can take advantage of that.’ Sure enough, we got in that set and I had a kid that could run. She beat it, they threw it away, and

we were able to score.”
The Lady Ads proved unable to do any more damage, as Science Hill starter Isabella Meeks kept the FHS lineup in check the rest of the game.

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Tate's School's Wax Museum takes living history to new level

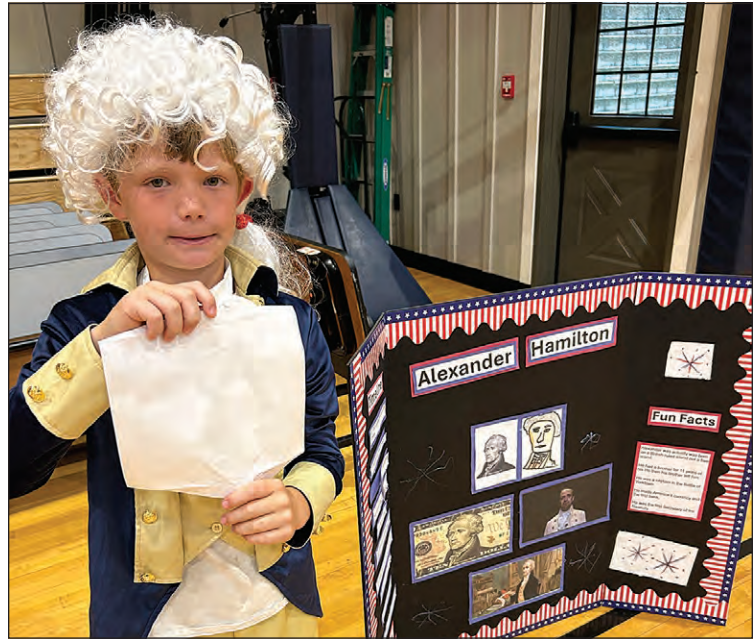


Photo submitted

Elliott Saltzman dressed as Alexander Hamilton for Tate's School's Wax Museum project.

Staff Reports

editor@farragutpress.com

Tate's School's third-graders recently took living history to a whole new level of learning.

They held the Wax Museum, which is a culminating inquiry-based project, allowing students to showcase the lessons they have learned throughout the school year, according to Tracey Van Hook, Tate School director of resources.

"The students chose a historical figure from the past, researched and created a timeline of that person's life, wrote an expository paper and a monologue," Van Hook said. "Students then created a display board, added a costume and acted as though they were that person."

"Each student was frozen in position, like a wax statue, until a button was pushed," she said. "Then, they presented

the personal story of their selected famous persons in character.

"Students could choose to be a historian, a president, an inventor or an explorer, just to name a few categories," Van Hook said.

"Inquiry-based projects like this allow students to take ownership of their learning," she added. "They exercise autonomy through voice, choice and ownership."

"The students are engaged and interested in learning," said Mary Alice Devenney, a social studies teacher at Tate's. "They take pride in their work and are able to make connections to their lives and the world around them."

"I am so proud of the students and their hard work," Van Hook said. "Learning to present in front of others is also a life skill that serves them well as future leaders."



Photo by Jake Nichols

Christian Academy of Knoxville student Sawyer Anderson, right, walks alongside his dad, Layne Anderson, during the first few minutes of his 24-hour walk, which stretched from 8 a.m. on Friday through 8 a.m. on Saturday, April 24-25. Sawyer did this walk as part of his senior capstone project, as he is raising money for the No Athlete Left Behind organization.

Walking like a Warrior

Christian Academy of Knoxville senior fulfills 24-hour project

Jake Nichols

jnichols@farragutpress.com

In football terms, there is a simple three-letter phrase defining Sawyer Anderson: Swiss Army knife.

Quarterback. Running back. Outside linebacker. Safety.

The Christian Academy of Knoxville junior filled those roles and more for the Warriors last season, becoming an All-Region selection in the process.

Moreover, he did so while battling back from a knee injury he sustained earlier in his career.

But as tough as Anderson has become through the years, he has not faced any challenge like the one he took on Friday and Saturday, April 24-25.

For his senior capstone project at CAK, Sawyer walked around the school's track for 24 straight hours to raise money and awareness for No Athlete Left Behind.

"Founded by former NFL player Lee Smith, No Athlete Left Behind is a donor-led organization dedicated to empowering underprivileged

youth athletes," the NALB website reads. "By providing essential resources, mentorship and opportunities, we aim to help young athletes overcome challenges both on and off the field, fostering success and personal growth."

