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## Gibson pledges more patrols for Farragut

**Tammy Cheek**  
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**Brent Gibson**

As Knox County Republican candidate for sheriff, Brent Gibson, makes plans for stepping into the sheriff's role, he assured on Friday, June 19, to step up patrols in Farragut, as well as other areas in the county.

Since Gibson has no Democratic opponents in the General Election, he can set his sights on being sworn into office. While doing so, he reaffirmed his commitment to provide more officers in Farragut and Knox County.

"I love the people in Farragut, and they need to get treated exactly the same as everybody else," the candidate said. "We're going to put more people on the streets, period."

"So, those places that have more population than other places are going to get more people," Gibson said. "We're going to figure it out. We're going to do what's right for Farragut."

"I'm going to allocate more people to the street," he promised. "Our traffic unit's going to step up and do some traffic enforcement. My idea of policing is a little different from the current administration."

"We're going to do the best we can ... because that's what I am; I'm a cop," Gibson said. "That's all I've ever done my entire career."

Regarding another precinct in Farragut, he conceded, "I don't know yet."

"Until the new mayor of Farragut is in [office], I don't know what [his or her] plans are or what

[he/she] has got going on," Gibson said, adding he has talked to the individuals running for mayor, and "I've made a vow to do what's right for Farragut, so if there's a precinct in the works, I'm open ... but it's got to make sense."

"If there's a place for us to have one, and it makes financial sense, we'll do that, too," he said. "I've been promised by everyone who's running for mayor that we'd have a great working relationship."

"I don't know who's going to win, who's going to be in charge, but whoever it is, it doesn't matter," Gibson said. "There's still in Knox County. I'm going to do what's right for what Farragut needs."

Gibson's commitment to Farragut comes on the heels of a debate in the news between Farragut Mayor Ron Williams and Knox County Sheriff's Office, which started with a letter from the mayor to the sheriff, asking for more open communication and

**See GIBSON on Page 4A**

## FMPC approves Grove Phase 2 plat

**Tammy Cheek**  
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Construction on Phase 2 of the Grove at Boyd Station subdivision is nearing completion after the Farragut Municipal Planning Commission unanimously approved the final plat for the phase during its meeting Thursday, June 18.

Phase 2 includes 32 residential lots and two open-space lots on 15.86 acres.

Community Development director Mark Shipley said Town staff conducted a site inspection

June 8 and found the project ready for final plat consideration. Approval, however, is subject to three conditions:

- The developer must provide a completion letter of credit, in an amount to be determined by the Town engineer, to cover the surface course, sidewalks and streetscaping.

- The developer must provide a maintenance letter of credit, in an amount to be determined by the Town engineer, to cover streets, pedestrian

**See FMPC on Page 5A**



**Photo by Carlos Reveiz**

Dr. John Sorochan, Charlie Sorochan, Lisa Sorochan and Ian Sorochan (from left) have been part of the Farragut soccer family for a number of years, but Dr. Sorochan, a turfgrass professor at The University of Tennessee, also has combined his passion with his work by leading cutting-edge research in preparation for the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

## From Farragut to FIFA Turf expert shapes soccer's biggest stage

**Jake Nichols**  
jnichols@farragutpress.com

To say Dr. John Sorochan understands soccer fields is like saying Jimi Hendrix knew how to play the guitar.

In the past five years, Sorochan — a University of Tennessee turfgrass professor — has led teams from UT and Michigan State University in a cutting-edge research collaboration with FIFA for the 2026 World Cup.

With a goal of safe, consistent fields across all 16 World Cup sites, Sorochan and his team have developed new technology, performed 170 tests and reshaped the way grass surfaces across the world will be evaluated from this point forward.

In the process, they built the FLEX device — a machine used to test different cleats on a natural pitch — and discovered the grass blend to use for different climates across World Cup venues: Bermuda grass for warmer venues, a blend of Kentucky bluegrass and ryegrass for cooler and indoor stadiums, and a blend of synthetic fibers stitched within each pitch to offer consistent bounce.

For Sorochan, the work paid off when he heard the word "immaculate" in a description of the grass during the United States' opener with Paraguay.

"When you hear those things, it's cool, but it's not just me," Sorochan reflected. "It's all the moving parts and everything it takes to get that where

it was: growing the sod in Washington state, going to visit the sod farm, talking with them and the stadiums and FIFA having that vision. It's been really cool knowing what it took to get it where it's at today."

Yet none of the World Cup surfaces qualified as Sorochan's favorite soccer pitch.

Instead, that honor belongs to the ones he designed for his sons, Charlie and Ian, at their Farragut home.

"It was on my 8th birthday when he first did it," said Charlie Sorochan, who just wrapped up his senior year as an All-Region selection for the Farragut soccer team. "That week was super fun, and it looked professionally cut and painted."

The field drew praise across social media; but because of his professional work, Sorochan was able to add an extra touch, too.

"They had their friends over and played, and I had just gotten back from a trip to Spain looking at golf courses and the pitch where Real Madrid plays," he said. "We had flags from the pitch manager for the Columbus Crew, I brought back a red and yellow card from Spain, and they sent the spray foam to do the lines for penalty kicks. So when Charlie, Ian and their friends were playing, I thought it would be nice and controlled."

"Instead, they knew I had a red and yellow card

**See FIFA on Page 6A**

## Kaylee Jin appointed FMPC youth representative

**Tammy Cheek**  
tcheek@farragutpress.com

Farragut Municipal Planning Commission will have a new youth representative serving on the Commission.

During its meeting Thursday, June 18, the Commission unanimously appointed Farragut High School junior Kaylee Jin as its youth representative.

"During the past fiscal year, FHS senior Albert Liu has served as the youth representative and has done an excellent job," Community Development director Mark Shipley said. "For the upcoming fiscal year, Kaylee Jin has applied to be the Planning Commission representative."

Shipley described Jin as "a very impressive student" with a desire to be involved in her community.

"This is exactly why the youth representative program was created a number of years ago," he said. "The Planning Commission is intimately involved with how the community will look and feel over time, and having someone present to address the perspective of young people is critical, especially with the upcoming update to the



**Jin**

**See JIN on Page 5A**

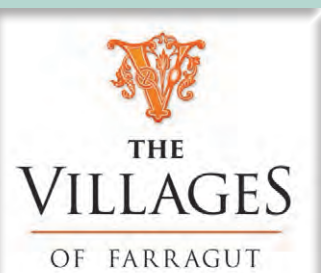


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Tammy Cheek

Candidates seeking Town of Farragut aldermen seats, from left, Dian Hall, North Ward 1; Joe LaCroix, South Ward 2; Greg Wiberley, South Ward 2; and Joey Ruffalo, North Ward 1, recently spoke to Concord Farragut Area Republican Club members at its meeting in Fruition Café.

## Candidates tackle growth, transparency

Tammy Cheek

tcheek@farragutpress.com

The Town's Comprehensive Land Use Plan, imminent domain and the recent sewer spill highlighted some concerns related by candidates seeking Farragut aldermen seats in the Aug. 6 General Election, when they spoke at Concord Farragut Area Republican Club's meeting in Fruition Café, 129 West End Ave., Thursday, June 4.

Although the mayoral candidates also were scheduled to speak, Alderman Alex Cain, one of the candidates along with Louise Povlin, was unable to attend because of a death in the family. That mayoral forum was rescheduled to, July 2.

However, club members did hear from North Ward alderman candidates Dian Hall and Joey Ruffalo and South Ward alderman candidates Greg Wiberley and incumbent Joe LaCroix.

"My platform, what I'm running on, is transparency," said Joe LaCroix said. "Our government needs to speak to the people. The people are very in charge of what we do.

"When I was appointed to that position, I started holding meetings, where people could come in to talk to me," he said, adding he also puts out information on his social media page regarding the Board's upcoming agendas.

Also, "people need to step in and talk to us, talk to the Town, to get the Comprehensive Land Use Plan going," LaCroix said.

Another issue he sees is the Town's infrastructure the Town needs to address.

"The Town does a really good job with roadways," LaCroix said. "But we need to make sure our roads are up-

dated, our parks are taken care of, the greenways ... stormwater. That costs money.

He also related the "incident that affected our stormwater system in Turkey Creek. That's a major focus of mine," he said. "I've already spoken to the Town administrator on what I would like to do."

Regarding finances, "We are very conservative in the Town of Farragut," LaCroix said. "We need to focus on maintaining that [excess budget]. We need to collect more revenues ... keeping our expenditures in line."

He said one of the strategies to "help develop that revenue stream" is hiring an economic development coordinator "so we don't have to worry in 10 years."

Another focus, LaCroix said, is protecting residents from development and "maintaining the community's character," as well as crime.

"I've spoken with the sheriff-elect, Brent Gibson, and he said he would like to see more patrols [in Farragut]," the candidate said.

"My campaign is based on three general themes: caring, community and competence," said Wiberley, a long-time Town resident. "Based on everything I've experienced, I've seen issues that must be faced by the next Town administration. I have witnessed how the Town has become urbanized beyond what the founders have intended.

"I have seen some of my elderly neighbors live under the cloud of eminent domain for years, finally having to spend significant amounts of money to defend their property rights," he said. "So, for decades now I have answered the call when Farragut needed

See CANDIDATES on Page 4A

## Politics meets picnic tables in Farragut

Jake Nichols

jnichols@farragutpress.com

Saturday, June 13, the District 5 unit of the Knox County Democratic Party gathered for a picnic and meet-and-greet with candidates ahead of the Knox County General Election in August.

The setting was more relaxed than a typical political gathering, as people came together in the River Sound neighborhood from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

"I feel like this has been our best way of outreach to people," said Damon Boggess, Knox County Democratic Party's District 5 representative. "It's welcoming and fostering that sense of community is what Democrats need to be doing more. This is an informal way of getting to know people, and whenever we're canvassing, people will say, 'There are no Democrats on my street.' And we can say, 'Actually, there's 20 in your neighborhood.' So it's a way to get those people working together to establish a sense of community."

This picnic is an annual event for the group, though election years bring a different feel.

There were Democratic candidates for different offices present Saturday. A few of these included District 14 State House Representative candidate Lindsay Young Honaker, District 2 State House Representative candidate Michaela Barnett, U.S. Senate candidate Maria Brewer and Katina Sharp, who is running for the Knox County Commission's At-Large Seat 10.

Brewer's presence brought a statewide feel to the event, as she has traveled to different cities meeting people as part of her campaign.

"It's the perfect setting for a U.S. Senate candidate be-



Jake Nichols

District 5 Democrats met with candidates for different offices at their annual picnic on Saturday, June 13, in Concord.

cause the most important thing we need to be doing is listening to people," Brewer said. "If you just try to set up rallies or videos on Facebook, you're not having two-way communication. And right now, people are very concerned about their everyday lives, about getting food on the table and whether they can afford gas tomorrow. I can tell you that, traveling around the state, you all are very lucky with your gas prices. But people have hard choices to make right now economically, and it's great to hear from people firsthand."

The setting was equally ideal for Sharp, who has approached things from a more local angle given her candidacy.

"This is ideal because, as a County Commissioner, I will represent the entire county," she said. "People who voted for me and didn't, so it's important to get to know people, where they are and what they're loving, needing and concerned and excited about here in Knox County. The thing I hear most often is people who are concerned about public

schools with us being 51st in the nation, and I share that concern with four kids of my own. So I'm really looking at that and making sure they're fully funded and competitive. I also hear people talking about the roads that are crumbling underneath them and traffic and all infrastructure, really. I also hear a lot about the price of rent costs and the cost to purchase a home, so I'm trying to listen and see what I can do."

Boggess, representing the KCDP, reinforced the feedback they hear at several events, including this one.

"The first thing we always hear is, 'I didn't know there were this many Democrats, especially in Farragut,'" he said with a chuckle. "We do this event every year, and on our off-election years, it's a way to thank volunteers and for other Democrats to get to know each other. During election years, like this one, it's way to meet a candidate in a more personal way to get across who they are and what they hope to accomplish. They come and set up, and we run the event."

