



History hour explores nation’s first seven presidents

Tammy Cheek
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From George Washington to John Quincy Adams, Farragut Museum’s History Hour’s presentation Tuesday, June 23 in Farragut Town Hall by author, history professor, radio host and speaker Tim Holder, shed insights on the first seven men who shaped the country.

Introduced by former Farragut Vice Mayor Dot LaMarche, Holder said, “Since we are celebrating the 250th birthday of the birth of the country, I’m going to tell stories about some of our founding fathers.”

The first presidents “were all, in some way, involved with the Revolutionary War,” he said. “I like telling stories that have a point.”

The first president, Washington, standing at 6 feet, 3 inches from Virginia, was the general who led the American army during the revolution then led the country through its early years after the war.

“You probably remember when he was the commander and chief of the Revolutionary War, the deck was really

stacked against him,” Holder said of Washington.

“He really struggled to get [the soldiers] paid and make sure they had supplies,” Holder added.

“There’s a great lesson in adversity from the life and career of George Washington,” he said. “He simply refused to quit.”

The second president, John Adams “was a guy who, if you looked at his career, by any fair measurement you might presume, this guy was wildly successful,” the speaker said. “He was known as the Atlas of the American Revolution. He carried the whole thing on his shoulders.

“When he was in the Continental Congress during the Revolutionary War, he served on 25 different committees to help the war effort.

“He was on the committee to write the Declaration of Independence,” Holder said. “He was part of the team that went to France to get the French to join the Revolution.

“Yet, as an adult, he’s miserable a whole lot of the time because he’s so focused on other people and their success that

he really struggles with jealousy,” Holder said.

Adams’ biggest point of jealousy was at the next president, Thomas Jefferson, who was credited for writing the Declaration of Independence and bought the Louisiana Territory, which doubled the size of the United States and removed France from North America as a potential threat.

Holder said Jefferson, who served eight years, was “incredibly charismatic.”

The fourth president, James Madison from colonial Virginia, was called “Father of the Constitution” because he helped write it.

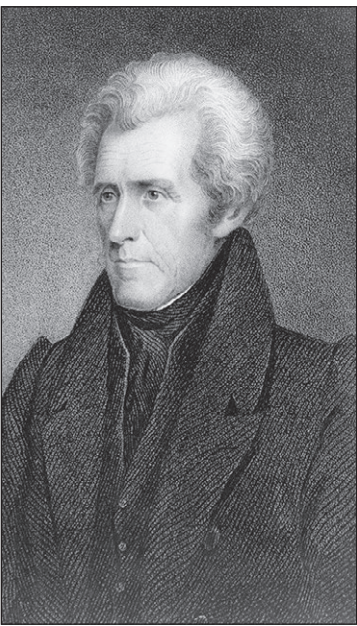
He tried to join the Virginia militia but he was small, 5 feet, 5 inches and 100 pounds with health issues.

“He could not stand up to the demands of the life of a soldier,” so he decided to make his mark with his mind,” Holder said.

Fifth president, James Monroe, established the Monroe Doctrine to keep European countries from interfering in Latin America, which had just gained its independence from powers of Europe.



Washington



Jackson

“The Monroe Doctrine said if any of those European powers try to come back to Latin America and reconquer part of it, we’re going to fight them,” Holder said. “This was a radical departure from the first four presidents,” who favored neutrality.

“Monroe was hopelessly out of fashion, but he shows respect for tradition while making a big, bold change when

necessary,” Hader said.

John Quincy Adams, the sixth president, was the first U.S. president who was the son of a former president.

“He was a diplomat for years in Europe, knew seven different languages. Super smart,” Holder said.

The seventh president was Andrew Jackson of Tennessee.

See HISTORY on Page 4A

LaCroix

From page 1A

I went home and removed the seal from any further ads that I’ll be using.

“On top of that, there was an email that came in this morning,” he said. “I would like to respond to that email.”

Because medical appointments prevented him from emailing the person directly, LaCroix said he decided, “in the interest of transparency and accountability,” to address the email at the meeting.

“Yes, I did recognize that it was the Town seal,” he said. “I did use it in my campaign ads. I didn’t know that was not allowed.

“I didn’t even think of the perception of using the seal in my own ads as if that was an endorsement by the Town,” LaCroix said. “The Town had no idea I was doing that, and they did not endorse me. This was something I did on my own.”

Regarding campaign financial disclosures, he said, “If anybody has any questions about how those ads were purchased, they can contact the executive director of the Tennessee Registry of Campaign Finance and Chris Davis [Knox County Election Office administrator of elections], both of whom were included in emails that went back and forth in regards to how those ads were paid and how they were done.

“That’s a public records request,” LaCroix said. “They will give you all that information.”

LaCroix also gave his phone

number, which is on his website.

On the ads, LaCroix said, “Who created, submitted and approved each one of my advertisements? I did. I created them all. It was on me.

“How was the Town seal obtained? Who put it in? Did any Town employees, files, equipment, email accounts or other public resources assist? The answer to that is I pulled that seal from a Google doc,” the alderman said. “I went out to Google, did a Google search and pulled it straight off the Internet and used it.

“No Town employee, no files, no equipment, no email accounts and no other public resources were used in that,” he said. “I did that all on my own, at my home, as I was building my campaign ads.

“Were the campaign funds reported properly? Yes,” LaCroix said. “This was an unauthorized use of the Town’s seal. I won’t do it again.”

During a subsequent citizen comments portion of the meeting, Kimberlie Parks addressed LaCroix.

“You have acknowledged tonight that using the Town seal was wrong,” Parks said. “I want to say that it’s sincerely appreciated.

“Owning a mistake matters; an apology matters, and I believe people should be given credit when they stand up publicly and admit they are wrong,” she said. “But Joe, your own words also matter. When you stood at this podium, asking the Board to censure two other aldermen, you specifically said that you did not believe he intended to vio-

late the law.

“Yet, you still said, ‘If I ever violate the law, I would own it, admit it and seek whatever remedy is available,’” she recalled. “And then you said something even more important. ‘They must be censured to preserve the integrity of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.’

“So tonight, I’m not asking for this Board to punish an apology or an admission, I’m asking you to honor the standard that Joe himself asked this community to accept,” Parks said.

While she accepted LaCroix’s admission, she asked that he be censured.

“Apology addresses the words and accountability addresses the actions,” she added.

Yet, in a Monday, July 27 interview, Town attorney Tom Hale said, “I don’t think it was a violation of any law.”

He said it was an unauthorized use, as the seal is Town property and LaCroix did not obtain permission to use it.

Hale supplied a municipal law section that deals with the seal that “prohibits misleading endorsements.” However, he added, “Here there was not even a suggestion of an endorsement by the Town in the ad; and from a legal standpoint, in my opinion, one viewing the ad would not concludes that an endorsement was being made simply because the seal of the Town was in the ad,” he said. “My guess is that

hardly any of our citizens even know that what appeared in the ad was the official seal of the Town.”

The law states: Any municipality has the exclusive right to use: the full corporate name of the municipality ... any seal, insignia, flag, coat of arms, emblem, sign, logo or visual image that has been formally adopted by the municipality ... a municipality may file a civil action against a party who, without the consent of the municipality, uses” the visual image “for the purpose of trade or commerce, to induce the sale of any goods or services or promote any public exhibition, performance, competition or similar activity ... tending to cause confusion or mistake, to deceive or to falsely suggest a connection with or endorsement by the municipality.

“In the event that the actions of any person give rise to a cause of action ... the municipality may seek to enjoin the manufacture, use, display or sale of a protected name or image,” the law stated. Further, it states the Town may seek an injunction to restrain the use.

Attorney John Neal also addressed LaCroix’s admission.

“Mr. Hale and I were able to talk about it on Sunday. Mr. Hale talked to Mr. Smoak. Mr. Smoak talked to Mr. LaCroix, and Mr. LaCroix, I appreciate your prompt handling of this matter. I appreciate your candor. As far as I’m concerned, the matter’s closed,” Neal said.

In other action, the Board approved:

n Ordinance 26-16 on first reading, amending the fiscal year 2025-26 Capital Investment Program Fund budget to allow for additional expenses associated with the Anchor Green public restroom project in the Biddle Farms development. The original budget totaled \$400,000.

“To date, there have been previous expenditures amounting to \$29,912,” said Chris Sheffield, director of public services.

He added the lowest bid for construction services exceeded the original budget by \$8,150. Since money already had been spent, “We are recommending allowing for a small contingency reserve of \$11,850,” Sheffield said.

