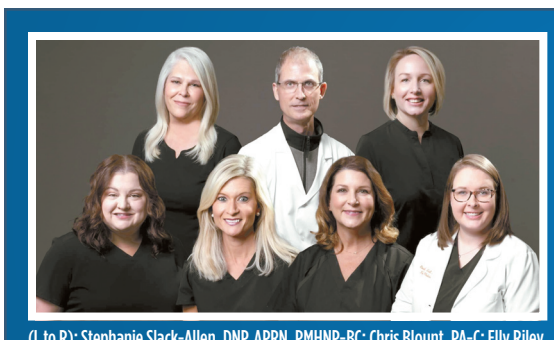


(L to R): Stephanie Slack-Allen, DNP, APRN, PMHNP-BC; Chris Blount, PA-C; Elly Riley, DO; Lori Holladay, NP; Jill Bennett, NP; Katharine Bullock, FNP; and Emily Ezell, DO.

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INSIDE THIS EDITION



Tuesday, March 25, 2025 | **McKENZIE, TENNESSEE** | **Vol. 155 / No. 12 / 7[illegible]ts**

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Solar Electric Project Continues in Trezevant

TREZEVANT — A large solar array will be providing electricity to Carroll County Electric Department customers.

Silicon Ranch is constructing its 6.5 megawatt solar array in Trezevant. The project was started in September 2024 and should be operational in the coming months.

Located at Power Station Road, Trezevant, the array will connect with Carroll County Electric Department's substation at Trezevant and provide lower-cost electricity to CCED. *Photo by Joel Washburn/The Banner*



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BETHEL UNIVERSITY



Lady Cats Punch Ticket to Fab Four

COURTESY BETHEL SID

SIOUX CITY, Iowa — The #16 Bethel Lady Cats staged a stunning comeback against #2 Southern Oregon, securing a thrilling 74-70 victory and earning their first-ever trip to the Fab Four. The battle at the Tyson Events Center was a showcase of resilience, momentum swings, and clutch performances that will be remembered for years to come.

Southern Oregon set the tone early, dominating the paint and pushing the tempo. Led by Meghan McIntyre's 15 first-quarter points and six assists, the Raiders built a commanding 23-14 lead after the opening frame, leaving Bethel facing an uphill climb.

See CATS on Page 3

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Joe Barker, executive director of the Southwest Tennessee Development District, led McKenzie officials during a leadership training course on Friday, March 21.

McKenzie Officials, Community Leaders Participate in Leadership Training

BY JOEL WASHBURN
washburn@mckenziebanner.com

McKENZIE — City officials, department supervisors, and members of the McKenzie Chamber of Commerce and McKenzie Industrial Board participated in leadership training led by Joe Barker, executive director of the Southwest Tennessee Development District, on Friday, March 21, at the Vera Low Center on the Bethel University campus.

McKenzie Mayor Ryan Griffin organized and hosted this free event, which was funded by Gresham-Smith, the planning contractor for West Tennessee.

See McKENZIE on Page 3

HUNTINGDON SSD

Board Approves SPED Position, Student Reps

BY BRAD SAM
brad@mckenziebanner.com

HUNTINGDON (March 19) — The Huntingdon Special School District Board of Education met Wednesday afternoon at the board office. A quick but productive meeting included the approval of a student representative to the school board as well as an additional Special Education position at the middle school.

Director of Schools Dr. Jonathan Kee requested the additional HMS position, which was approved unanimously.

See SPED on Page 3

HUNTINGDON

Upgrades to Kelley Sports Complex is On Agenda

HUNTINGDON (March 25) — The Town of Huntingdon will address upgrades to Kelley Sports Complex during its Tuesday, March 25 meeting of the Huntingdon Mayor and Council at 5:15 p.m. at City Hall.

See KELLEY on Page 3

Small Loan Interest Rates Just Went Up

BY JOEL LANCASTER
jlancaster@mckenziebanner.com

NASHVILLE (March 24) — A new Tennessee law raises the maximum allowable interest rate on certain small-dollar loans to 36 percent, up from the previous 30 percent cap. The change affects industrial loan and thrift companies, which include many of the state's payday and title lenders.

Locally, the law applies to payday loan companies already operating in Carroll, Weakley and Henry counties, including storefronts in Huntingdon, Martin and Paris.

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Bethel Students, Community Members Travel to France

BY JOEL WASHBURN
washburn@mckenziebanner.com

PARIS, FRANCE (March 2025) — A group of 22 travelers embarked on a 10-day trip to Paris, France, through Bethel University's Global Studies and Global Citizen Adventure Corps. The group explored iconic landmarks such as the Eiffel Tower, the recently reopened Notre Dame Cathedral and enjoyed boat cruises on the Seine River, as well as visits to renowned palaces and art museums. They also visited Disneyland Paris and the historic Normandy beaches, where Allied Forces liberated France from the Nazi regime during World War II. Throughout the trip, travelers immersed themselves in French culture and witnessed how the historic city blends its rich past with modern life. For many in the group, this was their first experience flying, riding the subway, traveling in tuk-tuks, or visiting a foreign country.

Stacie Freeman, director of Bethel University Global Studies and co-CEO and founder of Global Citizen Adventure Corps (GCAC), expressed her enthusiasm for the trip, saying, "Leading this journey to Paris was more than just an opportunity to explore a beautiful city; it was about witnessing transformation—students stepping out of their comfort zones, experiencing history firsthand, and embracing the world with curiosity and courage. Travel is education beyond the classroom, and I am honored to help make these life-changing moments possible."

Freeman has overseen 56 travel programs, with a total of 719 participants across 14 countries, and has personally traveled to 52 countries. Bethel professors Stacie Freeman (Professor of Sociology), Dr. Sarah Kidd (Professor of History), and Dr. Kyra Sanchez Clapper (Professor of French History) led the excursion to Paris.

Among the travelers were current Bethel students Taiylor Carter, Hannah Monroe, Grace Brown, Hannah Brake, and Noelle Herris, along with 2024 Bethel graduate Chloe Isbell. Community members included Carson Stover (a former Bethel student), Dr. Jessica Ferrell, Reverend Latricia Trull, Reverend Alan Trull, Reverend Mory Anderson, recently retired Huntingdon High School teacher Jenny Wilson, Jeff and Jen Washburn, Joel and Teresa Washburn, Dr. Robert and Debra Torstrick, and Melissa Herris. Jeff, Joel, and Teresa Washburn are Bethel alumni, and Reverend Anderson, along with his granddaughter Noelle Herris and daughter Melissa Herris, represented three generations of their family on the trip.

Hannah Monroe shared her experience, stating, "Almost a year ago, I took a leap and signed up for a trip to France. I told my parents about my desire to go, and they were immediately supportive, helping me find ways to finance my trip! After a year of working, saving, planning, and praying, the trip is now over. I will never forget this adventure! I am immensely grateful to Bethel University Global Studies for this opportunity to learn and grow. I'll be back in France soon! Here's to many more adventures, maybe even in Japan!"

Grace Brown added, "This trip has been a dream of mine since I was seven years old, inspired by my Fancy Nancy books, my Paris comforter, and my dad teaching me French words. I visited the Musée d'Orsay, got lost in the Louvre (literally and figuratively), enjoyed coffee at numerous charming cafés, and climbed the Eiffel Tower. I spent a layover in London and saw Macbeth in Paris on my last night. I admired the rebuilt Notre Dame, prayed at Sacré-Cœur, shopped in Montmartre, felt the wind on my face at Normandy beaches, walked the streets of Paris, and cruised on the Seine River to watch the Eiffel Tower sparkle. I spent a day at the Palace of Versailles, visited the Shakespeare and Company bookstore, rode the Paris Metro, and read by a café along the Seine. This was the most amazing trip of my life, and I am so thankful to everyone who helped me get there, including my parents, GCAC for the opportunity, my family who supported my travels, Bethel University for allowing me to study abroad, and God for placing me where I was meant to be."





Above, (L to R) Front Row: Taiylor Carter, Alan Trull, Melissa Herris, Noelle Herris, Grace Brown, Sarah Kidd, Morris Anderson, Kyra Sanchez Clapper, Stacie Freeman and Hannah Brake. Back Row: Teresa Washburn, Debra Torstrick, Robert Torstrick, Carson Stover, Chloe Isbell, Jenny Wilson, Hannah Monroe and Joel Washburn. Below, Bethel students and faculty in Paris, France: Professor Dr. Sarah Kidd, Hannah Monroe, Grace Brown, Taiylor Carter, Noelle Herris, Chloe Isbell, Professor Stacie Freeman, Hannah Brake and Professor Dr. Kyra Clapper.

The travelers began their journey at Nashville's BNA Airport, flying first to London before arriving at Charles de Gaulle Airport in Paris. The first full day included meeting the in-country guide, Louise (Lou) Kari-Mereau, who is bilingual in French and English. She led the group on a walking tour that included the Centre Pompidou for Contemporary Art, the Marais district, Place des Vosges, and the Jewish Quarter. The itinerary featured a trip to the Palace of Versailles, a visit to Les Invalides and the Musée de l'Armée, a climb up the Arc de Triomphe for a panoramic view of Paris, and a visit to the Musée d'Orsay to admire Impressionist masterpieces, as well as Montmartre Cathedral. A day trip away from the city took the travelers to Normandy beaches, where Americans in conjunction with Allied Forces, fought during WWII on D-Day, June 6, 1944. They visited the historic beaches of Pointe du Hoc and Omaha Beach, culminating in a visit to the American military cemetery, Cimetiere Americain de Colleville. This served as a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made by many during the war.

The next day was a walking trip to Notre Dame Cathedral, which reopened in December 2024 after a devastating fire just five years earlier. The original construction of the Catholic cathedral took hundreds of years.

The Louvre Museum is a national art museum and one of the most famous museums in the world. It is home to some of the most canonical works of Western art, including the Mona Lisa, Venus de Milo, and Winged Victory. The museum is housed in the Louvre Palace, built in the late 12th to 13th century under Philip II.

On the final day, the travelers had the opportunity to explore on their own. Some traveled to the famous Eiffel Tower, others to Disneyland Paris or shopping or the historic cemetery, Cimetiere du Pere Lachaise, where many famous and not-so-famous people are buried in above-ground crypts. One of the many grave markers was that of Jim Morrison, lead singer of the band The Doors.

Bethel University Global Studies and Global Citizen Adventure Corps offers travel and service-learning opportunities for juniors and seniors in high school, college students, and community members. Scheduled trips include Mexico, Honduras, Colombia, Brazil, Costa Rica, Japan, Ireland and Scotland.

Your local Global Citizen Adventure Corps (GCAC) is a West Tennessee-based non-profit organization specializing in student, adult and group travel with pre-planned and custom-designed trips for students, adults, and church and corporate groups.

These travel opportunities blend exploration with meaningful service, creating a travel experience that enriches the traveler and the world around us.

If you are ready to embark on a journey, GCAC offers a transformative travel experience that enriches the traveler and the members of the international community served.

Student travelers are eligible for three hours of college credit through Bethel University. Scholarships are also available for student travelers. The scholarships assist student travelers pay for travel previously thought beyond their financial means.

GCAC is constantly adding travel experiences. Are you ready to embark on a journey that transforms not just your perspective but the communities you touch?

For more information, visit globalcitizenadventurecorps.org or email info@globalcitizenadventurecorps.org.



Left, (L to R): Hayley Argo, Raelynn Maples, and Madeline Finley. Center, (L to R): Layla Forrest, Ellie Everett, and Brooklynn Hilliard. Right, Karma Wilkey, West Carroll Senior, reads to 6th graders during their library class.

WCES Celebrates Read Across America Week

West Carroll Elementary School celebrated Read Across America Week from March 3 to 7 with a variety of engaging activities designed to foster a love for reading among students. The week was filled with excitement as students participated in Dr. Seuss Mad Libs, Buddy Reading, Drop Everything and Read time, and a Reading Power Hour.

Throughout the week, classes competed within their grade levels to see who could read the most books or earn the highest number of Accelerated Reader points. The winning classes will be rewarded with extra recess time as a recognition of their hard work and dedication to reading.

The celebration culminated on Friday with "Be Our Guest" day, where students had the unique opportunity to listen to guest readers. These special guests included administrators from the West Carroll School District and senior students from the Class of 2025. Additionally, 3rd-6th grade students participated in themed dress-up days inspired by Dr. Seuss books. Themes included Crazy Sock Day for "Fox in Socks," Favorite Hat Day for "The Cat in the Hat," wearing green for "Green Eggs and Ham," and sporting their favorite colors for "My Many Colored Days."

The week concluded with a College and Career Day, aligning with the overall theme, "Oh, The Places You'll Go." Students were encouraged to dress in outfits representing their future aspirations. To make the event even more interactive, students received cards at the beginning of the week that were punched each time they participated in the dress-up days. At the end of the week, those with five punches were entered into a drawing, with one lucky winner from each grade receiving a special gift bag.

A special thank you goes to those who worked hard to organize this literacy-promoting event, especially Mrs. Lisa Brown, 5th grade ELA teacher, whose coordination and dedication made the week a memorable success.

Loan

...From Front Page

The new cap applies to loans of $100 or more. Borrowers who carry a balance for a full year could pay up to 36 percent in interest—not including additional fees, which remain legal under Tennessee's permissive lending rules.

Supporters say the increase helps lenders cover the risks of high-default loans and keeps credit options available. Opponents argue it raises costs for borrowers who already struggle to repay, many of whom use these loans for basic expenses like rent, utilities or groceries.

The law does not expand consumer protections, reporting requirements or financial disclosures. It simply increases the maximum effective annual interest rate allowed under state law.

The legislation—House Bill 775 and Senate Bill 694—passed the General Assembly in March. It now awaits action from Gov. Bill Lee. If he does not sign or veto it, the law will take effect automatically within 10 days of reaching his desk.

Bethel, Eastside FCE Met

Eight members met in the home of Mary and Pennye Mays for the March FCE meeting.

The president, Gail Eubanks, called the meeting to order with the reciting of the Club Pledge in unison. Roll call was answered with "How do you eat healthy, save money, and not be wasteful?".

