



Tammy Cheek

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Jake Nichols



THE
VILLAGES
OF FARRAGUT

A lasting 'Mark' on Farragut

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Farragut Community Development director Mark Shipley has been the face of the Town development for 30 years.

Since October 1996, he has overseen the development, growth and structural integrity of Farragut.

Through the years, he has watched Farragut grow and its ordinances change.

“It’s hard to believe it’s been 30 years,” he reflected. “Time goes by fast. We’ve seen a lot of changes over the years, and it’s been a good place to work.”

Shipley said the Town, particularly the Town Center, “has changed dramatically, especially in the last 10 years.”

In the last decade, “We had a lot of vacant, abandoned buildings,” he recalled. “I mean, if you came here 10 years ago, it looked kind of like a dead zone in the Town Center because you had the old Silver Spoon, the old Kroger, the old Burger King building and the old gas station.

Since then, however, the Town government and developers have repurposed that part of the community.

“There are many people who played a role, but I think having a role in that is probably one of the things I’m most proud.”

Now, though, Shipley is looking to retire in the latter part of February 2027.

“I’m just kind of looking for a chance and do something different,” Shipley said.

Although he is setting his sights on his retirement, he takes with him his status as an award winner.

Tuesday, Oct. 13, Shipley was named the 2026 Planner of the Year by Tennessee Chapter of the American Planning Association. The announcement was made during the TAPA Fall Conference in Chattanooga.

TAPA is a professional organization of more than 500 members representing city, county and state planners and related professions across Tennessee.

“Mark’s selection as the Ten-

nessee Chapter of the American Planning Association Planner of the Year recognizes an extraordinary 30 years of service and a lasting commitment to the Town of Farragut,” TAPA President Micah Wood said. “Mark’s leadership in guiding quality growth, protecting environmentally sensitive areas, expanding greenways and creating more walkable, livable places demonstrates the meaningful, lasting impact professional planning can have on a community.

“His career is a testament to the value of thoughtful planning and dedicated public service, and we are proud to recognize his contributions to Farragut and to the planning profession in Tennessee,” Wood said.

“Mark has given so much to the Town and the community over the last 30 years, and he has shepherded Farragut through a large growing season,” Town administrator David Smoak said. “This award is a great testament to his dedication to the community, his dedication to planning and his dedication to making sure our Town looks and feels great to everyone who wants to live here, work here and spend their time here. It’s a well-deserved honor, and I’m glad his peers at the Planning Association recognized him for it.”

Shipley started as an assistant community development director under former planning director Ruth Hawk before he was promoted to director in 2013.

“Once I got out of graduate school, I went to work in upper East Tennessee for a couple of years, then I saw where this job (assistant director) was available,” he recalled. “I would be working for [Hawk].

“I always knew Farragut was a nice community,” Shipley said. “They valued good planning.”

Over his tenure, he has overseen the expansion of the master greenway system and the advancement of pedestrian facilities within every new development, according to a press release.

KCSO policereports

Vandalism – A Farragut man reported that an Amazon delivery driver damaged approximately \$200 worth of newly installed sod on Candle-nut Lane on Oct. 11. The incident was captured on a Ring security camera. The man filed a claim with Amazon.

Theft – The manager of Amish Elegance on North Campbell Station Road reported Oct. 12 that surveillance footage captured a suspect allegedly taking business paperwork without permission Oct. 6. The business had not determined which documents were missing.

Identity theft – A Knoxville man reported Oct. 10 that a suspect attempted to withdraw money from his bank account at a First Horizon Bank location in Nashville using his personal information. Bank

employees became suspicious, and the withdrawal was unsuccessful.

Identity theft – A Farragut man reported Sept. 30 that someone allegedly used his personal information to make six purchases totaling \$2,001.13 through a Wayfair account between May and November 2025. The man discovered the activity after receiving collection notices in Sept. 2026. The victim believes the charges could be from his estranged wife. The district attorney’s office declined prosecution.

Fraud – A Knoxville man reported Oct. 16 that he was scammed out of approximately \$340,000 after visiting an online website named heart-fluttering.cc. The complainant said a suspect contacted him and sent photos and profiles of

15 women. Over several weeks, the man transferred money through cryptocurrency, Cash App and PayPal while communicating with the suspect through Telegram. Deputies advised him to stop sending money and communicating with the suspect.

Vandalism – A Knox County man reported Oct. 18 that a tree from a neighboring property fell onto his fence on Clover Fork Drive on Oct. 10, causing approximately \$2,000 in damage. The complainant said his neighbor removed the portion of the tree on his own property but left the remainder on the complainant’s property. The neighbor reportedly refused to remove the remaining tree or pay for the damage. The complainant also reported previous disputes with the neighbor.

Concept From page 2A

izens. Ask as many questions as you can. It’s going to give better answers.”

Wiberley expressed concerns about traffic, access to neighboring property and the preservation of trees that provide a buffer from railroad noise.

“I addressed the crowd based on a previous conversation I had with TSW,” Wiberley said. “I said they’re missing the point on their design, that their first priority was addressing traffic: how the park was going to interface with McFee [Road], if they define the easement for the road to the property behind it and how that property behind it was going to impact the traffic on McFee Road and the local neighborhoods.”

Wiberley also emphasized the importance of preserv-

ing the tree line to help buffer train noise for nearby neighborhoods.

He said additional workshops and discussions with the Board of Mayor and Aldermen and the park steering committee are likely.

Mayor Alex Cain also expressed concerns about the scope of the proposed park.

“Obviously, it’s a concept,” Cain said. “They came out with a concept based on the information they got from the survey they used in talking with the citizens, talking with the Parks & Athletic Council.”

However, Cain believes the plan includes too many features.

“In my opinion, it went way overboard,” he said. “Way too much stuff put into it. There was a Frisbee golf course; there was a gathering space; there was an event center, a stage and so on.”

Cain said the proposed road

through the park was particularly troubling.

“Just looking at it visually, it was very busy,” he said. “The point that really bugged me was we had a two-lane road going from McFee right through the middle of the park to connect to possible development that’s behind it, which means we can never close the road.

“We could never limit access to the road, and the residents who live there would have 24-hour access back and forth.”

During the Thursday, Oct. 22, Board of Mayor and Aldermen meeting, Cain acknowledged that the Town must provide an easement for access to the adjoining property but said alternatives should be considered.

“That doesn’t mean it has to go through the middle of the park, and it doesn’t have to be the same road our [other] residents would access,” Cain said. “So, there’s options there.”



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Board fills vacancies, delays committee appointments

Tammy Cheek
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The Farragut Board of Mayor and Aldermen filled several committee vacancies Thursday, Oct. 22, but decided to postpone appointments to the Comprehensive Land Use Plan steering committee.

During a workshop before the Board's regular meeting, Town administrator David Smoak said several committees needed additional members, including representatives from the Board.

"There are several [committees] we need representation on," Smoak said. "We sent out applications online on which people could apply, and we received several for the Board's consideration this evening.

"Also, given the fact that we have three new Board members, we have several committees that also need Board representation on those committees as well," he said.

However, Vice Mayor Greg Wiberley said he had not had

an opportunity to interview the applicants.

"Is this an appropriate time to [decide on the vacancies]?" Wiberley asked. "Or, is this the standard procedure?"

"This is our standard procedure," Smoak answered. "All the resumes and applications are attached to the report here. It's really your call.

"The main ones we're trying to report on are the [CLUP] steering committee and the [Visual Resources Review Board], on which we're short for a quorum," he added.

Wiberley said he wanted to wait until the Board held a workshop on the land-use planning process before appointing steering committee members.

"With the steering committee, you recall back in September, I asked for a workshop so the Town could provide guidance on the old land-use plan process, and I think that really includes the steering committee," Wiberley said. "So, on that particular committee, I

would like to defer that committee until that workshop."

Alderman Joey Ruffalo recalled the Board had planned to have the committee in place before the next workshop.

"We seem to be skipping a step," Wiberley said.

Ruffalo expressed concern about the number of applicants for the steering committee. The Town received 10 applications for five citizen positions.

Applicants were Budhu Bhaduri, Jim Bolon, George Ellis, Susan Finzer-Moor, Dian Hall, Reed Honken, Don Mann, Trevor McQueen, Kimberlie Parks and Stacey Walters.

Ruffalo suggested postponing appointments to allow more residents to apply.

"There are not too many choices," Wiberley agreed, adding, "I don't know these people. I'd rather talk to them."

Smoak said a workshop on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan process is scheduled for Thursday, Nov. 12.

Ruffalo asked whether the

Town could reopen applications until that meeting, allowing the Board to better define the committee's responsibilities before making appointments.

"Sure," Smoak answered. "We've had this open for about a month now. We advertised on social media and newspapers as well. We can certainly do another round."

During its regular meeting, the Board approved the following committee appointments:

- Arts & Beautification Committee: Matthew Ladd as a citizen member and Ruffalo as the Board representative.
- Tourism and Visitor Advisory Board: Kimberlie Parks as an at-large citizen member.
- Education Relations Committee: Lorna Keeton as an ex-officio member representing Concord Christian School.
- Museum Advisory Board: Ruffalo as the Board representative.
- Stormwater Committee: Wiberley as the Board representative.

■ Visual Resources Review Board: Alderman Larry Segrest as the Board representative and Stacey Walters as a citizen member.

Other board committee assignments include Alderman Drew Burnette on the Education Relations Committee and Parks & Athletics Council; Wiberley on the Municipal Planning Commission; and Ruffalo on the Tourism Advisory Committee.

In other business, the Board approved the hiring of Karla Magnuson as Town recorder.

The Town recorder maintains records of official proceedings, ordinances, resolutions and other municipal documents.

"After an extensive search process, Karla Magnuson possesses the qualifications and experience as outlined in the Farragut Municipal Code to fulfill the responsibilities of Town recorder," Smoak said.

The position became vacant Oct. 2, and Smoak had been handling the duties until a replacement was found.

Questions

From page 1A

with the property deeds. One provides the Scott family with a 50-foot easement across the property while the other limits what the town can do with the 15 acres donated by the family.

"The Park Service manual says granting property rights for private use on grant land is a 'conversion.' Conversions need federal approval," she said.

Vice Mayor Greg Wiberley also questioned the proposed road, noting the property had previously been described as difficult to develop because of a sinkhole, creek, wooded areas and lack of road access.

"We get into what is the real hurry here," Wiberley said. "Shouldn't Ms. Parks' comments and documentation be

taken seriously?"

Wiberley asked Mayor Alex Cain to direct town staff to create a project page on the town's website for the park and include Parks' documentation.

Town attorney Tom Hale defended the agreement, explaining the easement was part of the original land purchase negotiated between the town and the Scott family.

"When this agreement was reached between the Town and the Scotts to do this transaction, it was documented in a Letter of Intent that was approved by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen," Hale said.

He said the board subsequently held a meeting and workshop before approving the contract.

Hale noted little undevel-

oped land remains in Farragut and that the Scott family agreed to sell 55 acres to the town while donating another 15 acres.

"Part of the consideration for that was that they have an easement across the property so they could access McFee Road from their property, which sat to the west of the 70 acres involved in the transaction," he said.

Hale said the federal grant was awarded with full knowledge of the easement.

"The grant was made with full knowledge that there was an easement that would allow the Scotts to get to McFee Road," he said.

Under the agreement, the town would pay to construct the road to the Scott family's property, while the family

would pay to connect its property to the road.

"This was all very well-documented, very well-explained three or four times in public meetings," Hale said.

He defended the purchase, noting the \$2.75 million grant covered approximately half the town's acquisition cost.

"I don't understand how anybody can think that's a bad deal," Hale said. "It's a perfectly grand deal for the Town."

Alderman Drew Burnette disputed the suggestion that the property was unsuitable for development.

"There's absolutely nothing undevelopable about that property," Burnette said.

He pointed to similar terrain at McFee Park and Mayor Bob Leonard Park, both of which have sinkholes.

The discussion also addressed claims the park project must be completed by 2027.

Cain said the issue arose during a public meeting Tuesday, Oct. 20, when residents questioned information circulating about a possible deadline.