To cover all costs, staff recommended a budget amendment moving \$49,912 from CIP reserves to CIP expenditures for the project.

Ordinance 26-14 on second reading to amend and update the ordinance regarding administrative purchasing regulations, clarifying approval authority for lower-dollar purchases and adding a formal protest procedure for competitive sealed bids and proposals.

The purchase of Microsoft 365 software licenses to upgrade the Town’s existing licenses through Sourcewell Technology Products & Solutions for up to \$31,899.08.



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A Message From Louise

Farragut was founded in 1980 to protect its residential character. The community wanted local control with a resident-led government. Our boards and committees are still made up of neighbors who step up and serve. Serving in Farragut isn't a stepping stone to some other higher political office.

Residents deserve direct access to their elected representatives who listen, understand, and act. For eight years, I have done exactly that. I did not shy away from the difficult conversations. I worked directly with neighborhoods across Farragut. I addressed concerns, and I helped find solutions.

I do not answer to outside noise. I go straight to the residents most affected.

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- Supporting Small Businesses
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DISCOVER LOUDON COUNTY



Voice of the Vols visits Loudon

Tammy Cheek
tcheek@farragutpress.com

“It is a fantastic time of year for the University of Tennessee because we are about to get cranked,” “Voice of the Vols” Mike Keith told a crowd of Loudon County Chamber of Commerce members at The Venue at Lenoir City Thursday, July 23.

Keith, the play-by-play radio announcer who also serves as the University of Tennessee’s assistant athletics director for broadcasting, was the featured speaker for the Chamber’s Speaker Series, sponsored by Lenoir City Utilities Board, Viskase, JTEKT, Kimberly-Clark and Carriage Hill Insurance.

He offered insights on UT athletics, leadership, teamwork and his career behind the microphone with both the Volunteers and the Tennessee Titans. “This month started off with a bang with the Adidas unveiling,” Keith said. “We just went back to Adidas after 11 years, and everything associated with that transition — not

only the shoes and apparel, but everything on campus that had anything to do with Nike — had to be changed to Adidas.

“So they’re having to paint the equipment trucks that travel to football games,” he said. “They’re having to take down all the signage within the building, which for 11 years has featured our Nike products, and change it to Adidas.”

“We are a better football team right now,”

~ Mike Keith,
Voice of the Vols

Keith added that “what Adidas adds in the NIL space, which is an area that they jump in before any new companies, has allowed us to have some real success with high-priority recruits.”

As the football program prepares to welcome another recruiting class, Keith said the recruiting process has changed dramatically.

“That’s another good happening as (head coach Josh) Heupel gets ready to wrap up high school recruiting for the Class of 2027,” he said. “That’s a big change.

“When I was here in the

See VOICE OF VOLS on Page 7A



Tammy Cheek

University of Tennessee “Voice of the Vols” Mike Keith shares insights into UT football coverage during a Loudon County Chamber of Commerce Speaker Series in The Venue at Lenoir City Thursday, July 23.

Blues and Brews on Broadway concert



Old Souls Band performed

Historic Downtown Lenoir City Merchants Association welcomed the community to its Blues and Brews on Broadway concert event, which took place at Depot Street in downtown Lenoir City Saturday, July 27. Along with live music, attendees enjoyed dining from food trucks and fellowship at the craft beer and music event.

Photos by Tammy Cheek



From left, Jerry Wilkerson, James Brandon and Mary Bright



Tonya Hamilton

Authentix networking

Jonathon Smith, far right, Community Manager of Authentix Town Creek, alongside Loudon County Chamber of Commerce president Rodney Grugin, talks to Chamber members about the apartments which are part of Continental Properties during a Chamber Coffee & Commerce networking event at Authentix, 494 Town Creek Blvd, Tuesday morning, July 21. The new complex features 276 studio, one-, two- and three-bedroom units.

Photo by Tammy Cheek

Community connections shine at the Non-Profit Showcase

The Loudon County Chamber of Commerce hosted its 7th Annual Non-Profit Showcase on Tuesday, July 14, 2026. Bringing together local leaders, passionate volunteers, Chamber members, and area residents, the event spotlighted the vital organizations that strengthen our community. The high-energy gathering took place from 5:00 PM to 6:30 PM at The Venue in Lenoir City. It successfully blended professional networking with community advocacy.

This year’s showcase saw 31 non-profit organizations set up interactive displays to share their missions and service resources. The event was proud-

ly sponsored by The Venue and Wampler’s Farm Sausage, whose generous support highlights a strong corporate dedication to regional community development.

For the local business community, it served as the official July installment of the Chamber’s popular Business After Hours series. This unique framework allowed regional business professionals to build relationships with community organizers. Attendees explored a diverse array of organizations, ranging from healthcare access advocates and youth mentorship initiatives to local food pantries and animal welfare groups.

The atmosphere inside the facility was vibrant and collaborative. Attendees moved booth to booth, collecting educational materials and discovering practical ways to give back through volunteering, board leadership, and corporate sponsorships.

Chamber events function as a critical bridge between sector leaders. Local businesses found creative opportunities to align their corporate social responsibility goals with local causes. Meanwhile, non-profits traded strategies regarding fundraising, volunteer retention, and community outreach.

The event was entirely free to attend, ensuring that all



community members could participate. Attendees also enjoyed local refreshments—

complements of the evening’s

See NON-PROFIT on Page 7A

Voice of Vols
From page 6A

'90s covering Heath Shuler's recruitment in Bryson City in the dark for his announcement at 10 o'clock," Keith recalled, "I covered the whole Peyton Manning recruitment."

At that time, "you would start in January and invite two or three commitments, generally somebody local," Keith said. "College coaches wanted to see high school film before

making a decision on a player, and that film had to come from the player's senior season."

"Now, players receive scholarship offers as freshmen, sophomores and, in some cases, even eighth-graders," he said. "Your high school recruiting is more or less done for the upcoming signing period by the end of the summer."

Keith said he also has seen recruiting evolve as programs increasingly rely on transfer portal additions rather than

strictly recruiting high school players.

Additionally, he said the physical nature of the game has changed.

"I'm dumbfounded by the way the players look," he said. "They're leaner."

"We are a better football team right now," Keith added.

With those changes producing stronger players, Keith said he is excited about the upcoming season, but even more optimistic about the years ahead.

Non-profit
From page 6A

sponsors—while browsing the crowded exhibition floor.

The annual showcase serves as a powerful reminder of the impact local non-profits make daily in Loudon County and surrounding areas. The Loudon County Chamber of Commerce continues to provide these platforms to ensure our community's economic and social sectors grow hand in

hand.

If you missed the showcase, you can still get involved. Reach out directly to the Chamber to connect with participating non-profits or to learn about upcoming networking events.

Get Involved with the Chamber:

- Phone: (865) 458-2067
- Email: christy@loudon-countychamber.com
- Address: 119 W Broadway St., Lenoir City, TN 37771



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LCUB
Going the Extra Mile

Success
From page 5A

days later, we got an email saying the store was closing.

“Needless to say, along with many others, we had some losses due to that,” he said, estimating that closure cost him \$1,500 to \$2,000, which “we didn’t get back.

“We were notified that day that they filed a Chapter 7 [bankruptcy],” Mullins said. “I went straight to the store that

day ... there was a big sign that said the store was closed.”

However, “We did get in,” he said. “We did get to get our stuff out, and I did it very quickly because I didn’t know ... the landlords could come in and we would not get in there again.

“Imagine all those people trying to get all their stuff out,” Mullins mused. “It only had one back door.”

But, “I guess when God closes a window, He’s opened

a door,” he said. “We were able to get in [The Shoppes at Homespun].

“We were able to open up here the first of May,” Mullins added. “That was a blessing.

“It’s really been great,” he said, adding he has recovered from the April downturn. “[The Shoppes] have been here a long time, and they do a good job. I’m very encouraged.”

Looking back, “We weren’t the only ones affected,” Mullins said. “A lot of people here

locally were looking for places to go. There are a few here that have booths at [The Shoppes]. We’re glad we’re able to find a place in Farragut.

“We like this concept because we can bring our products in, set them up and they take care, pretty much, everything else,” he said. “For me, at my age, that works really well ... this has been good.

Mullins, with his wife Donna, his stylist, bring about a bright, colorful booth for

people to visit. And along with the wreaths and bows, people will find other housewarming items for their homes.

Before making wreaths and bows, Mullins was in the food business before he retired.

The items he now makes initially was a hobby.