The minutes were read from the February meeting and were accepted as read. Treasury report was given by Mary Mays, also accepted as presented.

Old business: Cakes for the nursing home were reopened for discussion. It was decided that Pennye Mays would take care of it for April and will call someone if assistance is needed.

Boo-Boo Babies workshop will be held at the Mays home on Saturday, April 12 at 10 a.m. She will have all the materials, just bring your helping hands.

Reading for Dr. Seuss took place on Monday, March 3 at the primary school. The readers were Gail Eubanks, and myself, Danita Laman.

New business: Readers for Head Start in McKenzie will meet at the Mays home on Wednesday, March 19 at 9 a.m. to carpool. The trip to Cyprus Park was tabled for the next meeting.

Spring Rally will be on April 21, 2025 at the Carroll County Complex. Our club will host this year. We voted for the theme to be salads. The list was discussed of who is bringing what. Lacy, our agent, will line up a speaker for the event. Remember to bring your cultural art exhibits for judging.

A few dates to remember are: Spring Rally — April 21; Cluster meeting — April 24 at Montgomery County; Council Meeting — June 9.

The program was given by Pennye Mays, our hostess, on an Anti-Scam Guide. It can happen to you, so be on your guard and don't give out private info on the phone. Your bank will not call you. Check your statements for suspicious activity.

Jean Wininger will be our April hostess.

SPED

...From Front Page

A motion to create the position of student board representative was also approved unanimously. A representative will be selected each year among seniors at Huntingdon High School.

HHS students Naomi Martin, Katherine Meggs and Wyatt Forbess addressed the board about their trip to Nashville for the Tennessee School Board Association's (TSBA) annual Student Congress on Policies in Education (SCOPE). At the event, students participate in debates on current education issues.

The students spoke about their experience and thanked the board for its support in making the trip.

Board members approved a three-year contract with the TSBA for $3,000 per year.

The board approved a resolution required by the state in order to participate in a one-time teacher bonus included in the recent Education Freedom Act. Most certified teachers will receive $2,000 during the next school year.

Also approved was a recommendation from the Science textbook committee to adopt Savvas as the vendor for grades K-8, Chemistry and Physics and to adopt McGraw-Hill as the vendor for Biology.

Several announcements were made by Director Kee.

The district received a Health Care Resilience Grant of $250,000, which will allow the schools to retain special staff.

Huntingdon Primary School will host an Art Show after school on Wednesday, April 23.

HMS will offer eighth graders free CPR training on an undetermined Saturday in April.

HHS hosts the FFA Plant Sale April 11-12.

The Carroll County Special Olympics will be held at Paul Ward Stadium on Friday, April 11 from 9 a.m. until noon.

The meeting adjourned in just under half an hour.

The Huntingdon school board meets next on Wednesday, April 16 at 5 p.m.

Cats

...From Front Page

The Lady Cats struggled to find their rhythm in the second quarter, briefly cutting the deficit to one (30-29), but a late surge from Southern Oregon extended their lead to 40-29 at halftime.

Then, the game flipped.

With 6:47 left in the third quarter, Bethel found themselves down 44-29. But instead of folding, they ignited. Senior Kalynn Howard caught fire from beyond the arc, drilling four three-pointers as part of a 26-point explosion that swung the momentum. Kylie Reynolds added 13 crucial points during the surge, helping Bethel take the lead heading into the final quarter.

Despite relentless pressure from Southern Oregon, Bethel's defense locked in. The Raiders led 56-55 after three, but down the stretch, the Lady Cats clamped down, holding their opponent to just 31.6% shooting in the final frame.

Micah Hart delivered in the clutch, pouring in seven of her game-high 22 points in the final five minutes. Madison Hart was dominant on the glass, finishing with a double-double (17 points, 13 rebounds), while Howard contributed 14 points, capping off a well-balanced offensive attack.

Bethel's ability to execute under pressure proved decisive, especially at the free-throw line. The Lady Cats shot 76% from the stripe, compared to Southern Oregon's 2-of-6 performance. The rebounding battle also tipped in Bethel's favor, as they edged out the Raiders 43-39 on the boards.

After the game, Coach Chris Nelson captured the significance of the moment,"This team never quits. We believed in each other, stayed composed, and executed when it mattered most. I'm incredibly proud of their heart and fight."

He added, "So many different players stepped up with huge plays. This win is a credit to their passion and determination. We look forward to next week and a chance to continue this magical ride."

With the win, Bethel improves to 27-7, while Southern Oregon's remarkable season ends at 34-1.

The Lady Cats now prepare for the national semi-finals, where they'll face #1 Dordt on Monday night, March 24, at 5 p.m.

Kelley

...From Front Page

The $585,000 plan calls for 50 percent from state grants and 50 percent from local funds to build two baseball fields, add and improve lighting for four fields, add parking and walkways - all accessible to meet American with Disabilities Act requirements. The plan indicates the project would be completed by January 2027.

In other business during the Council meeting, the board is expected to approve the Master Plan for the Kelley Sports Complex and approve a capital outlay note for the purchase of new police vehicles.

McKenzie

...From Front Page

Barker, who has 50 years of experience in public service, oversees the eight-county regional planning and economic development organization based in Jackson. His extensive background includes serving as mayor of both the City of Savannah and Hardin County. In 2003, Governor Phil Bredesen appointed him as Assistant Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development. Three years later, he was appointed to lead Tennessee Tomorrow, a public-private partnership aimed at rural economic development.

In 2022, the West Tennessee City and County Mayor Associations selected Joe to represent local governments in the Ford/SK Innovation BlueOval City (BOC) project in Haywood County. Barker has also served on various national boards, including the Community Development Advisory Council of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis and the National Association of Development Organizations.

During the two-hour interactive session focused on effective leadership, Barker identified key qualities that strong leaders should possess. He emphasized that a good leader must have a vision for their community, personal values, and the ability to shape their organization in a way that reflects those values. Additionally, leaders should build coalitions, encourage innovation, and foster trust among their associates.

In contrast, poor leadership can lead to low trust, subpar performance from team members, increased costs, suspicion among workers, and higher turnover rates. Barker stressed the importance of showing compassion and maintaining effective communication. He reminded attendees that most public officials have limited time in office, so it is crucial to make a positive impact during their tenure. Public officials and their teams should strive to provide excellent customer service to the constituents they serve.

Barker encouraged the leaders to leverage their community's assets. He noted that McKenzie is fortunate to have a four-year university and a TCAT school for technology training. He recalled a conversation with former Mayor Conger during a banquet in Jackson, where Conger expressed a desire for a river in his community. Barker realized that one of Hardin County's most significant assets was the Tennessee River, which prompted the community to embrace the numerous opportunities it offers.

"Find that one thing that draws attention to your community," Barker advised.

In conclusion, he urged attendees not to let naysayers dictate the future of their communities, referring to these individuals as "CAVE people" — citizens against virtually everything.

Northwest Tennessee Tourism To Hold Awards Celebration

BY JOEL WASHBURN
washburn@mckenziebanner.com

HUNTINGDON — Northwest Tennessee Tourism is hosting its first-ever Cornerstone Awards at the Dixie Carter Performing Arts Center on April 3, 6 p.m. Individual tickets are $25.

Entertainment will be provided by Leslie and Brooke Cooper of 24/7 Band, and Courtney Echols and Suzanne Harper of Extra Credit Solutions.

This event celebrates excellence in tourism across Benton, Carroll, Crockett, Dyer, Gibson, Henry, Lake, Obion, and Weakley counties, recognizing individuals, businesses, organizations, and other entities that contribute to making Northwest Tennessee a top destination.

"The Dixie is thrilled to be the venue for the Cornerstone Awards, and we look forward to celebrating the very best of Northwest Tennessee!" said Angela DeMaris, Executive Director of The Dixie Carter Performing Arts Center. "This evening will be filled with quality entertainment and networking opportunities for tourism professionals alike—you don't want to miss it!"

Attendees will enjoy heavy hors d'oeuvres served from multiple local eateries, live music from Leslie and Brooke Cooper of 24 Seven, and an energetic program hosted by Suzanne Harper and Courtney Echols of Extra Credit Team Solutions. Based in Martin, TN, Extra Credit Team Solutions is a leadership and teamwork consulting company founded by two former coworkers turned best friends. Known for their flash, flair, hot pink vibes, and love of bubbles, Suzanne and Courtney bring energy and excitement to every team they work with.

Award Categories

The Cornerstone Tourism Awards will recognize outstanding contributions in three key categories:

Experience Awards — Honoring top businesses in lodging, dining, shopping, attractions, events/festivals, and venues.

Individual Awards — Celebrating dedicated professionals and volunteers in tourism, including special Volunteer and Emerging Excellence Awards.

Partner Awards — Recognizing outstanding Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) and tourism partners that actively support and promote the industry.

Finalists are:

Attractions — Lavender Kisses Farms, Southland Safari Cabins and Guided Tours, White Squirrel Winery and Vineyard.

Dining — Blake's at Southern Milling, Boyette's Dining Room, Oaklawn Southern Dining.

Events/Festival — Old Time Bluegrass and Fiddler's Jamboree, Tennessee Soybean Festival, and West Tennessee Strawberry Festival.

Lodging — Nathan Bedford Forrest Cabins, Sandy Creek Farms, Southern Safari Cabins.

Venue — Crown Winery, Discovery Park, The Dixie Carter Performing Arts Center.

Shopping — My Favorite Things, Sugar and Spice Ladies Clothing, The Chocolate Bunny.

Individuals Lodging — Pulani Lani Hodge - Sleep Inn Union City, Christa Hopper - Sleep Inn, Lyne Sands - Magnolia Manor and Chapel.

Individual Shopping — Sharon Maloan - Sugar and Spice, Taylor Griffin and Susie Pratt - Ivy Corner Gifts, Mary Beth Puckett - My Favorite Things.

Individual Attractions — Michael Avery - Southland Safari, Jessica Duncan - Lily's Garden, Bill Sandersion - White Squirrel.

Individual Dining — Drew Beeler - Hometown Hangout, Alan Laderman - Sammie's and The Grind, Blake Stoker - Blake's at Southern Milling.

Individual Volunteer Stars — Zach Marbrey, Alicia Pinto, Rick Revel.

Individual Emerging Excellence — Drew Beeler, Caroline Partin, and Clint Weaver.

Champion DMO — Dyersburg Chamber, Martin Business Association, Obion County Chamber.

Champion Partners — Caroline Partin - Discover Reelfoot; Brianna Roser - Dyersburg/Dyer County Chamber; Libby Wickershaw - Greater Gibson County Chamber.

For more information, visit nwtourism.com.

Local Students Graduate From MTSU

MURFREESBORO (March 14) — Middle Tennessee State University congratulates the students who received their degrees at its fall 2024 commencement ceremony. MTSU's fall commencement saluted members of the final Class of 2024 during two ceremonies in Murphy Center to confer their degrees.

Local residents among the fall graduates included:

Shelby Davis of McKenzie, who earned a Bachelor of Science in Integrated Studies.

Kira Fullington of Lavinia, who earned a Master of Science in Media and Communication.

Darren Kirkland of McKenzie, who earned a Bachelor of Science in Video & Film Production.

Tianna McCutcheon of Paris, who earned a Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science.

Ava Parrott of Martin, who earned a Bachelor of Science in Forensic Science.

Savannah Sutton of Huntingdon, who earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing.

Founded in 1911 as one of three state normal schools for teacher training, Middle Tennessee State University is one of the oldest and largest undergraduate universities in the state of Tennessee.

West Carroll Elementary School Celebrates Exceptional Students with SOAR Awards

West Carroll Elementary School (WCES) continues its tradition of celebrating outstanding students through its SOAR Awards program, recognizing those who embody the school's core values of Safety, Ownership, Achievement, and Respect. Each week, the program honors students who demonstrate excellence in academics, character, and positive contributions to the school community.



Pictured (L to R): Courtney Edwards, Camilla Jenkins and Aysia Johnson.

For the week of February 24-28, fifth grader Camilla Jenkins earned the most positive Class Dojo points, earning recognition for her hard work and kind-hearted nature. Mrs. Lisa Brown, Camilla's teacher, praised her by saying, "Camilla is an excellent student! She is kind to everyone and looks for opportunities to cheer up those who are struggling. Camilla works very hard in all subject areas but especially loves to write. She is a ray of sunshine at WCES!"

The week of March 3-7 saw fourth grader Aysia Johnson recognized for her outstanding effort and character. Aysia earned the most Dojo points for consistently demonstrating responsibility, hard work, and kindness. Mrs. Beth Hysmith, Aysia's teacher, remarked, "Aysia consistently shows responsibility, hard work, and kindness in everything she does. She always completes her homework on time and makes sure her assignments are neat and well-thought-out. Whether it's leading a group project or simply listening when someone needs to talk, Aysia's kindness and work ethic shine through, making her a true role model in the classroom."

Additionally, third grader Courtney Edwards was nominated for the award by her teachers for consistently showing kindness and respect. Ms. Brianna Rice shared, "Courtney Edwards consistently shows kindness and respect towards her peers and adults. Her willingness to lend a hand is truly admirable. She puts in a lot of effort and works hard on her assignments, which positively impacts our classroom atmosphere."

West Carroll Elementary's SOAR Awards program continues to highlight the exceptional character and achievements of its students, inspiring others to reach their full potential and live by the school's core values.



HUNKER DOWN WITH KES

I Ate As Slow As I Could, Hoping It Would Last Forever....

The first thing I noticed was the odd shaped, six-sided table. We were at Fat Cats in Rogersville, Alabama, sitting down to eat breakfast. Three alternating sides were scalloped inward and the other three jutted out and were squared off... just enough for one person to sit and eat comfortably.

I was wanting to ask the story behind the name, Fat Cats; but I got so intrigued by the table, I completely lost that train of thought. J.C. moved over to the table and picked out a squared off end. The rest of us fell in line.

It had already been one of the best weekends of my life. It wasn't every day I got to see Moe Bandy in person. I knew the concert would be special. But it exceeded my expectations by 10,000 percent! I jumped up and sang with him on, "Hank Williams, You Wrote My Life." And I thought about Melinda, Billie Jean, and Mary Hadley when he cranked up, "I Just Started Hatin' Cheatin' Songs Today."