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# SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT: The Truth about Louise Povlin and Her Opponent



## LOUISE POVLIN

- ✓ Led the effort to remove apartments from the land use plan
- ✓ Led the effort to reduce the density across the land use plan
- ✓ Led the effort to address the Town's aging stormwater infrastructure
- ✓ Led the effort to preserve corridor character while improving substandard roads (*No more roads like McFee Road and Everett Road*)
- ✓ Proactively met with residents to discuss future development
- ✓ Worked with residents to update policies and regulations

## ALEX CAIN

- Voted for eminent domain
- Censured for violating state law
- Lacks municipal planning and zoning experience

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**POVLIN**  
for **MAYOR**  
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# Letters to the editor

Dear Editor,

As a Farragut resident and voter, I've been paying attention to the mayoral race and the messages coming from each campaign.

One thing that stands out to me is the decision by one candidate to revisit old news involving Mr. Cain rather than spending that time emphasizing her own qualifications, ideas, and vision for Farragut's future. Campaigns should be opportunities to present solutions, discuss priorities, and earn support based on leadership and policy; not on criticism of an opponent's past.

It's also worth remembering that the position of Farragut Mayor is a volunteer role with no salary attached. That makes it even more disappointing to see negative campaigning enter the conversation rather than a focus on service to the community.

As voters, we should ask questions, evaluate each candidate's plans, and make informed decisions based on what each person wants to accomplish for Farragut.

I hope this election stays centered on respectful dialogue, transparency, and the future of our town.

Corey P. Kreisler,  
Farragut

Dear Editor,

The last 8 to 10 years has seen a rapid growth of development across Farragut. We have seen some great projects as well as some that have been more contentious. In 2025, the Town participated in the National Community Survey. The survey received 538 responses resulting in a 95% Confidence Level with a 4% Margin of Error.

Overall, the community has a positive view of Farragut as a place to live with an Excellent/Good rating of 97%. This replicates other reports on Farragut being one of the Best Places to Live!

Within the survey there are a few areas of concern. Approximately 80% of participants said traffic flow on ma-

ior roads is "Fair or Poor." We all live this as we try to make a left turn off of Kingston Pike. Development is another area of concern. Approximately 60% said Land use, planning and zoning was "Fair or Poor." Respectively, 56% and 64% of respondents also said Well-planned commercial and residential development were "Fair or Poor." So, while our report card is good overall, we have some subjects that need attention.

Voters should ask why are our scores the way they are? To me it is decisions like three BOMA members saying NO to the Harmony Assisted Living Facility and single-family homes behind Ingles. This decision led to another school and its resulting traffic on Kingston Pike. It was not completing the Mixed-Use Town Center Substantial Public Outreach in 2018 or 2019 when the Town learned what was planned was not viable. Instead, the BOMA took it upon themselves to change ordinances and town plans themselves. These changes gave an advantage to one landowner and developer while targeting another's known development. Ultimately, freestanding apartments were contrary to our collective vision from 2012 and should have not been approved until the Substantial Public Outreach was done. This would've ensured the communities desires were incorporated into our future Town Center.

Voters should look at the entire record of our candidates and ask, who advocated for and voted on the developments that give us "Fair" results at best? Don't we deserve better? As we look to update our Comprehensive Land Use Plan, we need leadership that will create a plan based on the communities' wants, not an individual politician's vision or desires. Alex Cain is the candidate that will ensure your voice is heard!

Michael Wilson,  
Farragut

have none,' it means the one police officer, Capt. Brad Hall, that we had is still reassigned to the jail in East Knoxville, where he has been since September.

"We have no complaints with the type of protection we have, when we have it," he said. "It's just that we no longer have the police out here like we had before."

Regarding the apology, "I don't think I have anything to apologize for," Williams replied. "Lack of communication is a big problem. They need to apologize."

When Pinnacle/Crawford Square had a potential new tenant for the space in which the sheriff's office had its precinct, the sheriff's office moved in October 2025 to Cedar Bluff.

# presstalk

865-671-TALK (8255) or [editor@farragutpress.com](mailto:editor@farragutpress.com)

■ I just want to thank the public works of Town of Farragut for always being there when there's a problem. Thank you for cutting down the brush at the stop sign of Orin Road in Newport continually. And I thank you from years ago fixing that bridge on Newport. It used to be so bumpy. Now it's smooth as glass. And every time I go over it, I thank you, Public Works. Y'all do a great job. And I really, really appreciate you. Thank you so much.

■ This is about the safety of the students in the new primary school, the new elementary primary school, that's going on Boring Road and also about the safety and protection of the parents and teachers and residents in that area, but primarily the safety of the students. We need to leave the entrance at Boring Road open at least to right in, right out. There is another entrance at Smith Road and Boring Road, but it's at the top of the hill and there's only going to be a stop sign where the buses will go in. The Village Commons is up through and to an assisted living. So, parents can use that entrance, the Village Commons, but they need to be able to use the Boring Road entrance, too, to go into Boring Road right in, right out to the new school. There needs to be better access to that school. There's going to be 1,400 children there, 1,400 students, parents there, teachers. We need the right in, right out at Boring Road. The mayor of Farragut,

who's going out of office in just a few days, wanted to close it. But what do the candidates for mayor say about the access at Boring Road? Right in, right out. We need to leave it open for the safety of the 1,400 students and the safety of the parents, teachers and residents of Boring Road. It's a big issue. Safety, safety, safety, safety.

■ I just drove up Boring Road by Boring Lane and over toward Baldwin Park and the new entrance to the elementary school. The elementary school is widening Boring Road and putting in the new entrance on the north side of Boring Road, but surely to heaven, the Town of Farragut will agree to widen the rest of Boring Road down to Kingston Pike and have a right in, right out for the parents, teachers and the residents in that area. Surely the Town of Farragut can spend the money. They've got plenty of money to spend to widen Boring Road the rest of the way down to Kingston Pike and have a right in, right out. That's the safe thing to do. For fire protection, safety, emergency protection, there needs to be another way in and out of the school. Right in, right out at Boring Road and go up and turn into the school entrance on Boring Road. Surely the Town of Farragut can realize that. And the mayor candidates need to say what they would do about that. There's an election coming up in early August. The mayor candidates need to say their position on the right in, right

out, additional way in and out of the school. It's a big, big issue and the mayor candidates need to state their position.

■ In today's Press, the mayoral candidate rejected what he described as "political attacks." However, the question that must be asked is: how can documented concerns involving a teacher's conduct with students be dismissed as merely political? A parent, grandparent or any member of the community has a right to consider allegations of inappropriate behavior and documented professional reprimands seriously, especially when the individual is seeking a position of public trust and leadership. This is not speculation or rumor. These concerns are reflected in official personnel records, including written reprimands issued during his employment as an educator. Those documents raise legitimate questions about judgment, professionalism and whether this candidate is the right person to represent the citizens of Farragut. One documented reprimand states: "For your continued unprofessional actions, you are receiving this written reprimand and your contract is being non-renewed for the 2021-2022 school year." Superintendent KCS The voters deserve to evaluate all relevant information when choosing their leaders. Asking questions about a candidate's documented professional history is not a political attack; it is part of an informed democratic process. (Email)

## KCSO policereports

■ **Mail theft:** A Farragut woman reported June 11 that a \$1,000 check she mailed from the Farragut Post Office at 11409 Municipal Center Drive in July 2025 to the Internal Revenue Service had been altered and fraudulently deposited. The complainant said she recently learned the IRS never received payment. After contacting her credit union, she discovered the check had been washed, rewritten to a different payee and deposited through a mobile banking account. The incident was reported as felony theft from a building, forgery and fraud by false pretenses.

■ **Public intoxication:** On June 14, Knox County Sheriff's deputies arrested a suspect on a charge of public intoxication after responding to a disturbance at a business on Outlet Drive. According to the report, deputies found the suspect yelling in a parking lot after a verbal argument. The suspect allegedly showed signs of intoxication, including slurred speech and the odor of alcohol and was taken into custody after deputies determined he posed a danger to himself and others.

■ **Attempted fraud false pretenses:** A Farragut man

reported an attempted fraud June 16 after encountering a fake computer virus alert while browsing the internet the previous day. The complainant said he called a phone number displayed in the alert and spoke with a man who asked about his bank accounts and advised him to notify his bank that his computer had been compromised. The complainant contacted his bank but was unsure what personal information he had shared. The incident was reported as attempted felony fraud by false pretenses.

## Gibson

From page 1A

asked that another precinct be re-opened in Town. That letter was followed by a TV newscast, in which Williams said "We pay our property tax; and out of that property tax, we're supposed to have police protection, and we have none."

After the newscast, Williams received a letter from the sheriff, calling the mayor a liar.

In the letter, he was told, "You knew there had been no decrease in patrol officer numbers or patrol officer hours in your town" and "You owe the men and women of this agency an immediate apology."

"I wasn't lying," the mayor responded. "When I said 'we

## Candidates

From page 2A

me ... and that is why I am running for alderman."

In the North Ward, Ruffalo said he was inspired to be civically active by his father, a blind Army veteran, who taught him the importance of voting at 4 years old.

"He believed if you care about your community, you don't just complain about problems, you get involved," Ruffalo said. "My wife and I chose [to live in] Farragut," he said. "But choosing a community and investing in a community are two different things."

For the last two years, Ruffalo has served as vice chairman on the Farragut Visitor Tourism Advisory Board, is on the

Shop Farragut/Farragut Business Alliance board, a Rotary Club of Farragut member and Farragut West Knox Chamber of Commerce member.

Through that, he said he listened to what people want in Farragut and what they want improved.

"People want to preserve what makes Farragut special, through planning for the future," Ruffalo said.

"I'm not anti-growth," he said. "I'm not pro-growth for growth's sake. I'm pro strategic growth."

Ruffalo also is for strengthening partnerships and supporting economic opportunities.

"The issues require cooperation," he said. "I want to see a Town that's financially strong, supports local businesses, pre-

serves its unique character and continues to be one of the most desired communities in East Tennessee."

Also running for the North Ward alderman seat, being vacated by Alderman Scott Meyer, who is term-limited, Hall is an Air Force veteran who served for 27 years.

"One of the key things I want to bring to this job, this position, is the ability to work with people, to talk to people ... to work together to come up with solutions," she said.

From her service, Hall also has experience in emergency response and emergency plans.

"I know that our town has one [emergency response plan]," she said but added it was difficult to find.

The final opportunity to submit candidate endorsements in Letters to the Editor or Presstalks for publication before the August 6 election is

**10 a.m. Monday, July 13**

for inclusion in the July 15 edition of farragutpress.

No candidate endorsements will be published after the July 15 edition.

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**Presstalk rules:** Keep calls to a 90-second maximum · e-mails to 250 words maximum · Libelous & malicious comments will not be published; profanity will be edited out · Comments will remain anonymous but must come from verifiable phone/email · Names of individuals (including public figures) will not be published

**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 · We reserve the right to reject publication based on factors including threats, name-calling and foul language

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**Obituary Information and Deadlines:** Send obituary & photo, if applicable, to [editor@farragutpress.com](mailto:editor@farragutpress.com). The cost is \$25 for the first 200 words and 25 cents for each additional word thereafter. The cost to submit a photo is \$10. We only use thumbnail "head and upper chest" portrait photos. The submission deadline for obituaries is 10 a.m. on Monday for that Wednesday edition. Payment must be received by 10 a.m. on Tuesday for that Wednesday edition.

Call 865-675-6397 or email [editor@farragutpress.com](mailto:editor@farragutpress.com) with questions.

**Find our 2026 policy for submission of political profiles at [farragutpress.com](http://farragutpress.com).**

**Jin**

From page 1A

Comprehensive Land Use Plan that will be occurring over the next year."

"This board has more influence over what the Town's going to be than any other board that we have in the Town," Shipley added.

Commissioner Louise Povlin said Jin's application was especially timely because of the upcoming Comprehensive Land Use Plan update.

"This is really quite an impressive application here, and given that we are doing a Comprehensive Land Use Plan, I would encourage us to get her involved and see if she can wrangle up a student representative group that might be interested in comprehensive land use planning because that's been the tough nut to crack — getting a student aspect into this planning," Povlin said. "It's always interesting to hear their perspectives."

"Her ambitions are aligned with what we are trying to do," Povlin added. "I'm excited to see what she might bring to this."

According to her application, Jin has served one-year terms as youth representative on the Town's Arts and Beautification Committee, Farragut Museum Committee, Farragut Tourism/Visitor Advisory Committee, Parks and Athletics Council, Planning Commission, Stormwater Advisory Committee and Visual

Resources Review Board. She also served a two-year term on the Farragut Education Relations Committee.

"My core aspiration is to pursue a career in public policy and civic leadership, primarily focusing on optimizing data and infrastructure to improve daily life in communities," Jin wrote in her application.