“This was supposed to be my retirement, but it turned out to be full time,” he observed with a chuckle. “I enjoy making something and hear people like what I make.”

Lifetime
From page 5A

dustries, ultimately inspiring a myriad of researchers, engineers and students. He particularly noted David’s work on welds of austenitic stainless steel, mathematical modeling and weld pool simulations, as well as single-crystal welding and high-performance materials.

“Over a remarkable career, you have helped elevate weld-

ing from an art into a rigorous scientific discipline grounded in metallurgy, modeling, experimentation and engineering application,” Burgess wrote to David. “Your leadership at Oak Ridge National Laboratory, including your stewardship of the Department of Energy Basic Energy Sciences Welding Science Program, has shaped generations of research and set a standard of excellence that continues to influence the field worldwide.”

David, who joined ORNL in 1977, served as leader of the Materials Joining and Nondestructive testing group in the laboratory’s Metals and Ceramics Division. He received his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from the Indian Institute of Science in India and later earned a doctorate in metallurgical engineering from the University of Pittsburgh.

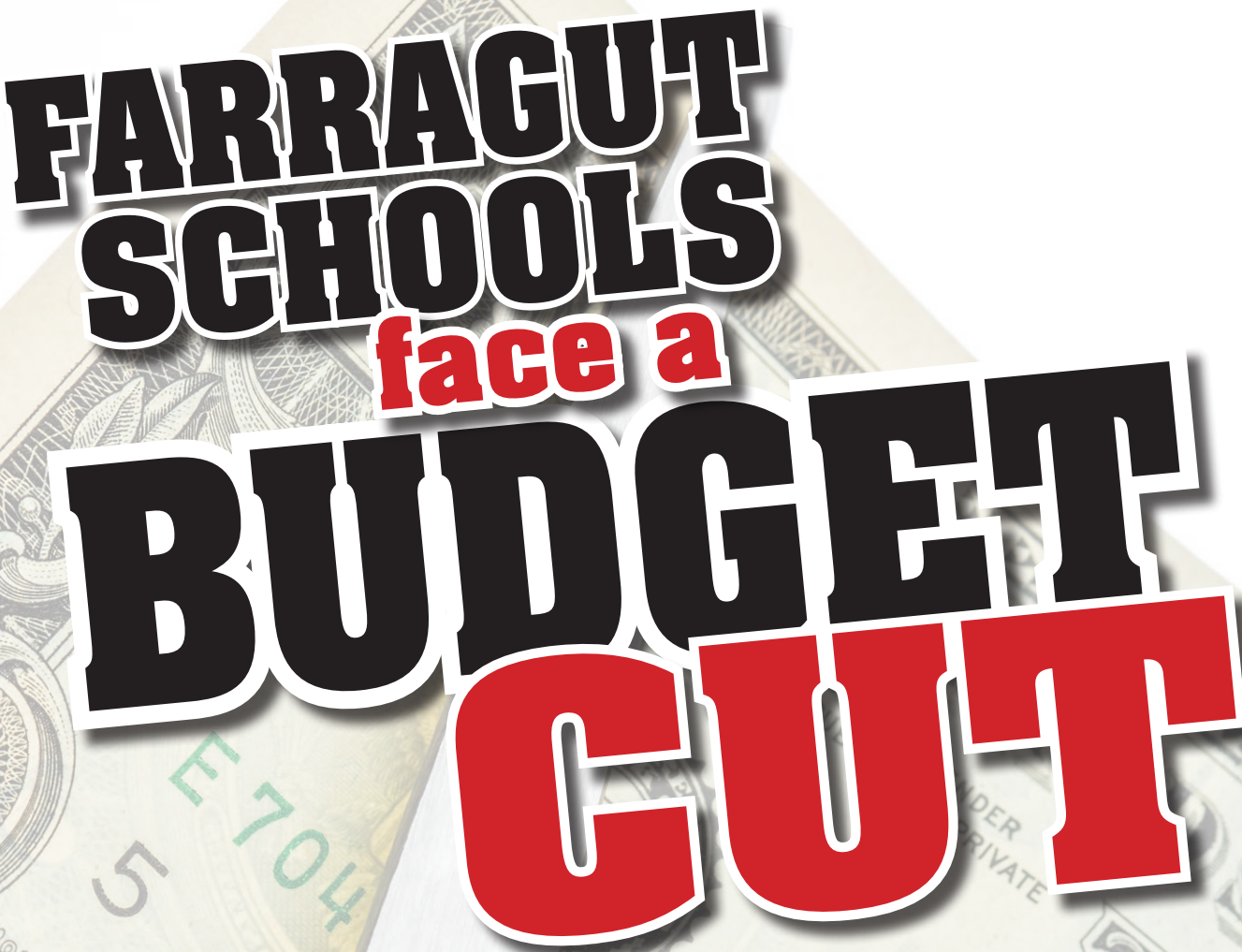
Throughout his career, David has garnered a multitude of industry-related awards

and recognitions, including the McKay-Helm Award, the James F. Lincoln Gold Medal, the Warren F. Savage Memorial Award, the Arata Prize and the 2023 Japanese Welding Science Award from Osaka University.

He also received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from the University of Pittsburgh and was named a fellow of many professional societies, such as the American Welding Society, American Association for the Advancement of Sci-

ence, ASM International and the International Institute of Welding.

Additionally, David, a founding member and editor-in-chief of the journal Science and Technology of Welding and Joining, has contributed to over 350 peer-reviewed journal publications and conference proceedings. He has also organized a variety of world-renowned conferences, further proving his influence as a leader and mentor.



FARRAGUT SCHOOLS face a BUDGET CUT

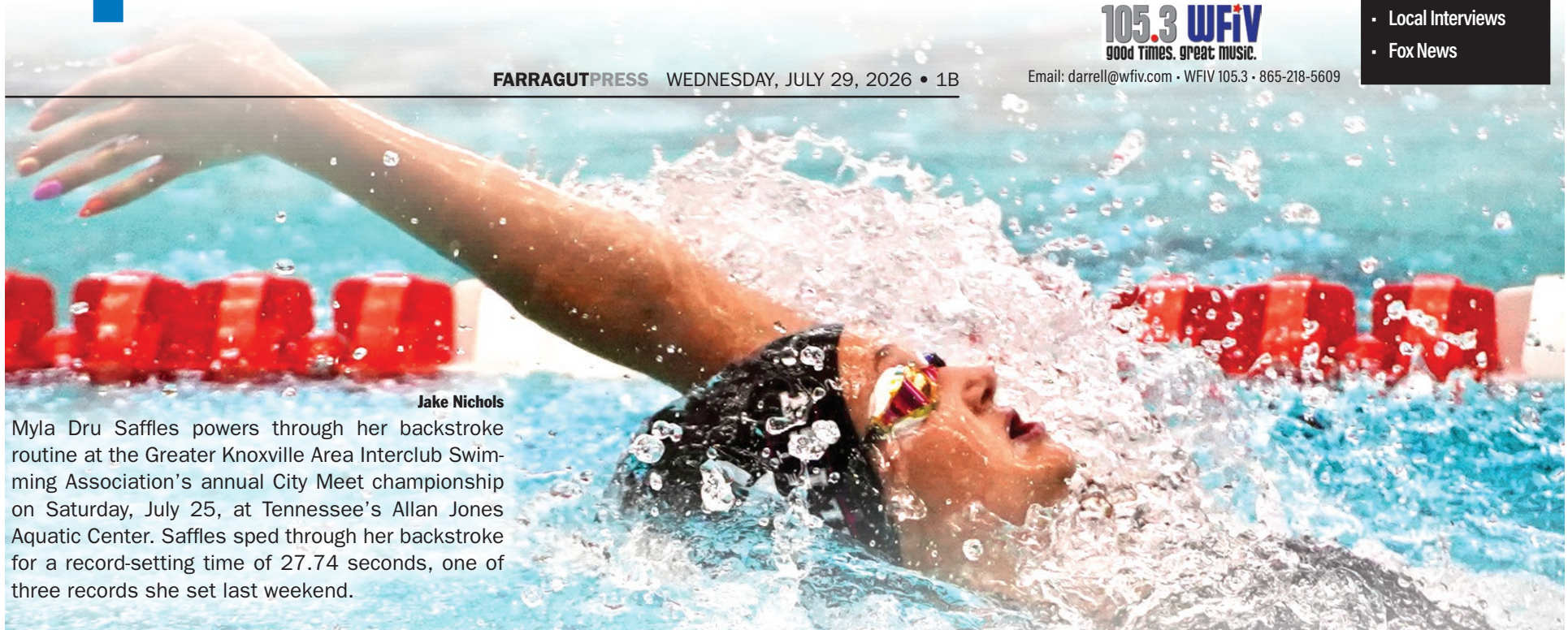
The Knox County School Board had a \$7.8 million cut from the Knox County Commission budget and so Knox County schools including Farragut schools have a funding cut. All the Farragut homes pay a property tax to the Knox County budget that pays for all county expenses including all county schools- Farragut is one of the many county schools.