J.C. leaned over from the seat on my left, "It's David's turn to pay."

I immediately told the waitress I wanted the biggest porterhouse steak in the place, with eggs, grits, bacon, biscuits, gravy, and apple pie and ice cream for dessert.

Everyone laughed at that old ploy.

The truth is anyone of the six of us would, and had, paid for all of us at one time or another. We quit keeping score on such matters years ago. But that didn't keep us from good naturedly pointing fingers and calling each other out.

Family.

David was on my immediate right. You cannot believe, as kids, how many Indians and outlaws we chased down in the mornings and then, come afternoon, we pushed every Japanese and German soldier hiding in the big ditch behind the house all the way back to Tokyo and Berlin.

Joe sat on the other side of Dave. He was J.C.'s younger brother. "Bear," as he had been known to us since birth, has always been the quietest and most gentle of the bunch. He was a steading force when we were all boys running wild up and down Steadman Ridge, or fishing with a rifle in the clear water of Sugar Creek.

Their father was our mom's younger brother. I believe you would understand the reverence with which we still speak of both Mom and Uncle Clifford. And our conversation is never far from Pa and Gran. Uncle Hugh. Aunt May White. F. D., and countless other precious related souls that shaped, molded, and pushed us along the road to adulthood.

Richard was on J.C.'s left, he'd come all the way from Lawrenceburg to see us off. Dave and I were leaving for Florida as soon as the meal was over. He married C and Bear's younger sister. Now, I know about those "married in" folks. Some didn't measure up. But let me tell you, there wasn't a guy at the table that wouldn't put their life in Richard's hands in a New York second.

It doesn't get any more family than that!

Allen sat directly across from me. He wasn't a cousin. Nor did he marry anyone kin to us. And I have not known him for a lifetime. But C and Dave have stamped their approval on him. That is good enough for me.

And heck, he's the one that bought the tickets and invited me to the Moe Bandy Concert. And then went out of his way to ensure that I had the best time of anyone there. If that ain't family.... then a hundred-pound sack of Martha White flour won't make a big biscuit!

As I munched on my pancakes I marveled at the goodness of the moment. I studied every face. I pondered on the touch each one of these men had on my life. I thanked God all over again for the blessings He continues to pour into me.

We talked about everything, and nothing. We "remembered" a gun show in Tulsa. We mentioned one or two of the million idiotic things Leon got us into. We would be in 1956 one minute, and yesterday, the next.

People got to staring at a group of "mature" men laughing and carrying on like school children. One lady leaned over so far from the next table that I thought we might have to rearrange so she could join us. She mentioned the Moe Bandy Concert must have been very special by the way we were talking about it.

She was partly right. It was great, even monumental, to see a country singer I had idolized for half my life. But when I really took a second to put everything in perspective, the really special moment of this weekend.... was sitting around an odd shaped table in a place called Fat Cats, sharing life with my family....

Respectfully,
Kes

WIT AND WISDOM OF DAVID JOHNSON

One of Willie Johnson's Boys

It was oft-heard phrase when I was growing up. "Oh, so your one of Willie Johnson's boys."

Here's how it would go:

When the parents of one of my friends met me for the first time, they would ask, "Who are your parents?"

My answer: "Willie and Martin Johnson."

Then would come, "Oh, so your one of Willie Johnson's boys."

No matter what town we lived in (and we lived in several) it seemed everybody knew my daddy. Maybe that's just the way of small towns and their preachers, or maybe that was just my daddy's way, making certain he met and knew everybody.

You see, my daddy had what I call a "large personality." When he walked into a room, he owned it. Not in a braggadocious way. He just made it a point to meet everyone and shake their hand, and it seemed like everyone was eager to shake his.

It kind of made me proud that everyone knew him and that they smiled when they said his name. It looked to me like everybody liked my daddy. Now, as an adult, I'm confident everybody didn't, it's just I never met any of them.

For a long time, I took for granted the fact that I had a father to be proud of and figured every kid was proud of their father. But in my teen years I became more aware of fathers of friends who were never around, who drank too much, who cheated on their wives, who had pornography hidden in a garage...

Here's what I've learned: every child needs a father they can be proud of.

At the same time, though, there's a lot of pressure when you have a father like mine was. Because he was upright, honest, hardworking, friendly, and devoted to God, people assumed I was a miniature version of that.

His reputation rested on my shoulders like a weight because I knew I was less than he was.

What I didn't understand back then was that pressure was good for me. It helped me avoid some of the temptations my peers succumbed to. I said some, certainly not all.

You see, the last thing I didn't want to do was anything that would tarnish my daddy's reputation and cause people to doubt their view of his sterling character.

As I was thinking about all this recently, my thoughts turned to my other father—my heavenly one. The one that matters the most.

Although I don't "proclaim it from the rooftops," I'm not shy about telling people I'm a Christian and devoted to following God's plan for my life.

Here's the thing though: Just as being a son of Willie Johnson carried a weight of responsibility to live my life reflective of his life, identifying myself as a child of God carries an even greater responsibility to live my life reflective of the life that his Son lived when he walked this earth. People expect it of me.

Thankfully, though, my Father knows I'm a flawed human living a flawed life and He's provided grace and mercy, by sacrificing his only Son, that will cover all my shortcomings. Because of that, I don't have to let the weight of my mistakes tear me down and make me feel like giving up.

In the presence of such love, it makes me want to try harder to avoid doing things that would change people's views of my Father in a negative way.

Claiming God as your Father and Christ as your Savior is one of the boldest steps a person can make. It's one I've never regretted.

** Taken from The Wit and Wisdom of David Johnson, Volume II: The Hairy Catfish Caper.*



From (L to R): Nola Hobbs, vice president of the Carroll County Historical Society; Jennifer Waldrup, great-granddaughter of Cpl. Stewart Huffman; and Brent Cox, director of the Gordon Browning Museum, with the new uniform display. *Photo by Brad Sam/The Banner*

Local Museum Receives Uniform Display

COURTESY TONI KEE
Gibson County Historical Society

McKENZIE (March 20) — The Carroll County Historical Society and the Gordon Browning Museum recently received a $1,000 museum grant from the Tennessee Society Daughters of the American Revolution. The nomination was made by the Chickasaw Bluff Chapter.

The grant was used to create a display honoring Cpl. Stewart Staten Huffman, a trooper in the 1st U. S. Cavalry Regiment, Company M, Spanish American War, 1898-1900. He was a resident of Carroll County, born in the Hico community and later lived in McKenzie. He was a farmer and was employed by the N.C. & St. L. Railroad until an accident caused the loss of his left arm.

Huffman was once a postmaster in Carroll County.

His great-grandchildren, Jennifer Barksdale Waldrup, Billy Barksdale, Mark Barksdale, Barbara Brewer and Col. Joe R. Parker, donated Mr. Huffman's uniform and war documents to the Gordon Browning Museum. This uniform is the oldest in the museum's vast collection.

In addition, Col. Parker also donated his uniform, which is displayed with his great-grandfather's items. Col. Parker is a retired U. S. Army officer with 47 years of service in Military Intelligence, serving part of his career at the Pentagon. In 2017, he was inducted into the Military Intelligence Hall of Fame.

The Gov. Gordon Browning Museum is honored to have this display added to its collection. Museum hours are Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Everyone is invited to come by and visit the new addition.

Tennessee Legislature Proposes Change to Foreclosure Notices

The motivation behind the proposed legislation in Nashville is clear and falls into one of three categories:

1. A genuine attempt to tackle a specific issue.

2. A maneuver to win favor with or reward support from lobbyists, wealthy donors, or powerful political figures.

3. A tactic to gain media attention or boost a legislator's public profile.

It is evident that the legislation aimed at changing foreclosure notice procedures in Tennessee does not arise from a sincere effort to address a pressing problem.

Currently, foreclosure notices must be published three times in a reputable newspaper. The proposed change aims to reduce this requirement to just one publication, compromising transparency for property owners, consumers, and the general public. This alteration will drastically limit the number of people who see these crucial notices.

Moreover, the second component of the proposed legislation mandates that a posting be made online by a third-party internet posting company. This ignores the fact that the Tennessee Press Association already provides a reliable third-party internet site that newspapers use to publish such notices online, as required by law, and at no additional cost. Newspapers also post these notices on their individual websites.

This proposed legislation seeks to replace a clear and effective law with something vague and untested. Several critical questions remain unanswered:

- Who will the third party be?

- Who will select this third party?

- Is the third-party site already operational, or will it be created by the banks and lawyers lobbying for this change?

- How will the public be informed about where to find the third-party site?

- What will the rates be, and how much will the third-party site charge? If the site is controlled by banks or lawyers, isn't this merely a scheme to funnel money back to the lobbyists supporting this bill?

These issues demand clear answers.

Let's be transparent: newspapers charge a fee for each foreclosure notice published. This raises significant questions about motivation: Is it acceptable to redirect funds that should support the press—an institution vital to maintaining our Constitutionally protected Freedom of the Press—back into the pockets of bankers, lawyers, or the government? It certainly raises eyebrows about the intent behind this legislation.

The mission of community newspapers is crucial: they keep you informed about the workings of your government and community. They serve as a vital light illuminating important issues.

Reducing notice requirements for something as significant as foreclosures undermines the very principles on which our federal, state, and local governments are built.

If you stand for greater transparency in Tennessee, it is imperative that you contact your Tennessee State Representative or State Senator. Demand that foreclosure notices and all public announcements remain in your local newspapers. Your voice matters, and it's time to make it heard!

Correction

In the March 11, 2025 edition, the County Agrees to $10 Million Reimbursement For Electric Department mistakenly stated the $10 million bond was for the construction of a new Carroll County Electric Department (CCED) headquarters. The bond issuance is primarily directed to build a new substation in Leach, TN. According to Ryan Drewry, CCED General Manager, "the reimbursement resolution will allow CCED to recoup hard costs, for capital improvements to the electric distribution system, looking back 60 days from the March 10, 2025 approval by the County Commission. Soft costs, such as Engineering fees, CCED has paid towards the Leach Substation project, are also eligible for reimbursement from a bond issuance. It may be several months before the bonds are actually issued to align with project timing. So in between, CCED can track costs and seek reimbursement with the Bond funds for the capital improvements to the electric distribution system... The bond issuance will be timed to appropriately meet spend down requirements based upon the anticipated outlay/timeline of significant capital costs of the Leach Substation project and other capital improvement projects that all strengthen the electric system in providing safe, reliable power."

Drewry added, "As mentioned in the article concerning building a new facility, this will come with time. Land has been procured to build a new facility to replace the existing facility. It is notable to mention, the current facility was state of the art when built in 1949. You may be able to find the news article from March 4, 1949 stating such in the Banner's archives. Load growth in the Leach area, primarily from development around Lake Halford has necessitated the need to build a substation to serve the growing load. Other system improvements for reliability and redundancy will also be completed."

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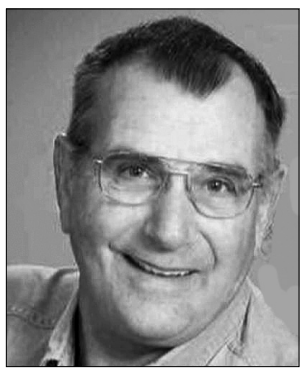
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Obituaries



BOBBY D. PATE
1948 — 2025

McKENZIE — Funeral services for Bobby D. Pate were Friday, March 21, 2025, at McKenzie Church of Christ.

The family received friends at the church on Thursday, March 20, 2025, and Friday. Interment was at Hinkledale Cemetery.

Mr. Pate, 76, died at Baptist Memorial Hospital Carroll County on March 16, 2025. He was a retired police chief for the City of McKenzie, a member of McKenzie Church of Christ and an Army veteran.

He was born on June 26, 1948, in McKenzie to Johnnie and Nell Stewart Pate.

He is survived by his wife, Gloria Kee Pate; two sons, Jeremy (Gina) Pate and Joel (Amanda) Pate, all of McKenzie; a daughter, Nicole (Marcus) Williamson of Clarksville; and thirteen grandchildren, Emma (Austin) Anderson, Sydney Pate, Lydia Pate, Sophie Pate, Olivia Pate, Jaden Pate, Willow Pate, Beau Pate, Gavin Hicks, Nevaeh Williamson, Hailee Williamson Zachary Clark and Gracie Clark; and two great-grandchildren, Jachsyn and Lily.

He is preceded in death by his parents, his brother, James "Jim" Pate, his sister, Frances Helen Vick and two grandchildren, Drake Pate and Heaven Williamson.

In Lieu of flowers, the family is asking that memorials be made to Carroll County Humane Society.

If you need further assistance, please call Brummitt-McKenzie Funeral Home at 731-352-4848 or visit our website at brummittmckenziefuneralhome.com. +



ALEXIS M. NOLIN
1996 — 2025

McKENZIE — Funeral services for Alexis M. Nolin and Asher Nolin was Thursday, March 20, 2025, at 2 p.m. at Brummitt-McKenzie Funeral Home. Interment was at Mt. Olivet Cemetery.

Mrs. Nolin, 28, died at Baptist Hospital Carroll County on Saturday, March 15, 2025. She was a correctional officer for Carroll County Sheriff's Department. Mrs. Nolin was born in Baltimore, Md., on April 14, 1996.

She is survived by her parents, Bill Graciani Jr. and Jenn Kalwa of Trezevant; her husband, Dylan Nolin of McKenzie, a sister, Christina McClarren of Pa.; a brother, Chance Graciani; grandparents, Rich and Pat Nicholson; mother and father-in-law, Tina (Mike)Annis of McKenzie; sister-in-law, Tiffany (Jon) Grandowicz of Dover and Olivia Nolin of McKenzie; and brother-in-law Zachary Annis of McKenzie.

She is preceded in death by her unborn child, Asher James Nolin; and her grandmother, Linda Sessa.

In lieu of flowers, please donate to an area such as the Epilepsy Foundation. +

DANNY LASTER
1954 — 2025

McKENZIE — Mr. Danny Joe Laster, 70, died at his residence on Tuesday, March 18, 2025. It was his request for cremation and no services of any kind. The family will honor his request.