"Throughout high school, I have spent many days in rooms full of passionate peers, debating and navigating complex global and state issues through conferences such as Model United Nations and Youth in Government.

"I have come to love the energy and diplomacy of it all, but I started to feel like the debate was lacking a crucial, real-world, tangible impact," she wrote. "This realization has driven me to look into the analytical side of matters, researching the math and data behind policies to make an impact in the community."

"My long-term goal became not just debating policy. I wanted to be someone who helps build and improve communities from the ground up, using both logical research and a deeper understanding of what residents of all ages actually need," Jin wrote. "Serving as a youth representative is the perfect first step to achieve my aspirations, taking everything I have learned about diplomacy and applying it to the very real neighborhoods and people right here in Farragut."

In addition to her service

with the Town, Jin serves as an ALTMUN chair for the Model United Nations Conference System and is a member of the Knoxville Symphony Youth Orchestra, Farragut

Model United Nations, Farragut Youth in Government, Mu Alpha Theta and the Engineering Club.

In a recommendation letter to the Town, Farragut High

School Spanish teacher and National Honor Society and National Spanish Honor Society adviser Allison Maldonado praised Jin's qualifications.

**FMPC**

From page 1A

facilities, stormwater infrastructure and streetscaping.

• The developer must correct Note No. 13, which references an open-space lot that is not part of this phase.

In other business, the Planning Commission approved a mostly aerial fiber-optic installation for Charter/Spectrum along a section of Concord

Road near 116 Concord Road.

Shipley said staff recommended approval, subject to the applicant obtaining a Town right-of-way permit and coordinating the work with the Town Engineering Department.

The Commission also approved an aerial fiber installation for Charter/Spectrum along a section of North Campbell Station Road ending at 11656 Parkside Drive.

According to Shipley, the

project begins on the west side of North Campbell Station Road near the southern entrance to Farragut Primary School and extends north before crossing the road and ending at 11656 Parkside Drive.

As with the Concord Road project, the applicant, Mastec, must obtain a right-of-way permit and coordinate the work with the Town Engineering Department before construction begins.



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**FIFA**

From page 1A

and that foam, so they did nothing but try to foul one another so I could spray that foam in the yard.”

That is one of several happy memories for Sorochan, merging his career with a passion that dates to his own childhood in Canada.

Growing up, he dreamed of playing in the Canadian Football League or making bicycle kicks like Brazilian soccer star Pelé.

Now, he has developed the grass Pelé would play on if he suited up today.

“It’s the last thing I ever thought I’d be doing, leading research for the World Cup and living in Tennessee,” Sorochan said with a smile. “But I do remember watching the World Cup, and I’m a lifelong

fan of the game and all sports. To have a way to stay in the game has been unbelievable.”

He has not only worked in soccer, having partnered with the National Football League, Major League Baseball and Major League Soccer, too.

When those games come on television, Sorochan scopes out the surface through the screen.

He has done the same through the World Cup, recording the games he can’t stay up for to ensure each surface is performing as designed.

“You can always see something,” Sorochan said. “When they’re passing the ball, they want the surface wet so the ball will skip and be faster for the play. They water just before the game and at halftime, and some teams even do it during these hydration breaks.

“When they switch fields

and they kick the ball and it lands, how is it rolling? Then when players are cutting and moving and a player slips, what happened? A lot of times, it’s because they put their foot in an awkward position, but I don’t want the surface to be a contributor to them slipping.”

The stadiums are being tested regularly throughout the 48-team tournament, which runs through Sunday, July 19.

Until then, Sorochan is communicating constantly with the FIFA team in Miami, where a monitor displays a live feed of all 16 pitches across the world. He also receives photos from every pitch every day to determine the state of each one.

The process is a bit more in-depth than sons’ Farragut High School games — though Sorochan would look for any divots or stray sprinkler heads before kickoff there, too.

Once each game began, though, he would shift into dad mode.

“Watching my boys play, that’s the only time the field’s not something I’m thinking about,” Sorochan said. “Whether it was Charlie or Ian, everything disappeared from what I do as a career.”

It has been that way throughout his life, putting family first and career second.

Ian Sorochan — now a rising senior at Tennessee — has even worked with the research team for a summer job while Charlie Sorochan has shared his dad’s work with friends at Farragut.

“I think it’s really awesome,” Charlie said. “When I was a kid and he was doing stuff for the NFL, I got my first taste of it. I thought that was cool, but this is a whole other level because of how much I like soccer and

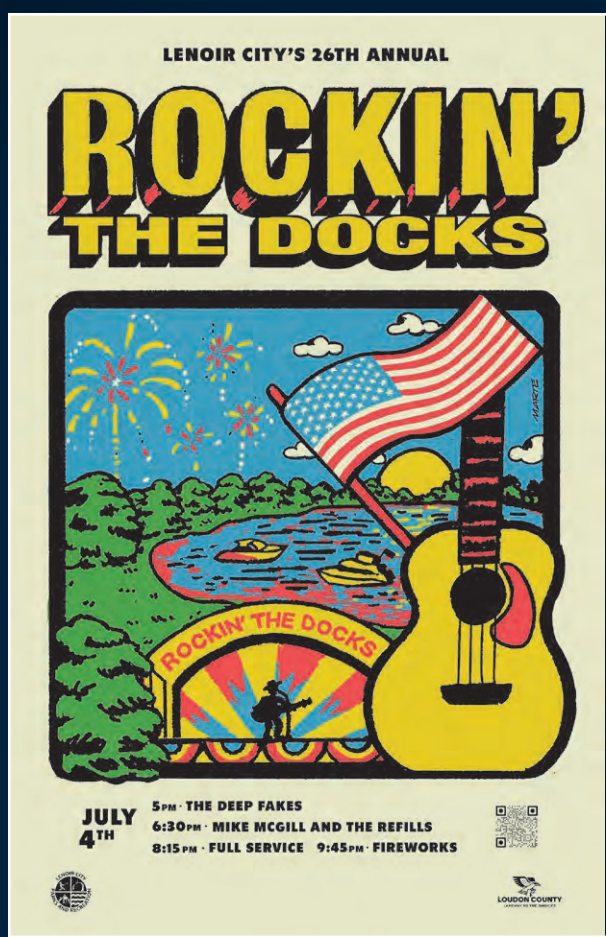
how popular it is.”

John and Ian watched Spain play in Atlanta last week, and the family is visiting Canada together for today’s meeting between Vancouver and Switzerland.

When they settle into a pub and go into the stadium, both aspects of John Sorochan’s life will be together in his home country.

But then again, they merged 11 summers ago in Farragut, too.

“It’s a dream come true, getting to have a hand in the World Cup, helping them select the grasses and construct the pitches for the stadium,” Sorochan said. “This has allowed me to do something I love to do in my backyard — which is probably the most important pitch of all for my kids and their friends — versus one on the world’s stage.”



# The Lake. The Music. The Tradition.

Each summer, Lenoir City Park transforms into the ultimate lakeside party for Rockin’ The Docks. Set on the beautiful shore of Fort Loudoun Lake, this free community tradition brings together locals and visitors alike to celebrate Independence Day.

Now in its 26th year, the event is presented by the Lenoir City Utilities Board and has become one of Loudon County’s most beloved annual gatherings — a perfect reason to make a weekend of it and explore everything the region has to offer.

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Tammy Cheek

Zach Hair (with scissors), owner of Sports Treasures, joined by his wife, Amanda (to his right) with their 18-month-old son, Jaxson, his father Danny Haire (to Amanda's right), mother, Sharon Haire (to Danny's right), Farragut Mayor Ron Williams (center back row), Town administrator David Smoak (back row, third from left) and Farragut West Knox Chamber of Commerce members in celebrating the opening of Sports Treasures with a FWKCC-sponsored ribbon cutting Wednesday, June 10.

## Card collector turns hobby into business

Tammy Cheek

tcheek@farragutpress.com

A lifelong hobby transformed into a business for Zach Haire, who celebrated the opening of Sports Treasures, with a Farragut West Knox Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting at his store, 135 Brooklawn St., Wednesday, June 10.

Like many young boys, he started out collecting baseball cards then, as an adult, had a chance to buy a company's inventory.

"Then the IRS told me it wasn't a hobby," Haire

related. "So, it kind of moved into a business."

"We're really glad that you all are here," FWKCC president/CEO Julie Blaylock said just before the ribbon was cut.

"I'm glad to be out here," Haire said. "I get to come to work and look at cards all day."

"You're bringing me back to my childhood," Town administrator David Smoak said. "Thank you for opening your business in the Town. It's small business owners like you who really make a difference and help us with our sales tax revenues and our community."

Sports Treasures, which opened March 21, nurtures collectors' enthusiasm for the hobby, with sports cards, miniature and signed helmets, baseballs, footballs, posters and other memorabilia. He also carries collector supplies.

"We always have new releases coming in," Haire said. "We have new singles."

"We have a direct contract with Topps [which makes the cards], Panini and Upper Deck."

Besides getting cards from Topps, Panini and Upper Deck, Haire travels to card shows

multiple times a year, and he buys cards from people who come into the store.

"June 1 was my fourth year owning Sports Treasures," he said. That's when he bought the original Sports Treasures, which is located off Broadway in Fountain City, north Knoxville.

"It's been there for 37 years," Haire said. "It was originally owned by Joe and [son] Eddie Barkley ... back in '89, when they started it."

"Every year, we go out to a Topps conference somewhere," he said. "It was Ari-

zona this year."

This year, Haire decided to expand his business west.

"Farragut was one of the areas that was identified by Topps as needing a sports card shop," he said. "So why don't we do it?"

"I've been trying to move out west for a little while now," Haire said. "Trying to find the right place. It's not easy to find property for a storefront."

"We started looking in October of last year," he added. "We were driving by and saw a sign here. It actually worked out."

## Regional Chamber Networking



Tammy Cheek

A Y-12 Federal Credit Union team, from left, Chris Latka, Becky Caponetti and Tawnya Brooks, welcome attendees to the Regional Chamber Networking in Hotel Hilton in Alcoa, Tuesday, June 9.

## businessbriefs

• Leslie England recently was appointed president and chief executive officer of TNBANK. England. She has served as president since April 2024, and will now assume the combined role of CEO and president, unifying the bank's executive leadership under a single strategic vision.

Her appointment reflects strong organizational confidence in her leadership following her successful two years as

president, where she strengthened operational performance, reinforced credit discipline and advanced key strategic initiatives across the organization. Over the past year, England also has been instrumental in building and strengthening a high-performing senior leadership team, and positioning the bank with the depth, experience and alignment needed to support continued growth and long-term succession planning.

### BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT



To celebrate Father's Day a little early, NHC Farragut hosted a special Car Show for our patients and residents. The event brought together classic cars, great conversation, and time outdoors with family, staff, and community members. Residents enjoyed admiring the vehicles while sharing stories and reminiscing together. Events like these create meaningful opportunities for social connection, spark memories, and bring joy to our community.

To learn more about NHC and their Farragut-area communities, contact Harriet Amonette at [harriet.amonette@nhccare.com](mailto:harriet.amonette@nhccare.com) or go to [nhccare.com](http://nhccare.com).

### farragutpress is now accepting political profile submissions for the 2026 election cycle.

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](mailto:editor@farragutpress.com)

The deadline for political profiles prior to the August 6th election is 12 p.m. on Friday, July 10th.

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





# DISCOVER LOUDON COUNTY



## Annual Arts & Crafts Festival draws thousands

**Tammy Cheek**  
tcheek@farragutpress.com

Thousands of people flocked to Lenoir City Park to enjoy GFWC Suburbia Woman's Club of Lenoir City's annual Arts & Crafts Festival on Saturday, June 6.

Whether shoppers were looking for lye soap, pottery or caramels, the festival offered a wide variety of handcrafted goods.

"I come every year," Tammy Johnson of Lenoir City said. "I've been coming for the last seven years. My niece is really into arts and crafts, and she was interested in what they have here."

One Maryville attendee, Debbie Banville, said she brought her aunt, Dhanya Nadesan, to the festival.

"It's my aunt's birthday," Banville said. "It's her favorite thing to do, so we're happy to bring her here."

This is the 63rd year the club has held the two-day festival, according to Suburbia club President Tina Courtney, who said the event is always held on the first full weekend in June.

"It's great," she said about how the event was going. "It's always exciting getting it started. The weather's beautiful, so we're real excited for the weekend."