"I've not heard anyone from the Town [give a project deadline]," Burnette said. "Just talk with staff ... or ask us [the Board]."

Cain also acknowledged concerns that the proposed road appeared to cut through the middle of the park property to reach the Scott family's land.

Hale emphasized that the design remains preliminary.

"It's just a concept," he said. "These projects don't happen overnight. They take a long time ... we're just studying it at the moment."

TENNESSEE GOVERNOR 2026

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1 BOTH ARE CAREER POLITICIANS BLACKBURN: 37 years in party politics, 27 in elected office. Now leaving a six-year Senate term two years in.	GREEN: Ten years on government payrolls. Her boss gave her a taxpayer-paid county job while she was already running for governor.
2 BOTH SUPPORT FLOCK CAMERAS BLACKBURN: Says license-plate readers are "very helpful" to police "in tracking criminals."	GREEN: Voted for 94 more license-plate readers on Memphis interstate ramps. Has never voted to remove one.
3 BOTH SUPPORT DATA CENTERS BLACKBURN: Calls data centers "a good and important part" of growth. Took \$121,352 from AI-company employees.	GREEN: Voted to sell 13 acres of city land to Elon Musk's xAI. Now she claims to want a statewide moratorium.
4 BOTH TAKE SPECIAL-INTEREST MONEY – PAY-TO-PLAY BLACKBURN: PAC money from companies holding state contracts: CoreCivic, BlueCross, AT&T, Charter.	GREEN: \$19,500 from the building-trades unions that live on government construction work.
5 BOTH SUPPORTED RAISING TAXES AND FEES BLACKBURN: Voted for the 2013 budget deal that raised airline security fees.	GREEN: Her ordinance doubled the Memphis car-registration fee, \$30 to \$60. First increase in 40 years.
6 BOTH ARE SOFT ON CRIME BLACKBURN: Voted to let 2,243 federal inmates out early, including 239 sex offenders. Called it "historic."	GREEN: A career public defender. Fought to keep the National Guard out of Memphis. Would abolish ICE.
7 BOTH ARE FISCALLY IRRESPONSIBLE BLACKBURN: At least five votes to raise the debt limit. The last one took the ceiling to \$41.1 trillion.	GREEN: Voted to raid Memphis budget reserves to cover \$15 million in overtime pay.

THE QUESTION

DO WE WANT EITHER ONE OF THEM TO DO TO TENNESSEE WHAT THEY HAVE ALREADY DONE TO WASHINGTON AND TO MEMPHIS?

WHAT WASHINGTON LOOKS LIKE

Runaway spending and deficits. A \$41.1 trillion debt.
Cost of living and inflation out of control.
A pay-to-play system where the connected get rich.

WHAT MEMPHIS LOOKS LIKE

The highest violent-crime rate in America in 2024.
Failing schools. 25.7% of students read on grade level; the state is 45%.
Shelby County lost more residents than any county in America in 2024.

THERE IS ANOTHER CHOICE.

VOTE HATLEY

FOR GOVERNOR
TUESDAY, NOV. 3

Letter to the editor

Dear Editor,

Back in 2020 the City of Knoxville threw out over seventy years of zoning ordinances and replaced them with brand new zoning they called “Recode”. All kinds of justifications were given but all that really happened was housing density was greatly increased.

Knox County did a copycat and “Advance Knox” began at the end of 2021, with its core comprehensive land use and transportation plan officially adopted on April 22, 2024, and taking effect on May 1, 2024. Again all kinds of justifications were given but all that really happened was housing density was greatly increased.

In January of 2026, Farragut Mayor Ron Williams ordered an update of the Farragut Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Mayor Williams and the Farragut Board of Mayor and Aldermen (BOMA) voted to approve a contract with consultants TSW of Atlanta for an update to the Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) on May 7, 2026.

Mayor Ron Williams and Alderman Joe LaCroix voted in favor of the contract while Alderman Alex Cain voted against it, saying he believed action on updating the CLUP and map should wait until after the election. Vice Mayor Scott Meyer and Alderman Drew Burnette were absent.

What possible reason is

there to redo the CLUP now? The road system for Farragut is already over loaded. Very little land other than Eddy Ford’s farm next to the town hall and the remaining Biddle property on South Campbell Station Road is available. Does anyone in Farragut really want more housing density in the CLUP?

Why did Mayor Ron Williams hire TSW to redo the CLUP? TSW did in 2024 the Mixed Use Town Center Vision Plan, which had a \$4.5 million dollar parking garage for Biddle Farm, \$4 million dollars in town staff expenses, and trees in the middle of Kingston Pike, Campbell Station Road, and Concord Road? The Vision Plan was written as an ordinance, which meant if it was approved the town would be out \$8.5 million dollars. Town residents pressured the BOMA into making the plan a resolution saving the day. We thank them.

Before the 2026 election, Mayor Williams promised “no more apartments”. Was hiring TSW a way to get away from that promise? Was that the real reason for the CLUP redo? Hire a willing consultant to give reasons why apartments should still be allowed in the Mixed Use Town Center?

~ Mike Mitchell,
Farragut, TN

Lawrence

From page 1A

rence’s resume to be exemplary, having a sound education as a mechanical engineer and excellent work experience,” Vice Mayor Greg Wiberley stated in an email Tuesday, Oct. 27. “The fact that he runs a successful business along with his sister (empowers women!) that has adapted to changing business environments through creative retooling of his business model is impressive.

“On the very few times I have talked with him, he has displayed a thoughtful and even temperament,” Wiberley said. “I think he has all of the qualities to provide leadership to the Town and will be a great asset to the citizens of our community.”

Pastor

From page 1A

He said the church previously was located at the cemetery on Virtue Road, where it was granted the property in 1887, but was moved to its current location the 1950s.

In response to the news, Lyle wrote an email to Benjamin Moorman, Benchmark president, and expressed his reaction and objections.

The pastor stated: “I was surprised to read in the farragutpress (Volume 39, Issue 7) that discussions are underway concerning our church’s property.

“It appears these discussions address both our driveway and the easement providing access

“I have had the opportunity to get to know Lawrence over the past few years with my involvement in previous elections,” Mayor Alex Cain said. “Lawrence and I have volunteered for many different candidates. I have come to know him as a man of exceptional character, sound judgment and unwavering integrity.

“I believe Lawrence to be someone I can trust to make difficult decisions with honesty, thoughtfulness and the long-term interests of our community in mind,” he added of Segrest.

In his application letter, Segrest said, “I am deeply invested in the continued prosperity, fiscal health and smart management of our community.”

He is the co-founder and

CEO/CFO of GreenLeaf Industries in nearby Lenoir City.

“I manage corporate [profit and loss], risk management and long-term financial planning,” Segrest stated in his letter to the Board. “That discipline was tested most recently in 2023, when post-pandemic labor shortages left our entry-level positions unfilled.

“Rather than absorb the loss, I led a complete retooling of the company-automation production, outsourcing every function not core to our operations and rebuilding our processes to be streamlined and fault-tolerant,” he stated. “Delivering the same output with substantially fewer resources is a discipline I believe translates directly to the stewardship of public funds.”

to Virtue Road immediately south of the driveway,” Lyle stated. “It further appears that the proposed greenway has shifted northward onto church property.”

In the Oct. 15 Farragut Municipal Planning Commission meeting, Vice Mayor Greg Wiberley, also a Planning Commissioner, pointed out one of the lots encroaches on the church property at the entrance. Should the future owner of that lot decide to block the entrance in some way, “how am I going to get into the church?,” Lyle asked Thursday.

At the meeting, FMPC members and Community Development director Mark Shipley recommended Moorman place

a plat note stating that lot owner could not impede the entrance.

While Moorman told FMPC, during its Thursday, Oct. 15, meeting he attempted to contact the people affected by the property subdivision and received no response, Lyle wrote, “We have received no communication from your firm regarding this matter.”

Lyle pointed out a quote from Moorman, where he answered Wiberley’s question, “whether the issues involving the property owners had been resolved.”

“His comment was ‘No, they have not because they have not chosen to respond.’ That’s why I said in my letter, ‘We have received no notification.’

Union

From page 1A

that went parallel to [Union Road].”

Wiberley also pointed to a driveway with a 7% slope, saying the proposed road improvements would increase that slope to 15%.

“It affects low-set cars,” he said.

Another resident hired an engineer to evaluate how the project would affect the prop-

erty and submitted the engineer’s report to the town, Wiberley said. The resident is still awaiting a response.

Despite those concerns, Wiberley said none of the residents he spoke with opposed improving Union Road.

“Everyone knows how dangerous and awful it is,” he said. “That’s not the controversy here. We’re just trying to polish it so that we don’t have an unintended consequence during and after construction.”

Jim Bolon, president of the Fox Run subdivision homeowners association, urged the board not to delay the project.

“The Union Road improvement project has been 13 years in the making,” Bolon said. “Farragut is now on the cusp of moving this vitally important project forward pending a notice to proceed from [Tennessee Department of Transportation].”

Bolon said the improvements would benefit thou-

sands of residents.

“This project will increase safety and quality of life for the several thousand residents living in approximately 900 homes in Fox Run, Saddle Ridge, Ivy Farms and Coal Springs, Sedgfield and other homes along Union Road,” he said.

“Going back to the drawing board with the design is not a great idea. I urge BOMA to not take that step. Redesigning the project could set it back for years, further delaying a criti-

cally needed safety improvement.”

Mayor Alex Cain indicated the project would move forward while officials worked to address residents’ concerns.

“It has been something that has been in the works for a long time,” Cain said. “We’re going to move forward with it. I’m glad we’re able to work through these issues. Hopefully, these will be very minor changes.”



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Letter to the Editor rules: Must not exceed 400 words · Include name, address & telephone number to be verified · All Letters to the Editor from any citizen must have a minimum four-week period between publication · Must not have inaccurate information, such as wrong statistics, from which to form an opinion

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

Full rules can be viewed at farragutpress.com under Opinion and Presstalk.

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A little fall fun, a lot of heart

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Blue Ridge Yoga has three events to celebrate the fall season.

The studio begins the season with a Halloween version of its Fall 5K Fundraiser.

“Lace up your walking shoes and get those costumes ready,” Sierra Schreiber, events coordinator, said. “We’ll stroll 3.1 miles along the scenic greenways behind the studio — no racing — just fresh air, fall fun and great company.”

Join Blue Ridge Yoga at noon, Saturday, Oct. 31, at the studio, 623 N. Campbell Station Road for this event. Registration is \$29 with proceeds benefitting Smoky Mountain Service Dogs.

“Everyone receives a bib at the start and a medal at the finish, so come walk with us and make a difference,” Schreiber said.

For more information about this and other events, call BRY, 865-865-1833.

The celebration continues with a Friendsgiving Potluck.

“Good food always tastes better when it’s shared with friends,” Schreiber said. “Join us on Saturday, Nov. 14, at noon for our annual Friendsgiving Potluck, an afternoon of delicious dishes, laughter and catching up with your Blue Ridge Yoga community.”

“Have a family-favorite recipe?” she asked. “We’d love for you to share it.”

“Prefer to leave the cooking to someone else? That’s perfectly fine, too,” Schreiber said. “Having you there



Photos submitted

The Blue Ridge Yoga community is preparing for its annual Fall 5K fundraiser, which will take place at noon, Saturday, Oct. 31, at the studio, 623 N. Campbell Station Road, to benefit Smoky Mountain Service Dogs. Last year, Elie Kahn and her pup took a break after the 5K walk.

is what matters most. Friends and family are welcome, so bring your favorite people along. Just be sure to register on Walla.

“We can’t wait to gather around the table, share a little gratitude and maybe go back for seconds,” she said.

The fall season rounds out with a gratitude workshop noon, Saturday, Nov. 21, “a special workshop focused on slowing down, reflecting on what we appreciate and finding meaningful ways to share that gratitude with others,” Sch-

reiber said. “Sometimes the smallest gestures can mean a lot.