Mr. Laster was a retired plant manager for Gaines Manufacturing and New Generation Furniture. He was born in McKenzie on May 10, 1954, to Jack Laster and Corky Ward.

He is survived by his wife, Debra Hampton Laster; two sons, Wesley (Niki) Laster of Paris, and Dusty (Shannon) Laster of New Port Richie, Fla.; a sister, Gail (Mark) Setterlund of Arlington; one grandson, Noah James Laster; and a nephew, Brandon (Natalie) Allen of Millington.

He is preceded in death by his parents and a brother, Ricky Laster.

LINDA GRACE HUISMAN
1963 — 2025

A Celebration of Life for Linda Huisman will be announced later.

Ms. Linda Grace Huisman, 61, died at her residence on Saturday, March 15, 2025. She is a retired dietitian manager for Lakeside Retirement Center. She was born in Hazel Crest, Ill., on March 27, 1963, to Lendell and Axielene Essary Alexander.

She is survived by her children, John (Shania) Huisman of Paris and Nicole Garrett of McKenzie; a sister, Jackie (Kevin) Billingsley of Gleason; a brother, Jerry Alexander of Memphis and Rodney Alexander of Chicago, Ill., and three grandchildren.

She is preceded in death by her parents; a brother, Mark Alexander; and a son-in-law, Austin Garrett.

LURLYE B. THOMPSON
1942 — 2025

PARIS — Mrs. Lurlye B Thompson, 82, of Paris, died Thursday, March 13, 2025, at Henry County Health and Rehabilitation.

Funeral services were Monday, March 17, 2025, at Lakeside Christian Fellowship Church at 2920 US 641, Paris, Tenn., with Reverend Pamela E. Hughes officiating. Interment was in Memorial Cemetery in Paris.

Mrs. Thompson was born August 24, 1942, in Paris, to the late Seth T. Brown and late Blanche McFarland Brown. She was married on February 27, 1982, to Jackie Thompson who preceded her in death on April 30, 2004. Other than her husband and parents, she was also preceded in death by a brother, Seth Thomas Brown, Jr.

She is survived by a daughter, Suzi (Mark) McFadden of Paris; a son, Bob (Addie Lou) Chase of Huntingdon; two sisters, Earlene Boyd, and Verlene Phifer, both of Paris; granddaughters, Mandy (Trevor) Haywood, Lezley (Colin) Crossno, Brooke McFadden, Hannah (Tucker) Lowe, Katie Lou (Austin) Pritchard; and great-grandchildren, Reagan (Joe), Will, Jack, Hazel, and Wes. She also leaves two step-children, Jenny (Mike) Underwood, and Jason Thompson, both of Paris; along with grandsons Justin (Kaylyn), and Jordan; and great-granddaughters, Evelyn and Ashlyn.

JOSEPHINE STOKES SMITH
1937 — 2025

CLARKSBURG — Mrs. Josephine Stokes Smith, 88, of Clarksburg, died Tuesday, March 18, 2025, at Baptist Memorial Hospital in Huntingdon.

Funeral services were in the Chapel of Chase Funeral Home on Friday, March 21, 2025, with Bro. Mark Simons and Bro. Chase Sanders officiating. Burial was in Sellers Hill Cemetery.

Mrs. Smith was born February 16, 1937, in Clarksburg, to the late George Washington Stokes Jr. and Mary Olivene (Jarrett) Stokes. She was married to Charles Ray Smith on May 3, 1953, who preceded her in death on June 16, 1997.

She is survived by a son, Michael Smith (Doris); a daughter, Debbie Crossno, all of Clarksburg; five grandchildren; and ten great-grandchildren.

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Thank You

I would like to thank everyone who has comforted me and my family since the loss of Ali and Asher. Your presence, well wishes, cards, texts, food and flowers have been such a comfort to us all. These acts of kindness has meant more to me than you will ever know. I am truly grateful for your love, friendship and unwavering support.

Dylan Nolin
The Family of Ali & Asher Nolin

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Campfire Hash

2 tablespoons cooking oil
1 medium onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
4 large potatoes, peeled and cubed
1 lb fully cooked, smoked kielbasa, cubed
Green chilies
1 (15 to 16 oz.) can whole kernel corn

Heat oil in Dutch oven. Sauté onion and garlic until tender. Add potatoes. Cook, uncovered, over medium heat for 20 minutes. Stir occasionally. Add kielbasa; cook and stir until potatoes are tender and well browned, about 10 minutes more. Stir in chilies and corn; cook until heated through.

Chocolate Ice Cream Pie

1 1/2 cup milk
1 c chocolate ice cream - softened
1 pkg chocolate instant pudding
1 graham cracker ready made crust

Blend milk and ice cream, add pudding mix, beat slowly about 1 minute. Pour into pie shell, chill about 3 hours. Garnish with cool whip.

Careless Salad

1 package vanilla instant pudding mix
1 large can pineapple, drained

Mix until mixture thickens, add 1/4 cup miniature marshmallows, 1/2 cup nuts. Fold in 8 oz. cool whip and chill.

Key Lime Pie

1 baked pie shell
3 eggs -separated
1 can Eagle Brand Milk
1/2 cup real lime juice
Few drops green food color
1/2 teaspoon cream of tartar
1/3 cup sugar

In medium mixing bowl, beat eggs yolks, stir in condensed milk, real lime juice and food coloring if desired. Pour into cooled pastry shell. Beat egg whites with cream of tartar until soft peaks, add sugar gradually, beating until stiff. Spread on top of pie. Bake 12-15 minutes or until golden brown. Cool before serving.

Sinful Pie

Layer 1:
1 1/2 stick oleo
1 1/2 cup flour Plain or self-rising
1/2 cup chopped nuts

Mix these ingredients and press into 13x9 pan. Bake at 350 degrees until golden brown or about 30 minutes. Let cool.

Layer 2 :

Mix 8 oz. cream cheese, 1 cup powdered sugar, and 1 cup cool whip. Beat until creamy and pour over crust.

Layer 3:

Mix 2 small boxes of instant jello pudding (chocolate or any flavor) mix with 3 cups cold milk, pour over the cream cheese mix. Top with cool whip and chopped nuts.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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FISH & 'QUE FRIDAY

Greater Enon Missionary Baptist Church is hosting a Fish & 'Que on Friday, March 28, 2025 from 3:30 p.m.-7 p.m. (or until sold out), at 103 Chestnut Street in McKenzie (behind the church). Plates are $10 and include fresh fried catfish, BarBQ spare ribs, smoked pulled pork, and smoked leg quarter with sides of potato salad, slaw, and white beans.

McKENZIE SENIOR CENTER CAKEWALK, DINNER

The McKenzie Senior Center is hosting a cakewalk and dinner Saturday, March 29 at 172 Main Street South, McKenzie. Dinner is at 5 p.m. and includes chili, cornbread, tea or water for $5. The cake auction begins at 5:45 p.m., followed by the cakewalk. For only $5, you can participate in the cakewalk all evening, with no limit on how many times you can win. Follow McKenzie Senior Citizens Center on Facebook for more information.

MHS DECADES REUNION

McKenzie High School is hosting the annual football Homecoming on Friday, September 19, 2025. The Rebels will play Camden Lions at Rebel Stadium. In conjunction, the MHS Alumni Association will host its second annual Decades Reunion. Any MHS class hosting a reunion should contact the MHS Alumni Association to help promote the class reunion.

E911 BOARD TO MEET

The Carroll County Emergency Communications District Board of Directors (911 Board) meets Thursday, March 27, 5:30 p.m. at 200 Norandal Drive, Huntingdon. Anyone wishing to address the board must contact 731-986-8911 to be placed on the agenda.

CARROLL COUNTY SPORTS HALL OF FAME CEREMONY

The Carroll County Sports Hall of Fame induction ceremony is Saturday, May 3 at 6 p.m. at the Carroll County Civic Center. The event will honor one male and one female senior from each high school, along with outstanding athletes who have graduated from the five local high schools. Nominations are currently being accepted. For ticket information, contact Lex Suite at 731-415-2834.

HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC CHURCH LENTEN FISH FRY

Holy Family Catholic Church, 256 Cotham Dr., Huntingdon, hosts a Lenten fish fry each Friday in March from 4:30-7 p.m. The price for adults is $17; children under eight are $8. Included are catfish, hush puppies, coleslaw, white beans, fries, dessert and a drink.

TCAT-McKENZIE SKILLSUSA FUNDRAISERS

Are you hungry to help SkillsUSA competitors compete at the state level? TCAT Henry/Carroll at McKenzie's local SkillsUSA officers are hosting fundraisers to raise money for state competition. Come out and support our competitors going to the 2025 STATE Leadership and Skills Conference.

Friday, April 4 at 11 a.m. — Mr. Tim Fann's chili plate. Comes with 2 chili dogs and a bag of chips for $6 per plate.

CARROLL COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY REORGANIZATION CONVENTION

The Carroll County Democratic Party Reorganization Convention is Thursday, April 10 at 7 p.m. at the Huntingdon Police Station, located at 1160 Lexington Street. Doors open at 6 p.m.

CANCER BAKE AUCTION IS APRIL 14

The annual radio Cancer Bake Auction is the week of April 14.

WEST CARROLL BAND BENEFIT, SONGWRITER SHOWCASE

A dinner, concert and silent auction are planned for Saturday, April 5 at the Carroll County Civic Center. The doors open at 5 p.m. and the silent auction is 5 to 7:30 p.m.

Dinner with entertainment from West Carroll Band Members Jace Hammett, Cole McMinn and Sawyer Sutton is 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

The Songwriters Showcase is 6:30 to 8 p.m. with Brice Ling, Deric Ruttan, and Phillip White.

For ticket information, contact Jenny Mims at 731-415-3760.

UPCOMING DATES, EVENTS

The following list of events was provided by Carroll County Chamber of Commerce. Specific information about events may be available at a later date.

March 24-28 — Carroll County Schools Spring Break.

May 1 — National Day of Prayer.

May 3 — Carroll County Sports Hall of Fame and Bethel University Spring Commencement.

May 17 — Bruceton in May.

May 22 — Chamber Golf Tournament.

May 22 — Last day of school spring semester.

May 26 — Huntingdon and McKenzie Memorial Day Celebrations.

June 28 — Eastview Fireworks Celebration.

July 4 — McKenzie and McLemoresville July 4th Celebrations.

August 5 — 2025-2026 school year begins.

August 22-23 — McKenzie Sweet Tea Festival.

September 27 — Huntingdon Heritage Festival.

October 13-17 — Fall Break.

October 27 — County Chamber Banquet.

November 7-8 — Carroll County Christmas Market.

November 24 — Ducks Unlimited Banquet.

December 19 — Last day of fall semester.

HIGH SCHOOL CELEBRATION OF THE ARTS APRIL 12

Carroll Arts, Inc. presents the Celebration of the Arts, a free event showcasing Carroll County high school students involved in the arts, will be held on Saturday, April 12 at The Dixie Carter Performing Arts and Academic Enrichment Center in Huntingdon. The celebration is open to all high school students in Carroll County to exhibit or perform in the areas of visual arts, music, and drama. Performers will take to The Dixie stage to display their talents and artwork will be prominently displayed in the gallery. The art exhibit starts at 6:30 p.m. and performances start at 7 p.m. If students are interested in participating, please reach out to your school's art, drama, band, or guidance counselor.

Carroll Arts, Inc. is a non-profit dedicated to shining a light on the arts in Carroll County, Tenn. To learn more, e-mail carrollartsinc@gmail.com.

Other upcoming events include: An Evening with Carroll Arts is June 21; The Creativity Camp for Carroll County elementary and middle school students is July 7-11; Southern Fried Funnies during McKenzie's Sweet Tea Festival in August; Storytelling during the Huntingdon Heritage Festival in September; A Mistletoe Christmas Program during McKenzie's Christmas Celebration in December; and the 15th Annual Trivia Bowl in January 2026.

CAPITOL TALK DATES RELEASED

The Carroll County Chamber of Commerce announced upcoming final date for "Capitol Talk". Senator John Stevens will be at the Civic Center on Friday, April 11. Events start at 8 a.m. with remarks from 8:10-8:30 a.m. and question and answer from 8:30-9 a.m.

CARROLL HUMANE SOCIETY EVENTS

Cat Vouchers

We always have spay/neuter vouchers for cats at a cost of $60 and to be used at Paris Vet Clinic. If you need to pay with cash, come by the shelter to purchase. Otherwise, we have a NEW NUMBER to purchase using a credit/debit card. Please leave a message and the volunteer will return your call very soon, 731-514-0878.

Dog Vouchers

Dog vouchers are available for $60 each cash or card only. These must be purchased at the shelter during business hours Tuesday-Saturday 8 a.m.-12 p.m. Appointments will be made at the time of purchase. The participating vet clinic is Huntingdon Animal Clinic. You'll be responsible for paying the clinic when you pick up your animal. We do recommend that you have your pet vaccinated due to exposure to other animals. Puppies must be a minimum of 4 months of age (older if small breed) at the time of surgery.

LOW-INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

The Northwest Tenn. Economic Development Council is accepting applications for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program. This program assists low-income households through direct energy payments to their energy provider. Individuals interested in applying for the LIHEAP Program should make an appointment at the Northwest TN Economic Development Council office in their county of residence. Go to our website for county site contact information: nwcommunityaction.org.

ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES

Huntingdon Location — Adult Education Building, 14155 Paris Street. Office hours are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Classes are offered for one-on-one instruction on Mondays, 1-4 p.m. and Thursdays, 9 a.m.-NOON. For more information, phone 731-364-5481.

McKENZIE TOPS MEETS MONDAYS

The McKenzie Chapter of TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) meets Mondays at 3 p.m. at the McKenzie Church of Christ gym. Anyone interested in losing weight can join. The first meeting is free. For more information, call (731)- 352-7309. If no answer, leave a message.

CARROLL DEMOCRATIC PARTY MEETS

The Carroll County Democratic Party meets the third Thursday of every month at 6 p.m. at 12740 Lexington Street, Huntingdon.