Sawyer encountered the organization while training at Triple F Elite Sports Training, the gym Smith started after he retired from professional football.

Sawyer credited Triple F for his recovery from injury, wanting to find a way to give back as part of his project.

But it was only when his dad, Layne, suggested walking that this idea came to fruition.

"For projects, my wife and I have tried to always come up with something as big and significant as possible," Layne Anderson said. "There have certainly been some remarkable capstone projects here, so I told Sawyer, 'Let's do something big that will impact lives and challenge him mentally and physically.' And I coached track for years at the collegiate level, so I said,

See WARRIOR on Page 6B

Anchor Learning Center marks new chapter with faculty changes

Tammy Cheek

tcheek@farragutpress.com

Anchor Learning Center is embarking on a new journey as founding teacher Tyler Lane departs to launch a new Bible Learning Center and ALC welcomes a Farragut educator, coach and church leader onto ALC's faculty.

Chris McNeer's joining ALC marks "an exciting new chapter in the nonprofit Bible learning center's mission to make disciples through Scripture-based education," a press release stated.

"McNeer is a well-known and deeply respected figure throughout the greater Knox-

ville and Farragut community," it added. "He brings 19 years of experience in education, instructional leadership and coaching to this role."

Anchor Learning Center is a nonprofit Bible learning center with classes held in Faith Promise Church in West End Center.

"It is a released-time Bible education program," ALC executive director Sherry Shope

said. "Released-time Bible education is a program that's about 100 years old. It was actually challenged at the U.S. Supreme Court level in the 1950s in a case, Zorach vs Clausen."

It is "dedicated to equipping students of all ages with a foundation in Scripture and a passion for discipleship," according to a press release.

Shope said released time Bible education allows for the creation of a class for public high school students, for which they can leave the high school campus and be taught "academically rigorous Bible education in a devotional manner" in an elective course and get school credit, Shope explained.

"What's important is Bible can be taught in most any public school with restrictions: being taught as a historical or literary perspectives, but not devotional."

"We don't have those limitations," she said. "We can address behavior or any number of things and, most especially, we can teach that Bible is the truth."

"Release time Bible education can be and is done by oth-

er religions, not just the Christian faith, but that's what we are," Shope said.

Three things make the classes legal: it has to be off campus during the school day; it has to have parental permission; and there cannot be a penny of government funds to support it, she added.

Students may be part of the class by signing up for it as an elective and having their parents' permission.

On its board, ALC has "all these [church] denominations represented," Shope said and explained Faith Promise Church is its host location.

See ANCHOR on Page 6B



Lane



McNeer

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Scenes from 2026 graduation ceremonies

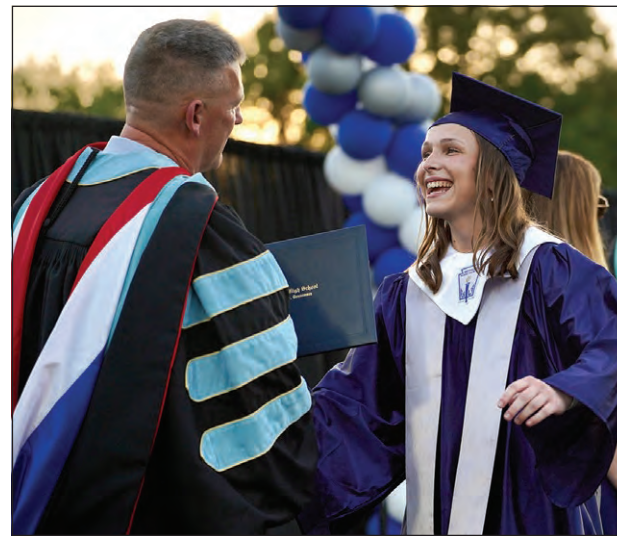
Farragut High School held its 2026 graduation ceremony on Sunday, May 17, at Bill Clabo Field. **FHS photos by Jake Nichols**
 Bearden High School held its graduation ceremony on Thursday, May 14, at the Bearden High School football stadium. **BHS photos by Jake Nichols**
 Hardin Valley Academy's Commencement Ceremony was held on Monday, May 18, in Hawk Stadium. **HVA photos by Tammy Cheek**



FHS graduates Samantha Barlow (left) and Mary Bennett



Farragut's Aidan Foshie receives his diploma from principal Dr. John Bartlett.