“We’ll spend time with gentle breath work and guided reflection before putting pen to paper to write cards for nurses, veterans, first responders and others who deserve a little extra love and recognition,” she said. “Come enjoy a cozy afternoon of mindfulness, connection and kindness,” Schreiber added. “You might just leave feeling a little more grateful and knowing you’ve brightened someone else’s day, too.”



Photos Kathy Hartman

Plenty of networking took place at last week’s Farragut Business Alliance Biz Mixer Tuesday, Oct. 20. From left: Kat Mahn of Kat’s Purrfect Getaways and Kat’s Lash Lounge and Wax Studio; Dave McFarland and Wes Long with Wild Wing Cafe; Beth Pennington, the salon manager at J.C. Penney; and Candace Viox, the Farragut Business Alliance president and owner of Water into Wine Bistro and Lounge.

Farragut Biz mixer scores with local businesses

Jake Nichols
jnichols@farragutpress.com

It has been a busy couple of weeks for Shop Farragut/the Farragut Business Alliance (FBA).

Before hosting this past weekend’s annual Harvest Fest at Village Green Shopping Center, the organization welcomed several people for its quarterly Biz Mixer last Tuesday, Oct. 20, at TopGolf in Farragut.

The targets and golfing bays provided a fitting backdrop for the event, which landed well among all attendees at 11400 Outlet Drive.

Originally slated for 90 minutes, the event stretched from 4:30 p.m. until 6:30 p.m. that night as business owners and executives stayed past the original 6 p.m. deadline to interact and greet one another.

“The Bizness mixer at TopGolf went well,” FBA president Candace Viox said. “We had over 25 people from Farragut businesses, and new businesses came by



Farragut Business Alliance executive director Ashley Lynch, left, got a chance to connect with Tyler Hunsaker at the FBA Biz Mixer Tuesday, Oct. 20.

to say hi. Joey Ruffalo, North Ward alderman, also attended. It was a great meet-up for the business community.”

Ashley Lynch, the executive director for Shop Farragut, added that “it

See MIXER on Page 10A

businessbriefs

• Tennova Healthcare and UT Medical Center, recently announced an agreement to expand access to coordinated cancer services in East Tennessee. UT Medical Cancer Institute medical oncologists will see patients at Tennova facilities in Farragut, connecting more patients with multidisciplinary expertise, advanced di-

agnostic capabilities and treatment planning closer to home.

• Weichert, Realtors - Advantage Plus recently hosted its inaugural “9 to 5 Dolly Day,” raising \$1,100 for Dolly Parton Children’s Hospital, formerly East Tennessee Children’s Hospital, and surpassing its original fundraising goal of \$925.

Held Sept. 25 at the

Weichert, Realtors - Advantage Plus office, the daylong fundraiser celebrated the spirit of Tennessee icon Dolly Parton while bringing the community together to support children and families receiving care through the hospital.

Open to all, the event featured Dolly-inspired

See BRIEFS on Page 10A



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Notice of Election

Gubernatorial, Federal, and State General Election

November 3, 2026 • 8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

GOVERNOR Vote for One (1) ☐ Marsha Blackburn Republican Party Nominee ☐ Jerri Green Democratic Party Nominee ☐ Misam Abidi Independent Candidate ☐ Dean Brewer Independent Candidate ☐ Ray Brown Independent Candidate ☐ David Hatley Independent Candidate ☐ Wendell Jackson Independent Candidate ☐ Charles Van Morgan Independent Candidate ☐ Eddie Lee Murphy Independent Candidate ☐ Lauren Pinkston Independent Candidate ☐ Victor L. Scoggin Independent Candidate ☐ Dave Seeman Independent Candidate ☐ Karl Knox Smithson Independent Candidate ☐ L. Webb Taylor Independent Candidate ☐ Robert C. Vick Independent Candidate ☐ Write-in Constitutional Amendment #1 Vote for One (1) Summary: This amendment changes Article I, section 15 of the Tennessee Constitution by allowing a court to hold a defendant without bail before trial when that defendant is accused of: an offense punishable by the death penalty, an act of terrorism, second degree murder, aggravated rape of a child, aggravated rape, grave torture, or any crime for which a convicted person would be required to serve eighty-five percent of their sentence. This amendment requires courts to state on the record the reasons for their decision to grant or deny bail in those cases. Question: Shall Article I, Section 15 of the Constitution of Tennessee be amended by deleting the following: That all prisoners shall be bailable by sufficient sureties, unless for capital offences, when the proof is evident, or the presumption great. And the privilege of the writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in case of rebellion or invasion, the General Assembly shall declare the public safety requires it. and substituting instead the following: (a) All prisoners shall be bailable by sufficient sureties unless for the following when the proof is evident or the presumption great: (1) A capital offense; (2) An act of terrorism; (3) Second degree murder; (4) Aggravated rape of a child; (5) Aggravated rape; (6) Grave torture; and (7) Any other offense for which, as of November 3, 2026, a defendant, if convicted, could not be released prior to the expiration of at least eighty-five percent of the entire sentence imposed. (b) In any case in which bail for an offense listed in subsection (a) is granted or denied before conviction, the judge or magistrate shall place in the record the judge's or magistrate's reasons for granting or denying bail. (c) The privilege of the writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in case of rebellion or invasion, the General Assembly shall declare the public safety requires it. ☐ Yes ☐ No Constitutional Amendment #2 Vote for One (1) Summary: This amendment adds text to Article II, section 28 of the Tennessee	Constitution that prohibits the Legislature from imposing a State property tax on real, personal, or mixed property. Question: Shall Article II, Section 28 of the Constitution of the State of Tennessee be amended by deleting the following language from the first sentence: In accordance with the following provisions, all property real, personal or mixed shall be subject to taxation, but the Legislature and substituting instead the following: In accordance with the following provisions, all property real, personal, or mixed shall be subject to taxation, but the Legislature shall not levy, authorize, or otherwise permit any state tax upon such property, and the Legislature ☐ Yes ☐ No Constitutional Amendment #3 Vote for One (1) Summary: This amendment changes Article I, section 35 of the Tennessee Constitution by clarifying existing rights for crime victims and adding new rights. The amendment gives victims new rights: to fair treatment; to be informed about and participate in the parole process; to be protected from harassment, intimidation, and abuse; to be informed of the minimum sentence the convicted criminal will serve, as well as their scheduled release date; and to have their safety, their family's safety, and the public's safety taken into account before any decision is made to release the convicted criminal. The amendment also maintains or clarifies victims' existing rights: to be informed about legal proceedings involving the accused or convicted criminal; to be present at public criminal proceedings; to be informed of any release, transfer, or escape of the accused or convicted criminal; to talk to prosecutors; to make statements about conviction, sentencing, or release of the accused person; to a speedy resolution of the case; to restitution from the convicted criminal; and to be informed of their rights. The amendment does not restrict the powers of prosecutors or courts and does not create a cause of action or claim for damages against the State of Tennessee. Question: Shall Article I, Section 35 of the Constitution of Tennessee be amended by deleting the section in its entirety and substituting the following: Section 35. That to preserve and protect the rights of victims of crime to justice and due process throughout the criminal and juvenile justice systems, a victim, as defined by law and which may be expanded by the General Assembly, shall have the following rights, which shall be protected: (1) The right to be treated with fairness for the victim's safety and dignity; (2) The right, upon request, to reasonable notice of all public criminal proceedings and all public juvenile delinquency proceedings involving the accused; (3) The right to be present at all public criminal proceedings and all public juvenile delinquency proceedings involving the accused; (4) The right upon request to be heard in any proceeding involving release, plea, sentencing, disposition, and parole, as well as any public proceeding when relevant during which a	right of the victim is implicated; (5) The right to be heard and informed of all parole procedures, to participate in the parole process, to provide information to the parole authority to be considered before the parole of the offender, and to be notified, upon request, of the parole or other release of the offender; (6) The right to be free from harassment, intimidation, and abuse throughout the criminal justice system, including reasonable protection, as defined by the General Assembly, from the accused or any person acting on behalf of the accused; (7) The right, upon request, to reasonable notice of any release, transfer, or escape of the accused or convicted person; (8) The right to full and timely restitution from the offender; (9) The right to a speedy trial or disposition and a prompt and final conclusion of the case after the conviction or sentence; (10) The right to be informed of the minimum sentence the offender will serve in custody and the scheduled release date; (11) The right to have the safety of the victim, the victim's family, and the general public considered before any parole or other post judgment release decision is made; (12) The right, upon request, to confer with the prosecution; and (13) The right to be fully informed of all rights afforded to crime victims. A victim may assert the rights enumerated in this section, not as a party, but in the manner further provided by the General Assembly protecting the victim's right to standing. The General Assembly has the authority to enact substantive and procedural laws to further define, implement, preserve, and protect the rights guaranteed to victims by this section. This section must be interpreted to preserve and protect the rights of all persons to due process. This section, or any law enacted under this section, does not create a basis for vacating a conviction. This section does not restrict the powers of the District Attorney General or the inherent authority of the court. Other than as provided in the preceding paragraph, this section does not create a cause of action or claim for damages against the state or a political subdivision of the state; an officer, employee, or agent of the state or of any of its political subdivisions; or an officer or employee of the court. ☐ Yes ☐ No UNITED STATES SENATE Vote for One (1) ☐ Bill Hagerty Republican Party Nominee ☐ Marquita Bradshaw Democratic Party Nominee ☐ Tharon Chandler Independent Candidate ☐ Andrew Gerena Independent Candidate ☐ Jeremy Dean Hearn Independent Candidate ☐ Robert Jones Independent Candidate ☐ James William Macon III Independent Candidate ☐ Yoshi D. Matthews Independent Candidate ☐ David Sutman, Jr. Independent Candidate ☐ Catherine Barcel "Barcy" Whitson Independent Candidate ☐ Write-in UNITED STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES District 2 Vote for One (1) ☐ Tim Burchett Republican Party Nominee ☐ Michaela Barnett Democratic Party Nominee ☐ Bruce Fine Independent Candidate	☐ Adam Heimerman Independent Candidate ☐ Write-in TENNESSEE SENATE District 5 Vote for One (1) ☐ Jimmy Matlock Republican Party Nominee ☐ David Miller Democratic Party Nominee ☐ Write-in TENNESSEE SENATE District 7 Vote for One (1) ☐ Richard M. Briggs Republican Party Nominee ☐ Bryan Langan Democratic Party Nominee ☐ Write-in TENNESSEE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES District 14 Vote for One (1) ☐ Jason Zachary Republican Party Nominee ☐ Lindsay Young Honaker Democratic Party Nominee ☐ Write-in TENNESSEE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES District 15 Vote for One (1) ☐ Sam McKenzie Democratic Party Nominee ☐ Write-in TENNESSEE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES District 16 Vote for One (1) ☐ Michele Carringer Republican Party Nominee ☐ Eliza Boles Democratic Party Nominee ☐ Write-in TENNESSEE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES District 18 Vote for One (1) ☐ Elaine Davis Republican Party Nominee ☐ Bryan Goldberg Democratic Party Nominee ☐ Write-in TENNESSEE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES District 19 Vote for One (1) ☐ Dave Wright Republican Party Nominee ☐ Jenny Fowler Democratic Party Nominee ☐ Write-in TENNESSEE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES District 89 Vote for One (1) ☐ Justin Lafferty Republican Party Nominee ☐ Randy DeBord Democratic Party Nominee ☐ Write-in TENNESSEE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES District 90 Vote for One (1) ☐ Gloria Johnson Democratic Party Nominee ☐ Write-in City Charter Amendment Vote for One (1) CHARTER AMENDMENT SUBMITTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF KNOXVILLE PERTAINING TO THE ELECTION OF CITY COUNCIL: SHALL ARTICLE VII, SECTIONS 707(B) and 707 (C) OF THE CHARTER OF THE CITY OF KNOXVILLE BE AMENDED TO PROVIDE THAT IF A CANDIDATE FOR THE OFFICE OF CITY COUNCIL RECEIVES A MAJORITY OF ALL VOTES CAST IN THE PRIMARY FOR THE DESIGNATED SEAT THE CANDIDATE SHALL BE DECLARED ELECTED WITHOUT THE NECESSITY OF A RUNOFF AND A CERTIFICATE OF ELECTION SHALL BE ISSUED TO SUCH CANDIDATE, ALL AS MORE FULLY SET FORTH IN ORDINANCE No. O-62-2026 OF THE CITY OF KNOXVILLE AS DULY PUBLISHED? THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER'S COST ESTIMATE OF THE PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENT IS \$0. ☐ FOR THE AMENDMENT ☐ AGAINST THE AMENDMENT
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Knox County Election Commission