CARROLL REPUBLICAN PARTY MEETS

Carroll County Republican Party meets monthly each fourth Tuesday, 7 p.m. in the Public Safety Building in Huntingdon.

CARROLL COMMISSION MEETS MONTHLY

Carroll County Commission meets the second Monday of each month, 7 p.m., in the Conference Room of the Carroll County Office Complex, High Street, Huntingdon. There are no meetings in February and July.

Rain or Shine
YARD SALE
1047 Old State Rte 22
McKENZIE
Friday & Saturday, March 28 & 29
8 A.M. — ?
Bake/Cook ware, dishes, furniture, yard & garden, antique cast iron kettle pots, camera spotting scope tripod, miscellaneous & much, much more.
R25365/12-1



Naturopathic Doctor in McKenzie
April 18 & 19
Meet Doctor Annette at Merchant Outlet Mall Booth 101



At the booth, you will have the opportunity to:
- Discuss your health concerns with Annette Hasalone.
- Learn about the benefits of Angstrom Minerals and how they can support your health.
- Get personalized advice on natural health solutions

Annette will be available to offer her expertise and answer your questions. For more information call: (208) 691-5727 or visit: www.elementalresearchinc.com

McKenzie Chamber's Easter Egg Drop is April 12

McKENZIE — McKenzie Chamber of Commerce and Industry is hosting its annual Easter Egg Drop at McKenzie City Park on Saturday, April 12.

The annual event brings thousands of children and their parents out to the park for an Easter egg hunt plus a petting zoo, bouncy house, food trucks, balloons, and prizes. This year, 50,000 plastic eggs were be scattered for hunting. The Easter Bunny will greet the children.

A helicopter will drop eggs at 9 a.m. Each of four age groups has their own hunting area.

Age 0-2 is 9:30 a.m.; Age 3-4 is 9:50 a.m.; Age 5-7 is 10:10 a.m.; and Age 8-10 is 10:30 a.m.

The event is sponsored by the McKenzie Chamber of Commerce, Allegion and Centennial Bank.

All activities are free except for the food trucks.

MES Pre-K and Kindergarten Registration

Tuesday, April and Wednesday, April 2 from 8:15 a.m.-5 p.m.

(Please wait to enter school at 8:15 a.m., this will help us get through announcements and student drop off)

Students entering Pre-K must be 4 years old by August 15, 2025.
Students entering Kindergarten must be 5 years old by August 15, 2025.

To enroll, McKenzie Elementary School must have the following documents:
- Certified copy of birth certificate
- Proof of Residency (i. e. utility bill with home address excluding phone and cable bill)
- Tennessee Certificate of Immunization (Forms may be obtained from your doctor or health department)
- Tennessee School Entry Medical Examination completed by medical doctor (physical)
  - The following immunizations are required and are to be documented on a Tennessee Permanent Certificate of Immunization (PH 2414)
    - DTP series and booster, five (5) doses
    - Polio series and booster, four (4) doses
    - MMR, two (2)doses
    - Hepatitis a, two (2) doses
    - Hepatitis b, three (3) doses
    - Varicella (chicken pox), two (2) doses or history of disease.



**If you are registering for Pre-K, you must provide proof of income for each person living in the household, birth certificate, current immunization/physical record on TN form and proof of residency.

Acceptable forms of proof of residency include:
- Option 1: Copy of signed lease agreement or mortgage statement
- Option 2: Utility bill (i.e., electric, water, gas, or sewer)
- Option 3: Bank statement
- Option 4: Paystub
- Option 5: Voter Registration or some type of legal mail

Please park in the front of the elementary school and enter through the office.
If you are registering a child for Kindergarten, please bring them with you so that they can be tested.

We are looking forward to a FANTASTIC year!

A460/PO#20250672/11-2

Parisian THEATRE
Jim Adams Drive
Paris, TN • 642-1696

SNOW WHITE (PG)
Tues. 7:25
Wed. 7:25
Thurs. 7:25

NOVOCAINE (R)
Tues. 7:35
Wed. 7:35
Thurs. 7:35

THE DAY THE EARTH BLEW UP (PG)
Tues. 7:30
Wed. 7:30
Thurs. 7:30

BLACK BAG (R)
Tues. 7:25
Wed. 7:25
Thurs. 7:25

CAPTAIN AMERICA: BRAVE NEW WORLD (PG-13)
Tues. 7:30
Wed. 7:30
Thurs. 7:30

LAST BREATH (PG-13)
Tues. 7:35
Wed. 7:35
Thurs. 7:35

A4365/12-1

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All Movies Now in Digital DLP/HD

CONSIGNMENT EQUIPMENT AUCTION
Saturday, April 5 @ 9 A.M.
@ Two-Way Gin, 333 S. Washington St.,Brownsville, TN 38012
Accepting Consignments starting Monday, March 24th @ 8am
Live & Online Bidding View Catalog & Register Online
1% Buyers Premium-Ground Bidders - 4% Buyers Premium-Online Bidders
Buyer is responsible for doing his or her own inspections. All equipment sold as is-where is. No warranty expressed or implied except items with manufacturers transferable warranty, new equipment, or merchandise with warranty. ALL SALES ARE FINAL! Announcements made on the day of the sale take precedence over all advertising.
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Tennessee Expands Charter Schools

BY JOEL LANCASTER
jlancaster@mckenziebanner.com

NASHVILLE (March 14) — The Tennessee General Assembly is currently considering SB1310/HB1332, a bill that would expand charter school access and allow certain charter operators to bypass local school boards. The proposed legislation has sparked renewed debate over local control, accountability, and its connection to the newly enacted Education Freedom Scholarship Act (HB0001), which expands school vouchers statewide.

Charter School Expansion, Legislative Progress

Under current law, all new charter schools must apply through their local school board. However, SB1310/HB1332, if passed, would allow charter operators in districts that have had three denials overturned by the state within three years to apply directly to the Tennessee Public Charter School Commission instead of the local board.

Other key provisions of the bill include:

State Oversight Expansion – Shifts regulatory authority from the Department of Education to the Tennessee Public Charter School Commission, consolidating oversight at the state level.

Charter Renewal Changes – Reduces charter renewal terms from ten years to as little as five years at the commission's discretion.

Special Enrollment Privileges – Allows public colleges and universities that operate charter schools to set aside up to 25% of enrollment slots for faculty and staff children.

Supporters argue the bill would streamline the approval process for high-performing charter models, while opponents warn it could reduce local oversight and allow underperforming charter operators to expand.

Connection to the Voucher Law

The introduction of this bill follows the passage of HB0001, the Education Freedom Scholarship Act, which expands Tennessee's school voucher program. The two measures align in shifting decision-making from local school boards to state-level authorities.

HB0001 provides eligible families with $7,075 per student in state funding for private school tuition.

SB1310/HB1332 expands access to publicly funded charter schools as an alternative to traditional district schools.

Financial Impact – Fiscal analysts estimate a $45 million reduction in public school funding due to student departures under the voucher law, a trend that could accelerate with increased charter expansion.

Legislative Perspectives

Supporters, including Governor Bill Lee and Republican legislative leaders, argue that expanding school choice creates better opportunities for students. Gov. Lee has called school choice a "revolution in education," stating, "We must continue to break down barriers that limit access to high-quality education options for families."

House Majority Leader William Lamberth (R-Portland), a key sponsor of the bill, echoed this sentiment: "This legislation ensures that parents have the choices they need to address their children's unique educational needs."

Opponents, including Democratic legislators and education advocacy groups, argue that the bill erodes local control and lacks strong accountability measures. Rep. Bo Mitchell (D-Nashville) criticized the measure, stating, "The last time I checked, there is no one in the Tennessee Department of Education that has ever run a school district. It's troubling that they would take over a number of school districts with no experience to do so."

Additionally, concerns about charter school accountability have intensified following revelations at Chattanooga Preparatory School, where 21 out of 45 teachers were found to be unlicensed. Hamilton County Schools has since moved to revoke the school's charter, highlighting risks associated with reduced oversight.

What Comes Next?

As SB1310/HB1332 moves through the legislature, school districts, educators, and policymakers are closely watching its progress. If passed, its implementation could begin in the next school year, potentially reshaping how charter schools are approved and funded in Tennessee.

At the same time, potential legal challenges may emerge. Public school districts that stand to lose funding could challenge provisions that reduce local decision-making authority over education.

The debate over local vs. state control in Tennessee's education system is far from settled, especially in rural Tennessee. As lawmakers weigh the impact of vouchers and charter expansion, the future of public education funding and governance remains a key issue for communities statewide.

State Medical Ethics Defense Act Advances

BY JOEL LANCASTER
jlancaster@mckeniebanner.com

NASHVILLE (March 18) — The Medical Ethics Defense Act (HB1044/SB955) is moving swiftly through the Tennessee General Assembly, passing the Senate by a 27-3 margin and advancing in the House. Framed as a protection for religious and moral conscience rights in healthcare, the bill grants medical providers the ability to refuse participation in procedures, treatments, or services that conflict with their ethical, moral, or religious beliefs.

Supporters argue the legislation is necessary to prevent healthcare professionals from being forced into medical practices they find objectionable. Opponents, however, raise concerns about the bill's broad and undefined scope, questioning whether it could lead to denials of care without oversight or legal clarity. Unlike similar laws in states such as Mississippi and Illinois, Tennessee's bill does not specify which procedures may be refused, how objections must be documented, or what recourse is available to patients.

The legislation amends Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 63, which governs the state's healthcare system. Under its provisions, doctors, nurses, pharmacists, hospitals, and insurance providers may decline to perform, assist in, refer for, or pay for medical procedures they personally object to. Unlike some existing conscience laws that apply specifically to abortion, sterilization, or euthanasia, this bill does not define which procedures fall under its protections, leaving its full impact uncertain. This means it could apply broadly to gender-affirming care, contraception, fertility treatments, psychiatric medication, or even vaccinations and blood transfusions.

The bill also differs from existing federal conscience protections, such as the Church Amendments, which require documentation of objections and limit refusals to individual providers rather than entire institutions. Tennessee's bill places no such restrictions, meaning refusals could be applied at both the individual and institutional levels, potentially affecting entire hospitals or clinics.

That ambiguity has raised questions about enforcement. There is no requirement for providers to justify their refusal beyond citing personal beliefs, and no formal process exists for patients to challenge a denial of care. The bill does not override federal emergency medical laws, meaning that providers must still offer stabilizing treatment in life-threatening situations. An amendment passed in the Senate clarifies that the right to refuse does not apply when a patient is in imminent danger of harming themselves or others. However, beyond these exceptions, the legislation offers no specific patient safeguards and prevents providers from facing disciplinary action for exercising their rights under the law.

Debate and Opposition

While the bill has advanced quickly, it has not done so without opposition. Representative Sam McKenzie (D) has criticized the bill's lack of clarity, arguing that it contradicts the medical profession's oath to "do no harm." During a hearing, he questioned whether a Muslim doctor could refuse treatment based on religious beliefs and warned that the law's vagueness could lead to costly legal battles.

In the Senate, three Democratic lawmakers—Sens. Akbari, Campbell, and Lamar—voted against the bill, citing concerns over its broad applicability and potential patient consequences. However, with a Republican supermajority in both chambers, opposition has not been strong enough to slow its progress.

Proponents, including bill sponsor Rep. Bryan Terry (R), argue the measure is necessary to reduce physician burnout, improve retention rates, and make Tennessee a more attractive state for medical professionals with strong religious or moral convictions. They emphasize that the bill does not permit refusals based on a patient's race, sex, or national origin.

The legislation has moved rapidly through the Tennessee General Assembly, aided by the Republican supermajority, favorable committee assignments, and a lack of vocal opposition from major healthcare organizations. The bill was filed on February 5, passed through the Senate by March 6, and is now scheduled for a full House Health Committee vote on March 18.

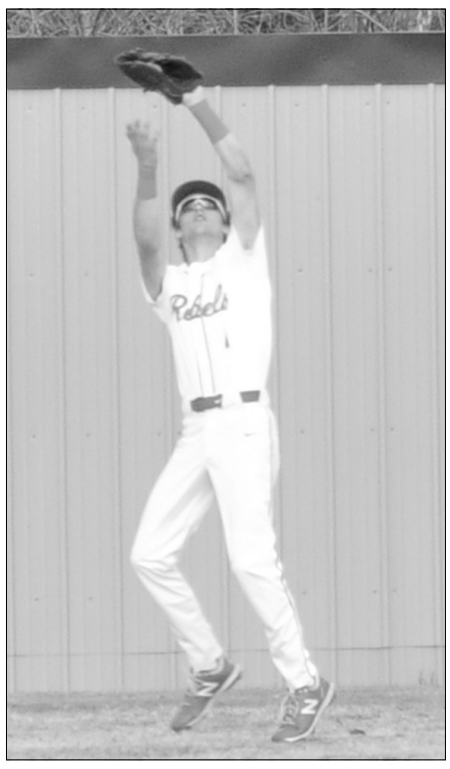
With no major amendments introduced to clarify its scope, the bill is expected to pass the House without significant resistance. If enacted, its full impact will likely be determined through real-world application and potential legal challenges, particularly if providers refuse care in ways that affect patient access.

While its supporters view the bill as an important step in protecting medical professionals, its long-term consequences remain unclear, leaving open questions about how broadly it will be interpreted, how often it will be invoked, and whether courts will ultimately be required to define its boundaries.

HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL



Above, Rebel second baseman Xander Johnsey dives to make the play on a sharp ground ball. Below Left, Rebel center-fielder Gage Crosland makes a catch near the outfield wall. Below Right, Rebel Cole Brown connects for a base hit. *Photos by Brad Sam/The Banner*





Rebels Fall to Patriots Despite Hit Advantage

BY BRAD SAM
brad@mckenziebanner.com

McKENZIE (March 18) — McKenzie High School hosted Henry County Tuesday for afternoon baseball. Despite outhitting the Patriots, the Rebels fell 7-3.

After two scoreless frames, Henry County struck first with three runs in the top of the third and matched that in the fourth. McKenzie mustered one run in the home half and added two more in the fifth. The Patriots tacked on an insurance run in the sixth.