The Town of Farragut has a \$32 million cash surplus and no debt and the Town only contributes \$151,000 per year to our 4 Farragut schools. Now is the time to invest more in our children in the Farragut primary, intermediate, middle and high schools rather than spending money on buying land, more parks and giving money to developers. Each year the Town receives over \$17,000,000 sales tax revenue from the state and their budget is only \$11,000,000 so each year the Town has a surplus of about \$6,000,000. It’s time to invest \$1,000,000 or more per year in our children’s Farragut schools and not buying more land, building expensive parks and helping developers with road improvements.

The big question is which Mayor candidate will commit to this- Alex Cain or Louise Povlin, it’s obvious it’s time for a change in town leadership.

Let’s get our priorities straight.

Paid for by Citizens for better funded Farragut schools



Jake Nichols

Myla Dru Saffles powers through her backstroke routine at the Greater Knoxville Area Interclub Swimming Association's annual City Meet championship on Saturday, July 25, at Tennessee's Allan Jones Aquatic Center. Saffles sped through her backstroke for a record-setting time of 27.74 seconds, one of three records she set last weekend.

Gators chomp, records fall at 2026 City Meet

Jake Nichols
jnichols@farragutpress.com

KNOXVILLE — This time last year, the Village Green Gators still were riding the high of their first championship in 14 years.

Fast forward 365 days, and head coach Sarah Fortney remained buoyant after the team fell just short of back-to-back titles in the Greater Knoxville Area Interclub Swimming Association (GKAISA) championship.

After unseating Knoxville Racquet Club (KRC) from a 13-year run last season, the Gators totaled 2,005.50 points

for a second-place finish at this year's Tom Schumann Memorial GKAISA championship meet at Tennessee's Allan Jones Aquatic Center on Saturday, July 25.

KRC reclaimed its throne this year with a total of 2,175 points.

"I feel like we swam up from where we were seeded and outperformed what we were expecting," Fortney said Sunday, July 26. "Heading into last year when we won, that was our first time to ever score 2,000 points."

"Historically, that's always been enough to win that meet, and yesterday, it just wasn't enough. Comparatively,

we swam really well and everyone did well. And with that number of points, that's the best we've been in 15 years, aside from last year. So we really can't be upset with that performance."

VG turned in 10 first-place finishes, while Concord Hills racked up 1,815.50 points for fourth place with Sugarwood in seventh at 843 points and Gettysvue in eighth with 782. Fox Den came in 16th with a total of 214 points.

There also was a slew of individual awards, most notably three record-breaking finishes from Myla Dru Saffles.

Having enjoyed a birthday on Friday,

July 24, Saffles blew out her candles and blew past the competition.

Saffles set new City Meet records in the girls 11-12 50-yard backstroke (27.74 seconds), 50-yard butterfly (26.52 seconds) and 50-yard freestyle (24.99 seconds) to pace the Stingrays.

"Myla Dru is a tremendous athlete," Sugarwood team president Michelle Bell said. "I've known her since she was little and she just keeps getting faster and faster. She is fun to watch! A broken record is a huge accomplishment, as GKAISA has a long history of

See GATOR on Page 2B



Submitted

After a standout senior year at Bearden High School, new Lady Vol freshman Jayla Blue was named the 2026 Tennessee Gatorade Player of the Year.

Record-setting Blue adds Gatorade award

Ken Lay
Correspondent

Bearden High School's Jayla Blue was named Tennessee Gatorade Girls Soccer Player of the Year recently.

During her senior season with the Lady Bulldogs, she scored 33 goals and dished out 17 assists

while leading Bearden to a 20-2-1 overall record and a fourth TSSAA Class AAA State Championship in five Ny.

She holds the school's career goal scoring record as she found the back of the opposing side's net 135 times dur-

See BLUE on Page 2B

Eckert takes the lead

Ken Lay
Correspondent

The new Bearden High School cross country coach is no stranger to the school or its athletes. He's been with the Bulldogs for five years.

Matt Eckert, who has been Bearden's head track and field coach for the past five seasons, now will have another opportunity to impact Bearden's athletes as he was recently tapped to take the reins for the school's cross country team.

The new challenge is

one to which Eckert is looking forward.

"I love to develop athletes and this gives me another opportunity to do that," Eckert said. "We've had good workouts during our first days of practice and I'm excited to see how we do when we get to the district and the region (championships)."

"I love to develop athletes mentally and physically."

Many cross country runners compete in both indoor track (in the win-

See ECKERT on Page 2B

Teeing up 2026

Area golf preview: HVA, Farragut, Bearden reload



Submitted

The 2026 Farragut High School Admirals golf team is eager to hit the links for this year's campaign.

Ken Lay
Correspondent

The 2026 golf season opened earlier this week for Hardin Valley Academy, Farragut and Bearden.

The schools each had players competing in the 5Star Preps Masters at Three Ridges Golf Course in Northeast Knox County. The annual two-day, 36-hole event, which features some of the top teams and individuals in East Tennessee, opened Tuesday morning and will conclude today (July 29).

The Hawks entered the new season coming off a Class AA state championship but they'll have a new coach as Greg Boling takes over both the boys team and the Lady Hawks, who were state runners-up last season.

Boling, who previously coached at Lenoir City High School before becoming coach at Point University in Georgia, and later at Wallace State University in Alabama, is looking to develop relationships with his players.

"My expectation is to build relationships. It's all about building relationships," Boling said. "I also expect our players to become good people and contributors in society. I want them to be good moms and good dads."

"At all my previous stops, I was able to build deep and meaningful relationships."

Top returners for the Hardin Valley boys include: Hunter Mousa (junior); Arjun Patel (junior); Sam Stiles (senior) and Cash Doane (senior).

The veteran cast will be joined by newcomers Jimmy Luttrell (junior), Mike Huff (senior) and Collin Schemel (junior).

The Lady Hawks, meanwhile, return five players, including one senior, Rylee Taylor, and four juniors. The junior class includes Addisyn Newman, Kendall Ownby, Hadley Fox and Emma Dolynchuk.

HVA also has an incoming freshman as Berkleigh Foss enters the fray for the Lady Hawks.

At Farragut, coach Ryan Mahoney begins



A few members of the 2026 Hardin Valley Academy girls golf program: Hadley Fox, Kendall Ownby and Rylee Taylor.

his fifth season at the helm for the Admirals and Lady Ads.

Both teams have a wealth of experience and the coach has high hopes for both squads but they'll have to play some of the area's top teams in District 4-AA.

"Our (boys) district is one of the toughest around," Mahoney said. "We've got Bearden and Maryville

See TEEING on Page 2B

Eckert

From page 1B

ter) and outdoor track in the spring and the sports have their similarities, but they’re also quite different.

“There are some similarities in cross country and distance running (on the track),” he said. “But the biggest difference is that in cross country, it’s 3.1 miles and in track, the most you run is two miles, so you want to try to stay con-

sistent or get better mile after mile after mile and you really be pushing yourself,

“And in cross country, you get to see some different scenery. That’s for sure.”

When Eckert had his first summer workout, he was greeted by some passionate runners, which made him even more excited about his new job,

“These kids just really love to run,” Eckert said. “That’s why they’re out here.”

Blue

From page 1B

ing her illustrious record, shattering the previous mark held by Brinley Murphy, who is now playing at the University of Florida after beginning her collegiate career at South Carolina.

Blue also holds the Lady Bulldogs’ single-season goal scoring record as she tallied

45 markers as a junior in 2024. She also totaled 15 assists during her junior campaign.

A recent Bearden graduate, Blue will play at the University of Tennessee. With the Lady Vols, she’ll join her sister, Nyla, a junior defender for Tennessee.

Jayla and Nyla are the daughters of former Lady Vols’ basketball player Ace Clement Blue.

Gator

From page 1B

great swimmers. Setting three records in one meet is exceptional.”

Saffles was not the only area swimmer to carve a new spot in the record book.