Hannah Hopper, Chair • Julie Gautreau, Secretary • Bob Bowman • Eddie Smith • Adronicus Thomas • Christopher S. Davis, Administrator



Notice of Election

Gubernatorial, Federal, and State General Election

November 3, 2026 • 8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Polling Places			
Precinct 6 Green Magnet Academy 801 Lula Powell Drive Precinct 9 Eternal Life Harvest Center 1801 Western Avenue Precinct 10-N Fort Sanders School 501 S. 21st Street Precinct 10-S Howard H. Baker Jr. Center 1640 Cumberland Avenue Precinct 10-A Howard H. Baker Jr. Center 1640 Cumberland Avenue Precinct 11 Central United Methodist 201 Third Avenue Precinct 12 Phyllis Wheatley YWCA 124 S. Cruze Street Precinct 13 Fair Garden Community Ctr. 400 Fern Street Precinct 14 Austin-East High School 2800 MLK Jr. Avenue Precinct 15-E John T. O'Connor Ctr. 611 Winona Street Precinct 15-W John T. O'Connor Ctr. 611 Winona Street Precinct 16-E Larry Cox Senior Rec. Ctr. 3019 Ocoee Trail Precinct 16-W Larry Cox Senior Rec. Ctr. 3019 Ocoee Trail Precinct 17 Christenberry Comm. Ctr. 931 Oglewood Avenue Precinct 18 Lincoln Park Center 535 Chickamauga Avenue Precinct 19 Thrive Lonsdale 1317 Connecticut Avenue Precinct 20 Communications Workers of America 1415 Elm Street Precinct 23 Westview School 1714 Mingle Avenue Precinct 24-Q Sequoyah Elementary School 942 Southgate Road Precinct 25 South Knox Comm. Ctr. 522 Maryville Pike Precinct 26 Dogwood School 705 Tipton Avenue Precinct 27 So. Knox Optimist Club 6135 Moore Road Precinct 29 Anderson Headstart 4808 Prospect Road Precinct 30 Sarah Moore Greene School 3001 Brooks Avenue Precinct 31 Chilhowee School 5005 Asheville Highway Precinct 32 Spring Hill Primary School 4711 Mildred Drive Precinct 33-N Richard Yoakley School 4415 Washington Pike Precinct 33-S Richard Yoakley School 4415 Washington Pike Precinct 34 Central High School 5321 Jacksboro Pike	Precinct 35 Shannondale School 5316 Shannondale Road Precinct 36 Gresham Middle School 500 Gresham Road Precinct 37 Inskip Elementary School 4701 High School Road Precinct 39-E Inskip Recreation Ctr. 301 W. Inskip Drive Precinct 39-W Inskip Recreation Ctr. 301 W. Inskip Drive Precinct 40 Norwood Elementary School 1909 Merchants Drive Precinct 41 Norwood Elementary School 1909 Merchants Drive Precinct 42 Pleasant Ridge Elementary 3013 Walnoaks Road Precinct 43 West Haven Elementary 3620 Sisk Road Precinct 44 Ridgedale School 4600 Ridgedale Road Precinct 45 Bearden Middle School 1000 Francis Road Precinct 46 Knoxville 1st Church of Nazarene 538 Vanosdale Road Precinct 47-N Bearden High School 8352 Kingston Pike Precinct 47-S Bearden High School 8352 Kingston Pike Precinct 48 Pond Gap School 4530 Papermill Drive Precinct 49-N Bearden Elementary School 5717 Kingston Pike Precinct 49-S Bearden Elementary School 5717 Kingston Pike Precinct 50-N West High School 3326 Sutherland Avenue Precinct 50-S West High School 3326 Sutherland Avenue Precinct 51 Deane Hill Recreation Ctr. 7414 Deane Hill Drive Precinct 55 Bearden Middle School 1000 Francis Road Precinct 56 Copper Ridge Elementary School 2502 E. Brushy Valley Road Precinct 57 Bethany Baptist Comm. Ctr. 6705 E. Raccoon Valley Drive Precinct 58 Copper Ridge Elementary School 2502 E. Brushy Valley Road Precinct 59 Brickey-McCloud School 1810 Dry Gap Pike Precinct 60 Halls High School 4321 E. Emory Road Precinct 61-E – NEW LOCATION Faithway Baptist Church 4402 Crippen Road Precinct 61-W Halls High School 4321 E. Emory Road Precinct 62 Hardin Valley Elementary School 11445 Hardin Valley Road Precinct 63 – NEW LOCATION Karns High School 2710 Byington Solway Road	Precinct 63-N Karns Elementary School 8108 Beaver Ridge Road Precinct 64 Pellissippi State Comm. College 10915 Hardin Valley Road Precinct 65-E Ebenezer United Methodist Church 1001 Ebenezer Road Precinct 65-S Ebenezer United Methodist Church 1001 Ebenezer Road Precinct 65-W Faith Lutheran Church 225 Jamestowne Boulevard Precinct 65-SW Faith Lutheran Church 225 Jamestowne Boulevard Precinct 65-N Farragut Primary School 509 N. Campbell Station Precinct 66-NE Farragut Middle School 200 West End Avenue Precinct 66-NW Farragut Middle School 200 West End Avenue Precinct 66-SE – NEW LOCATION Korean Church of Knoxville 108 Farlow Drive Precinct 66-SW Farragut High School 11237 Kingston Pike Precinct 67 Cedar Bluff Middle School 707 N. Cedar Bluff Road Precinct 68 – NEW LOCATION Election Commission - Downtown West 1645 Downtown West Blvd, Unit 40 Precinct 68-E Cedar Bluff Public Library 9045 Cross Park Drive Precinct 69-E Bluegrass Elementary School 8901 Bluegrass Road Precinct 69-N West Valley Middle School 9118 George Williams Road Precinct 69-S Northshore Elementary School 1889 Thunderhead Road Precinct 69-W A.L. Lotts Elementary School 9320 Westland Drive Precinct 70-E Amherst Elementary School 5101 Schaad Road Precinct 70-W Ball Camp Elementary School 9801 Middlebrook Pike Precinct 71 Rocky Hill Elementary School 1200 Morrell Road Precinct 72-E Crown College 2307 West Beaver Creek Drive Precinct 72-W Crown College 2307 West Beaver Creek Drive Precinct 73-E Powell High School – Clark Duncan Complex 2136 W. Emory Road Precinct 73-W Powell High School – Clark Duncan Complex 2136 W. Emory Road Precinct 74 Shannondale Elementary School 5316 Shannondale Road Precinct 76 Sunnyview School 412 Bagwell Road Precinct 78 Marbledale Baptist Church 5935 Thorn Grove Pike	Precinct 79 Mt. Harmony Baptist Church 6500 Strawberry Plains Pike Precinct 80 Corryton Comm. Ctr. 9331 Davis Road Precinct 81 Gibbs Elementary School 7715 Tazewell Pike Precinct 82 Arminda Comm. Ctr. 2501 Ellistown Road Precinct 84 Ritta Elementary School 6228 Washington Pike Precinct 85 East Knox Elementary School 9315 Rutledge Pike Precinct 86 Carter Elementary School 8455 Strawberry Plains Pike Precinct 87 Odd Fellows Lodge Hall 10103 Thorngrove Pike Precinct 89 Mount Olive School 2507 Maryville Pike Precinct 90 South-Doyle High School 2020 Tipton Station Road Precinct 92 Gap Creek Elementary School 1920 Kimberlin Heights Road Precinct 93 New Hopewell Elementary School 757 Kimberlin Heights Road Central Absentee Ballot Counting Board 109 Lovell Heights Road Central Provisional Ballot Counting Board 109 Lovell Heights Road Meets November 6 KNOX COUNTY ELECTION DAY POLLING PLACE CHANGES PRECINCT 61-E has relocated. If you live in Precinct 61-E, you now vote at: Faithway Baptist Church 4402 Crippen Road PRECINCT 63 has relocated. If you live in Precinct 63, you now vote at: Karns High School 2710 Byington Solway Road PRECINCT 66-SE has relocated. If you live in Precinct 66-SE, you now vote at: Korean Church of Knoxville 108 Farlow Drive PRECINCT 68 has relocated. If you live in Precinct 68, you now vote at: Election Commission – Downtown West 1645 Downtown West Blvd, Unit 40 PRECINCT 77 has merged with PRECINCT 78. If you live in what was Precinct 77, you now vote at: Precinct 78 Marbledale Baptist Church 5935 Thorn Grove Pike Maps of all new Election Day Polling Places can be found at www.knoxvotes.org



DISCOVER LOUDON COUNTY



Loudon Chamber of Commerce celebrates growth, welcomes board members



Left photo by Tammy Cheek / Above photo courtesy of Christy Fitzgerald

Left: Kyle Greening, left, of Carriage Hill Insurance, and Daniel Vesco of Centriworks mingle. **Above:** The team at Best Buy Metals accepted the Business of the Month Award during the Chamber's October Business After Hours and Annual Membership Meeting Tuesday evening, Oct. 13.

Tammy Cheek

tcheek@farragutpress.com

Smoked wings, brisket mac and cheese and pork chops awaited about 100 Loudon County Chamber of Commerce members who attended its October Business After

Hours and Annual Membership Meeting Tuesday evening, Oct. 13 at Calhoun's at the Marina in Lenoir City.

"We had a fantastic turnout, and it was wonderful to connect with so many of you as we celebrated our Chamber's growth and reviewed the

great year," LCCC Director of Membership Christy Fitzgerald said. "A special thank you goes out to the entire team at Calhoun's for providing a spectacular venue, delicious food and exciting giveaways that made the evening truly memorable. Your hospi-

tility is exceptional.

"We would also like to congratulate again our Business of the Month, Best Buy Metals," she said. "Thank you for your continued excellence and dedication to supporting our local business community."

Best Buy Metals was chosen

by the membership council for its participation in Chamber programs and events, according to Fitzgerald.

At the event, members voted on new board members. They are: first term nominee, Kyle

See CELEBRATE on Page 9A

How to avoid the cost of a bad hire

Tammy Cheek

tcheek@farragutpress.com

What can you do to prevent a bad hire?

Stephen Laing, human resources manager with Del Conca USA, shared how businesses can find a "good fit" candidate for their businesses as part of Loudon County Chamber of Commerce's Learning at Lunch program presented by Servpro, at Lenoir City Utilities Board conference room, 7698 Creekwood Park Blvd., Tuesday, Oct. 6.

The session, The Cost of a Bad Hire "is about improving the hiring process," said Laing, who has been in human resources for 30 years.

"What counts as a bad hire?" he asked then noted, "That's not always a bad person; it just may not be a good fit ... He

could be a good hire in a different organization."

The person simply might not have the personality, mastery of skills, expectations and values within the company, according to Laing.

"It could be fixable if we catch it early enough and see certain qualities ... but you can't salvage them in certain cases."

In that instance, "there's a cost associated to that individual," Laing said. "There's a cost of hiring the individual ... a lot of those costs have to do with advertising, screening, interviews, back-



Laing

ground checks.

And, "There's hidden costs that go along with hiring," he said. "There's time supervisors and managers have to invest ... lowered morale, especially when you bring somebody in ... there could be customers impacted."

Laing said the rule of thumb in calculating those costs is 30% of the first year's salary. So, if the salary would be \$60,000, the loss would be \$18,000.

To help find a good fit, Laing advised using structured interviews to "reduce noise, preferably panel style."