Rebel Craegen Travis went 3-for-4 with two RBIs. Xander Johnsey was 2-for-5 with a double and an RBI. Tate Surber went 1-for-2 with a run scored. Fletcher Holt hit 1-for-3 with a run scored. Ace Brown was 1-for-3 with a double, a walk and a run scored. Cole Brown went 1-for-4.

Patriot Levi Peale was 3-for-4 with two RBIs, two runs scored and two stolen bases. Martez Rack went 2-for-4 with two doubles and two runs scored. Peyton Littleton batted 1-for-4 with two RBIs and a stolen base.

Turner McSwain got the start for Henry County, allowing three earned runs on seven hits while striking out two and walking none in four and a third innings. Two pitchers combined for two and two-thirds innings of relief, allowing no runs on three hits while striking out three and walking one.

Tate Surber had the start for McKenzie, allowing six earned runs on six hits while striking out five and walking two in three and a third innings. Fletcher Holt pitched the final three and two-thirds innings, allowing one earned run on three hits while striking out three and walking one.

HIGH SCHOOL SOCCER

Rebels Draw at Jackson Christian, 2-2

BY BRAD SAM
brad@mckenziebanner.com

JACKSON (March 21) — The McKenzie High School Rebel soccer team traveled Friday to face Jackson Christian School and played to a 2-2 draw.

Rebel Aiden Mason scored both McKenzie goals.

Goalkeeper Nate Dameron had three saves.

The Rebels next game is Senior Night on Monday, March 31 at home against Clarksburg. The game begins at 5 p.m., and seniors will be recognized at halftime.

HIGH SCHOOL SOFTBALL

Lady Rebels Earn District Win at McEwen, 10-3

BY BRAD SAM
brad@mckenziebanner.com

McEWEN (March 21) — The McKenzie Lady Rebels traveled Friday for a district softball contest at McEwen and slugged their way to a 10-3 victory.

McKenzie struck first with four runs in the top of the second inning. McEwen answered with a pair in the home half and cut the deficit to one with a run in the third. The Lady Rebels added a run in the fourth, then sealed the win with five in the seventh.

Lady Rebel Jaycee Stafford went 3-for-5 with a double, three RBIs and a run scored. Kailie Hudgins was 4-for-4 with an RBI and a run scored. Addison Milam hit 2-for-4 with a double and a run scored. Braylin Auvenshine went 2-for-5 with two runs scored. Aubrey Jackson batted 1-for-4 with a walk, an RBI, two runs scored and a stolen base. Maggie Hall was 1-for-5 with an RBI, two runs scored and a stolen base. Aurora Johnson went 1-for-5 with a double and an RBI. Carli Beeler was 1-for-5 with an RBI.

Aurora Johnson earned the complete-game win for McKenzie, allowing three runs (two earned) on six hits while striking out six and walking none.

Tennessee Bill Restricting Facility Access

BY JOEL LANCASTER
jlancaster@mckenziebanner.com

NASHVILLE (March 17) — A Tennessee bill that would require public schools, domestic violence shelters, and correctional facilities to designate restrooms, changing rooms, and sleeping areas based on biological sex is advancing in the state legislature.

Senate Bill 0468, known as the "Women's Safety and Protection Act," establishes legal definitions of sex, male, and female under state law. The bill mandates that certain facilities restrict access based on biological sex rather than gender identity, affecting public schools, correctional institutions, and domestic violence shelters.

If passed, public schools would be required to assign restrooms and changing rooms exclusively for males, females, or families. Students attending overnight school trips would only be allowed to share sleeping quarters with members of the same sex unless they are family members and have parental approval.

The bill also applies to domestic violence shelters, where restrooms, changing rooms, and sleeping areas must be designated for biological males or females. Entering facilities assigned to the opposite sex would be prohibited except in cases of law enforcement intervention, medical emergencies, or custodial services.

Correctional and juvenile detention facilities would also be required to house inmates and detainees based on biological sex for sleeping, restroom, and changing areas. Single-occupancy accommodations would remain an option when deemed necessary.

The legislation includes an enforcement provision allowing individuals who believe they have been harmed by violations of these policies to file lawsuits against public schools, shelters, or correctional facilities. It explicitly rejects gender identity as a determining factor for facility access, defining sex strictly as biological and immutable.

SB 0468 was filed on January 29, 2025, and referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee on February 12. A hearing is scheduled for March 18, 2025. If enacted, the law would take effect on July 1, 2025, requiring statewide compliance. The bill remains under consideration in the Tennessee General Assembly.

McKenzie Police Reports

Driving on Suspended License — Kody Michael Rust, 24, Mount Zion Road, Gleason, was charged with Driving a Suspended License, Window Tint Violation, and Following Too Closely on March 23.

Officer Dustin McClure stopped the vehicle because the window tint looked too dark and the vehicle was following too close to the one in front of it. A check of Rust's license revealed the suspended status. He was cited into General Sessions Court.

Driving on Suspended License — Second Offense — Leonel Alejandro Pena, 24, Blackburn Road, McKenzie was charged with Driving on a Suspended License-Second Offense, Violation of Light Law, and Violation of Financial Responsibility on March 22. Officer McClure stopped Pena's vehicle because it had a broken taillight and learned of the suspended license and lack of insurance. Pena was cited into Carroll County General Sessions Court.

Driving on a Revoked License — Second Offense — James G. McMullin, 51, Florida Court, McKenzie, was charged with Driving on a Revoked License for a Prior DUI Conviction -Second Offense, No Helmet While Operating a Scooter, Lack of Registration, No Registration Plates, and Violation of Financial Responsibility on March 18.

Officer McClure stopped McMullin's scooter and made the above charges. McMullin was arrested and the scooter was impounded.

Driving on Suspended — Devon Starling, 24, Lee Street, Martin, was charged with Driving on Suspended License, Violation of Financial Responsibility, and Violation of Window Tint on March 17.

Officer McClure stopped Starling's vehicle on suspicion that the window tint was too dark. The driver was charged as noted above and cited to Carroll County General Sessions Court.

Public Intoxication — Thomas Augustus Harris, 70, Highland Drive, McKenzie was charged with Public Intoxication and Failure to Appear on an outstanding warrant on March 17.

Officer McClure was dispatched to McClure Street, where Harris was lying on the side of the road and intoxicated. He was arrested for his personal safety and transported to Carroll County Jail. An outstanding warrant for Failure to Appear was active from Weakley County. He was held for Weakley County authorities.

Simple Possession — Logan Riley Singleton, 22, Old Union Loop Road, Paris, and James W. Singleton, 49, of the same address, were charged after their pickup truck was stopped for speeding on March 22.

Officer McClure stopped the truck driven by Logan Singleton for speeding. Officer McClure smelled marijuana and found roaches of marijuana in the vehicle. The passenger, James Singleton, had an active warrant for Violation of Probation from Henry County. James was arrested and Logan was cited into court.

Domestic Assault — Jose Ismael Funes-Garcia, 38, Paris Street, McKenzie, was charged with Domestic Assault on March 20.

Officer Bill Burson was dispatched to the Paris Street address, where a female victim claimed Funes-Garcia punched her in the head. The victim stated the assailant was intoxicated. Officers attempted to interview the assailant, who refused to answer their questions. He was transported to jail.

Domestic Assault — Noah G. Lozano, 21, Pillowville-Gleason Road, Gleason, and Lelia Madison Wilkerson, 21, Field Street, McKenzie, were both charged with Domestic Assault on March 21.

Officer Matthew Cunningham was dispatched to Highland Drive to a parking lot where a lady stated that Lozano and L. Wilkerson had assaulted her after she had a verbal altercation with the two assailants. Video surveillance revealed the assault and Lozano and Wilkerson were both transported to Carroll County Jail.

Theft — Daryl Ross, 66, Reynolds Street, McKenzie, was charged with Theft on March 22. Sergeant Cody Coleman responded to E.W. James Supermarket, where a store associate said he confronted Ross about the theft. Ross left the store and drove away. Details of the car and tag number were provided and officers were able to locate him. After questioning, Ross was charged with theft and advised that he was banned from again entering the store.

Public Intoxication — Trevor Jamar Willis, 30, Paris Street, Huntingdon, was charged with Public Intoxication on March 22.

Officer Bryan Batchelder was dispatched to a McKenzie industry where Willis reported to work while intoxicated. Company officials wanted police there when they terminated Willis' employment. Willis was then transported to jail for Public Intoxication.

Criminal Trespass — Maurice Lawrence, 32, a homeless man from McKenzie, was twice charged with Criminal Trespass on March 19 and 23.

Officer Darren Davis responded to a convenience store, where Lawrence is banned from the property. Lawrence was twice transported to Carroll County Jail.

Property Transfers

Mark Smith to Jennifer Bobbitt Smith.

Jennifer Bobbitt Smith to Jennifer Bobbitt Smith in District 21.

Curtis L. Miller to Ring Rentals LLC.

Isom K. Washington to Richard and Shari Fisk in District 11.

Vicki Odle to Richard F. Odle, III in District 14.

Janie J. and James A. Carney to Guy A. and Chris P. Williams in District 13.

Joseph N. and Lindsey D. Foster to Joseph N. and Lindsey D. Foster in District 24.

Kayla and Justin Christian to Jason Lee and Anna Catherine Eaton.

C and C Loggings, LLC to Vina Tran in District 17.

John B. and Rebecca Kathleen Fisher to John Benton Sr. Fisher.

Lowanda Berry to William James Berry in District 2.

Stanley E. and Benita L. Lee to Ethan Lee in District 16.

Sherry Lee Crossett to Stephanie Denise Charles in District 8.

Sherry Lee Crossett to Latasha Crossett Woodell in District 8.

Sherry Lee Crossett to Lauren Crossett Banuelos in District 8.

Sherry Lee Crossett to Sherry Lee Crossett in District 8.

Fred Henry and Bernice Allen to Mack J. Napier in District 8.

Mitchell Whitworth to Mitchell Whitworth in District 10.

Rebecca Craig to James Craig.

Bread Capital, LLC to Bennie Braswell.

Othella McGowan to Othella McGowan.

Ashley L. Barlow to Planet Home Lending, LLC in District 16.

Alicia L. Engley to Ormond Merino in District 16.

Joseph Walter and Kathy N. Winchester to Kathy N. Winchester in District 4.

Johnny Beth Nolen to Meredith Kelley Surber.

Michael Cary to Meredith Kelley Surber.

Meredith Kelley Surber to Meredith Kelley Surber.

Charles Jason Harris to Tanner A. Jackson in District 4.

Cockrill Family Partnership to Tanyard Branch Farms Family Partnership in District 5.

Carolyn Ledbetter to Karen Gillespie in District 18.

Robert F. Leitgen to Beaver Creek, LLC.

Darrell Ridgely to Darrell Ridgely in District 2 and 21.

K2M, LLC to Carlos T. Gonzalez.

Charles Edward Prater to Charles Dillon Cursey in District 12.

Stephen Nicholas Priddy to Barry A. Dillahunty in District 11.

Daniel Keith Barnhard to Misty Lynne Barnhart.

Misty Lynne Barnhart to Kelly Family Properties, LLC in District 16.

Huntingdon Police Reports

Driving on Revoked License; Speeding — On March 8, Officer Arline observed a Ford Bronco going 72-mph in a 55-mph zone. Officer Arline conducted a traffic stop and ran the driver's information through dispatch, and identified the driver as Martha McKinney, 66. Dispatch confirmed that McKinney's drivers license was suspended due to failure to pay fines in Kentucky. McKinney was issued a state misdemeanor citation for Driving while Suspended and Speeding. She was advised that she had 10 days to report to Carroll County Jail for processing and receive a court date.

Driving on Revoked License; Compliance for Financial Responsibility — On March 7, Officer Brad Allen was dispatched to a motor vehicle crash with no injuries on Main Street East near the Court Square. The driver: Kala Lee Baggett, 29, had a suspended driver's license. She was issued a citation into General Sessions Court and charged with driving while suspended first offense and no proof of insurance.

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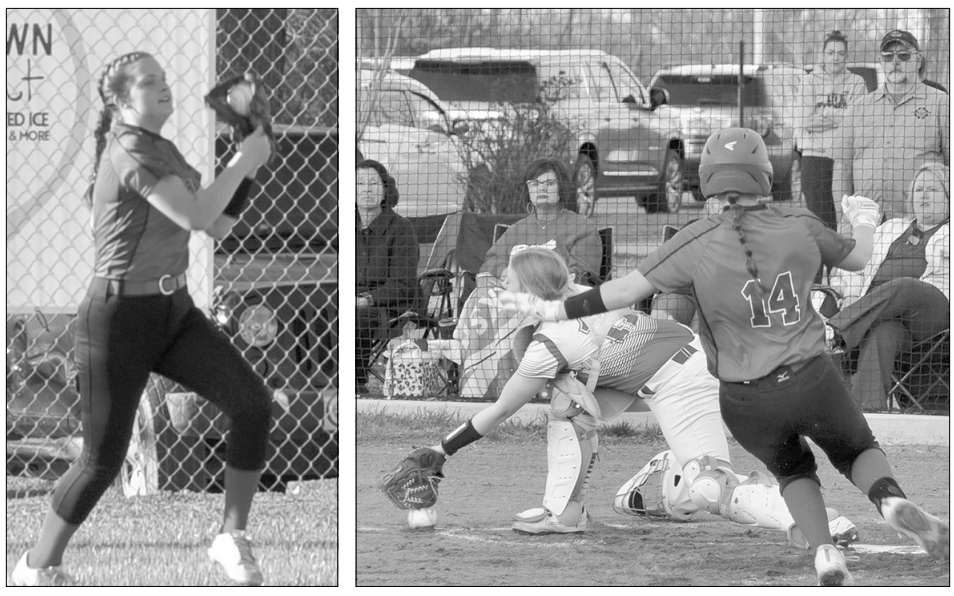
731.352.3323

Marriage Licenses

Alec Michael Meddings, 32, of McKenzie, to Shelby Paige Hancock Meddings, 28, of McKenzie.