"We have more than 200 vendors and numerous food trucks, so we're expecting a big crowd," Courtney said. "We usually have between 7,000 and 10,000 people attend the event."



Photos by Tammy Cheek

**Clockwise from top left:** Mel Scroggin, left, with David Koscielak and Dawn Willis; Lenoir City Councilman James Brandon, left, and Henry Mercer of Wonder Bar; GFWC Suburbia Womens Club, from left, Jody Cusick, Robin Stapp and Tina Courtney

Vendors come from throughout the Southeast, she added. "We have a lot of returning vendors. We have vendors who have been coming for 30 years. We also advertise for new vendors in a number of different

ways." "You'll see homemade jewelry, leather goods, customized wood products, handmade soaps and lotions, birdhouses and metalwork," Courtney said.

Among the many vendors was artist Jae Montano, who created paintings in front of attendees. "She's a certified Bob Ross instructor," her husband, Mike Montano, said. "She's a

Level 3 master." After being introduced to festivals, he said they became hooked. Her works were on display and available for purchase. **See ARTS & CRAFTS on Page 9A**



Tammy Cheek

Brian Sams, Community Business Development Consultant with Y-12 Federal Credit Union, shared insights into getting and providing a wellness program in the workforce as part of Loudon County Chamber of Commerce's Breakfast Academy Tuesday morning, June 16, in Lenoir City Utilities Board.

## Helping employees thrive financially

**Tammy Cheek**  
tcheek@farragutpress.com

About 30 Loudon County Chamber of Commerce members heard from a financial consultant about how to budget more wisely and avoid financial pitfalls during the Chamber's monthly Breakfast Academy on Tuesday, June 16, at Lenoir City Utilities Board.

Brian Sams, Community Business Development Consultant with Y-12 Federal Credit Union, shared advice on financial wellness in the work-

place during the event. "We're talking about financial wellness," he said. "It doesn't exist by itself. It's part of an employee benefits package. It should be something every employer has access to, just like an employee assistance program or a retirement package."

"You want to make sure you have something to address all the other issues," Sams added.

With a financial wellness program, an employer spon-

**See THRIVE on Page 9A**

## Business of the Month



Loudon County Chamber of Commerce Director of Membership Christy Fitzgerald presented John Radu of Honey Do Service with a Business of the Month Award just prior to a Breakfast Academy session Tuesday morning, June 16.

Tammy Cheek

## Networkings

Loudon County Chamber of Commerce members A.J. Vincil, left and Dawson Hope served up barbecue during a Chamber Power to Promote networking event in Lenoir City Park Friday, May 29.

Tammy Cheek



The Tennessee Valley Regional Chamber Networking drew a crowd of members from seven area Chambers: Loudon County, Farragut West Knox, Blount, Anderson County, Roane, Oak Ridge and Monroe. Hosted by the Blount Partnership, the event took place Hilton Knoxville Airport, Alcoa, Tuesday, June 9.

Tammy Cheek

**Arts & Crafts**

From page 8A

chase. Suburbia Woman's Club members work on the festival throughout the year, but "we really start working hard after January," Courtney said. "Then we work all week prior to the festival." To help with the festival,

members of the Lions Club, Loudon High School band, Boy Scouts and individual volunteers assist, she said. Courtney estimated there are about 30 volunteers. As a nonprofit organization, money raised from the event supports General Federation of Women's Clubs Suburbia Woman's Club's many community projects.

**Thrive**

From page 8A

sors an initiative designed to help employees manage money with less stress and more confidence.

The program goes beyond the traditional 401(k) plan by providing tools, education and support for everyday needs, such as budgeting, debt management and emergency savings. It also provides educational resources, such as webinars and workshops, one-on-one counseling, and debt repayment strategies.

Sams said people are borrowing money at a rapidly increasing rate. "This is a problem," he added. "We're already at a 22.4 percent increase across the board when it comes to costs and another 10 percent increase ... totaling \$276,000."

Sams said 51 percent of loans taken out are used to consolidate debt. He also noted that 86 percent of Americans

have a budget, but fewer than 25 percent follow one.

"Everyone has to juggle these changes," he said.

As a result, financial wellness programs are becoming more popular. What's driving the trend? Costs.

He said that, according to the Consumer Price Index, prices have risen 42 percent. As of June 12, the price of gas was \$4.64.

"We're experiencing really big disruptions," he said.

Additionally, Sams said that while more people are working past retirement age, the younger workforce is shrinking because people are having fewer children.

One way to respond to these changes is by adopting wellness plans that provide support to employees, he said. Other employers are educating workers and improving benefits comprehension to build long-term pathways to success.

"Benefits comprehension is badly lacking," Sams said.

*Ribbon Cuttings*



Tammy Cheek

Jeremy Eaton (with scissors) owner of Penwood Homes; his family, wife Sherry (to Jeremy's left), son Jeremy II (to Sherry's left) with daughter Charlotte, daughter-in-law Katie (back with son Jeremy III and Isabell Eaton), and Loudon County Chamber of Commerce members, cut the ribbon on his business with a LCCC-sponsored ribbon cutting at the Chamber office, 119 W. Broadway, Lenoir City, Friday, June 12.



Tammy Cheek

Rita's Mexican Taqueria manager Sandra Aguilar (with scissors), her staff and Loudon County Chamber of Commerce members gathered to cut the ribbon on Rita's re-opening at a LCCC-sponsored event at Rita's, 765 US Highway 321, in The Shoppes at Mill Creek in Lenoir City, Friday, June 5.



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## Admirals open new facility

**Ken Lay**  
Correspondent

In a project nearly four years in the making, Farragut High School's football program now has another meeting facility.

The Admirals and head coach Geoff Courtney were able to utilize the new complex during the final week of spring practice. Farragut also has its old field house.

The new facility, however, provides for additional rooms for meeting space and each room can accommodate up to 24 players.

"Of course, we still have our old field house, but this is just another place where we can meet with our players and prepare for our next practice or our next opponent," said Farragut coach Geoff Courtney, who succeeded his father, Eddie, as head coach prior to the 2024 season. "I believe this was a three-year project. I think we started projections and funding after the 2022 season.

"These are all small group meeting areas and each room's max is 16 to 24 and so eventually, we could have our whole team in here; but now, it helps that you don't have guys sitting on top of each other when we watch film. The way that it's laid out, you're not going to be overly crowded and you're not going to interrupt somebody that's in another meeting."

The building was conceived and completed by members of the booster club, the community and Eddie Courtney.

"You had several members of the booster club over the past two

See ADMIRALS on Page 2B



Jake Nichols

Farragut baseball coach Garrett Copeland has maintained an even-keeled approach throughout his baseball career. Now, that mindset has helped as he led the Ads to their second-straight state title in his tenure and fifth straight as a program since 2022.

## Calm coach, big results

**Jake Nichols**  
jnichols@farragutpress.com

Anytime Garrett Copeland steps into the Farragut baseball dugout, he does it with a visible sense of intense stoicism.

Eyebrows furrowed beneath his navy cap, left arm resting on the dark green concrete block, Copeland evaluates every second with the same even-keeled, tight-lipped expression.

The facial features give a glimpse into his mind, which spins with sound evaluation at every turn.

"I've kind of been that way my whole life," he confessed at a recent summer camp. "I'm not really a highly emotional guy on the outside. I like to think through things and be logical about it.

"My grandfather was always that way, and it's something I always respected about him. This is the situation, this is what's at hand, and emotion isn't going to change it. This game needs level-headedness, so I feel like that's the best way to approach things."

So far, the method appears effective. A couple weeks before he offered that statement, Copeland's Farragut team won its TSSAA-record fifth straight title.

In the process, he joined an elite set of predecessors — Matt Buckner and Tommy Pharr — who also guided Farragut teams to their ultimate goals.

When asked about that honor, Copeland referred to himself as a figurehead — citing the community support, player and parent commitment and involvement from assistant coaches Bill Mink, Daniel Sharp and Dave Roberts.

But he, too, has played a role, using the same baseball mind that developed just a few miles down the road.

Bearden bred Matt Buckner has seen both sides of Garrett Copeland.

He had plenty of opportunities, watching Copeland mature into a steady left-handed pitcher for the Bulldogs in the late 2000's.

Even then, the signs were visible of the career to come.

"He was a really good player, but he's always had a really calm demeanor and has thought about things in a good way," Buckner said. "He's got a good disposition for coaching, but don't let that fool you. He's a fiery dude."

See CALM on Page 2B

## Nine titles for lions

**Jake Nichols**  
jnichols@farragutpress.com

Steve Prince has coached track in Knoxville for almost four decades.

So he knows when a team has what it takes to win it all.

Earlier this season, he saw those signs within his Concord Christian track squad. And in May, the Lions proved him right by winning nine state titles with 22 All-State performances at the Division II-A state track meet at Tennessee's Tom Black Track. It was an impressive win for any team but especially one that had just four athletes on the entire team last year with no track to practice on at Concord.

To compensate, Prince had his sprinters run on the CCS soccer fields — not a rare approach, considering athletes, such as Usain Bolt, have trained on the same surface. Meanwhile, distance runners would head down Kingston Pike, hang a right at Starbucks and continue on their way for practice.

"It was a small school, but being a mile from Farragut, we realized we weren't big as a school but had these elite athletes," Prince said. "We've got quality kids, and we recognized that early. Everybody ran faster at the state meet and peaked at the right time, so that was really fun."

The state championship athletes included Lydia Kohlbusch, Maurice Smith, Presley Horst and Reese Franklin in the Co-Ed Relay; Baylor Kohlbusch, Lydia Kohlbusch, Presley Horst and Annie Von Hagen in the girls 4x400

See LIONS on Page 2B

## Lions look for 'big things' after productive spring

**Jake Nichols**  
jnichols@farragutpress.com

Last season, the Concord Christian football program compiled a campaign to remember.

The Lions put together a 6-5 record, finishing with their first playoff appearance in program history. With a scoring margin of plus-170, CCS notched the top spot in the farragutpress annual How the West was Won contest, presented by Billy Houston Group, Realty Executives.

In the process, Concord scored 49 points or more in four different games with five wins of 42 points or greater.

With plenty of pieces back from that run, including All-State wide

receiver Dasani Moulden and quarterback Kohbe Ward, the Lions are looking for even more this year after a productive spring practice.

"Most days, we had about 45 or 50 out, so that's a good number for us," head coach Steve Matthews said. "Really improved in skill positions with all these guys coming back knowing the system. It's been much better than last year but still a long way to go."

"It's made things easier where you're not constantly installing or telling everybody the expectations," he added. "They get it. But we've also got a tougher schedule this year with Halls, Grace and CAK, so

See PRODUCTIVE on Page 2B

## Small gym, big success

**Jake Nichols**  
jnichols@farragutpress.com

Heidi De La Rocha knows her facility isn't the biggest around.

But perhaps that's a good thing, as the 1,900-square-foot home of Heidi's Gymnastics Philippians 4:13 has produced some awfully big results since its opening in 1999.

Those results are reflected in the title banners along the walls, which also feature motivational quotes and Bible verses reflecting her faith-driven philosophy.

See GYM on Page 2B



Photo submitted

Gymnast Lexi Adoue poses on a beam during the AAU Southern Gymnastics Regionals event in Greenville, South Carolina.

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## Gym

From page 1B

Recently, the approach has shown in a name change, as the verse Philippians 4:13 is written on the windows outside.

But it has been reflected in scores, too. At the AAU Southern Gymnastics Regionals in Greenville, South Carolina, in May, five of the gym's 12 regional competitors — Saniya Gaikwad, Ayslyn McCreight, Abbi Jackson, Lexi Adoue and Aspen Nelson — captured all-around first-place finishes in their respective divisions.

"Some people are like, 'This place is really small,'" said De La Rocha, who competed for the Brigham Young University gymnastics squad in college. "But we've had tremendous success because it's not how big the place is — it's what's inside it. To have five regional all-around champions is incredible."

Notably, she said it is the most regional champions in a single competition that her gym has ever seen.

Her team has competed in the USA Gymnastics' Xcel AAU league this year, finding first-place results across the bronze, silver and gold divisions.

Those results have followed the girls' custom-made routines, as De La Rocha and her

daughter, assistant coach Savannah, coach every minute detail from head to toe.

"She's amazing," De La Rocha said of her daughter. "She's been coaching going on 16 years, I think, and she's my right-hand person."