With unstructured, he said the interviewer uses different questions for each interviewee and gut feelings, which make results hard to compare and

See COST on Page 9A



Photos by Tammy Cheek

Coffee & Commerce

Hosted at Jellystone Park, 10250 Corporate Park Drive, Loudon, Tuesday morning, Oct. 20

Above: From left, Daniel Vesco, area business manager with Centriworks; Loudon County Chamber of Commerce Director of Membership Christy Fitzgerald; and April Ray, medical staff coordinator Covenant Health in Lenoir City, welcomed members.

Find out what LCCC membership offers at Chamber 101 and Networking Lunch

Tammy Cheek

tcheek@farragutpress.com

Business people interested in finding out what Loudon County Chamber of Commerce can do for them have an opportunity to learn just that when LCCC holds its Chamber 101 and Networking Lunch.

Presented by Kimberly-Clark, this free event, which is open to new, active and prospective members, will take place from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 28, at Lenoir City Utilities Board, 7698 Creekwood Park Blvd. Knoxville TVA Employees Credit Union is sponsoring the lunch.

Registration is required by visiting online at info@

See 101 on Page 9A



Blair Sitzlar

Businesses who become Loudon County Chamber of Commerce members can celebrate their opening with a Chamber-sponsored ribbon cutting, like Dr. Michael Craig (with scissors), when he cut the ribbon for Tennessee Orthopaedic Alliance during a Loudon County Chamber of Commerce-sponsored event at TOA, 1787 Highway 72 E., Loudon, on Thursday, Aug. 13.



Above: From left, Loudon County Chamber of Commerce board members, Joe Webb, Loudon Alive Vice Chairman, and Matthew Mott, Loudon Funeral Home and Cremations owner, chat with Johanna Mason, General Manager of Watts Bar Lake Jellystone Park.

Cost
From page 8A

creates more of bias risk.

He said a structured interview by a panel of individuals would use the same questions for all interviewees and focus on job-related qualities.

The takeaway is “the structured interviews produced validity effects about twice as high as unstructured interviews in an analysis of interview research,” Laing summarized.

From day one to Day 60 then Day 90, he advised “asking three questions at each check-point: What is working? What is unclear? What support or decision is needed now?”

When considering someone

to hire, Laing advised:

- “Hire for the job — not just the resume. Be clear about what success actually looks like in the position,” he said.
- “Don’t rush because you’re short-staffed. An empty seat is painful; the wrong person in the seat can be more costly,” Laing said.
- “Ask behavioral questions,” he suggested. “Instead of ‘Are you a team player?’ Ask ‘Tell me about a time you had to help a teammate meet a deadline.’”
- “Look for both skill and attitude,” Laing said. “Technical skills may be teachable; reliability, accountability and willingness to learn are equally important.”

- “Use multiple perspectives. Involve appropriate team members in the interview process rather than relying on one person’s impression,” Laing said.
- “Watch for evidence — not just charisma,” he advised. “A great interview does not automatically equal great job performance.”
- “Give candidates a realistic picture of the job,” Laing said. “Be transparent about expectations, schedule, environment, challenges and performance standards.”
- “Partner with HR early,” he said. “HR can help structure interviews, evaluate risk and keep the selection process consistent.”

Celebrate
From page 8A

Greening with Carriage Hill Insurance; second term nominees: Matthew Mott, Loudon

Funeral Home & Cremations; Matthew Coleman, Centriworks; Bill Leith, Keller Williams; Connie Martin, Covenant Health – Fort Loudoun.

benefits to grow your business through real member success stories,” she said.

Fitzgerald and Blair Sitzlar, Chamber, Director of Tourism and Marketing, will present the program, describing how members can get the most out of their membership, which “gives members opportunities to promote, grow and learn,” Fitzgerald said.

Registration required to secure your spot and meal.

EXPLORE

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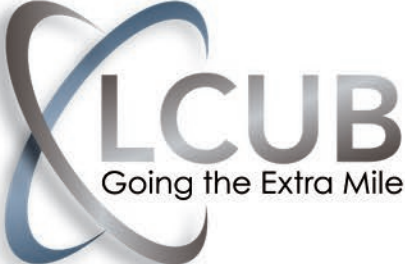
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GOING THE EXTRA MILE FOR YOU



Briefs
From page 5A

activities throughout the day, including morning coffee and donuts, a sponsored lunch provided by Conveyance Title of Knoxville and a happy hour gathering to cap off the festivities. Attendees were encouraged to contribute donations of \$9.25, \$92.50 or \$925, with giving options available through cash, check or the hospital's online donation platform.

• Priority OnDemand, a national healthcare solutions and medical transportation company, recently announced Janet Halling has joined the team as director of proposal development. In this newly established role, Halling will lead proposal strategy and development efforts supporting the company's continued growth, competitive positioning and pursuit of new healthcare partnerships nationwide.

Mixer
From page 5A

was a really good turnout. "People came in waves but it was a great venue and went well," she said. "Everyone left with a prize. We had a different revolving door of new businesses, and we want to keep the momentum going. The food wasn't bad, either, and people stayed later."

The next mixer is slated for Tuesday, Jan. 12, weather permitting with the event set to take place at Ace Pickleball at 11130 Kingston Pike.

And much like last week's event, Lynch and Viox will hope for plenty of connections and networking opportunities.

"That's the great thing about the small businesses in Farragut," Lynch said. "They all communicate and support each other. So it's a constant networking thing, and we just keep growing and growing."

Area businesses closures

Several area businesses have closed in the past couple of months, among them, Little Joe's Pizza, Altard State, Dickey's Barbecue Pit, Lizard Thicket and Wings Etc.



Altard State, Dickey's Barbecue Pit and Lizard Thicket all were in the Pinnacle at Turkey Creek. "The recent departures of Dickey's Barbecue Pit in Farragut, along with Altard's State and Lizard Thicket in Knoxville, were all the result of each tenant reaching the natural end of its lease term," Pinnacle Turkey Creek marketing manager Gabi Walsh said. "These were standard lease expirations, and we appreciate each tenant's time at Pinnacle and wish them continued success. As with any retail center, tenant turnover is a normal part of the business, and our leasing team has already been actively working to backfill these spaces. We are in discussions with several exciting new tenants and look forward to sharing announcements in the near future as those agreements are finalized."

www.farragutpress.com



BOO AT THE ZOO

SELECT DATES NOW THROUGH OCTOBER 30

ZOO knoxville

Presented by **Chick-fil & Knoxville**

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- Ages 6-8:** 1st - Hollis Knight; 2nd - Shea Conti; 3rd - Macie Joy Martin
- Ages 9-11:** 1st - Caroline Young; 2nd - Anna Spadaro; 3rd - Shepard White
- Adults 12-112:** 1st - Laura Clift; 2nd - Kristin Koren; 3rd - Hattie Zierden

Pictured in main photo: Back Row (left to right): Erin Stidham, Executive Director at Davis Family YMCA; Kristin Koren; Laura Clift; Hattie Zierden
Middle Row (left to right): Shepard White; Shea Conti; Macie Joy Martin
Front Row (left to right): Anna Spadaro, Kristin Dieffenthaller
Individual photos: Left: Caroline Young; Right: Adley Lamb
Not Pictured: Valor Stoddard; Hollis Knight

farragutpress wishes to thank all the participants who submitted entries. We were very impressed with the wide range of creativity!

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FMS goes back-to-back in state titles

Jake Nichols
jnichols@farragutpress.com

Earlier this month, the Farragut Middle School softball team went back-to-back with a second consecutive title in the Tennessee Middle School Fall State Championship Tournament.

With only one available pitcher in Lydia Lane, the Lady Admirals survived two 90-minute games with Lane in the circle.

After going up 4-0 in the first game, Farragut lost 6-4, but they bounced back for a 9-8 win to take the title over Meigs County, as Sophia Watkins knocked a bases-loaded RBI single down

the third-base line to cement the victory and a final mark of 22-6.

“Would have liked to have played a little better in the league tournament,” head coach Nick Green said. “We got beat by Gibbs and Halls there, and we were not scheduled to go to the tournament because it’s supposed to be the top four qualifiers. A couple teams elected not to go, and we got into it and played pretty well.

“Those championship games, it was a rough night. We were down to just one pitcher, and Lydia gave us everything she had. We were able to put enough runs on the board to outscore them.”

Earlier in the tournament, FMS won its first game 9-1 then defeated Bearden 7-6 in a comeback victory. An 8-0 win over Jefferson County followed in the winner’s bracket final, slotting Farragut in the championship for the second straight year.

The Lady Admirals had to battle back from a deficit in the second game, overcoming a 3-0 deficit to take a 4-3 lead. Not to be outdone, Meigs tacked on another run to tie it at 4-4 before FMS exploded for four more runs. But Meigs scored again, adding four runs of its own to tie the score

See FMS on Page 2B



Photo submitted

On Thursday, Oct. 1, the Farragut Middle School softball team won its second consecutive Tennessee Middle School Fall State Championship Tournament title in Athens, Tennessee.



Jake Nichols

Bearden senior Landree Horner (20) celebrates after scoring a goal against Morristown West in a Class AAA sectional match Saturday, Oct. 24.

Bearden back at state for 14th time

Jake Nichols
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The banners across Bearden’s Radcliffe-Kelly Soccer Complex speak for themselves. But the quiet confidence carried by the team is even louder.

The latter was on full display last Saturday, Oct. 24, as the Lady Soccer Dawgs defeated visiting Morristown West 6-0 in their Class AAA sectional match at BHS.

With the win, Bearden has a chance to defend its 2025 title after advancing to its 14th state tournament appearance in program history.

When the clock hit zero, there was no dog pile. Instead, Bearden’s players smiled and exchanged high-fives after moving one step closer to their ultimate goal.

“I guess it comes with the territory,” Bearden head coach Ryan Rad-

See BEARDEN on Page 3B



Jake Nichols

Knoxville Catholic tailback Ryheem Lee (0) and his backfield mate, Kruise Buntyn, will face off with counterpart David Gabriel Georges from the Baylor School this Friday, Oct. 30.

Irish set to face Baylor in marquee matchup

Jake Nichols
jnichols@farragutpress.com

Jason Surlas took a phone call in August. It was Mark Packer, the broadcaster and media personality behind the Rivalry Thursday and Rivalry Friday matchups that air on East Tennessee television each fall.

Packer’s pitch to the Knoxville Catholic athletic director started a snowball effect, which will land this Friday, Oct. 30, as Knoxville Catholic faces the Baylor School at Covenant Health Park in the inaugural Covenant Health Classic.

To prepare for the event, the baseball field at the home of the Knoxville Smokies has been converted to a football gridiron.

A video from the Rivalry Thursday Instagram page showed bulldozers rolling onto the field as workers laid mats, dug up dirt and nailed down tarp to prepare for the sod needed to create the playing surface.

This will not be Catholic’s first baseball venue this year, as the Irish defeated a Hoover (AL) at the Hoover Metropolitan Complex — home of the SEC Baseball Tournament — earlier this season.

Nor will it be the Catholic athletic department’s first foray into unique matchups, as the Irish have hosted outdoor volleyball matchups at Blaine Stadium along with a preseason volleyball tilt between Tennessee and Vanderbilt in April.

It will, however, be the biggest matchup of the season for KCHS, as the Irish take on a Baylor team featuring 5-star tailback David Gabriel-Georges, who is committed to Tennessee.

Another visiting draw comes in the form of Marshall Manning, a Baylor backup QB who is the son

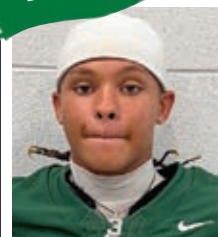
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Jake Nichols

Farragut's Johnny Jacobs (2) fights for yardage against Oak Ridge Friday, Oct. 23, at Blankenship Field.

Farragut shows 'fight' against Wildcats

Jake Nichols

jnichols@farragutpress.com

OAK RIDGE — Elijah Sadler took the pitch, stopped and heaved a spiral into the October night at Blankenship Field.

Johnny Jacobs leaped and hauled in the pass, turning to stiff-arm a defender as he picked up 10 more yards. The trickery preceded Jacobs' fourth-down catch on the same drive, setting up Carter Collier's 3-yard touchdown run to bring FHS within a score of Oak Ridge last Friday, Oct. 23.