Steven Lee Oakes, 38, of McKenzie, to Kristenia Marie Roberts, 39, of McKenzie.

HIGH SCHOOL SOFTBALL



Left, Lady Rebel Ady Freeman makes a catch in deep right field. Right, Lady Rebel Aurora Johnson slides into home safely in the Game Two win. *Photo by Brad Sam/The Banner*

McKenzie Splits Doubleheader with Clarksburg

BY BRAD SAM
brad@mckenziebanner.com

McKENZIE (March 17) — McKenzie High School hosted Clarksburg Monday for a softball doubleheader. The Lady Rockets took Game One 8-5, but the Lady Rebels bounced back to take a 9-2 win in Game Two.

Game One: Clarksburg Lady Rockets 8, McKenzie Lady Rebels 5

Clarksburg started strong with four runs in the top of the first and two more in each of the next two innings. McKenzie got on the board with a pair in the bottom of the third, adding two more in the fourth and a final run in the fifth.

Lady Rocket Addison Milam went 2-for-3 with a double and two runs scored. Lainey Glosson was 1-for-2 with two RBIs. Carli Swinford was 1-for-3 with two RBIs and a run scored. Brooklyn Laws hit 1-for-3 with an RBI, two runs scored and a stolen base. Alyssa Belew went 1-for-3 with an RBI and a run scored. Libby Autry was 1-for-3 with a run scored. Morgan Peterson was 0-for-1 with two walks, a run scored and a stolen base.

Lady Rebel Kailie Hudgins was 2-for-3 with an RBI and a run scored. Jaycee Stafford went 1-for-3 with a double and two RBIs. Braylin Auvenshine was 1-for-3 with a double and a run scored. Aubrey Jackson was 1-for-3 with a walk and a run scored. Aurora Johnson was 1-for-2 with a walk and a run scored. Carli Beeler went 1-for-3 with an RBI. Molly French was 1-for-3. Maggie Hall was 0-for-2 with a walk and an RBI. Ady Freeman went 0-for-2 with a walk and a run scored.

Addison Milam got the start for Clarksburg, allowing four earned runs on five hits while striking out two and walking two in three and two-thirds innings. Morgan Peterson pitched an inning and a third in relief, allowing one earned run on three hits while striking out one and walking two.

Braylin Auvenshine threw the complete game for McKenzie, allowing eight runs (three earned) on seven hits while striking out five and walking two over five innings.

Game Two: Lady Rebels 9, Lady Rockets 2

McKenzie struck first for five runs in the top of the first. Clarksburg answered with a pair in the bottom half, but the Lady Rebels added three in the second inning and one in the third.

Lady Rebel Braylin Auvenshine went 1-for-2 with three RBIs and a run scored. Maggie Hall was 2-for-3 with a double, an RBI and two runs scored. Aubrey Jackson went 2-for-2 with a walk, three runs scored and two stolen bases. Jaycee Stafford hit 1-for-1 with a walk, an RBI, two runs scored and two stolen bases. Aurora Johnson was 1-for-2 with a run scored. Carli Beeler went 0-for-1 with a walk, an RBI and a stolen base. Ady Freeman was 0-for-2 with an RBI.

Lady Rocket Alyssa Belew went 1-for-1 with a solo home run. Carli Swinford was 0-for-1 with an RBI.

Aurora Johnson threw the complete game for McKenzie, allowing two unearned runs on one hit while striking out three and walking none in two innings.

Morgan Peterson got the start for Clarksburg, allowing nine runs (seven earned) on seven hits while walking three in an inning and two-thirds. Addison Milam pitched the final inning, allowing no runs or hits and walking one.

HIGH SCHOOL TENNIS



Left, Rebel Alex Garcia squares up a return. Right, Huntingdon's Mary Kendall Stevens prepares to make a return. *Photos by Brad Sam/The Banner*

Huntingdon Wins at McKenzie

BY BRAD SAM
brad@mckenziebanner.com

McKENZIE (March 17) — McKenzie High School hosted Huntingdon Monday afternoon for district tennis matches at the Bethel University courts.

The Mustangs swept both singles and doubles play, 4-0 and 2-0 respectively. The Fillies also swept singles play, but the Lady Rebels earned a doubles win for a 3-1 finish.

In the Fillies' 7-0 singles sweep, Mary Kendall Stevens defeated Ava Hastings 8-2, Jazmine Seiber defeated Ashley Dunavant 8-6, Sara Beth Smith topped Willow Arnold 8-0, Alayla Johnson won over Rachel Oliver 8-0, Celeste Perez defeated Morgan Little 9-0, Lainey Bales topped Janyla Piro 6-0 and Savannah Vinson defeated Molly Drewry 8-0.

In doubles play, the duo of Fillies Vinson and Lila Reed defeated Piro and Drewry 8-0. Johnson and Bales beat Arnold and Oliver 8-6 and Smith and Perez defeated Arnold and Little 8-1. Lady Rebels Hastings and Dunavant defeated Stevens and Seiber 8-6.

In the Mustangs' 4-0 singles sweep, Shawn Simpson defeated Alex Garcia 8-2, Carter Coleman topped Owen Walker 8-0, Cole Chafin beat Caleb Burke 8-2 and Tylan Johnson won against Davarion Gilbert 8-0.

In doubles play, Simpson and Coleman defeated Garcia and Walker 8-1, and Chafin and Nolan Foley defeated Burke and Gilbert 8-0.



Lady Rebel Ava Hastings returns a Huntingdon volley. *Photo by Brad Sam/The Banner*

Carroll County General Sessions Court

HUNTINGDON (March 19) — The following cases were heard in Carroll County General Sessions Court on March 19.

Bound over to the Grand Jury of the Circuit Court were:

Kevin Jones, Florida Court, McKenzie, bound over on charge of Meth-Possess or Casual Exchange, Evading Arrest, Possession of Drug Paraphernalia.

Andrew Joshua Lucero, North Forrest Avenue, Camden, bound over, Driving Without a License, Speeding.

Jeremy Malone, Bethel Court, McKenzie, DUI-First Offense.

Christopher Stevens McCaslin, Gardner Road, Cedar Grove, Evading Arrest; Driving While Revoked.

The following cases resulted in a guilty finding or plea.

David Autry, Holmes Street, Trezevant, guilty, Simple Possession or Casual Exchange, $250 fine,11/29 jail; dismissed, Schedule II Drugs.

Jerry Bailey, Orchard Street, Gleason, guilty, Probation Violation, 11/29 jail suspended to 48 hours, probation extended.

Christina Baker, Roundhouse Rd., Hollow Rock, guilty, Probation Violation, 20 days jail suspended to seven days; dismissed, Failure to Appear.

Jaxon Boswell, Morning Glory Way, Waverly, guilty, Possession of Handgun While Under the Influence; DUI-First Offense - bound over to Grand Jury; bound over, Window Tint Violation.

John T. Coble, Jr., Lavinia Road, Lavinia, guilty, Simple Possession/Casual Change,11-29 jail suspended to 19 days, probation; dismissed, Driving While Revoked; dismissed, Seat Belt Violation; dismissed, Light Law Violation; dismissed, Financial Responsibility Violation.

Andesrea Fuller, Highway 104, Cedar Grove, guilty, Possession of Drug Paraphernalia, $150 fine, probation; dismissed, Unlawful Possession of A Weapon, surrendered to defendant's father; dismissed, Meth-Manufacture, Deliver, Sell, or Possess.

Alexander Neal Gilliam, Cotton Creek Road, Bruceton, guilty, Probation Violation, 10 months jail - suspended except 30 days, probation extended.

Joshua Morris Gray, guilty, Possession of Drug Paraphernalia, 19 days jail, probation, alcohol and drug evaluation and counseling; dismissed, Resist Stop, Arrest, Search.

Gregory Harvey, Bobbitt Road, Bruceton, guilty, Domestic Assault, time served, probation.

Dallas Kennedy, Dancyville Eurekation Road, Stanton, guilty, Probation Violation, 11/29 days jail suspended to 146 days.

Santanna Danielle Moore, Old Lavinia Road, Cedar Grove, guilty, Meth-Manufacture, Deliver, Sell or Possess, $750 fine, probation, alcohol and drug evaluation.

Cody Edward Noah, Bluebird Lane, Huntingdon, guilty, Driving While Canceled, $100 fine, probation, must obtain a driver's license; dismissed, Light Law Violation.

Edwina Rhenae Parker, Thorne Road, Huntingdon, guilty, Driving While Canceled, probation, must obtain a driver's license.

Ray Russell, homeless, guilty, Simple Possession/Casual Exchange, $250 fine, 11/29 jail suspended to 17 days, probation; dismissed, Possession of Drug Paraphernalia.

Pablo Salas, High Street, Huntingdon, guilty, Driving While Revoked Due to DUI Conviction, 30 days jail; dismissed, Financial Responsibility.

Stephanie Smith, High Street, Huntingdon, guilty, DUI-First Offense, $350 fine, 48 hours jail, probation, not to drive for one year, complete alcohol and drug treatment; dismissed, Implied consent.

Jeffrey Story, Mitchell Road, Greenfield, guilty, Driver's License to be Carried, eight days jail; dismissed, Financial Responsibility.

James Daniel Waiter, Green Allen Springs Road, Huntingdon, guilty, Domestic Assault,15 days jail, probation.

Nicholas White, Terry Road, Cedar Grove, guilty, Financial Responsibility, $100 fine; dismissed, Leave Scene of Accident; dismissed, Improper Lane Change; dismissed, Failure to Provide Immediate Notice of Accident.

The following cases were dismissed.

Amanda Hobbs, Bowden Road, Huntingdon, dismissed, Driving While Suspended.

Johnathan Hughes, Harmon Arnold Road, Bradford, dismissed, Failure to Appear.

Kenvotta Johnson-Sambou, Whispering Lane, Memphis, dismissed, Driving While Revoked.

Ariel Mercer, Walnut Circle, McKenzie, dismissed, Driving While Suspended; dismissed, Light Law Violation.

Darren Washington, Main Street, Huntingdon, dismissed, Probation Violation.

Carroll County Sheriff's Reports

Simple Assault — On March 18, Corporal Jeremy Smith was dispatched to 10 Perit Lane for a patient attacking staff members. Douglas Pracher, 53, of Huntingdon, was being restrained by a worker when the deputy arrived. The employee gave a statement that Douglas ran away from the facility again and he went to find him. After finding him, he brought him back and Pracher attacked the employee by biting his hands, hitting him in the back of the head with his phone, grabbing his neck, and hitting him with a folded metal chair.

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IN THE CHANCERY COURT OF CARROLL COUNTY, TENNESSEE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

PROBATE CASE NO: 2025PA58

ESTATE OF: ALDRED KENT JOHNSON, LATE OF CARROLL COUNTY, TENNESSEE

Notice is hereby given that on the 19TH day of MARCH, 2025 Letters Testamentary, of Administration, in respect to the Estate of ALDRED KENT JOHNSON deceased, who died FEBRUARY 28TH, 2025, were issued to the undersigned by the Chancery Court Clerk & Master of Carroll County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured, against the Estate are required by law to file the same with the Clerk of the above named Court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2) otherwise their claims will be forever barred:

(1) (A) Four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting, as the case may be) of this notice if the creditor received an actual copy of this Notice to Creditors at least sixty (60) days before date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting); or

(B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the Notice to Creditors, if the creditor received a copy of the Notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting) as described in (1) (A); or

(2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.

All persons indebted to the above Estate must come forward and make proper settlement with the undersigned at once.

This 19TH day of MARCH, 2025.
THIS NOTICE WILL RUN TWO CONSECUTIVE WEEKS.

FILE CLAIMS IN TRIPLICATE WITH:
KENNETH TODD - CLERK & MASTER
99 Court Square, Suite 105, Huntingdon, TN 38344

BETTY JOHNSON, Executor/Administrator
DWAYNE D. MADDOX III, Attorney
KENNETH TODD, Clerk & Master

A561/R25361/12-2

IN THE CHANCERY COURT OF CARROLL COUNTY, TENNESSEE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

PROBATE CASE NO: 2025PE59

ESTATE OF: MARGIE INGRAM ADAMS, LATE OF CARROLL COUNTY, TENNESSEE

Notice is hereby given that on the 19TH day of MARCH, 2025 Letters Testamentary, of Administration, in respect to the Estate of MARGIE INGRAM ADAMS deceased, who died MARCH 4TH, 2025, were issued to the undersigned by the Chancery Court Clerk & Master of Carroll County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured, against the Estate are required by law to file the same with the Clerk of the above named Court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2) otherwise their claims will be forever barred:

(1) (A) Four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting, as the case may be) of this notice if the creditor received an actual copy of this Notice to Creditors at least sixty (60) days before date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting); or

(B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the Notice to Creditors, if the creditor received a copy of the Notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting) as described in (1) (A); or

(2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.

All persons indebted to the above Estate must come forward and make proper settlement with the undersigned at once.

This 19TH day of MARCH, 2025.
THIS NOTICE WILL RUN TWO CONSECUTIVE WEEKS.

FILE CLAIMS IN TRIPLICATE WITH:
KENNETH TODD - CLERK & MASTER
99 Court Square, Suite 105, Huntingdon, TN 38344

REBECCA PAULETTE HAGLER, Executor/Administrator
DWAYNE D. MADDOX III, Attorney
KENNETH TODD, Clerk & Master

A561/R25362/12-2

IN THE CHANCERY COURT OF CARROLL COUNTY, TENNESSEE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

PROBATE CASE NO: 2025PA52

ESTATE OF: DONALD R. BENRUD, LATE OF CARROLL COUNTY, TENNESSEE

Notice is hereby given that on the 12TH day of MARCH, 2025 Letters Testamentary, of Administration, in respect to the Estate of DONALD R. BENRUD deceased, who died OCTOBER 3, 2024, were issued to the undersigned by the Chancery Court Clerk & Master of Carroll County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured, against the Estate are required by law to file the same with the Clerk of the above named Court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2) otherwise their claims will be forever barred:

(1) (A) Four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting, as the case may be) of this notice if the creditor received an actual copy of this Notice to Creditors at least sixty (60) days before date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting); or

(B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the Notice to Creditors, if the creditor received a copy of the Notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting) as described in (1) (A); or

(2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.