FHS senior Ella Schlomer receives her diploma from principal Dr. John Bartlett.



Bearden High School senior choir members perform.



Farragut High School choir members sing.



Bearden High School co-valedictorian Mery Diaz speaks.



HVA graduate Gracie King (second from right) with family members, from left, Aston Garcia, Bentley Garcia, Michael Garcia and Kimberly King



HVA's Sophia Roberts talks to fellow students with her speech, "Build Toward Connection."



BHS senior Jakylen Taylor receives his diploma from principal Deborah Sayers.



FHS student Heidi Huang tolls the bell in memory of deceased Farragut students.



Dawson DeGiffarde, left, received his diploma from HVA executive principal Kirk Renegar.

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Mansour Hasan, State Farm Agent presents

The Good Neighbor Character Award

Andi W.

Congratulations to Andi W, a Second Grader from Farragut Primary School, for receiving the Good Neighbor Character Award presented by Mansour Hasan, State Farm Agent. This award recognizes students who exemplify outstanding character traits, and Andi was chosen for being remarkable. "Andi is remarkable for having good character," said her 2nd grade teacher, Mrs. Hall. "She follows the rules and completes her work to the best of her ability. She is also a very sweet and kind friend to all!"

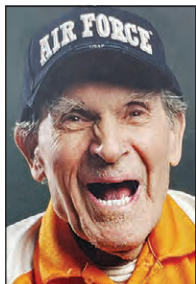


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obituary

DeLacy Mulford “Mul” Wyman 1939-2026, Lieutenant Colonel DeLacy Mulford “Mul” Wyman passed away at Duke Hospital, Durham, NC, on Tuesday, April 28th, 2026, at the age of 86. Mul is survived by his beloved wife of almost 62 years, Carole Luttrell Wyman (Durham, NC; formerly Farragut, TN), three daughters, Candice Kay Eagle (Durham, NC), Caroline Wyman Mc-



Wyman

Clintock (Nashville, TN), Dena Wyman Reed (Farragut, TN), half-sister, Allene Wyman Monaco (Jacksonville, FL), eight grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, Dr. Edward Holbrook Wyman and Martha Moon Mulford Wyman, beloved brother Edward Holbrook ‘Buck’ Wyman, Jr., and son Russel Floyd Eagle, Jr.

A Military Honors Memorial Service was held for him on Monday, May 18, 2026, 12:30 p.m. at the East Tennessee State Veterans Cemetery. (Arrangements by Atchley FH, Seymour, TN)

Anchor

From page 4B

Currently in his ninth year at Farragut High School, McNeer teaches advanced placement government and psychology and previously served as the lead teacher of the Health & Human Services Academy, a signature program recognized for developing real-world skills and leadership in students across the region.

“A proven leader both on and off campus,” McNeer also served as the Farragut High School Admirals football program’s defensive coordinator and associate head coach from 2018 to 2023, “earning a reputation for building culture, developing young men and driving results,” the press release

stated. “Prior to Farragut, he spent eight years teaching American history and leading character education initiatives at Daniel Boone High School in Washington County.

McNeer holds a Master of Education degree from Milligan College and a Bachelor of Science degree in psychology from East Tennessee State University.

“His commitment to community extends well beyond education,” the release stated. “McNeer serves as an elder at Shoreline Church and has faithfully invested in student and men’s ministry. He is a devoted husband to his wife Gina and a proud father of two.”

“We are beyond thrilled and deeply grateful to our Sover-

eign God for bringing Chris to ALC,” Anchor Learning Center Board of Directors stated in the release. “His years of teaching excellence, his coaching leadership, his ministry involvement and his love for this community make him uniquely equipped to carry this mission forward. We couldn’t be more excited.”

This announcement coincides with the departure of Lane, ALC’s founding teacher and director of Program Development, who is leaving to answer a new calling. He has been tapped to serve as the founding teacher of Bearden Learning Center, a new ministry partner launching in the fall of 2026.

For more information about ALC, visit alcfarragut.com.

PressPlanner

- Farragut Museum has produced two scavenger hunts for children to learn local history. The first one, titled “If the Trees Could Talk,” takes families throughout the Town of Farragut to find eight historically-significant spots, each marked by a tree. The tree narrates the importance of the location and describes the historical event that happened there. The second is the “Find Admiral Farragut” passport, a scavenger hunt inside Farragut Museum. Children search for artifacts marked by small Admiral Farragut icons using detailed clues. A prize is offered upon completion of the passport. Both scavenger hunts are available at Farragut Museum. “If the Trees Could Talk” also can be picked up at Farragut Community Center and Campbell Station Inn.