"They work incredibly hard, and they're very coachable," she added of the gymnasts. "That shows when they compete. All 12 of them did amazing, and we're really proud of everyone."

Going forward, the team will compete at the national competition Friday through Sunday, June 19-21.

De La Rocha was hopeful they could find the same result as last year, as one of her gymnasts one a national title.

But no matter how the results shake out, she has been excited to see this team progress on and off the floor.

"All are welcome," she said. "We have wonderful families, and the girls on our team are very respectful, accepting, understanding, and their hearts are very open to our philosophy. They work together in unison, and my job is to mentor them and help them to be the best they can be inside and out."

"I've only got them for a little bit of time, so I hope that in the time they're here, they come out stronger in their character, confidence and who they are."

## Calm

From page 1B

That flame — and talent — proved enough to fuel Copeland on to Lincoln Memorial University.

But when an injury brought his career to an abrupt halt, he took a year off from the game and transferred to Tennessee to finish out his undergraduate work.

Little did Copeland know how his return would shape his future.

### From flaws to Farragut

When Copeland decided to step back into baseball, he took on a far different role than the one he'd left a few years prior.

Rather than playing, or even coaching, he strapped on shoulder pads, tugged on a mask and, for just one season, stepped behind the plate as an umpire for the TSSAA.

"As I was umpiring, I noticed a lot of flaws in high school baseball," he said, "and how things were run and how kids were doing it — so I decided I'd like to get into coaching just to help. Really, that was the start."

A conversation with Buckner followed, as Copeland brought it up the next time he worked a game at Farragut.

"He said to come out the next year, and the rest is history," Copeland cracked. "I've been here ever since."

Since his senior year in college, Copeland's status within the Farragut program has certainly changed.

He coached third base for a while then called pitches under Buckner.

As his role changed on the field, it changed in life, too, with marriage to his wife Ashley and becoming a father to their daughter, Hadley.

Through it all, Copeland took bits and pieces from the man he had looked up to since high school.

And on the baseball side, he learned how to run a program that produced five state titles during his time as an assistant.

"Honestly, he was a little more fiery when I played for him than at the end of his career," Copeland said of Buckner. "He evolved with the game, and he was a really good players' coach. As I matured and became an adult, seeing how he interacted with the players and looked after them, he did a good job in that."

Along the way, Copeland found the right balance between passion and poise.

So by the time he was tabbed as Buckner's replacement in 2024, Copeland brought plenty to his new perch in the dugout.

"You have to support your players, and there's a time to be fiery," Copeland said, "but there's also a time to teach and coach and get better. You can't berate a kid because you never know what'll happen. He could be a huge part of the win. But if you shut him down, you've lost that chance. It's situational, though, and the game will dictate what it needs to be."

In both roles, Copeland has learned the hard truth that comes with coaching — the lack of control — and tries to prepare ahead of time with an emphasis on fundamentals.

Now, that focus has yielded the same result as Buckner and Pharr.

And if Copeland's cool leadership has been any indication, the success should only continue.

"It's a really special place when it comes to baseball, and it's a special culture of winning and working," Buckner said. "That only happens with good leadership, and obviously he's taken that and able to do the same thing. It doesn't just happen by chance, I promise you. There's a lot that goes into it."

## Productive

From page 1B

we'll have to keep improving. This year we're older and last year felt kind of like a freshman team. This really is our first year with guys getting older, so

## Lions

From page 1B

relay and Kohbe Ward in the 400-meter event.

Notably, the Kolbusch twins were moved up for state since they are eighth-graders. Ward, meanwhile, finished with a time of 48.72 seconds, as Prince estimated he is the fastest freshman in Knoxville history in that event.

"I don't remember anybody else in my career being that fast," he said. "Kohbe, he just worked his tail off this year."

In terms of team finishes, the Lady Lions came in sixth with five girls while the Lions took 10th with six guys overall.

The team also racked up three second-place finishes in the girls 4x200 relay (Baylor Kohlbusch, Lydia Kohlbusch, Presley Horst, Annie Von Hagen), girls 4x100 relay (Baylor Kohlbusch, Lydia Kohlbusch, Emory Thomas, Annie Von Hagen) and boys 200-meter event (Dasani Moulden).

Moreover, CCS saw three top-four state finishes, too: the boys 4x200 relay (Dasani Moulden, Reese Franklin, Amare McKenzie, Kohbe Ward), the boys 400-meter run (Baylor Kohlbusch) and the boys 100-meter event (Amare McKenzie).

Overall, it was a rewarding

this to me is our first year all-in on varsity football. Last year was more a freshman roster.

Matthews noted the Lions' returners at skill positions but added the team is "still building" along its offensive and defensive lines.

Defensively, he noted the impact of returners Todd Lundy and Oakley Helton, who moved from linebacker to edge this offseason.

"We've got a new attitude on both sides of the ball," Matthews said, "and are looking to do big things."



Photo courtesy of Concord Christian School/Facebook

Concord Christian School freshman Kohbe Ward runs the 400-meter event at the Division II-A state championship meet at Tennessee's Tom Black Track. Ward was one of several Lions to find success at the meet, as CCS made program history.

performance for the Lions — and a welcomed victory for Prince, who recognized that potential early this year.

"When you've been there before," he said, "you know

what's possible. It came true because I knew the material we had, and it's been a great group to work with. A lot of camaraderie and fun."

## Admirals

From page 1B

or three years, and, of course, Coach (Eddie) Courtney was instrumental and getting this

building completed," Geoff Courtney said. "You had people in the community and people from the Town of Farragut, the state fire marshal and the Knox County engineers.

"It took a lot of effort from a lot of people, a lot of people in the booster club to get a building like this on a public school campus. It's all privately funded."

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### Notice of Informational Public Meeting

The Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) will host three public informational meetings on June 29, June 30 and July 1, 2026, to gather public input on the proposed I-40/I-75 West Knoxville Corridor Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. The PEL Study will evaluate solutions for congestion along the Interstate 40 and Interstate 75 (I-40/I-75) corridors within the study area, including portions of Anderson, Knox and Loudon Counties. A PEL Study is a collaborative approach that integrates transportation planning with environmental review. By connecting these phases, duplication of effort is reduced, leading to more efficient decision-making, improved public involvement and agency outreach, and better overall outcomes. At the conclusion of the I-40/I-75 West Knoxville Corridor PEL Study, projects will be identified and prioritized for subsequent development phases. The I-40/I-75 West Knoxville Corridor PEL Study considers improvements to approximately 17 miles of the I-40/I-75 corridor west of Knoxville, from the I-40/I-75 Interchange in Loudon County to the I-640 Interchange just west of downtown Knoxville. As part of this process, TDOT is also evaluating a possible new corridor within the study area. TDOT intends to adopt planning products and recommendations made as part of the PEL Study into future National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) studies, per Title 23 of the U.S. Code (U.S.C.), Part 168. The meetings will be held from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time at the following locations:

Monday, June 29	Tuesday, June 30	Wednesday, July 1
Pellissippi State Community College J.L. Goins Administration Building Student Center 10915 Hardin Valley Road Knoxville, TN 37932	City of Knoxville Public Works Service Center-Community Room 3131 Morris Avenue Knoxville, TN 37909	Farragut Community Center Assembly Hall 239 Jamestowne Boulevard Farragut, TN 37934

These meetings will be held to offer the public an opportunity to review the I-40/I-75 West Knoxville Corridor PEL Study planning products developed to date and provide comments. The same information will be presented at each meeting. Information shared at these meetings will be published and made available online as part of a virtual public meeting on the study website: <https://www.tn.gov/tdot/projects/projects-region-1/west-knoxville-corridor.html>. The virtual public meeting will be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, from June 29 through July 22, 2026, and will offer the same information and opportunities to participate and provide feedback as the in-person public meetings. The in-person meetings will follow an open-house format with no formal presentations. The public is welcome to visit anytime during the scheduled hours to view exhibits, ask questions, and offer comments. TDOT representatives will be available to provide information on various aspects of the PEL Study. Anyone with questions regarding the meeting should contact: Jason Sholtz, P.E., Region 1 Alternative Delivery Manager, (865) 594-3639, [Jason.Sholtz@tn.gov](mailto:Jason.Sholtz@tn.gov). Persons who require disability-related accommodations (e.g., a sign language interpreter or accessible materials) to participate in this meeting should contact Ms. Shanna Chevalier, ADA Coordinator, at (615) 741-0465 or via TTY 7-1-1 no less than ten (10) days prior to the meeting, or by email at [TDOT.ADAC.compliance@tn.gov](mailto:TDOT.ADAC.compliance@tn.gov). Comment forms will be available to make written statements at the public meetings. Written statements and other exhibits to be included in the public meeting documentation may be submitted by July 22, 2026, which is twenty-one (21) days after the last public meeting listed above, to the following address: TDOT West Knoxville Corridor Planning and Environmental Linkages Study Comments, Tennessee Department of Transportation, 312 Rosa L Parks Ave., 24th Floor, Nashville, TN 37243. TDOT is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, sex, religion, color, disability, or national origin.

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Tammy Cheek

Addy Nelson and Graham Hurt demonstrate some waltz moves during a recent dance session

## Prom prep inspires dance lessons

Tammy Cheek  
tcheek@farragutpress.com

Some Farragut High School students had an opportunity to learn some dance steps before the school year ended.

Tracy Kiumarsi, an instructor with Dance Center West in Farragut, recently taught the “proper way to hold a partner in a slow dance,” she said before the class began.

About 50 students were taught the slow dance, waltz,

salsa and merengue and a little hip hop.

“This is kind of exciting that they’re into this,” Kiumarsi added. She was asked to come in by FHS Spanish teacher Allison Maldonado, who also is the faculty advisor for National Spanish Honor Society and National Honor Society. She observed how students attempted to dance at their proms and thought they

See PROM on Page 6B

## Race day coming to Village Green

Tammy Cheek  
tcheek@farragutpress.com

Village Green Swim Team is gearing up for its team triathlon Thursday, July 16.

Farragut Board of Mayor and Aldermen approved a special event permit for the event during the Board’s meeting Thursday, June 11.

“This triathlon is a recurring event and includes biking and running on selected streets in the Village Green subdivision,” Community Development director Mark Shipley said. “Since these are public streets, this event must be approved by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.

“The start and finish will be at the Village Green Monticello pool,” he said. “The event is expected to have around 100 participants and roughly 25 spectators.

“No streets will be closed and volunteers will be stationed around the course,”

Shipley said. “The event time frame is from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m.”

He said the event was presented to the Town’s Event Committee on Monday, June 1, and was approved. Shipley pointed out, though, the day after the Event Committee meeting, it was discovered a storm sewer under South Monticello Drive is being replaced and a section of that street will be closed during the time frame of the triathlon event.

“The applicant has been made aware of this and has been asked to provide a modified route,” Shipley said.

In the application, Nicole Bailes with the swim team, stated in the application the triathlon is being held “to allow swimmers to participate in a triathlon for fun during their normal practice time.”

Attendees are asked to park along Bellfield Road and Cloverfork Drive or walk from their Village Green homes.

## Goodman turns 100



Tammy Cheek

Patricia Gilbert Goodson (seated front) enjoyed celebrating her 100th birthday with family, from left great-granddaughter Zoe Couston; grandsons Steve Couston and Michael Goodman; son, Jeff Goodman; son-in-law Jim Couston (seated); daughter Elise; daughter-in-law Teresa Goodman; Teresa’s father, Ed Falco; and Patricia’s granddaughter, Amanda Mise.

Tammy Cheek  
tcheek@farragutpress.com

Family and friends joined Patricia Gilbert Goodson when she celebrated her 100th birthday Wednesday, June 17, at NHC Farragut.

When asked how she felt about turning 100, Patricia simply responded, “Oh, OK.”

For her family, though, she was an inspirer, mentor and supporter. She is the mother of Elise Goodman Couston and Jeff Goodman; grandmother of Amanda Mize and Michael and Steve Goodman; great-grandmother of 11; and great-great-grandmother of four, as well as a daughter-in-law Teresa Goodman and son-in-law, Jim Couston.

“She’s an unbelievable mom,” Elise Couston said. “She encouraged you to be the best that you could possibly be. She was very encouraging, and she always wanted you to be the best person you could possibly be and to work hard and to make something of yourself.

“I attribute a lot of my success to my mom,” the daughter said.