Village Green’s Kuba Shaw set a new pace in the men’s 15 and over 100-yard freestyle, while Concord Hills’ Landon Hall snapped a record in the men’s 15 and over 50-yard breaststroke.

Shaw, a future Arizona State Sun Devil swimmer, burned through his heat in 43.94 seconds to bring a fitting end to a rewarding high school career.

“All of our staff was pretty aware that that was a goal, and his eyes were set on that,” Fortney said of Shaw. “We knew how invested he was, and it was special. Not a lot of D1 swimmers have to take the time to pour into a community team, and Kuba invests in younger swimmers and makes a point to encourage them. It made it really special for everyone watching that he could do that his senior year.”

event stood out in terms of competitiveness.

Farragut senior Adam Webster beat Jefferson City’s Braden Lanham in a swim-off with a 23.46-second finish, winning men’s 15 and over 50-yard freestyle.

Concord Hills totaled 11 first-place results, a few of which included Landon Hall’s record-breaker, Hayden Hall’s 20.49 result in the 50-yard freestyle and the combo of Katie Dutrow, Sam Duby, Millie Stoewer and Anna Whitley in the women’s 15 and over 200-yard relay at 1:48.83.

Sugarwood’s Lauren Hackett won the girls 13-14 individual medley and breaststroke, and Gettysvue saw several first-place finishes, too: the mixed 11-12 200-yard freestyle relay, Danny Fleming Jr. in the boys 11-12 100-yard freestyle and individual medley and Lilly Britt in the girls 8-and-under 25-yard backstroke.

On the deck, there also were a couple of notable awards to wrap up the summer.

Webster earned the Bill Lauer Service Award while Hardin Valley Academy senior and Sugarwood swimmer Annelise Hwang took home the Tom Schumann Service Award.

“Another huge win with Adam winning the service award because he’s such an exemplary student athlete,” Fortney said.

“It is an honor for Annelise to be awarded the Tom Schumann Service Award,” Bell added of Hwang. “This season she served as an assistant coach for the Stingrays and gave back to our team with her knowledge and experience. She is a role model our younger swimmers can look up to and we are grateful for the leadership she brings to our team.”



Submitted

Hardin Valley Academy Hawks golf team boys: Jimmy Lutrell, Hunter Mousa, Arjun Patel, Collin Schemmel, Mike Huff and Sam Stiles.

Teeing

From page 1B

and Hardin Valley and they won the state last year.”

But that doesn’t mean that he doesn’t have lofty expectations for both teams.

“I’m expecting some big things from both of our teams,” Mahoney said. “We have kids who have played in the districts and the regions.

“We have great senior leadership but we also have a lot of underclassmen. We have 16 boys on our team and they’re all getting better year by year.”

Top returners for the Admirals include Quinn Beck (a senior and four-year player at Farragut); Will Feehan (a senior who has played for three years, who was a region qualifier in 2025); Bryce Coulter (a junior in his third year on the team; he was also a region qualifier last season); Brady Beaver (sophomore and Oliver Gerwin (senior).

The Lady Admirals have three returners who had deep postseason runs last season. Senior Harper Holmes has been a state qualifier for the last two seasons and junior



Submitted

The 2026 Farragut Lady Admirals golf team.

Sophie Williams made a trip to the state championships last season.

Sophomore Lauren Hedinger returns after qualifying for the region in her rookie campaign last season.

At Bearden, coach Billie Davis begins his third year.

His key returners for the boys are seniors Aiden Morgan and juniors Dane Helzer and Will Ibbotson.

Davis has lofty goals for his boys squad but the team must

answer a few questions.

“Our goal is always the same and that’s to win the region,” he said. “But I really don’t know what my lineup is going to be.”

Top returners for the Lady Bulldogs include junior Caroline Sellers and senior Josie White. Bearden will also have four newcomers, including a pair of freshmen.

“Our goal for the girls is just to go out and represent Bearden,” Davis said.

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Photo submitted

Knoxville resident Bradford Kuester, 57, paused for a photo with his son Mac before competing at the U.S. Senior Open earlier this summer, having served as a club pro at Cherokee Country Club earlier in his career. He will compete at Pinehurst in August and hopes to qualify for the Senior British Open next year.

‘Golf experience of a lifetime’

Jake Nichols

jnichols@farragutpress.com

On the first tee at Scioto Country Club, Bradford Kuester experienced a moment he will cherish forever.

The date was Thursday, July 2, and Kuester — a 57-year-old golfer out of Cherokee Country Club in west Knoxville — was teeing off for the U.S. Senior Open in Columbus, Ohio.

When the starter announced his name, Kuester’s family and friends brought cheers that drew acclaim to the rest of the tournament.

Once off, he competed against players he had watched on television for 30 years prior: Ernie Els, Davis Love III, Vijay Singh and Padraig Harrington, the eventual back-to-back winner of the tournament.

“It was fantastic,” Kuester said. “From the moment they announced me when the tournament started and friends and family are yelling, it was so cool to have that. It was a surreal experience.”

But, the sequence would not have happened without Kuester’s belief and persistence, which carried him to heights he had always dreamed.

A graduate of Greeneville High School, Kuester launched his career at Middle Tennessee State University, where he became an All-Ohio Valley Conference (OVC) selection.

He became an assistant

golf pro at Bluegrass Country Club, then moved on to Cherokee as its assistant pro from 1993 to 1998. But meeting his wife Meredith led Kuester away from the life of a full-time golfer.

“Knowing that in the country club business, you work all holidays, I got out of the golf business and went to sell anything from toilet paper to urinal cakes cleaning products,” said Kuester, who has done that since 1999.

Still, he hit the links for club championships at Cherokee and the national level.

At 55 years old, after 19 years away from the professional ranks, Kuester began playing in Tennessee Golf Association events.

“So, I wasn’t quite sure how I would do once I got out there playing,” he said.

The results spoke for themselves, as he won the 2025 Tennessee Senior Amateur championship.

“That was sort of always a dream of mine,” Kuester said of the state amateur, “so to be able to do that as a senior was really cool.”

The victory pushed him into the final stage of U.S. Senior Open qualifying, as well as the North and South Senior Amateur championship at Pinehurst in August.

At the regional qualifier in Dayton, Ohio, Kuester posted

See GOLF on Page 5B

Unapologetically Adams: Part 2

From law to sound, Adams does everything he can

This is the second part of a three-part series on Terry Adams, a west Knoxville businessman and musician.

Jake Nichols

jnichols@farragutpress.com

When Terry Adams decided to go to law school, he enrolled in Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law in Memphis — only to start Admiral Law and Admiral Title the same year he graduated.

“I had a really strong background in business and understood what it took to build a business from scratch,” Adams said. “I had a business plan and knew exactly what I was going to do, though it evolved more organically than I thought it would.

“My idea was an attorney-based title company where you have the benefit of legal expertise but with the attitude that our very first job is to find a way to get the deal done,” he continued. “So we were solutions-driven, and that really helped. I think a lot of people in our community looked and said, ‘Man, that is a benefit.’”

In time, both companies became Knoxville cornerstones, combining employees’ expertise with philanthropic



Jake Nichols

Terry Adams, a lawyer and businessman in west Knoxville, has lived a double life as an independence country artist. These are just two parts of a career that has also included a U.S. Senate run, as Adams has fulfilled a pledge to “do everything he can every single day, and then get up and do it again.”

endeavors ranging from the American Cancer Society to the Knoxville Zoo.

Adams even made a trip to Harvard University for his work, sitting in the same class as a Supreme Court justice from South America.

“There was an assumption, I could tell, that I wasn’t as smart because of my Southern accent,” he said. “And I could eliminate that immediately if I wanted to, but I don’t, because

I like when people underestimate me.”

From Senate to sound

By 2013, that mindset had guided Adams to plenty of success in the legal field.

That same year, he was approached about a run for a U.S. Senate seat.

“It became well-known amongst people in Tennessee that I was good at helping folks

See ADAMS on Page 4B

Nguyen crowned Mrs. Universal Petite

Tammy Cheek

tcheek@farragutpress.com

Christina Nguyen, co-owner of the family-owned Angel Nails, did not want to just win a title when she was crowned Mrs. Universal Petite on a cruise, Margaritaville at Sea, June 28, she wanted to empower girls to make their own dreams come true.

“I still can’t believe it,” she said about winning the Mrs. Universal Petite Pageant. “It’s over a week now, but still feel that I’m still dreaming. I can’t believe that one day I can walk on an international stage and I brought home the big crown.