- Pinnacle at Turkey Creek will host a community blood drive with Medic Regional Blood Drive on Friday, May 22, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., inviting community members to come together and help save lives through blood donation. The blood drive will take place at Pinnacle Turkey Creek in front of Condado Tacos, located at 11383 Parkside Drive, and is open to all eligible donors. Appointments are en-

couraged, though walk-ins may be accepted as space allows. Donors are encouraged to eat a healthy meal, stay hydrated and bring a valid photo ID.

- Blue Ridge Yoga and Zoo Knoxville are inviting the community to experience an unforgettable evening where wildlife, wellness and conservation come together for a meaningful cause. Friday, May 29, guests are invited to “Yoga at the Zoo,” a special after-hours fundraiser beginning with an up-close surprise animal encounter before transitioning into an all-levels yoga class surrounded by the sights and sounds of the zoo. The event begins at 4 p.m., and tickets are \$39 with all proceeds directly benefiting Zoo Knoxville’s ongoing wildlife conservation efforts. Guests are encouraged to embrace the fun by dressing as their favorite animal. Find details and purchase tickets at www.yogaknoxville.com/workshops-events.

- Beltone is offering free hearing screenings throughout May, along with an opportunity to nominate deserving individuals for a chance to receive a free set of Beltone hearing aids. Nominees must complete a free hearing screening and have a

See PRESS PLANNER on Page 7B

Warrior

From page 4B

“Hey, could you just walk for 24 hours and raise money?”

They agreed on the plan and received approval from CAK’s capstone coordinator to set the idea into motion.

From there, they set up the donation website — <https://noathlete.org/get-involved/sawyer-anderson-nalb-supporter/> — and set an initial goal of \$7,500.

In the days since, people have donated more than \$10,000, which will sponsor two athletes for a full year in the NALB program.

“And we will keep the donations open and see if it gets more traction,” added Sawyer, who answered questions while walking during the first 10 minutes of his challenge.

He walked alongside his dad, who noted he would remain alongside his son “as long as my 58-year-old legs will hold up.”

During the initial moments, father and son remained buoyant and energetic.

Still, Sawyer knew those feelings would not last through the full 24 hours — especially when factoring in logistical concerns such as eating and using the restroom.

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Press Planner

From page 6B

minimum loss of 25dB to be considered for the giveaway. To schedule a free hearing screening and submit a nomination for

the giveaway, visit www.beltone.com before Sunday, May 31.

Amadeus Concert Ensemble will present Rachmaninoff & Friends, its final free concert of the 2025-2026 season, Sunday, May 31, at 5:30 p.m. The perfor-

mance, under the baton of ACE artistic director Brian Salesky, is part of the Cathedral Concert Series at the Cathedral of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, 711 S. Northshore Drive. Free reservations may be made three

weeks prior to the concert at www.shcathedral.org

Wednesday, June 3, at 5:30 p.m., Town of Farragut will host a first-time reunion of all Intro to Farragut Program alumni at the Farragut Community Cen-

ter, 237 Jamestowne Blvd. All classmates from 2013 to 2025 are welcome to join together for a fun evening. RSVP by Wednesday, May 27, to ascott@townoffarragut.org.

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LEGAL NOTICE

The Board of Mayor and Aldermen of the Town of Farragut, at its meeting on May 14, 2025, adopted the following ordinance on second and final reading:

1. Ordinance 26-07, AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF FARRAGUT, TENNESSEE AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 CAPITAL INVESTMENT FUND BUDGET, PASSED BY ORDINANCE 25-10

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PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE ON PROPOSED CODE OF ORDINANCES

Notice is hereby given that a public hearing on the adoption of municipal code of ordinances will be held by the Board of Mayor & Aldermen of the Town of Farragut, Tennessee, at 6:00 p.m. on the 11th day of June 2026, at the Farragut Town Hall, 11408 Municipal Center Drive, Farragut, TN 37934, to hear citizen comments on the following ordinances:

1. Ordinance 26-09 (previously published as 26-07) An Ordinance on the second reading to amend the Farragut Code of Ordinances, Appendix A – Zoning, Chapter 4. General Provisions and Exceptions, Section VIII. – Farragut Municipal Flood Damage Prevention Regulations, Section C. General Provisions., 2. Basis for Establishing the Areas of Special Flood Hazard, to update the referenced Community Panel Numbers for 0243G and 0244G, to reference the LOMR effecting these panel numbers and that became effective February 10, 2026. A copy of the proposed code of ordinances is available online at www.townoffarragut.org or the recorder's office for anyone who desires to examine it in advance of the hearing. 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 accommodation due to disabilities, please call 865-966-7057 in advance of the meeting.