“She was a great mother-in-law, especially in raising the kids,” said Jeff’s wife, Teresa. “She really helped us with

everything. We traveled together; we did a lot together; and she was the best mother-in-law.”

For her grandchildren, Amanda and Michael, Patricia, “she always had great advice,” Amanda said.

“She didn’t take any crap,” Michael added. “She didn’t mince words.”

“That’s an understatement,” Amanda retorted. However, “[Patricia] babied [Michael],” the granddaughter said.

Yet, “when it came to raising my kids, she was the first person I called for help,” the granddaughter said.

And, “she inspired me to pursue my goals,” Michael added.

Patricia was born on June 17, 1926, to Charles and Rene Gilbert in New York City, and the younger sister to the late Perle.

“She said she was born on the kitchen table,” Couston related.

“She and her parents moved from New York City to Los Angeles, California, because of my grandfather’s business,” the daughter said. “She went to UCLA, and she met my father there. They got married and had two kids. Then, my parents got divorced.”



Photo submitted

Patricia Gilbert Goodson was a young lady when this photo was taken.

In the meantime, Patricia’s parents moved to Glencoe, a lakefront village on Chicago’s North Shore, Illinois, when her father’s business moved him to Illinois.

“So, my mom moved my brother, Jeff, and I to Glencoe so she had the support of her parents,” said Couston, who lived in Los Angeles until the fifth grade before being moved to Glencoe in 1960.

While Couston still lives in Glencoe, her brother attended Berkeley University, where he earned his undergraduate degree and became a nuclear

See GOODMAN on Page 7B

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## Summer at the Davis YMCA

Summer at the Davis YMCA is all about helping children stay active, connected, and engaged. This year, we're proud to host our Unplugged Summer Camp, where kids spend their days enjoying play, swimming, socialization, and a variety of activities—all without screens. In a world increasingly connected to technology, Unplugged Camp provides a refreshing opportunity for children to build friendships, explore their creativity, and simply enjoy being kids.

Summer is also an important time for water safety. For more than a decade, the Davis YMCA has partnered with the Boys & Girls Club to provide free swim lessons to local youth. This longstanding partnership helps ensure children gain confidence in the water while learning critical life-saving skills. Watching these young swimmers progress from apprehension to accomplishment is one of the most rewarding parts of our summer season.

At the Y, we believe every child deserves the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive. Whether through camp experiences, swim lessons, or community partnerships, we are committed to strengthening our community and creating opportunities for all.

As summer continues, we're grateful for the families, partners, and supporters who help make this important work possible and look forward to making even more memories together at the Davis YMCA.

**A:** Stretch, wag, repeat—puppy pilates is paws-itively the cutest workout around!

**B:** From water aerobics to lunch dates—our 11am water aerobics crew knows how to stay active, connected, and have fun together!

**C:** Unplugged Summer= Making memories the old-fashioned way—through laughter, swimming, games, friends, and fun, not screens!

**D:** Where little friendships grow, creativity shines, and fun happens all day long—Child Watch is the place to be!

**E:** Matching shirts, shared purpose, and a commitment to building a stronger community!



Photos submitted





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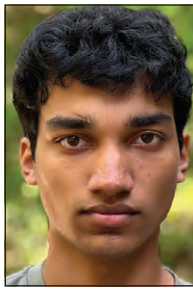


# Scholar earns national recognition

**Submitted**

Special to farragutpress

Rising Farragut High School senior Roshan Ramanan — already well-known as captain of the school's East Tennessee Scholar's Bowl team, which won first place earlier this year — has another honor.



**Ramanan**

He recently learned he is only one of two students state-wide to place among the top 150 students nationally in the United States National Chemistry Olympiad ((USNCO), sponsored by the American Chemical Society (ACS), making him an honors recipient.

The process began earlier this calendar year when Ramanan took an East Tennessee chapter level test conducted at his school. He decided to participate initially due to an already-present interest in chemistry "as a potential career path."

After earning a high score on the ETN chapter exam, he was selected as one of only 12 students to advance to the national competition, with no more than two students eligi-

ble from any single school.

The national exam was held at Roane State Community College and more than 1,000 participants nationwide competed.

Ramanan described the national test as "a roughly five-hour exam covering college-level general and organic chemistry with multiple choice, free response and laboratory practical sections."

He was notified of his honors placement very recently, at which time the top 20 national high scorers also were notified, making them eligible to attend a two-week study camp.

With another year ahead, Ramanan said making the top 20 and attending the camp, in which four students are selected as the U.S. team for the International Chemistry Olympiad, "is a goal for me for next year."

It also leads to a potential career goal, as the chemistry scholar said he is interested in studying chemical engineering in college.

This summer, Ramanan is doing an eight-week internship at Oak Ridge National Laboratory to further his interest in STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics).

He is the son of Dr. Ramanan Sankaran and Aarti Ramanan.



**Tammy Cheek**

**Above:** Asher Phillips and Niya Kaisare get tickled as they attempt the waltz. **Right:** Farragut High School's Makayla Treadway, left, and Shelby Watson get some laughs in as they dance the waltz.



## Prom

From page 3B

could use some guidance.

"We need to teach our young people how to dance," Maldonado said. So, she reached out to Kiumarsi.

"Mrs. Maldonado's daughter took dance from me starting in middle school then through high school," Kiumarsi said, referring to why she was asked to instruct the students.

In the meantime, National Spanish Honor Society students, who hosted the event, decorated the school's commons with piñatas and other Latin American decors and treated the dancers to Latin American foods.

## Farragut native



Photo submitted

Farragut native Max Robards graduated magna cum laude from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts during commencement exercises held on May 16. He earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in filmmaking. He graduated from L&N STEM Academy in 2022. Robards plans to start his career in New York City.

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But when retirement arrives, reality hits. After accounting for keeping your current home, everyday expenses and health care, \$1 million doesn't stretch as far as you thought, and the beach house remains a dream. The problem wasn't your discipline – it was that your number was never really your number. It was arbitrary, not anchored to what your ideal retirement would actually cost.

How can you make sure your retirement number is right for you?

A solid savings goal starts with a clear picture of the retirement you want. Think through where you plan to live, whether you'll keep your current home or downsize, how much you plan to travel, if you'll help children and grandchildren financially and what health care might cost you later in life. Build a realistic monthly budget, then multiply by 12 months to find your annual need. Adjust this amount for inflation until the first year of retirement.

Then, multiply that figure by 25 to get a sense of how much may be needed to save. It's a formula based on the idea of withdrawing 4% annually from your savings, assuming you retire in your mid-60s. If you need \$60,000 a year, your target is around \$1.5 million. You may need more or less depending on your lifestyle, health, unexpected expenses, Social Security benefits and other income. No single rate or strategy will work for everyone. A financial advisor can help you determine your number and strategy.

Once you know your target, the path forward becomes clearer. Here are a few tips for next steps:

**Start early.** The sooner you begin saving, the more time compound interest has to work in your favor. Small amounts set aside automatically each paycheck have the opportunity to grow significantly over decades.

**Live below your means.** Spending less than you earn is one of the most powerful wealth-building habits. When your income rises, save and invest the difference instead of upgrading your lifestyle.

**Keep your debt under control.** Since credit cards and other high-interest debt can slow your progress, pay off balances monthly when possible.

**Invest consistently.** If your employer offers a 401(k), aim to contribute at least 10%-15% of your salary, and increase your contributions after every raise. If you max out your 401(k), a traditional IRA or Roth IRA may offer additional tax-advantaged growth (eligibility and contribution limits apply).

**Boost your income when you can.** Develop new skills, ask for a raise or explore a side income. Every extra dollar saved moves you closer to your goal.

The difference between a retirement you love and one full of compromises often comes down to the planning you do today. Know your real number, build a solid plan and get the right help along the way.



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# Rotary volunteers construct 72 beds through sleep in heavenly peace



Photo submitted

Rotary Club of Farragut members Larry Sheumaker, left, and incoming president Brian Wilson stage a shot at the bed building project.

**Tammy Cheek**  
tcheek@farragutpress.com

More than 75 Rotary Club of Farragut and other Knoxville area Rotarians gathered last month to build 72 beds for Sleep in Heavenly Peace during a recent bed-building project at Mission of Hope.

"There are more than 150 kids in Knoxville today who need beds," RCF president Candace Viox said.

"We want to build as many beds as we can."

SHP is an organization that provides beds for children who don't have a bed. Led by RCF, the clubs contributed \$18,500 for materials, according to Viox.

RCF received support from Knoxville Rotary, Knoxville Breakfast Rotary, Knoxville Volunteer Rotary, Bearden Rotary, Knoxville Sunset Rotary and Lenoir City Rotary.

The team project took place in conjunction with World Rotary Day and is the fifth year Rotarians have built these beds with SHP, said Tom Woodbery, Public Image chair.

"We extend special thanks to Mission of Hope for allowing us their indoor warehouse to stage the event," he said. "Gus's World Famous Fried Chicken supplied a great luncheon spread for volunteers."

## Goodman

From page 3B  
engineer. His career would lead him to Oak Ridge National Laboratories and East Tennessee.

"He's been there a long time," she added.

During those years, Patricia was encouraged to work for the Department of Children and Family Services in Lake County, Illinois, where she served for 40 years.

"She was very active and very well-known and was a huge advocate for educating children and taking good care of them," Couston said of Patricia. "It was a huge part of her life."

When she retired, her accomplishments were recognized with a wooden plaque.

"She started doing that in 1961 and she retired in 1991," Couston said. "She started as a preschool teacher, when we lived on Los Angeles."

When she moved her family to Chicago, "her father encouraged her to get a job with the Department of Children and Family Services because he thought it would give her a long career," Couston said.

"[Patricia] went back to school at night and finished her four-year college degree while raising two kids, and got promoted," Jeff said. "Over the span of her career, she worked her way up from the entry-level position ... to director level."

"She was the head of licensing for all of Lake County, Illinois," Elise added.

"That was unheard of in those days," Jeff said. "A single mom, two kids, working ... she didn't get that by being a shrinking violet. She's tough."

While Patricia now lives in Farragut, "she still has her condo in Highland Park," the daughter said of her mother. "She used to come down [to Tennessee] through the winters."

"She would come down here, after my birthday, in mid-January, stay with Jeff and [his wife] Teresa, and then she would come back the first of March," Couston said.

In 2022, "she came down here for the winter, and she decided she didn't want to go back," the daughter said. "So she stayed here."

Photo submitted

Patricia Gilbert Goodson, right, shared a photographic moment with her older sister, Perle Mandiberg, who would later die in an automobile accident.



# classifieds

### Classified Advertising Rates

**Line Ads**  
Private Party 15 words \$47/4 weeks  
Commercial 25 words \$57/4 weeks  
Each additional word 25¢ per week

**Display Ads**  
\$12.00 per column inch

### Classified Advertising Deadlines

**Line Ads**  
Mondays, 11:00 am

**Display Ads**  
Space & Copy: Fridays, noon

### Classified Payments

Payments may be made by cash, check or credit card. Prepayment is required on all classified advertising.

**These Cards Gladly Accepted:**



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## ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE NEEDED

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The candidate should be comfortable speaking to business professionals and possess good written and verbal communication skills. Must be organized and self motivated.

Sales or customer service experience preferred, but will train the right individual.

Send resume to: [khartman@farragutpress.com](mailto:khartman@farragutpress.com)



Farragut Town Hall | 11408 Municipal Center Drive

### FARRAGUT BOARD OF MAYOR & ALDERMEN MEETING AGENDA THURSDAY, JUNE 25, 2026 AT 6:00 PM

- I. Roll Call, Silent Prayer, Pledge of Allegiance
- II. Approval of Agenda
- III. Approval of Minutes
- A. June 11, 2026, Workshop Minutes
- B. June 11, 2026, Minutes
- IV. Mayor's Report
- V. Ordinances & Resolutions
  - A. Ordinances
    - 1. Second Reading & Public Hearing
      - a. Approval of Ordinance 26-12, an Ordinance on the second reading of the Town of Farragut, Tennessee, Amending the Fiscal Year 2025-26 Capital Investment Program Fund Budget, Passed by Ordinance 25-10.
  - B. Resolutions

- 1. Approval of Resolution R-26-09, Approving Guidelines for Records Maintenance and Retention
- VI. Business Items
  - A. Approval of Revisions to Stormwater Advisory Committee Charter
  - B. Appointment of a Board of Mayor and Aldermen Representative to the Stormwater Advisory Committee
  - C. Approval of Emergency Contract for a Professional Service Agreement with Whaley Construction, LLC. for Replacement of Storm Sewer Pipe on Glen Abbey Boulevard.
- 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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12915 Kingston Pike  
Knoxville, TN 37934  
865-671-1885

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9:30 am  
and  
11:00 am

For more information go to [www.christcov.org](http://www.christcov.org)

Sunday Bible Class 9:30 AM  
Sunday Worship 10:30 AM  
*Nursery & Children's Worship Provided*  
Wednesday Bible Study 7 to 8 p.m.  
Weekday Preschool - Monday-Thursday

**farragut CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
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**FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
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Farragut 966-9626  
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9 a.m. & 11:11 a.m.  
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Sundays at 10:30 AM  
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865-966-8430 • [www.ffumc.org](http://www.ffumc.org)

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All Worship Services on-site and online.  
Nursery available for both services.