It was an admirable response from the Admiral squad, which overcame a blocked punt that led to Oak Ridge's first score of the night.

Neither that nor a fourth-quarter touchdown by Cruz Williams proved enough to overpower the Wildcats, however, as the home team held off the Admirals 35-14.

"I thought we fought for 48 minutes," head coach Geoff Courtney said afterward. "Offensively, defensively. The special teams mishap there in the first half hurt us, but I thought our guys played with great effort and poise, able to capitalize on some of their mistakes and their penalties helped us out.

"We have to play better complementary football. We did that in long stretches, probably more than we have in any game outside of Bearden. Not the outcome we wanted obviously, but proud of our guys' effort and fight."

Farragut reflected that early, turning the Wildcats away with a fourth-down stop on their first drive.

When the Admirals regained possession, an incomplete pass and two short runs set up the punt, which was blocked to put the Wildcats at the FHS one-yard-line.

Tailback Damillyan Porter pushed into the end zone to draw first blood, but that was all the Wildcats could muster in the first quarter.

He found the end zone again less than 90 seconds into the second quarter, and Farragut responded with a nice return from Sadler before returning the ball to the Wildcats with

another punt.

The Ads regained possession shortly thereafter, though, setting up their best drive of the season from their own 22-yard-line. Collier picked up 12 yards for a first down, then he took the ball again before Sadler hit Jacobs on the trick play. Two more Collier runs followed with a sack of Hayes Sharp in-between, giving FHS a fourth down with four yards to go. Undeterred, Sharp fired a dart to Jacobs to the 11-yard-line, and two more Collier runs put Farragut in the end zone.

The Admirals' tailback provided plenty of tough yards throughout the possession, and Jacobs and Sharp connected well on two more key plays.

"He's really had a good season," Courtney said of Jacobs. "We've not been able to get him the ball as much as we would have liked, but we have grown up around him in other areas. It was good to see him be productive. Hayes, he had a couple ill-timed interceptions but settled in and made some good throws."

Another Oak Ridge score followed, as Tennessee commitment Malik Howard snagged a TD in the corner to put the score at 21-7 going into half-time. The Wildcats ultimately stretched the lead out to 35-7 as Sharp was picked off twice, but Farragut freshman Easton Lear made an interception of his own to set up Farragut's final score from Williams.

The visitors marched 88 yards to pay dirt, as Williams punched in the score before Caleb Bell's PAT marked the final margin.

This week, the Admirals are turning their attention to Cleveland to wrap up the regular season with Senior Night.

"These seniors have led us and stuck together all year long," Courtney said. "It has not been easy by any stretch, and it's been frustrating. But they have managed to keep us together and a lot of guys in that group have been productive and great teammates. So we need to honor them the right way on Senior Night. Cleveland will be playing for a second-place home playoff game Friday, so we need to bring our A-game."

History, heartbreak comprise DII soccer slate

Jake Nichols

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KNOXVILLE — Webb's Emorie Barton sent the ball splashing into the net, giving the Lady Spartans a 1-0 lead on Saturday, Oct. 24, in the Division II-AA state quarter-finals.

Webb School of Knoxville went on to clinch a 5-2 state semifinal win over Lipscomb Academy, marking the best result for area private schools in postseason girls' soccer.

In the Division II-A quarter-finals, Christian Academy of Knoxville fell to University School of Jackson 3-0, while Concord Christian lost 2-0 at Lausanne Collegiate in Memphis.

This was Concord's fourth state tournament appearance in the last five years, as CCS defeated University School of Nashville 4-1 to mark its first state win in program history.

"You don't know what to expect replacing some starters," CCS head coach Jason Jennings said. "To make it as far as we did, it's a pretty proud accomplishment for our program."

For CAK, Saturday marked the Lady Warriors' first Elite 8 appearance since 2019.

"Overall, the level of commitment and determination and willingness to play at a higher level and support each other is what it came down to for our season's success," Warriors head coach Nathan Worley said. "The first year is tough for any head coach, but



Jake Nichols

Webb's Emorie Barton (15) celebrates after putting the Lady Spartans ahead of Lipscomb Academy 1-0 in the state quarter-finals Saturday, Oct. 24. Webb has moved on to the Division II state semifinals this week in Chattanooga.

what stood out to me is how much these girls love God and love each other."

At Webb, this marks the third consecutive year the program has reached the state semifinals with a fourth-straight appearance in the state tournament.

Today, Oct. 28, the Lady Spartans will face Christ Presbyterian Academy in a push

for their third straight state championship appearance.

"Maybe when we win the big game we'll have a little more swagger to us, but our girls still struggle with the confidence that's needed to be present in those big games," head coach Elaine Roth said. "To get them ready, I keep them focused on the task at hand and go one game at a time."

Irish

From page 1B

of former UT quarterback Peyton Manning.

"I'm super excited about this," said Surlas, whose own team features QB Mack Bartholomew and weapons such as Kruiise Buntyn and David Thomas. We always love to be the first to do anything, so we're honored and grateful to Covenant Health Park. And Chris Allen, CEO of Boyd Sports, has been fantastic. It's a home game for us and we had this opportunity come up, and we wanted to talk to our senior parents and get their take. After doing that, Mr. Sompayrac and Coach Shadowens and I

decided to do it. We're giving up a home game to do it but it's too exciting to turn down."

Surlas noted that Packer inquired about televising the Catholic-Baylor game when it was slated to take place at KCHS

But the Irish already had agreed to be televised for their Thursday night tilt with Anderson County, so Surlas said he was hesitant about the Baylor game since he wanted the crowd there to see it in person.

"I'm not sure when Baylor's running back had committed to Tennessee and it became a huge story," he said. "That might've coincided with the timing,

but Mark Packer reached out to us weeks before the season to inquire about allowing him to broadcast his game with Baylor.

"We were already slated for Anderson County and wanted to maximize our home stands and make a little money at the gate and figured it would be a big game, so we were hesitant on that," Surlas added. "We politely declined, but a few weeks later, he reached out and said he'd had contact with Chris Allen. So we met with Chris and Mark together and hammered out the details."

The final product will take place this weekend, as Knoxville's home for baseball becomes a football spectacle.

FMS

From page 1B

and set up Watkins' walk-off.

She finished the second game 3-for-4 at the plate while Logan Shrader went 2-for-4 in the first game and 3-for-3 in the second championship outing.

Going forward, Green is eager to see how his eight eighth-graders mesh with his Farragut High School players. But he is just as eager about next year's middle school squad and the possibility of a three-peat.

"The eighth-graders will be freshmen this year, so we'll see how they end up working

out and contributing," he said. "They get to practice and play with really good kids who are older than them, and they'll get to see how to prepare. We practice on a more regular ba-

sis, five to six days a week with multiple games, so just knowing how to prepare and handle your academics and all those things."

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Bearden
From page 1B

cliffe said. “In a weird way, they’ve been talking about going to state for multiple weeks, and you want them to understand how hard it is to get there. But you’re also encouraged that they expect to be there.

“I hope they have a bigger mission and end goal, and I think it comes with wearing that jersey. We have a tough road ahead of us. But obviously always happy to get back there, and you don’t take it lightly with how strong soccer is in our area.”

On Tuesday, Oct. 27, Bearden took on Ravenwood in the state quarterfinals. While results were unavailable by press time, the Lady Dawgs relied on the same pieces that guided them to this point.

Last Saturday’s win saw two goals from Webb transfer Landree Horner.

“For her first year in the program, she brings the mentality,” Radcliffe added of Horner. “If you watch her on the field, I think she’d compete in a race to the parking lot. She’s got that different edge to her. She never wants to lose.”

Along with Horner’s two goals, Madi Bowlin, Leighton Corum and freshmen Baylor Kohlbusch and Avery Stevens scored one apiece.

BHS will look to maintain that same approach this week, taking each game as it comes.

And in the end, Radcliffe’s squad hopes to lift another trophy to hang another banner along the wall.

“You just look at one game at a time,” Radcliffe said. “The state tournament is supposed to be hard, and we can make a tough route. You love that everyone each year holds up a reputation of what the previous classes have set. I never want to say we’re rebuilding, and I think it’s the proof in the pudding with where we are at.”

Local standouts earn volleyball honors

Jake Nichols
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With fall sports wrapping up, postseason awards have begun for multiple sports, including volleyball.

Under first-year coach Whitney Lee, Farragut saw three honorees: first-team All-District selection Megan Frana, who also earned All-Tournament honors; and second-team selection Olivia Cope; and honorable mention selection Emberly McNair.

“With Megan, her presence at the net is obvious, but her back row presence is less talked about,” Lee said “She doesn’t talk too much but does so purposefully and takes responsibility. She’s well-rounded as a player, but she’s also a great teammate and easy to coach and play with because of her character and humility.

“And (Cope), she’s so smart. I’m trying to get her to swing more but she knows where to place the ball. I had zero hesitation putting her in because she’s so good defensively.”

With McNair, Lee credited the sophomore’s infectious energy that spreads throughout the team.

“It really helps, especially

in volleyball, and she was just ready,” Lee said of McNair. “Sometimes I’d start her in the back, sometimes in the front, and she was ready for whatever we needed. She was very effective all the way around but would always cheer for other people, too. A really good athlete who applied all the feedback given with lots of energy.”

At Bearden, head coach Kaitlyn Davidson saw a sizable impact from All-District picks Karis McGaha, Lyla Sutton and Addy Mahan.

“This season wasn’t everything we hoped for in the win column, but I’m proud of the heart our girls showed through the challenges,” Davidson said.

Under coach Eric Boden, HVA saw three All-District picks in first-teamer Maddie Jerrell, second-team pick Caroline Clauss and honorable mention selection Parker Lamb. Clauss earned Server of the Year and was named to the All-Region team while Lamb and Jerrell earned All-Tournament honors for district.

In Division II, Webb’s Isla Adams and Arabella Keith earned All-Region honors while Concord Christian’s Laney Hochevar was named All-Tournament. She earned first-team



Jake Nichols

Left: Concord Christian’s Laney Hochevar (10) earned All-District and All-Tournament honors for the Lady Lions in the 2026 volleyball season. Right: Farragut’s Megan Frana (6) was named first-team All-District and earned All-Tournament team for the 2026 season. Frana is one of three Lady Admirals to be selected for district honors and is one of several area players to be recognized.

All-District, along with Molly Sloan and Madisyn Glasgow. Second-team All-District went to Clara Sanchez and Manhattan Shuler.

At CAK, Olivia Engle and Harper Bodiscomassink earned second-team All-District

and Newcomer of the Year, respectively.

At Knoxville Catholic, Emma Glandon earned All-District for the Irish while Vanderbilt signee Mia Kinney took home region MVP honors.

Hawks fall short in push for 2-seed

Jake Nichols
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After a remarkable season, Hardin Valley Academy hoped to make more program history last weekend.

A late Cleveland touchdown prevented it.

With HVA clinging to a slim lead over the Blue Raiders, Cleveland quarterback Kason McGowan leaped into a pile at the goal line. The Hawks thought they got the stop, but officials ruled on his second effort and called it a touchdown.

HVA proved unable to cross midfield on its final drive, leaving the Hawks just shy of a win that would have given them the 2-seed and a home game in the Region 2-6A playoffs.

Now, per head coach Tyler Wynn, HVA has to beat Ooltewah and needs Maryville to beat Oak Ridge to ensure the Hawks still get in. This changes the circumstances a bit for a team that appeared to have essentially sealed its postseason fate with a key victory over Oak Ridge in Week 8.

“I’m not happy, and I told the

kids that,” Wynn said of the Cleveland loss. “But I’m not disappointed either. Pleased with how hard they played and the way they competed. We had some things not go our way and they did a really good job defensively. We played ball control because I didn’t want their offense on the field forever, and they had a couple breaks to their way that we couldn’t capitalize on.”

Cleveland ran five plays inside the 1-yard-line, and Wynn acknowledged the statements he heard about whether or not the Raiders scored. He also gave

credit where it was due, though.