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farragutpress
Your Community Your Voice Your Newspaper Since 1988

9th Annual READERS CHOICE AWARDS OFFICIAL BALLOT

Winners will be announced in the June 24th edition of farragutpress.

Winners must be located within the farragutpress readership area: Dixie Lee Junction to Pellissippi Parkway and Snyder Road to Northshore.

Write in your vote for the BEST...

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All entries must be signed AND have votes in 25 different categories to be counted.

1 entry per person/ email address

ALL BALLOTS MUST BE RECEIVED AT THE FARRAGUTPRESS OFFICE BY MONDAY, JUNE 1, 2026 AT 4PM.

Our address is **11863 Kingston Pike, Farragut, TN 37934.**

All entries subject to approval. Judges decisions are final. No late entries accepted.

Ballot must be in original paper form OR downloadable version from farragutpress.com

Email for ballots is readerschoiceballot@farragutpress.com

Papers are available for purchase at our office Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.

1. Accounting/Tax Service _____
2. Antique Store _____
3. Apartment Complex _____
4. Appliance Store _____
5. Asian Food _____
6. Assisted Living Facility _____
7. Auto Dealer _____
8. Bakery _____
9. Bar-B-Que _____
10. Barber Shop _____
11. Beauty/Hair Salon _____
12. Bicycle Shop _____
13. Bistro/Wine Bar _____
14. Boat Dealer _____
15. Breakfast/Brunch _____
16. Burger _____
17. Car & Truck Repair _____
18. Car Wash/Detail Shop _____
19. Carpet/Flooring Store _____
20. Caterer _____
21. CBD/Tobacco/Vape Shop _____
22. Cell Phone Sales/Service _____
23. Child Care Facility _____
24. Chiropractor _____
25. Cocktails _____
26. Convenience Store _____
27. Cosmetic/Plastic Surgery _____
28. Credit Union _____
29. Cup Of Coffee _____
30. Customer Service _____
31. Day Spa _____
32. Dentist _____
33. Drug Store _____
34. Dry Cleaning _____
35. Express/Urgent Care _____
36. Eye Care Center/Optometrst _____
37. Family Restaurant _____
38. Fast Food Restaurant _____
39. Financial Advisor _____
40. Financial Planning Company _____
41. Fitness Center _____
42. Full Service Bank _____
43. Funeral Home _____
44. Furniture Store _____
45. Gifts & Collectibles _____
46. Golf Course _____
47. Grocery Store _____
48. Handyman _____
49. Hardware Store _____
50. Health Food _____
51. Hearing Center _____
52. Heating & A/C _____
53. Home Cleaning Service _____
54. Insurance Agency/Agent _____
55. Jewelry Store _____
56. Juice Bar/Smoothie _____
57. Kid's Party Venue _____
58. Landscaping//Lawncare _____
59. Law Firm _____
60. Liquor & Wine Store _____
61. Mail/Package Center _____
62. Marina _____
63. Martial Arts School _____
64. Medical Facility _____
65. Memory Care Facility _____
66. Mexican Food _____
67. Milk Shake/Ice Cream _____
68. Mini Golf _____
69. Mortgage Lender _____
70. Mortgage Lending Company _____
71. Music School/Store _____
72. Nail Salon _____
73. Oil Change _____
74. Orthodontist _____
75. Paint & Body Shop _____
76. Paint/Wall Covering Store _____
77. Pediatrician _____
78. Pest Control Service _____
79. Pet Grooming _____
80. Pet Shop _____
81. Photographer _____
82. Physical Therapy Clinic _____
83. Physician _____
84. Pizza _____
85. Place Of Worship _____
86. Plumbing Service _____
87. Real Estate Agency _____
88. Real Estate Agent _____
89. Seafood _____
90. Security Service _____
91. Senior Lifestyle Facility _____
92. Steak _____
93. Storage Facility _____
94. Tanning Salon _____
95. Tire Dealer _____
96. Veterinarian _____
97. Watch/Clock Repair _____
98. Weight Loss Center _____
99. Wings _____
100. Yoga Studio _____

Name _____

Address (REQUIRED) _____

City _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____