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275 Harrison Ln., Lenoir City, TN 37772

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Fredrick E. Brabson, Sr., Senior Pastor

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10319 Starkey Lane  
Knoxville, TN 37932

Contact Information  
Church: (865) 671-3370  
Fax: (865) 966-2072  
Email: [newcovenant@newcovenantbc.com](mailto:newcovenant@newcovenantbc.com)  
Website: [www.newcovenantbc.com](http://www.newcovenantbc.com)

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

Recorded Services  
On ZOOM  
Wed: Prayer Meeting & Bible Study (6:45 PM)  
Wed: Cultivate (7:00 PM)

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

# Area collegians earn dean's, president's list recognition

TUSCALOOSA, ALABAMA — Of the 14,306 students enrolled during spring semester at The University of Alabama, nine local students were named to the Dean's List with an academic record of 3.5 (or above) or the president's list with an academic record of 4.0 (all A's).

Farragut students include: Mason Benedetti,

Deans List; Jackson Magee, Presidents List; Selene Tan, Presidents List; and Caleb Wanca, Deans List.

West Knoxville students include: Halye Barlow, Presidents List; Aiden Brewer, Deans List; Ethan James, Deans List; Tessa Schlomer, Presidents List; and Kendall Thompson, Presidents List.

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# service directory

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8 Block.....\$465/mo.

Spot color \$5/mo.  
Process color \$15/mo.

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**Service Directory Payments**  
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• Pruning  
• Bush Hogging • Mulch  
Delivery Available

**CALL TODAY**  
Free Consultation & Quote  
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Painting & Drywall™

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The farragutpress is not responsible for errors in an advertisement if not corrected by the first week after the ad appears. This newspaper is not responsible or liable whatsoever for any claim made by an ad or for any of the services, products or opportunities offered by our advertisers. We do not endorse or promote the purchase or sale of any product, service, company or individual that chooses to advertise in this newspaper, and we reserve the right to refuse any/all advertising we deem inappropriate or unacceptable by our company standards.



## THE VOTES ARE IN

farragutpress readers make their choices for their favorite businesses within reading area

Readers of farragutpress recently cast their ballots for their favorites in the **ANNUAL “READERS’ CHOICE” AWARDS.**

Readers used ballots printed in the paper or downloaded from [www.farragutpress.com](http://www.farragutpress.com) to vote for their favorite Farragut-area businesses in a variety of categories.

**The complete list of winners can be found on page 4 of this section.**

A few of your favorites are highlighted here:

### Water into Wine

Viox grateful for support, blessings

A local staple, Water into Wine has repeatedly won farragutpress Readers Choice Awards over the last decade—and this year is no different.

The bistro and lounge, located at 607 N. Campbell Station Road, has been named Best Bistro/Wine Bar and Best Catering Company in our 2026 awards, marking another



Viox

huge achievement for Water into Wine just in time for their 10th anniversary.

“We have received this award many times, and we are grateful every year,” said owner Candace Viox. “The Farragut community has been amazing in their support of me since day one.”

While Water into Wine’s success is evident by these awards, Viox explained that the business’ inception ultimately stemmed from a series of difficult personal experiences that left her looking for a new path forward.

“When my marriage fell apart in March 2011, I knew I had to regroup... I needed a plan,” said the mother of four. “But then the unthinkable happened—my mom unexpectedly died on May 9, 2011. She was my rock, my source of strength and constant support.”

Viox, understandably, fell into a deep depression, attempting to fill the void with daily drinking at local bars. After being hospitalized with an illness and subsequently hitting an all-time low in 2012, Viox decided to return to her hometown, Huntington Beach, Calif., where an encounter with God swiftly brought her back to Tennessee.

The next day, she enrolled in culinary classes at Pellis-

See WATER INTO WINE on Page 8C



Photos submitted

### Farragut Junction Apartments

*Making a positive impact on the community*

One of the newest apartment complexes in the area, Farragut Junction Apartments has already made a positive impact on the community, thanks to its prime location and resort-style amenities.

Only in its second year, the luxury apartment concept, 13120 Royal Palm Way, has been named Best Apartment Complex in our 2026 Readers Choice Awards, proving Farragut Junction’s value as a premier residential property.

“Farragut Junction completed construction in 2024, and spent the majority of 2025 focusing on leasing up all 228 apartment homes,” explained Candice Davenport, community manager at Farragut Junction Apartments. “We have worked so hard over the last year and a half, so to hear that we received this award felt amazing.”

Giving residents the opportunity to “indulge in elevated living,” the pet-friendly apartment complex provides flexible leasing options and a slew of state-of-the-art amenities, including a lavish pool and lounging sundeck, 24-hour fitness center, basketball court, bark park and walking trails.

A retail expansion is also in the works, bringing Starbucks and other major businesses to a commercial space directly in front of the apartment complex. Davenport says these offerings, combined with Far-



ragut Junction’s convenient location just off Kingston Pike, make it an ideal option for those looking to rent an apartment in the area.

“Our location is unbeatable,” she said. “You are within walking distance to local parks, greenways, Publix and our future retail spaces.”

The complex’s dedication to customer service, however, is what ultimately sets Farragut Junction apart from other apartments throughout Knoxville. In fact, according to Davenport, the apartment’s management team is one of best in the industry.

“I am beyond blessed to work with amazing people that are like family to me. I think that energy translates out into how we manage and maintain our beautiful property, which circles back to creating that

resident experience,” she said. “You can’t find a better opportunity to join a community that cares about what it’s like when you live here. From application to move-in and move-out, we are here to go above and beyond to cultivate and curate the resident experience.”

As a result of this customer-centric approach, Farragut Junction is able to attract an impressive community of residents, further elevating the overall experience.

“Our residents are the best,” Davenport said. “We are an apartment community in every aspect. Our residents look out for each other, help one another and help take care of the property. They love where they live and share that with us.”

See JUNCTION on Page 10C

### Dr. Ayo named best physician

For yet another year, Dr. Raye-Anne Ayo has earned the title of Best Physician in the 2026 farragutpress Readers Choice Awards.

“We have been blessed with several awards from farragutpress and we are so thankful to everyone who continues to support our mission,” said Dr. Ayo, who founded Family Health Center, 11217 W. Point Drive, in 2008. “As a values and principles-based practice, we know whom we are here to serve and why we are so dedicated to our patients. Their health, wellness, satisfaction and amazing lifestyle is meaningful to us all. We are truly appreciative of everyone who voted for us, who supports us and who encourages us to be our best every day.”

With a passion for serving the world, Dr. Ayo knew since she was a young girl that she wanted to be a primary care physician and worked tirelessly through medical school and residency to fulfill her dream. She met several skilled doctors and physicians who acted as mentors during this journey, helping guide her toward the decision to offer complete family care for all stages of life.

“I truly love the opportunity every day to serve my team and our patients to deliver outstanding care for long term health and wellness,” Dr. Ayo said. “A lot of our patients have remained under our care since I first opened the practice. It has been and continues to be an incredible journey to walk with and care for our patients throughout a significant portion of their lives.”

To help patients achieve their health and wellness goals, Dr. Ayo said the Family Health Center team strives to focus on ensuring a sustainable lifestyle built around four foundational pillars: nutrition, a positive healthful mindset, movement and regeneration.



Ayo

See DR. AYO on Page 10C

## Wallace Real Estate has built a storied legacy in Farragut

Wallace Real Estate has built a storied legacy in Farragut and other surrounding communities, earning several prestigious industry accolades throughout their 90-year history. As a testament to the company’s overarching success, Wallace Real Estate’s Farragut office, located at 10815 Kingston Pike, has been named Best Real Estate Agency in our 2026 Readers Choice Awards.

Kate Spears, marketing and communications strategist for Wallace Real Estate, said the “tremendous honor” proves that members of the community recognize and appreciate

the hard work the company’s agents do each and every day.

“Real estate is a relationship business, and this award reflects the trust our clients, neighbors and community partners place in Wallace,” Spears said. “We are proud of the reputation our Farragut agents have built, and we are grateful to be recognized by the community we serve.”

Spears added that the company’s Farragut office has received more than 2,000 combined five-star reviews from clients, proving their important role in the local buying and selling process.

“We believe that says a great deal about the level of care, professionalism and service they bring to every transaction,” she said. “We are incredibly thankful to everyone who voted and to every client who has allowed us to be part of their real estate journey.”

The largest independent real estate company in East Tennessee, Wallace Real Estate was founded in Knoxville in 1936, and has proudly served generations of buyers and sellers throughout Farragut, Knoxville, Maryville, Lenoir

See WALLACE RE on Page 8C



# The Villages of Farragut Senior Living Community



## THE VILLAGES

OF FARRAGUT

### THANK YOU for VOTING

The Villages of Farragut this year's Reader's Choice for **Best Senior Lifestyle Community!**

*Our success is because of your support, and we are honored to serve you.*



### Come Live "The Good Life" at The Villages of Farragut.

*Good Health, Great Neighbors, Fabulous Food, and Lots of Love!*

Whether you choose an elegant apartment or villa, our approach is unwavering, offering luxury living with a catered lifestyle for independent seniors.

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## The Villages of Farragut Senior Living Community

230 Village Commons Blvd | Knoxville, TN 37934 | 865-671-2500 | | [TheVillagesFarragut.com](http://TheVillagesFarragut.com)

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# READERS' CHOICE AWARDS WINNERS

All winners are located within the farragutpress readership area: Dixie Lee Junction to Pellissippi Parkway and Snyder Road to Northshore.

ACCOUNTING/TAX SERVICE - **Jessica Phillips, CPA**

ANTIQUE STORE - **Homespun**

APARTMENT COMPLEX - **Farragut Junction**

APPLIANCE STORE - **Pattersons**

ASIAN FOOD - **Little Bangkok**

ASST LIVING - **Autumn Care**

AUTO DEALER - **CarMax**

BAKERY - **VGs Bakery**

BBQ - **Buddy's Bar-B-Q**

BARBER - **Beauty and the Beard**

BEAUTY/HAIR SALON - **Beauty and the Beard**

BICYCLE SHOP - **Hurricane Cycles**

BISTRO/WINE BAR - **Water into Wine**

BOAT DEALER - **American Boat Center**

BREAKFAST/BRUNCH - **First Watch**

BURGER - **Sam & Andy's**

CAR/TRUCK REPAIR - **Matlock Tire Service & Auto Repair**

CAR WASH/DETAIL - **PureMagic Carwash, Dixie Lee**

CARPET/FLOORING - **David's Abbey Carpet & Floors**

CATERER - **Water Into Wine**

CBD/TOBACCO/VAPE - **Apotheca**

CELL PHONE SALES/SERVICE - **AT&T**

CHILD CARE FACILITY - **Primrose School of Farragut**

CHIROPRACTOR - **Pete Sulack, DC**

COCKTAILS - **Cazzy's Corner Grill**

CONVENIENCE STORE - **Weigel's**

COSMETIC/PLASTIC SURGERY - **The Skin Wellness Center**

CREDIT UNION - **Knoxville TVA Employees Credit Union**

CUP OF COFFEE - **Summer Moon Coffee**

CUSTOMER SERVICE - **Mansour Hasan, State Farm**

DAY SPA - **Grace and Glow Medical Spa**

DENTIST - **Kizer, Miller & McKnight Dentistry**

DRUG STORE - **Belew Drug**

DRY CLEANING - **Farragut Cleaners**

EXPRESS/URGENT CARE - **Summit Express Clinic**

EYE CARE CENTER/OPTOMETRIST - **The Eye Group**

FAMILY RESTAURANT - **Calhoun's**

FAST FOOD - **Chick-Fil-A**

FINANCIAL ADVISER - **Travis Cullman, SageSpring Wealth Partners - Financial Advisors**