“My daughter and my former foster daughter are really proud of me,” she said.

On July 10, Nguyen headed to Chicago to be a supporter for all the contestants for Mrs. Petite USA, which took place the weekend of July 11-12.

“I will definitely continue with my mission, my platform, White Lotus Rising, and with my title, I will be able to expand it internationally,” she said, explaining White Lotus Rising refers to the flower that grows in muddy water and still thrives. Nguyen’s message is to empower young girls, including sexual assault survivors, to believe in themselves.

“No matter what life does to them, they can grow and be resilient like the flower,” she added.

Nguyen said the pageant was created especially for women 5 feet, 6 inches and under.



Nguyen

“Of course, it’s perfect for me because I’m petite. I’m only 5 foot, 2 inches,” she said. The founder, Hazely Lopez, also a petite woman, “wanted

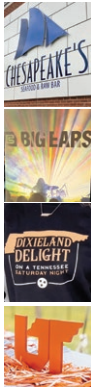
See NGUYEN on Page 4B



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Adams
From page 3B

do stump speeches well,” he said. “I’d also been a student of political science, and I really understood elections and campaigns, and I’m a veteran owning my own business and being moderate in my politics. In terms of running, I’d never run for any office, ever.”

Adams initially debated the offer, then went all-in by traveling to all 95 counties across the state in a push for the Democratic nomination.

He lost to Gordon Ball, who fell to Lamar Alexander in the general election, but took several lessons from a campaign that featured two prominent issues: veteran suicide and the economic argument for a living wage.

“There were a lot of issues at the time that were really important to me,” Adams said. “And even if we were a big long shot, we could raise awareness on a couple of things.

“Those two were important enough to basically take a year off and deliver thousands of speeches. And I still accomplished one of the things I set out to do, which was to raise awareness and make arguments that were more academic and logical in nature, rather than appeal to people’s heartstrings.”

As Adams returned to his day-to-day in Knoxville, he worked to represent clients in multiple facets — including the entertainment industry.

“My mom had a publishing deal, and they never paid her what she was supposed to get paid,” he said. “Each deal I get to negotiate is an opportunity to vindicate what happened to my mom, and I love that part of it. I love negotiating a good deal, but I also enjoy the fulfillment that comes with giving someone the courage to walk away.”

The key part is knowing when to take that second step, and Adams noted the crossroads that arrives with each artist he has represented.

“That’s one of the hardest things,” he said. “Because almost every time, a person’s first deal is a bad deal. Now there’s more readily available alternatives than just signing a traditional publishing deal; and being able to explore those options with clients and sometimes their parents, it’s a lot of fun watching them succeed based on the advice I’ve given them and the choices they made. It’s very fulfilling.”

Building a brand
Adams’ understanding of law and streaming platforms have certainly helped the artists he represents, as there are more options available than ever before.

But those options have also helped Adams in his own independent work as a musician.

“People are streaming my stuff all over the world — Ireland, Australia, Switzerland, Mexico and Canada — and years ago, for an independent, that would have been impossible,” Adams said. “You wouldn’t have even known where to send it because you wouldn’t know where your fan base was unless you toured there. I didn’t know Australia, particularly Brisbane, had this huge underground, red-dirt country music scene until they started streaming my record.”

He has also found plenty of fans in France, where Adams’ latest album, “Country Music,” was named Album of the Month.

“It found its time,” he said. “Because in 30 years, I haven’t changed anything. Years ago, nobody was giving a 50-year-old lawyer a record deal. But now, you put the music out, and if people like it, they listen to it.”

Rotary Club new members’ reception



Photo submitted

Thirteen was a lucky number for Rotary Club of Farragut, which welcomed new members with a recent reception at Fox Den Country Club. Of the new members, seven are returning members after a leave of absence, according to RCF president Candace Viox.

Nguyen
From page 3B

to do something about empowering and uplifting other women, and that’s why she created Petite USA,” Nguyen said. “Then she passed it onto one of her queens, and she made it into the Universal Petite, an international title.”

“The Petite USA celebrates 16 years this year,” she added. “The Universal [pageant] came a year after that.”

This is Nguyen’s second win with the pageant, as she won the People’s Choice Award last

year. She said she happened to see advertising for this year’s Mrs. Petite USA online and decided to apply as a Mrs. Tennessee Petite.”

She participated to show girls their dreams can come true.

She explained she is a former foster mother, taking in children to help raise. Some of those were sexual assault survivors.

“When I became a mother of an adopted daughter, I wanted to do something to show her that [the girls] can dream about whatever they

want and work hard for it,” she said.

While she signed up last year as Mrs. Petite Vietnam, she said whether she runs as Mrs. Petite Vietnam or Mrs. Petite Tennessee, “I still have the same purpose and mission.”

Angel Nails, a family-owned business, has been operating for more than 20 years.

“We are a part of Farragut,” said Nguyen, who has been in Farragut 19 years. “My brother-in-law and sister started the business.”

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Golf

From page 3B

a 2-under 69, finishing in fifth to earn one of 10 spots in the 46th U.S. Senior Open.

“I had it 3-under through 16, bogeyed 17 and had an idea that 1-under would be a play-off,” Kuester said. “So luckily I knocked it on the green, got a 21-footer.

“I’ve had a pretty good golf

career locally and state-wise. But when you start thinking all you have to do is two-putt to make the U.S. Senior Open, it gets sort of real. That one was a big surprise, I won’t lie.”

With longtime friend Sam Niell as his caddie and his son Mac alongside him, Kuester made the trek back to Ohio the week before Independence Day.

Once there, he approached

the tournament with lessons from Ted Lasso in the back of his mind.

“Even though you watched all those guys on TV that you’re going to play against, you have to go in believing you belong there,” Kuester said. “And you’ve got to be more forgiving, too, because golf can be a very hard and cruel sport. I’ve tried to work on not getting upset with myself

when I hit bad shots.”

Having spent the week around several pros, Kuester hit the course that Thursday and Friday, July 2-3.

“Just a fantastic golf course,” he reflected. “Now, it was harder than heck. Probably a 5 1/2, 6-inch rough.”

He ultimately missed the cut for the weekend, shooting 75 on the first day before double bogeying three times that Fri-

day for an 80.

But when Kuester did find success — like a birdie on 17 his final day — he relished the roars of those close to him.

“I had probably 30 or 35 folks from the club I play at, family and friends from college there, so when I made a birdie, it got loud,” he said. “With my 1 wife and son and one of my daughters there, that was special.”

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The Board of Mayor and Aldermen of the Town of Farragut, at its meeting on July 23, 2026, adopted the following ordinance on second and final reading:

- Ordinance 26-14, an ordinance on second reading to amend the Farragut Code of Ordinances, Chapter 2-Administration, Article 6-Finance, Division 2-Purchasing Regulations.

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Above: Jesus and Nicole Tovar with Marisol, 2

Right: Rena Sunico and Terry Cunningham play Pong

Party in the Park

About 300 families came to McFee Park to enjoy Party in the Park, the Town of Farragut’s summer blast Friday, July 24. Children enjoyed cooling off on the splash pad, running around the playground, having a water balloon fight, making crafts and jumping in the inflatables and more during the event. Farragut Parks and Recreation director said the weather was perfect: not too hot, not too sunny.

Photos by Tammy Cheek



Archer Bliton, 7



Tanner Owen with daughter, Avery, 2



Vivian Mae Courtney, 6



Rylie Smith, 2



Sisters Madison Russell, 3, and Mackenzie Russell, 6



Field Li with son, Joshua Li, 2



Kris Bridges with daughter Ryann, 9



Courtney Coffey with son, Henry, 1 1/2



Garrett Beeson with Gabriel, 2, and Camila, 4



Back to School photography by Jake Nichols

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Pictured above: From left, Beau Scott, Bentley Qualkenbush, Millie Scott, Olivia Coleman and Connor Austin in Target at Turkey Creek

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Jake Nichols

Incoming Farragut High School freshman Taylor Lunn took time to cool off this summer, but she also enjoys competitive cheer, crafting and other outlets to de-stress.