“Well, you know what? They earned it,” he said. “They found a way to get it across the line and we couldn’t make the stop when we needed to. It’s on to the next one to see what we can do to try to put ourselves in a better situation.”

This week, HVA will welcome an Owls team that lost last week at Lenoir City. To win, HVA will need weapons like Riley Matz, Jeremiah Brown and Nic Rivers on offense, along with Beau Wise on defense and Logan Holbrook in special teams.



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Fall Fun & Growing Together at the Davis YMCA

October brought plenty of pumpkins, fresh air, and meaningful connections to the Davis Family YMCA! As the seasons changed, our members continued to show us how much joy comes from trying something new and growing together.

Our Pumpkin Dunkin Floating Pumpkin Patch made a splash, bringing families together for a playful twist on a favorite fall tradition. Unplugged Family Game Night offered another opportunity to put down the screens, share some laughs, and enjoy time together.

Outside our walls, a beautiful Y Hike gave members the chance to enjoy the outdoors, take in the season, and connect along the trail. Our Senior Social trip to Brushy Mountain Prison combined fellowship with a fun and informative look into Tennessee history.

Beyond these special events, October was filled with personal victories. Whether building strength, gaining confidence, developing healthy habits, or making a new friend, our members reminded us that growth happens in many forms.

That is what makes the Y so special: the people who encourage one another along the way. We are grateful to be part of their journeys and to offer a place where every generation can belong, discover new possibilities, and keep moving forward together.

Photos submitted



Queen Parker designing her future castle!



You never know what fun activity Allan has up his sleeve for Senior Strong. Peggy crushed the backwards walk warm up!



Mrs. Pat, Brody and Grac rest after a big dance party blow out to "Who let the dog's out?" at Game Night!



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A shared stage, a lasting memory



Photos Tammy Cheek

FHS orchestra students, Emily Bockman, left, and Camden Coffey play as they learn during the Knoxville Symphony orchestra Side By Side program.

Tammy Cheek
tcheek@farragutpress.com

Fifty to 60 Farragut High School’s orchestra students got a chance Thursday, Oct. 22, and Friday, Oct. 30, to learn from 18 Knoxville Symphony Orchestra musicians in preparation for an upcoming concert 7 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 5, at FHS.

The concert is free and open to the public.

“It’s exciting,” FHS director of orchestras Rodney Brown said about the Side-by-Side. “It’s a lot going into it. This will be our second concert of the year, and we did some of the music on the first concert in preparations for this concert.”

“We get to work with 16 to 18 professionals,” he said. “Five of them will be here today [Oct. 22] working with the kids. It’s been a challenge but it’s been a tremendous privilege and a lot of fun putting this music together.”

That music revolves around Americana in observance of the 250th birthday of America.

“Everything is American composers, American-based, and it’s quite diverse music, from Copeland to Bernstein to Price and Mark O’Connor, the fiddle player,” Brown said. “A lot of music, a lot of different genres. Something for everybody at the concert.”

“It’s always great to see new generations coming in,” said KSO director Aram DeMirjian said. “I hope I can be of inspiration for them.”

“I feel like this is such a cool and amazing opportunity for everybody because KSO hasn’t done this [program at FHS] in years,” FHS freshman Liddy Price said. “Not only are they going to do it with our school, but Aram DeMirjian, the conductor of the KSO, is coming in to conduct us at our concert, and



Knoxville Symphony Orchestra director Aram DeMirjian tunes his violin before the Side by Side session.

that’s just almost unheard of. It’s crazy. I’m super excited.”

“I’ve heard this is the first time they’ve chosen to do this in the Farragut area for a long time,” FHS freshman violin student Emily Bockman said. “I think that’s pretty cool.”

“They’ve got a quintet or two coming in to help us,” she added. “I’m waiting to see what I can learn from them.”

“The KSO has been a big part of my life for a while,” freshman Layla Bennett said. “I’ve gone to see a lot of their shows with family. I’m just really excited overall.”

“I would really like to work with professionals and love to know how I can get better,” she added.

The collaboration between KSO and FHS is a Side-By-Side program provided by KSO because “it’s a great way to connect with the students in our community,” said Maddie Helbling, KSO director of education and community partnership. “It’s a great opportunity to allow high school students who might have interest in becoming professional musicians or who love playing their instrument an opportunity to get to work with professional musicians.

“These programs are really special because it allows them

See STAGE on Page 8B

Cancer Awareness



Photo submitted

Rachel Strange was diagnosed with triple negative breast cancer during the third trimester of her pregnancy with her daughter.

Looking toward the future

New mother persevered through cancer treatment

Rachel Totten
Contributor

In 2023, while 33 weeks pregnant, West Knoxville resident Rachel Strange noticed a lump in one of her breasts while getting dressed.

“I just happened to feel it — I wasn’t doing a self-examination or trying to feel for it at all,” said Strange, who was only 33 years old at the time. “I was also too young for mammograms so, to be honest, I wasn’t freaking out or anything much at first because your body goes through so many different things when you’re pregnant anyway.”

In fact, at a routine OB-GYN appointment later that day, Strange was told the lump could very well be a result of hormonal changes during pregnancy.

“They said it’s kind of weird but could be normal, and to just keep an eye on it,” she said.

However, at her next appointment a few weeks later, Strange mentioned that the lump had not gone away yet, causing her prenatal care team to swiftly take action.

“Luckily for me, they said that they don’t mess around with a lump and sent me down for a mammogram and ultrasound,” Strange said. “And things went pretty quickly from there.”

Strange soon was diagnosed with triple nega-

tive breast cancer but, seeing as she was in her third trimester, she was unable to begin treatment until after her daughter was born.

“So they brought her early—at 36 weeks—and I started treatment three weeks later,” she said.

Strange’s treatment began with 16 rounds of chemotherapy, followed by surgery, radiation and oral chemo — a long and difficult experience for anyone, let alone a new mother. Yet, even in the most trying times, she was committed to remaining positive.

“I never had a newborn without undergoing chemo, so I didn’t know the difference,” Strange explained. “Like, I was tired but all newborn mothers talk about being tired. Obviously it wasn’t what my idea of early motherhood was or what I expected my early motherhood to look like, but we made the best of it.”

After all, for Strange, her daughter has always been her reason for hope, especially during treatment.

“I just kept looking toward the future and everything that I would get to experience with my daughter,” she said. “And I’d say I had some pretty good motivation to get through it.”

Having completed her last treatment in May of 2025, Strange now is learning to navigate the

See MOTHER on Page 7B



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Obituaries

Ralph Myrl Skinner, Jr., 71, of Knoxville, TN, passed away peacefully on Saturday, October 17, 2026, in Greenville, SC, surrounded by his family. Family was always at the center of his life, and he cherished it deeply.

Ralph was born on November 11, 1954, in Gadsden, AL, to the late Ralph Myrl Skinner Sr. and Ursula Pauline Richter. He grew up on Weiss Lake in Centre, AL. His childhood days were spent learning to fish, ski, play sports, and working in his dad's appliance repair shop where he learned to tinker and fix almost anything. After high school, he attended Jacksonville State University then graduated

from the University of Alabama.

Ralph's first job moved him to Knoxville, TN, where he met his wife Susie at Middlebrook Pike UMC. They were married for 46 years, raised their two sons in that church, and have been devoted members of its family ever since. Ralph's dedication to church is seen in countless ways as he served on the Church Leadership Council; volunteered with the FISH program; organized and led multiple mission trips; organized and led the United Methodist Men; was a staple in the Chancel Choir every Sunday morning; led the youth group, college students, and several Sunday School classes

over the years to name a few. He never met a stranger, at church or anywhere else in Knoxville.

Ralph's heart for service knew no end as he was firmly entrenched throughout the community as well. Most notably, since 2002, Ralph was the "Voice of the Admirals," volunteering as the PA announcer for Farragut High School baseball. He traveled across the state to call games on the radio so fans at home could follow along. Due to his unwavering



commitment, he was inducted into the Farragut High School Sports Hall of Fame as the Service Awardee and the press box at the baseball field is now named after him.

Ralph began his career at the Tennessee Valley Authority, then moved to the Department of Energy in Oak Ridge in the 1990s. Work was never the center of his life, though. He loved bringing a project to life with his own hands, and on most Saturdays you could find him tinkering in the garage on one odd job or another, a trait he got from his father.

Ralph is survived by his beloved wife, Susie; his sons, Mark (Chariti), and Andrew; his granddaughters, Isabella,

and Mabry; and his sisters, Margarit Gray (Bill), and Barbara Cobb (Reggie).

A celebration of Ralph's life will be held in the Sanctuary at Middlebrook United Methodist Church Saturday, October 31, 2026. A receiving of friends will be held from 12:00 - 2:00 p.m. followed by the Celebration of Life Service at 2:00 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be made to Middlebrook Pike UMC (<https://app.securegive.com/middlebrook-pike/middlebrook-pike-umc>).

Favorite memories and condolences may be shared with the family by visiting www.thomasmcabee.com.

Ramon Gene Lee, Jr., entered peacefully into the presence of the Lord on October 20, 2026, in Beaufort, South Carolina. He was born on October 20, 1960, in Knoxville, Tennessee, to Ramon and Elizabeth Lee.

He attended Farragut High School, graduating in 1979, and went on to earn a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Tennessee. After graduating, he began a career in sales and eventually opened

his own business selling refrigerant products. After living in Knoxville, Tennessee, and Marietta, Georgia, he and his wife, Yvonne, settled in Bluffton, South Carolina, where he retired.

"Ray Lee from Tennessee" never met a stranger. He loved cooking, grilling, and entertaining, and his award-winning Hillbilly Chili was always a hit with family and friends. He also enjoyed saltwater aquariums and Tennessee football.

Most of all, he loved his family. Although he lived in South Carolina, he stayed close to his parents and siblings through daily calls and words of encouragement. He will be deeply missed by his family and friends.



Ramon is survived by his wife, Yvonne; his son, Ramon III; his stepchildren, Tori Lemke, Brandon Harrison, and Ryan Harrison; his parents, Ramon and Elizabeth Lee; his brothers, Bryan (Paula) and Steven (Yumei); and his sister, Rachel Piotrowski (John). He is also survived by his nieces and nephews: Gayle Smith (David), Matthew Lee (Jennifer), Marshall Lee, Daniel Lee, Gus Piotrowski, and Jake Piotrowski. He also leaves behind many

special aunts and uncles.

Funeral services will be held Monday, October 26, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. CDT at West End Church of God. Burial will be in Lee Family Cemetery. Online condolences can be made at www.reedfamilyfh.com. Arrangements are by Putnam-Reed Funeral Home, 1171 Main Street, Pikeville, TN. Visitation will be held Monday, October 26, 2026 from 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. CDT at West End Church of God.



Photo submitted

Mother

From page 3B

challenges of life after cancer.

"It's almost more difficult after you're finished with treatment," she said. "Things don't just go back to normal because everything has changed. And you still have appointments all the time; you're still nervous and having scans, and it doesn't just stop like that."

This is why getting involved with a local organization such as Breast Connect can be so invaluable, Strange said.

"That's where you will meet some of the best people that are in the worst club," she said of Breast Connect's private Facebook group. "Getting advice and just hearing from others that are in the same situation as you is really helpful."