FINANCIAL PLANNING COMPANY - **Rather and Kittrell**

FITNESS CENTER - **Davis Family YMCA**

FULL SERVICE BANK - **Home Federal Bank**

FUNERAL HOME - **Click Funeral Home**

FURNITURE STORE - **Ashley Furniture**

GIFTS AND COLLECTIBLES - **Bradley's Gift & Home**

GOLF COURSE - **Fox Den Country Club**

GROCERY STORE - **Kroger**

HANDYMAN - **Just Call Kevin**

HARDWARE STORE - **Elder's Ace Hardware**

HEALTH FOOD - **Clean Eatz**

HEARING CENTER - **Beltone**

HEATING AND A/C - **Lee Company**

HOME CLEANING SERVICE - **The Cleaning Authority**

INSURANCE AGENCY/AGENT - **Mansour Hasan, State Farm**

JEWELRY STORE - **Rick Terry Jewelry Designs**

JUICE BAR/SMOOTHIE - **Tropical Smoothie Cafe**

KIDS PARTY VENUE - **Poppets Play Place**

LANDSCAPING/LAWN CARE - **Bright Grove Landscaping**

LAW FIRM - **McDonald, Levy & Taylor, PLLC**

LIQUOR & WINE STORE - **TIE - Dixie Lee Wines & Liquors & Campbell Station Wine and Spirits**

MAIL/PACKAGE CENTER - **Goin' Postal**

MARINA - **TIE - Sun Life Concord & Choto Marina**

MARTIAL ARTS SCHOOL - **KAMA (Knoxville Academy of Martial Arts)**

MEDICAL FACILITY - **Tennova**

MEMORY CARE FACILITY - **NHC/NHC Cavette Hill**

MEXICAN FOOD - **Dos Agavas Mexican Grill**

MILK SHAKE/ICE CREAM - **Bruster's Real Ice Cream**

MINI GOLF - **Sir Gooneys - Family Fun Center**

MORTGAGE LENDER - **Elizabeth Powers (American Financial Network)**

MORTGAGE LENDING COMPANY - **Mortgage Investors Group**

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OIL CHANGE - **Valvoline Instant Oil Change**

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PAINT/WALL COVERING STORE - **Sherwin Williams Paint Store**

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PIZZA - **Blaze Pizza**

PLACE OF WORSHIP - **First Baptist Concord**

PLUMBING SERVICE - **My Professional Plumber**

REAL ESTATE AGENCY - **Wallace Real Estate**

REAL ESTATE AGENT - **Debbie Holloway, Gables and Gates**

SEAFOOD - **Connors Steak & Seafood**

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STEAK - **Fleming's Prime Steakhouse & Wine Bar**

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**Wallace RE**

*From page 1C*

City, Crossville, Dayton and Bristol.

“That kind of longevity only happens when people continue to place their confidence in you generation after generation,” Spears said of the company’s 90th anniversary. “This milestone is especially meaningful because our company has remained locally rooted while continuing to grow and evolve with the needs of our clients and agents.”

Spears noted that this rich local history and knowledge, along with the company’s forward-thinking service, has helped Wallace Real Estate stand out in the competitive industry.

“We have generations of experience in East Tennessee real estate, but we are

also continually investing in tools, training and marketing resources to help our agents serve today’s buyers and sellers well,” she explained. “Our agents are deeply connected to their communities, and that local expertise is one of the greatest benefits we offer our clients.”

Rhonda Thompson, for example, has served as principal broker of the Farragut location since 2020, providing guidance and support to a team of more than 80 agents. She also leads the Wallace Luxury program, which combines customized marketing services with in-depth market analysis to better target the proper buyers for distinctive homes.

“My favorite part of this role is supporting the agents in our office and helping them grow in their businesses,” Thompson said. “Wallace has

a unique culture among our agents... Their passion for knowledge, growth and excellence is unmatched in the market, and we desire to create exceptional experiences for all those we serve.”

As the company nears its centennial, Spears said that Wallace Real Estate remains focused on its mission of serving the local community well.

“The Wallace Farragut Office is filled with agents who care deeply about their clients and about this area... They live here, work here, raise families here and give back here,” she said. “We are honored to be part of the Farragut community and look forward to continuing to serve East Tennessee for many years to come.”

*For more information about Wallace Real Estate, call the Farragut office at 865-966-1111 or visit wallacetn.com.*

**Water into Wine**

*From page 1C*

Mississippi State Community College, aspiring to open an establishment where those dealing with loss and pain could safely share their stories. After completing a two-year degree in culinary arts and restaurant management, she worked with the team at Seasons Innovative Bar & Grille to gain experience and officially opened Water into Wine in May of 2016.

“One of my mom’s sayings was ‘If Christ turned water into wine, we could drink it.’ So, Christ’s first miracle, and my mom’s love of wine, are the inspiration behind my concept,” she said, noting that the bistro has proven to be a blessing for the entire community. “I am able to share the love of Christ with strangers, pray

for neighbors in need and provide amazing food and a glass of wine. The restaurant has become a wonderful ministry, aside from an experience to make new friendships.”

Along with Water into Wine’s plethora of Farragut Press Readers Choice Awards, the bistro has received CityView Magazine’s Best of the Best Award for their extensive wine menu for the last nine years. Executive chef Eric Rowland has also received CityView’s award for the Best Old Fashioned in Knoxville three years in a row.

“We are so grateful for our customers,” said Viox. “We could not have achieved this impact or reach across our community without them.”

*For more information about Water into Wine, visit [waterintowineknoxville.com](http://waterintowineknoxville.com) or call 865-392-1586.*

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**Junction**

From page 1C

After all, Davenport said, the ability to help others is what the job is all about.

“We do what we do daily because we love it—we love our residents; we love our vendors. To know that the love we pour into everything we do is felt... I don’t know that there’s a greater blessing than that for us,” she said.

In addition to the 2026 Readers Choice Award, Farragut Junction Apartments

has also earned the J Turner Elite 1% Power Ranking status, which recognizes the nation’s top apartment and student housing communities for their stellar online reputation and resident feedback.

“We just really want to say ‘thank you,’ and that we are grateful to be part of the Farragut community,” said Davenport.

*For more information about Farragut Junction Apartments, visit [FarragutJunction.com](http://FarragutJunction.com) or call 865-350-5006.*

**Ayo**

From page 1C

“Serving our patients with these four pillars of Health and Wellness (4PHW) truly motivates thoughtful care for our team and me,” she said. “Leading a private practice is truly a blessing, allowing us to encourage lifelong care for our patients according to our high standards of medical care, which we believe are medically and motivationally appropriate.”

In addition to the Readers Choice Awards, Dr. Ayo, along with Grace Herrington, DNP, have garnered various other distinctions of honor that recognize the team’s mission of ensuring an outstanding patient experience grounded in longevity health and wellness.

*For more information about Dr. Ayo and Family Health Center, visit [fhcpllc.com](http://fhcpllc.com) or call 865-675-4342.*



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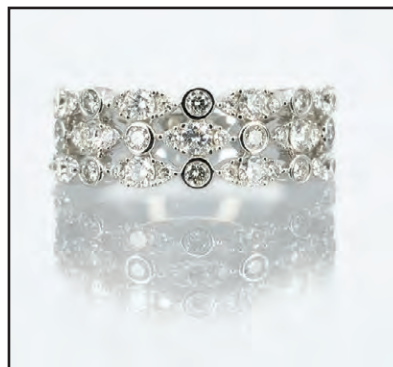


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David's Abbey Carpet & Floors has been under the ownership and operation of David Hayes since 1973. He leads a team of experienced and knowledgeable staff dedicated to delivering top-quality products and installations, ensuring a seamless experience for customers.

David's children, Barbie Moore and Mike Hayes, are actively involved in continuing their father's legacy by upholding the business's long-standing commitment to excellence. Barbie Moore oversees the accounting department, contributing to the business's success and operations. Meanwhile, Mike Hayes, the Store Manager, ensures that customers receive the best service and products in line with the family tradition.

Moreover, the establishment at David's Abbey Carpet & Floors is deeply rooted in community service. Through a designated employee charity fund established in 1998, they have proudly supported over forty local organizations and charities, displaying a strong commitment to giving back to the East Tennessee area and fostering community well-being. The commitment to service extends beyond business operations, emphasizing a dedication to the betterment and support of the local community.



David Hayes, Owner

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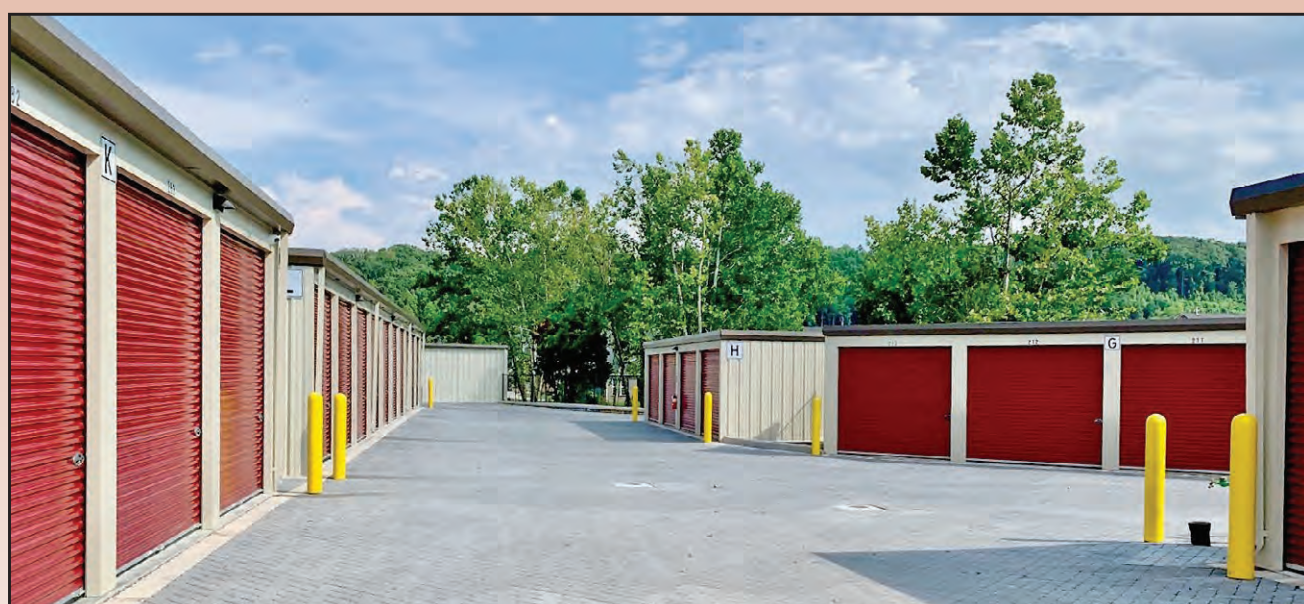
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### CAROLYN LEVY GILLIAM

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- 2023 Best Lawyers in America-Ones to Watch
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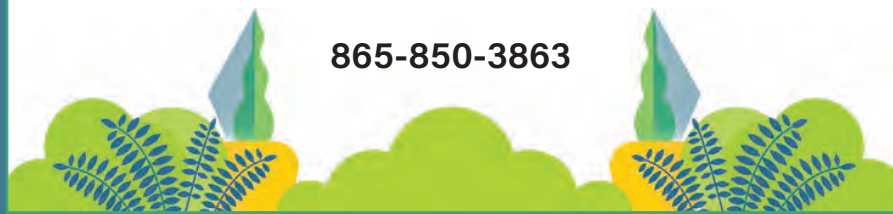


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Jessica Bird, Office Manager

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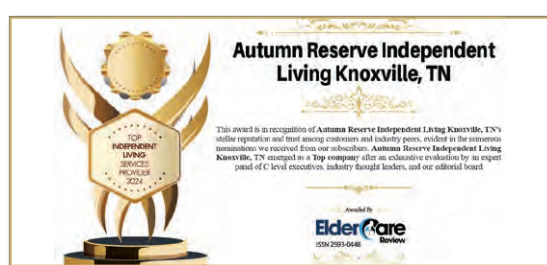
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