The tranquil textbook

Relaxation vital as students head back to school

Jake Nichols

jnichols@farragutpress.com

Taylor Lunn kicked back and smiled, backpack and books nestled nearby. For a moment, the imminence of freshman year was off her mind, as Lunn enjoyed the solitude and sanctity that arrived with an afternoon at the pool. That is one of the many ways she chooses to relax — an aspect that, for her, is even more vital considering her previous health struggles. But time away from the classroom is just as essential for any child who will be stepping back into the rigors of school and studies for the 2026-27 calendar. “Relaxation supports good mental health, which is essential to your child’s learning,” according to Playworld.com. “When children relax, they’re able to think clearly with a positive attitude. It gives them time and space to reflect on their emotions, which promotes better behavior. Stress is inevitable, even for children. However, too much stress can have a negative impact on their health, social interactions and performance in school. By giving kids time to relax, you can ensure that it doesn’t become too overwhelming.” Child development consultant Amy Yacoub, a licensed speech-language Pathologist, noted the effects of that overwhelmed feeling in a 2022 blog. “Ongoing academic demands can lead students to become stressed,” she wrote, “and 66 percent of kids have reported feeling stressed about grades. And this type of stress has been shown to impact children’s academic performance and mental health, resulting in issues like depression and anxiety.

“Intentionally building in some downtime into our kids’ schedules can help combat those negative effects of potential stress.” Some of those activities can include deep breathing — which involves taking big breaths through the nose, then releasing through the mouth. For younger children, this time can become playful since they can take stuffed animals for a “ride” as it sits on their stomach during the exercise. More activities include free play (whether alone, with a friend or inside or outside), reading, singing and dancing or exercise. Sensory stimulation also generates calmness, using items such, as Playdough or slime, sand or finger paint. Older children may choose activities such as painting or crafting as well, like Lunn, but she also is part of a local competition cheer squad. That exercise provides an outlet for her, as do hangouts with friends or trips to the mall or even the trampoline in her backyard. “I try to hang out with my friends, because I’m with them or out somewhere, I think more about where I am than about school,” Lunn said. The same goes for students, such as rising FHS junior Olivia Coleman. Her father, farragutpress ad executive Glen Coleman, has noticed his daughter’s independence grow along with her ability to keep herself entertained outside of school. “I was lucky, because from about the time they were in kindergarten, or even prior to that, they always had a sport almost all year long,” Coleman said.

See RELAX on Page 9C

Tennessee’s sales tax holiday begins Friday, July 31

Tammy Cheek

tcheek@farragutpress.com

With Knox County schools starting Tuesday, Aug. 10, parents are gearing up to get their students prepared, so they are looking forward to the state’s annual sales tax holiday weekend. “Tennessee’s sales tax holiday has become a back-to-school tradition for families,” Tennessee Revenue Commissioner David Gerregano said. “This weekend gives Tennesseans an easy way to save on many back-to-school essentials.” While most people generally know individual clothing, school supplies and school art supplies costing less than \$100 and computers costing less than \$1,500 are eligible to be tax free, what they don’t know about the holiday weekend could mean lost opportunities for savings. Items sold online are eligible, and all purchases must be for personal use, not for business or trade. “Did you know diapers are exempt [from state sales tax during the tax-free weekend?” asked Kelly Cortesi, director

of communications with Tennessee Department of Revenue. That includes baby and adult diapers. “When people look on the list of eligible items, there’s some things on there that might surprise people,” she said, especially people with young children ... Baby receiving blankets are on there as well. “Also, any type of uniform, as long as under \$100,” Cortesi added. “I know people have to wear uniforms to work, so it’s not just school uniforms that are exempt during the tax-free holiday.” Even by not having to pay the 10 percent tax, when talking about computers, “the savings can add up to a significant amount,” she said. “There are items, if you take a closer look, you might be surprised they’re on there,” Cortesi added. “Everything just has to meet that \$100 or less price threshold.” This year’s sales tax-free weekend, which begins Friday, July 31, continues through 11:59 p.m., Sunday, Aug. 2. During that time, “those retailers that sell eligible items

participate because we’ve had the holiday in place for quite some time, a couple of decades now,” Cortesi said. “As far as information, we have a dedicated page on our website ... www.tntaxholiday.com” or go to tn.gov/revenue. “It has all the information you need ... what’s exempt, what’s not exempt,” she added. “People can shop in store or they can shop online.” Although parents benefit, “the sales tax holiday is for everyone,” Cortesi said. “You just have to purchase an eligible item.” There is a listing of all items that are exempt and items that are taxable, according to Cortesi. The sales tax holiday applies to many back-to-school items, including shirts, pants, shoes, dresses, binders, backpacks, crayons, paper, pens, pencils, computers, and tablets. However, some items do not qualify, such as jewelry, handbags, sports and recreational equipment, computer software sold separately, printer supplies, and household appliances. Visit the Department of



Jake Nichols

Bentley Qualkenbush checks out a backpack at Target in Turkey Creek.

Revenue’s sales tax holiday page, www.tntaxholiday.com, for more information, including lists of exempt and taxable items. If you have questions, you can also call 615-253-0600 or email revenue.support@tn.gov.





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BACK TO SCHOOL PHOTO SHOOT



Jake Nichols

Olivia Coleman tries on a purse at JC Penney in Turkey Creek.

Clothing, supplies see differing trends entering new year

Jake Nichols

jnichols@farragutpress.com

Consistent and cyclical.

Those two words encapsulate the trends and lists that accompanying as they return to hallways, classrooms and even virtual learning centers for the 2026-2027 school year.

The consistency aspect comes into play with school supplies, which remain fairly consistent year-to-year depending on students' ages.

The largest item, a backpack, is a key choice for all ages. Students want to be comfortable yet fashionable as they walk through the doors to begin each year, and these bags fly off the shelves as children pick through their options.

"The biggest thing they're most excited about is that they get to pick out their own lunchboxes and backpacks," said Joey Falencik, the store director for Target in Turkey Creek.

Still, that desire may come at a cost given the weight of textbooks and other items that will be zipped inside.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, a child's backpack should weigh no more than 10 to 15 percent of their body weight. For an 80-pound child, this means that the backpack should weigh no more than 8 to 12 pounds.

This isn't much considering that the average textbook weighs about 3.5 pounds. Moreover, backpacks that are too heavy can cause pain, lead

to serious injury and affect posture.

Children can end up with injuries in their joints, back, spine, muscles, neck and shoulders from excessively heavy backpacks, making this a choice that parents may need to monitor as the school year unfolds.

Inside those backpacks, children may carry Kleenex tissue, Clorox wipes and dry erase markers as part of their lists for teacher supplies.

Beyond that lies the consistency for each age group, as Falencik noted "elementary kids still need crayons, markers, scissors and glue."

"Then they need binders for every subject, pens and pencils," he said. "I'll have somebody come in middle school and they'll still need five or six different binders."

All Knox County students are issued Chromebooks as well, beginning in kindergarten, and the computers and chargers are supplied by each school.

Falencik added that there is a "huge trend" on items that do not fall under a traditional school supplies list, such as fidget toys, backpack key chains and locker charms or supplies.

"It's school supplies, but it's also stuff you don't need to go to school with," he said. "That's really popular."

When students return to school with these items, they

See CLOTHING on Page 6C



With a new school year approaching, students of all ages can find new clothes, shoes and other assorted items at **JC Penney** at 11534 Parkside Drive in Turkey Creek. The store is open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Thursday through Saturday with 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. hours on Sundays and 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. availability Mondays through Wednesdays.



Clockwise from top: Before school starts back, several kids enjoyed shopping for clothes. Pictured from left to right: Bentley Qualkenbush, Connor Austin, Millie Scott, Beau Scott and Olivia Coleman; Millie Scott shows off some earrings; Connor Austin checks out the shirt selection during school shopping; Olivia Coleman tries on shoes; Bentley Qualkenbush tests out a t-shirt during school shopping; Beau Scott checks out some shoes.

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BACK TO SCHOOL PHOTO SHOOT



Before students head back into hallways and classrooms this year, they can find plenty of school essentials at **Target**, located at 11100 Parkside Drive in Turkey Creek. The store is open from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. every day and offers items such as backpacks, binders, notebooks, paper and other assorted items that may be needed to return to school.



Clockwise from top right: Bentley Qualkenbush, Millie Scott and Beau Scott share a sweet moment during school shopping at Target in Turkey Creek; Connor Austin picks through the school supplies; Bentley Qualkenbush flips through a notebook; Millie Scott looks over the toy aisle; Olivia Coleman enjoys checking out the folders in the school supplies aisle.

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BACK TO SCHOOL PHOTO SHOOT

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Before heading back to school this year, students around Farragut can check out **The Eye Group** at 11124 Kingston Pike to make sure their vision is squared away for the new school year. The optometrist office is open from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Thursdays, Fridays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. They close at 5 p.m. on Mondays and are closed on weekends.