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Wed: Cultivate (7:00 PM)

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Obituaries

Paul Buchanan Garrison, 87, of Farragut, TN (formerly of Nashville, TN), passed away Monday, October 12, 2026. He was preceded in death by his parents, Pauline and Claude Garrison. He is survived by wife of 62 years, Phylis Scales Garrison; daughters, Claudia Stall-



ings (Mike) and Paula Herston (Kelly/KO); sister, Mary Gowens; sister-in-law, Doris Davis; and their families. A member of Auburn University's marching band, Paul was also drummer for The Webs, a local fraternity favorite, and in 1962, began touring with Roy Orbison as a member of The Candyman. He recorded "Oh, Pretty Woman" in 1964, a worldwide #1 hit. His musical adventures included touring England, where the Beatles opened for Orbison. He even

learned to surf in Hawaii from one of the Beach Boys. His performance on The Ed Sullivan Show can be found online. Most of his professional career was as a graphic artist and events specialist. A man of strong faith and a member of Concord United Methodist Church, Paul never met a stranger. He will be remembered for his playful humor, warmth, and joy for life. Online condolences may be expressed at www.rosefuneraltn.com.

through them, along with the faith, values, and cherished memories she instilled in her family. Though her family will deeply miss her presence, they will forever treasure the memories they shared and the example she set through a lifetime of love and devotion. We take comfort in the faith that sustained her in life and in the hope of eternal peace in God's loving presence. Her earthly journey has ended, but the love she gave and the legacy she leaves behind will endure for generations. She was deeply loved, and she will be forever cherished and missed. A celebration of life will be held on Saturday, October 31, 2026, at Click Funeral Home Chapel in Farragut, Tennessee. A visitation will be held at 11:30 p.m. with a service following at 12:30 p.m.

Rosemary Ann Graziano It's with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of our beloved wife, mother, Noonie, and great grandmother, Rosemary Ann (Richard) Graziano. Rosemary was 88 years old when she passed away on October 22, 2026. She was known for a life defined by deep faith, unconditional love, and devotion to her family and friends. Rosemary was born in Thibodaux, Louisiana to Whitney Richard and Louise Baudoin. She was raised in New Orleans, Louisiana with her brother Ronald Joseph Richard and, after marriage, spent her adult life in Covington, Louisiana, where she dedicat-



ed herself to raising her family and creating a loving home. Later in life, she relocated with her husband to Lenoir City, Tennessee. Rosemary was married to Dr. Frank William Graziano for sixty-six years and she was the mother of Frank John Graziano (Judith), Lisa Marie Roberts (Randal), and Angela Marie Pifer (Nathan). Rosemary had a deep and abiding faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and her relationship with Him guided her throughout her life. As an active member of Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church, she led a women's bible study for many years. Rosemary's greatest legacy is the family she leaves behind: three children, eight grandchildren, and sixteen great-grandchildren. She was predeceased by one grandchild. The love she poured into each generation will continue to live on

Stage From page 6B

to work one-on-one with professional musicians and learn new things about their instruments ... learn what it's like to be a professional.," she said. And, "this is really a lot of fun for the students and musicians," Helbling added. "For this particular performance, we're partnering with Farragut High School," she said, explaining KSO rotates the schools for the program. "We try to do one in-county and one out of county," Helbling said. "When we do it in county, the program is free to the school that is participating." KSO has been holding the program "for quite some time. Helbling said KSO works closely with the high school orchestra director and set up sectionals with the students. "So for the concert, instead of working with the whole group together, we'll send a string quartet and a bass player in to work with each section individually," Helbling said. After sectionals, the day of the concert, they do a full orchestra rehearsal, "so they get a full hour and a half to work as a full orchestra with all the parts playing together," she said. "They get to work with our music director Aram DeMirjian. "He will help coach them



Tammy Cheek

FHS freshman Liddy Price practices before Knoxville Symphony Orchestra arrives.

through this rehearsal, and then after the dress rehearsal, students and musicians will eat dinner together," Helbling said. "Then, the students will perform a concert on their high school stage side by side with the musicians." Another aspect of the program is the students "don't have to go anywhere," she said. "We go to them." And, "it makes it special for them because they have this memory at their school," she said.

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Press Planner

Send upcoming events for the Press Planner to editor@farragutpress.com

- Downtown Knoxville Alliance invites residents and visitors to enter the Wicked Cool costume photo contest before the celebration comes to an end Oct. 31. Entrants can compete in eight categories: Best Couple, Cutest, Best Family, Best Group (Themed), Best Hollywood/Broadway, Best Kid(s), Best Pet and Scariest. To enter, capture a photo in your costume with Downtown Knoxville as the backdrop – suggested photo spots are marked throughout the city center. Then, submit your entry at downtownknoxville.org/wicked/costume-contest or share it publicly on social media using #KnoxHalloween. For more tricks and treats, visit downtownknoxville.org/wicked.
- Breast cancer survivors, health advocates, fitness professionals and community members will gather for the 3rd annual Let's Beat Breast Cancer rally from 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 31, at Marble City Market, 333 W. Depot Ave. in Knoxville. The free event will feature personal stories from local breast cancer survivors, who will discuss lifestyle changes that have helped them, along with drumming, dancing and entertainment. The rally is free and open to the public. For more information about the Let's Beat Breast Cancer campaign and breast cancer prevention, visit LetsBeatBreastCancer.org.
- Blue Ridge Yoga invites the community to its second annual Fall 5K Fundraiser Saturday, Oct. 31, at noon. The 5K is a gentle, 3.1-mile paved walk along the scenic greenways behind the Blue Ridge Yoga studio at 623 N Campbell Station Road in Farragut. Registration is \$29, with proceeds benefiting Smoky Mountain Service Dogs, a local nonprofit providing service dogs to veterans and first responders. Dogs are welcome to join this walk. Register at <https://www.yogaknoxvilletn.com/workshops-events>.
- MEDIC had over 30 original T-shirt designs submitted by local high school students. That has been narrowed to the final four, and it's time to pick the winner. The final round of voting will take place from Monday, Oct. 26, through Sunday, Nov. 1. The winner will be announced in November. The winning design will be featured as the shirt design for March 2027, and the student will receive a \$500 E-Gift card. Vote at <https://ahaslides.com/01BW5>
- Keyboards at Christmas returns to the Clayton Center for the Arts at Maryville College on Saturday, Dec. 5, at 7 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 6, at 3 p.m. The event brings together talented musicians for two performances of beautiful Christmas music with all proceeds benefiting Mission of Hope. Tickets are \$29.99 each with reserved seating for both performances. Parking is free. Tickets are available now at missionofhope.org/keyboards

See PLANNER on Page 9B

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PUBLIC NOTICE (10/28/2026)

The Town of Farragut will hold its Executive Session with the Board of Mayor and Aldermen on Wednesday, November 4th at 3:00 PM at Town Hall, 11408 Municipal Center Drive, Farragut, TN 37934.

It is the policy of the Town of Farragut not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, natural origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability or veteran status pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Public Law 93-112 and 101-336 in its hiring, employment practices and programs. To request accommodation due to disabilities, please call 865-966-7057 in advance of the meeting.

farragut

Farragut Town Hall | 11408 Municipal Center Drive

EDUCATION RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, November 2, 2026 at 4:00 PM

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Approval of Minutes
 - A) October 12, 2026 Meeting Minutes
- 3) Business Items
 - A) Coats Aboard Project Update
 - B) School Grant Discussion
- 4) School Liaison Updates
- 5) Call for 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 accommodation due to disabilities, please call 865-966-7057 in advance of the meeting.

Planner
From page 8B

boards-at-christmas/, which links directly to the Clayton Center's box office.

• Remote Area Medical is seeking volunteer medical, dental and vision professionals and general support staff for its Jan. 15-17 clinic. The three-day clinic is to be held at

Knoxville Expo Center, located at 5441 Clinton Highway, Knoxville. RAM also is in need of general support volunteers to help set up on Wednesday and Thursday, Jan. 13-14, and take down on Sunday, Jan. 17. Overnight parking volunteers to greet patients also are needed, and interpreters can volunteer to aid patients through the process, either in the parking lot

or during clinic operations. Individuals do not need to work in the medical field to volunteer as general support. If you or your organization would like to volunteer your time to help provide free healthcare services to Knoxville and surrounding communities, visit <https://www.ramusa.org/volunteer> or call 865-579-1530.

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HOW THE WEST WAS WON SCOREBOARD

School	Win-Loss	Points for Game	Net Difference
Christian Academy of Knoxville	36-35 L	8-1	+206
Knoxville Catholic High School	14-13 L	7-2	+19
Hardin Valley Academy	14-10 L	6-3	+156
Concord Christian School	46-20 W	6-3	+58
Webb School of Knoxville	21-14 W	2-7	-76
Farragut High School	35-14 L	1-8	-247
Bearden High School	28-7 L	0-9	-285

Lions, Spartans fare well in Week 9

Jake Nichols

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With a trio of close losses and a pair of key road victories, there was plenty to learn in the penultimate week of the regular season.

Concord Christian won 46-20 at Providence Christian in Murfreesboro. Freshman quarterback Dylan Brown went 16-for-26 for a 61.5% completion rate with 246 yards and three passing touchdowns, adding two carries for 6 yards and a score for four touchdowns in total.

“Dylan played really well,” Lions head coach Steve Matthews said. “He got started early and has continued to get better every week. Amare (McKenzie) and Dasani (Moulden) had really good nights too.”

Moulden hauled in seven catches for 110 yards and a touchdown to go with one rush for 13 yards.

McKenzie reeled in six more catches for 104 yards and two scores, and Maurice Smith turned in more than 100 yards in the ground game.

Matthews again credited the return of three offensive linemen as a key factor in Concord’s success, but he also took a big-picture look at his team as it has continued to grow.

“(Providence) was a good team, a one-loss team coming in, and having to go on a road trip, I was proud of our guys and the maturity they showed and how they handled it,” Matthews said. “Sometimes I’m disappointed if we don’t play well, but then I take a step back and look at the big picture of where we were 24 months ago. To see the progress we have made, it’s pretty impressive to see how these young men have matured and grown at a rapid rate.”

CCS will look to maintain that



Jake Nichols

Left: Webb’s Garrett King (9), Matthew Rogers (0) and Antwan Hill helped the Spartans clinch a key road win last Friday in Chattanooga. **Right:** Concord Christian’s Asher Noe (66) led the Lions onto the field for their season opener against CAK. The return of Noe and other CCS linemen have helped a Lions team that has won three straight games with one matchup left in the regular season.

growth this Friday, Oct. 30, as it will host Chattanooga Grace for Senior Night at Concord.

This will be the Lions’ first true home game since they hosted CAK to start the season.

“It will be great,” Matthews said. “It’s kind of a combination of Homecoming and Senior Night for our nine seniors, who have been through the thick and thin with us. Hopefully we will put on a great show, and it should be a lot of fun.”

Webb experienced plenty of fun, too, winning 21-14 at Chattanooga Christian for the second victory of the George Quarles era.

Antwan Hill played a role in three different Spartan touchdowns, scoring on a

punt return and a receiving touchdown. He also threw to quarterback Garrett King for a score.

“We talk about the middle eight, the last four of the first half and first four of the second half, and we scored twice in that period,” Quarles said.

A late fumble recovery by Jake Rogers and an interception by Mali Blake sealed the win and may have secured a playoff spot for Webb, per Quarles.

“First happy bus ride home,” he said. “I think we’re in the playoffs, which is a positive for us. We need to celebrate those steps for young team like we have.”

Meanwhile, CAK already is guaranteed a spot in the play-

offs with eight wins, as the Warriors still lead the How the West was Won standings. They did, however, see their undefeated record come to an end in last week’s 36-35 loss to Boyd Buchanan. The Buccaneers stopped the Warriors’ two-point conversion try at the end.

Seaton Moffett went 16-for-27 for 195 yards, two touchdowns and an interception, and he rushed 12 times for 98 yards and two scores for a total of 306 all-purpose yards. Isaac Kannah took the ball 15 times for 63 yards, and he caught seven passes for 92 yards and a touchdown. Hunter Bennett hauled in another Warrior touchdown with five catches for 73 yards. Defensively, Marvin Wyrosdick totaled a team-

leading 11 tackles, giving him 114 tackles with one game left in the regular season.

The Fighting Irish of Knoxville Catholic experienced a similarly close loss, falling 14-13 on the road at Christ Presbyterian Academy in Nashville.

David Thomas hauled in a long touchdown catch from Mack Bartholomew, who hit Ryheem Lee for another score, too.

But neither proved enough against CPA, which snapped an eight-game losing streak in its first win of the 2026 campaign.

Hardin Valley will look for a similar bounce-back after falling 14-10 against Cleveland while Farragut and Bearden lost 35-14 and 28-7 to Oak Ridge and Dobyns-Bennett, respectively.

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