Clockwise from top right: Students show off their new shades during a visit to The Eye Group in Farragut. Pictured from left to right: Beau Scott, Olivia Coleman, Millie Scott, Bentley Qualkenbush and Connor Austin; Bentley Qualkenbush tries on glasses at The Eye Group in Farragut; Millie Scott points out the Hello Kitty logo on her glasses; Beau Scott tries on glasses; Connor Austin is checked out by Dr. Harrison Amburn during a pre-school check-up.

Clothing

From page 2C

also must follow the dress code supplied by their specific institutions. These differ for some private schools, such as Knoxville Catholic, where students wear uniforms each day. Students in public schools must follow the dress code supplied by Knox County Schools (KCS), which details different standards for elementary, middle and high school students. Among the middle and high schoolers, especially, certain clothing trends are making a comeback — hence their cyclical nature.

Michelle Austin, the general manager at JC Penney in Turkey Creek, has seen the impact from two different sides. Having worked in retail for more than 30 years, Austin is well aware of trends in the market, but she also has seen a different view now as a parent, too. “Graphic tees are still in, and oversized is big for the sweatshirts and tees for girls and boys,” Austin said. “Denim ultra low-rise is making a comeback, as is the ‘90’s flair, so barrel leg, bigger and baggier, boot cut — all that is coming back.” She added that the bigger approach is more related to sweatshirts and tees,

while boys’ shorts are becoming shorter again, as opposed to the baggy ones that, took hold in the late 1990’s, and 2000’s. “Nike, of course, is popular again because kids like active wear,” Austin continued. “Skorts have been big with girls, and we’ve sold through a lot of those and dresses that have shorts under them. I don’t think leggings are as big as they used to be, but the bigger, baggier seems to be the thing. Oversized joggers, hoodies, tees are here. It’s a very ‘90’s look.” Having attended high school in the 1990’s herself, Austin is thankful to see some of these styles

making their return. “I think some of it is a lot of fun,” she said. “I like that the band tees are coming back and would wear that again. Some of it, I could probably do without. I look back at pictures and think, ‘Why was I wearing that?’ And here it is again. I think this generation puts their own spin on it, so that makes it fun and exciting to them. “It’s kind of nostalgic, I’m sure, for some of us. Then your kid never thinks you know what’s actually cool, even if you do work retain for a living. But I think boys are easier than girls for that stuff, too.”

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BACK TO SCHOOL PHOTO SHOOT



At **Nerds To Go**, located at 11110 Kingston Pike in Farragut, students can repair any laptops or tablets they may need for a successful start to the new school year. Nerds To Go is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.



Clockwise from top right: Nerds ToGo owner Susan Dally shows Connor Austin how to correct an issue on his laptop; Dally shows Olivia Coleman how to address a problem on her screen; Connor Austin tries out a laptop; Dally (right) shows Coleman (left) and Austin a shortcut on Coleman’s laptop during their visit to the store, which is a go-to spot for kids as they take their technology back to the hallways.



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BACK TO SCHOOL PHOTO SHOOT



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Clockwise from top right: Beau Scott, Millie Scott and Bentley Qualkenbush show their skills at Knox Dance Worx; Millie Scott shows off her new favorite move; Millie Scott and Bentley Qualkenbush share a sweet moment; Piper Belcher, Farragut High School student and dancer at Knox Dance Worx, shows Millie Scott how to stand during a visit to the studio; Belcher teaches Beau Scott a new move during his dance lesson at Knox Dance Worx.



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Before students return, teachers get to work

Tammy Cheek
tcheek@farragutpress.com

With Knox County Schools students returning to the classrooms Monday, Aug. 10, Farragut teachers are getting ready.

“We spend the first week [before school starts] getting their rooms set up,” said Farragut Primary School second-grade teacher Melinda Webster, who has been teaching at FPS for 14 years but is in her 32nd year of teaching. Before that, she said the rooms are cleaned, and the floors are waxed in the summer. “Everything is moved out and then moved back in.

“It takes a good week to go back to reset,” Webster said. Additionally, teachers need to make sure they are well-stocked.

Knox County Schools provides the textbooks, English as a Second Language, math, social studies and science curriculum, “but anything else we might want to add to it, we can buy on our own,” she said. “If we want to have a classroom library, we can purchase books. I do a lot of yard sales and people donate books and we get grants and things like that and donorschoose.com

Webster looks for children’s picture books and some they can take home with them.

“Now, you have to scan all your books in to make sure they are approved through Knox County, so it’s

a big ordeal to have anything in your classroom,” she said.

Also, Webster and fellow second-grade teacher Haley Faugot said teachers create a wish list of items needed for the classroom and provide them at Meet the Teacher.

Those items include folders, labels, laminating supplies, highlighters, pens, pencils, crayons, posters, rewards for students like trinkets, welcome back gifts, clip boards, staples, replacements for items that are broken and stickers.

“We do get a set amount of money — we don’t know how much — for those,” she said. “But that goes pretty quickly, and throughout the year, you need money for projects.”

She said some items are not necessary something the teacher needs but are something to improve the room, such as a rug.

Still, “if you look around, most of the stuff is old, was acquired from places, such as Knox Area Rescue Ministries’ thrift shop, garage sales or donorschoose.org.

“We have an excellent [Parent-Teacher Organization] here,” Webster said. “They supply grants to the teachers once a year.”

At the high school level, many of the needs are the same in regard to supplies.

However, Farragut High School digital design teacher Michelle Brossett, whose students use a camera in the



Tammy Cheek
Farragut Primary School second-grade teachers Haley Faugot, left, and Melinda Webster are getting Webster’s classroom ready for back to school on Monday, Aug. 10, which is a half day for students.

classroom, needs SD cards for the cameras, which are expensive.

Otherwise, she said they need pens, paper, poster board, folders, index cards, Clorox wipes, markers, Expo markers and Sharpies.

Also, FHS theater teacher Tony Wooley said consumable items, such as Kleenex, Lysol, hand sanitizers, dry erasers and “gift cards are always nice,” he added.

Relax
From page 2C

“Between practices, games and homework, they stay busy. We had some time for movies and would watch a little TV, but we generally stayed busy with sports and other activities.

“I think that helped them unwind because they were separate, and now,

with one in college and one as a rising junior at Farragut, they keep themselves active and have done a good job being responsible for that.”

But even before children reach that point, venues such as Knox Dance Worx help them find ways to bond with others while de-stressing at the same time.

“They like to be dropped off here be-

fore their classes because we have a homework room and a student lounge, and it’s a really good place for them to bond with their fellow dancers,” said owner Shelley Martin. “It is definitely their unwinding place, 100 percent their release.”

Before students find that release, though, they will step back into the hallways on Monday, Aug. 10.

And while Lunn and other students are certainly enjoying their downtime now, they are eager to reunite with friends in class, too.

“I’m excited,” Lunn said. “I get to see my friends, meet new people and teachers — and I’m going to a bigger school, so that’s really fun.”

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BACK TO SCHOOL

CALENDAR

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Knox County Schools Calendar 2026-2027

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September	Monday, August 3 Tuesday, August 4 Wednesday, August 5 Thursday, August 6 Friday, August 7 Monday, August 10	Monday, December 21 - Friday, January 4	Friday, April 23
October	Tuesday, November 3 (Student Holiday) Tuesday, November 17 Wednesday, November 18 Wednesday, November 25 - Friday, November 27	Tuesday, January 5 Monday, January 18 Wednesday, January 27	Thursday, May 27
November	Monday, October 5 - Friday, October 9 Friday, October 16	Monday, February 15	
December	Monday, September 7 Wednesday, September 9 Wednesday, September 16 Thursday, September 17	Monday, January 5 Monday, January 18 Wednesday, January 27	
January	Monday, September 7 Wednesday, September 9 Wednesday, September 16 Thursday, September 17	Monday, January 5 Monday, January 18 Wednesday, January 27	
February	Monday, September 7 Wednesday, September 9 Wednesday, September 16 Thursday, September 17	Monday, January 5 Monday, January 18 Wednesday, January 27	
March	Monday, September 7 Wednesday, September 9 Wednesday, September 16 Thursday, September 17	Monday, January 5 Monday, January 18 Wednesday, January 27	
April	Monday, September 7 Wednesday, September 9 Wednesday, September 16 Thursday, September 17	Monday, January 5 Monday, January 18 Wednesday, January 27	

Clip & Save
Check the Knox County Schools site for the earliest news on school closings due to weather.

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