All persons indebted to the above Estate must come forward and make proper settlement with the undersigned at once.

This 12TH day of MARCH, 2025.
THIS NOTICE WILL RUN TWO CONSECUTIVE WEEKS.

FILE CLAIMS IN TRIPLICATE WITH:
KENNETH TODD - CLERK & MASTER
99 Court Square, Suite 105, Huntingdon, TN 38344

SHERRI L. MARZARIO, Executor/Administrator
GEORGE ROBERT WHITFIELD III, Attorney
KENNETH TODD, Clerk & Master

A561/R25349/11-2

IN THE CHANCERY COURT OF CARROLL COUNTY, TENNESSEE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

PROBATE CASE NO: 2025PE53

ESTATE OF: CHARLOTTE ANN MARTIN JONES, LATE OF CARROLL COUNTY, TENNESSEE

Notice is hereby given that on the 12TH day of MARCH, 2025 Letters Testamentary, of Administration, in respect to the Estate of CHARLOTTE ANN MARTIN JONES deceased, who died JANUARY 18TH, 2025, were issued to the undersigned by the Chancery Court Clerk & Master of Carroll County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured, against the Estate are required by law to file the same with the Clerk of the above named Court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2) otherwise their claims will be forever barred:

(1) (A) Four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting, as the case may be) of this notice if the creditor received an actual copy of this Notice to Creditors at least sixty (60) days before date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting); or

(B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the Notice to Creditors, if the creditor received a copy of the Notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting) as described in (1) (A); or

(2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.

All persons indebted to the above Estate must come forward and make proper settlement with the undersigned at once.

This 12TH day of MARCH, 2025.
THIS NOTICE WILL RUN TWO CONSECUTIVE WEEKS.

FILE CLAIMS IN TRIPLICATE WITH:
KENNETH TODD - CLERK & MASTER
99 Court Square, Suite 105, Huntingdon, TN 38344

ELIZABETH LOTT, Executor/Administrator
DWAYNE D. MADDOX III, Attorney
KENNETH TODD, Clerk & Master

A561/R25350/11-2

IN THE CHANCERY COURT OF CARROLL COUNTY, TENNESSEE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

PROBATE CASE NO: 2025PA51

ESTATE OF: SUSAN STABLES, LATE OF CARROLL COUNTY, TENNESSEE

Notice is hereby given that on the 12TH day of MARCH, 2025 Letters Testamentary, of Administration, in respect to the Estate of SUSAN STABLES deceased, who died JUNE 26TH, 2024, were issued to the undersigned by the Chancery Court Clerk & Master of Carroll County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured, against the Estate are required by law to file the same with the Clerk of the above named Court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2) otherwise their claims will be forever barred:

(1) (A) Four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting, as the case may be) of this notice if the creditor received an actual copy of this Notice to Creditors at least sixty (60) days before date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting); or

(B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the Notice to Creditors, if the creditor received a copy of the Notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting) as described in (1) (A); or

(2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.

All persons indebted to the above Estate must come forward and make proper settlement with the undersigned at once.

This 12TH day of MARCH, 2025.
THIS NOTICE WILL RUN TWO CONSECUTIVE WEEKS.

FILE CLAIMS IN TRIPLICATE WITH:
KENNETH TODD - CLERK & MASTER
99 Court Square, Suite 105, Huntingdon, TN 38344

MATTHEW R. WEST, Executor/Administrator
ALEXANDRA BLACKBURN, Attorney
KENNETH TODD, Clerk & Master

A561/R25348/11-2

TRUSTEE'S NOTICE OF SALE OF REAL ESTATE

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS:

That, WHEREAS, by Deed of Trust recorded on April 5, 2021, of record in the Register's Office of Carroll County, Tennessee, in Trust Deed Book 702, page 239, **JOSHUA M. FRENCH** did convey in trust, to W. KENT JONES, Trustee, a tract of land hereinafter described, to secure the payment of the indebtedness described in said Deed of Trust to CARROLL BANK & TRUST; and,

WHEREAS, said Deed of Trust provides that in the event of default in the payment of the debt secured by said Deed of Trust, when due, or in the event of failure to comply with any of the conditions and/or covenants of said Deed of Trust, the whole amount of the unpaid principal sum, together with all interest due and accrued upon the same, together with all other payments agreed to be made, shall, at the option of the holder, become due and payable immediately without demand or notice thereof; and,

WHEREAS, default has been made in the payment of the indebtedness secured by said Deed of Trust and there have been other violations of the conditions of said Deed of Trust, and the owner and holder of said debt has instructed the undersigned Trustee, to foreclose said Deed of Trust.

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority in me vested as such Trustee, I will on the 4th day of April, 2025, offer for sale and sell in front of the Courthouse door in Huntingdon, Tennessee, at the hour of 10:05 a.m. to the last, highest and best bidder, for cash in hand, free from the equity of redemption, homestead, dower and curtesy rights, and all other rights or exemptions of every kind, and all unpaid taxes, to effect satisfaction of principal, interest and costs due on said promissory note(s) and Deed of Trust aforementioned, as well as to pay all attorney's fees and costs necessarily incident to this foreclosure, the following tract of land, situated in the 16th Civil District of Carroll County, Tennessee, more particularly described as follows:

On the north by J. H. Hill, now Clenard Kirk; on the east by a gully or Deport Street; on the south by 0. J. Mabry; on the west by Seminary Street; said lot being 65 feet and 9 inches wide by 177 feet long; the west end of said lot being 65 feet wide and the east being 70 feet and 6 inches wide. The above description is the same as in the previous deed of record.

For source of title, see Warranty Deed Book 397, Page 795, Register's Office of Carroll County, Tennessee.

The street address of the above described property is believed to be 21150 Seminary St, Hollow Rock, TN but such address is not part of the legal description of the property sold herein and in the event of any discrepancy, the legal description herein shall control.

Other Interested parties: None. If applicable, the notice requirements of TCA 35-5-117 have been met.

The debtors' equity of redemption, homestead, dower and all other rights or exemptions of the debtors are waived in said deed of trust, and the title is believed to be good, but said real estate will be sold and conveyed by me as Trustee and not otherwise.

Said sale will be made by Trustee only, without covenants of seizin or warranties of title, and title will be made subject to any unpaid taxes and assessments and all valid restrictions, liens, covenants or easements, if any, of record on said property.

The right is reserved to adjourn the day of the sale to another day certain without further publication, upon announcement at the time and place for the sale set forth herein, or with publication setting out the new date, time and place for the sale.

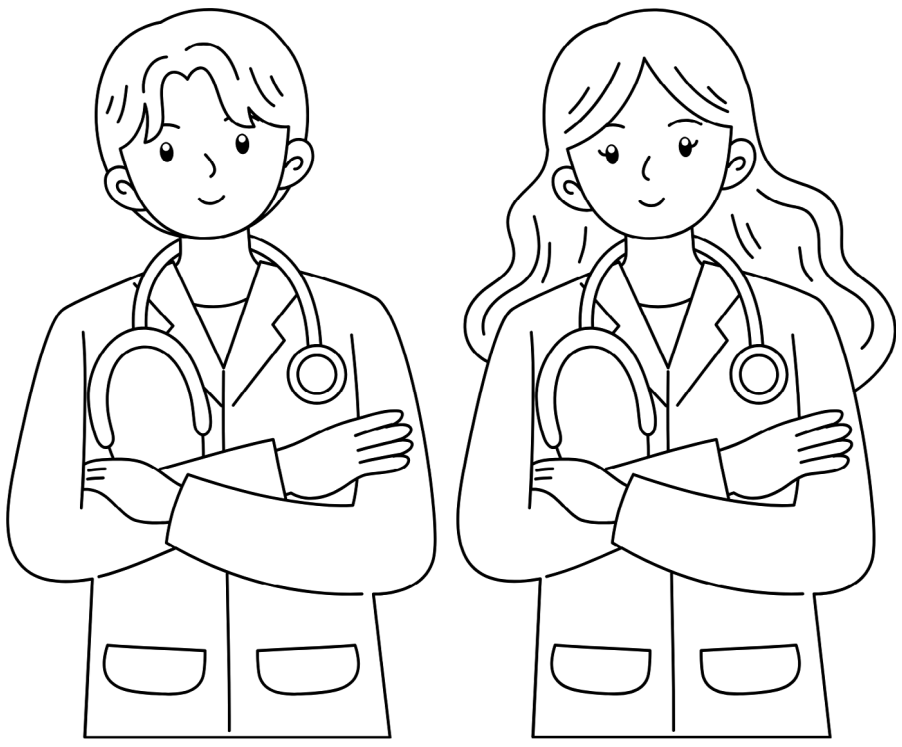
This law firm is acting as a debt collector. This is an attempt to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose.

Dated at Huntingdon, Tennessee, this the 7th day of March, 2025.

W. Kent Jones, Trustee
THE JONES LAW FIRM
19478 WEST MAIN STREET, HUNTINGDON, TN 38344-0707

A1071/10-3

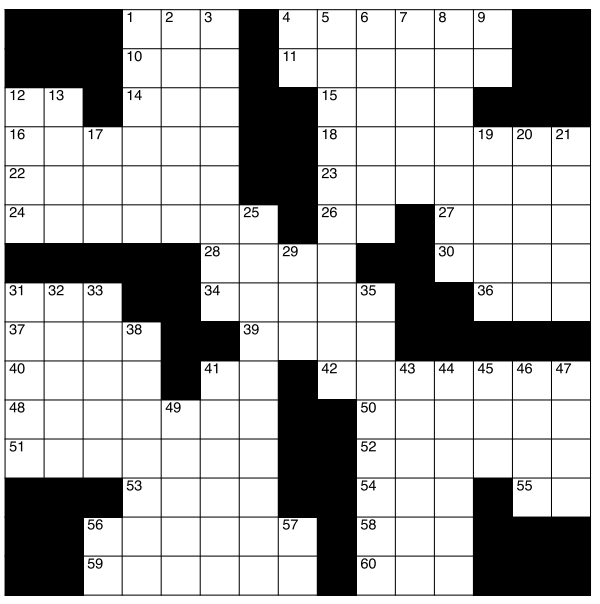
Color A Masterpiece



NATIONAL DOCTORS' DAY

SUNDAY, MARCH 30

Weekly Crossword



CLUES ACROSS

1. State in southwestern India
4. Pashto
10. Corpuscle count (abbr.)
11. Supervised release from prison
12. Greeting
14. Type of drug
15. __ Sagan, astronomer
16. Every year
18. Nasal cavities
22. Nova __, province
23. In an inactive way
24. Cream-colored root
26. Nervous system disease
27. Guitarist Clapton
28. Three came to see Baby Jesus
30. Lebowski's nickname
31. Play a role
34. Not fresh
36. Where golfers begin
37. Negatives
39. Wild goat
40. Releasing hormone
41. Makes up
42. Fastens
48. Exists in large numbers
50. A connecting word
51. A phase of the heartbeat
52. Northern Ireland county
53. An independent ruler or chieftain
54. Pacific sea bream
55. Commercial
56. Azure
58. Doctor of Education
59. Protected oneself against loss
60. Car mechanics group

CLUES DOWN

1. Pastes for filling crevices
2. Acquire
3. Heralds
4. News group
5. Exact copies
6. Particles
7. Noted 20th C. performer Lena
8. Tempted
9. Midway between north and east
12. Slotted, hinged metal plate
13. South American hummingbird
17. Neither
19. Walk with confidence
20. Omit when speaking
21. Imperial Chinese currency
25. A bakery specializing in French pastry
29. Talk incessantly
31. Ethnic group of Nigeria
32. Longtime NY Times film critic
33. Beginners
35. Makes a trade
38. Sleep
41. Not moving
43. Popular drink: Pina __
44. Potential benefits
45. A place you can get stuck in
46. Ancient Greek City
47. Chalcedony
49. Rover
56. Digraph
57. Investment vehicle

Week 12

See solution in next week's edition.

Financial Times Word Search

O	N	B	B	L	Y	F	I	S	R	E	V	I	D	R	Y	E	R	N	D
A	Q	A	E	Q	K	E	T	S	E	V	N	I	E	F	P	A	O	A	A
V	T	L	R	E	S	S	L	Z	I	S	T	A	T	D	N	I	O	N	E
A	A	L	K	T	S	E	R	E	T	N	I	P	A	M	T	B	Q	B	M
T	S	O	S	L	I	C	C	F	U	A	A	R	R	A	U	E	G	V	O
N	S	C	E	F	V	S	R	B	P	R	A	K	I	D	G	S	U	D	C
C	E	A	B	Z	Z	V	D	P	O	C	S	C	G	A	I	N	M	Z	N
P	T	T	M	A	T	E	R	L	C	V	E	E	T	R	U	I	G	L	I
T	S	I	O	B	L	A	V	O	E	R	T	N	Y	E	T	G	R	S	V
D	R	O	Q	L	I	A	U	M	P	V	E	O	P	E	D	R	E	S	C
M	L	N	F	S	O	N	N	E	Q	C	A	V	S	Q	U	A	S	G	S
B	Y	V	A	S	T	S	D	C	R	K	S	Q	V	O	Z	M	C	A	U
O	M	L	D	O	T	S	T	E	E	O	R	Z	C	K	C	N	C	D	C
N	B	T	B	B	K	O	P	A	C	C	R	U	A	L	N	A	N	Q	Y
D	Z	Z	L	O	A	R	N	O	I	T	A	Z	I	T	R	O	M	A	K
U	U	K	S	A	T	G	L	Z	P	P	F	T	Z	F	I	Q	R	Z	K
N	F	N	Q	O	Q	M	N	M	N	N	F	O	M	G	B	P	B	C	K
A	F	L	I	A	B	I	L	I	T	I	E	S	B	C	N	Z	O	O	N
A	G	S	E	Q	U	I	T	Y	I	M	A	R	K	E	T	T	G	M	I
V	N	L	T	I	F	O	R	P	U	S	V	N	G	C	S	S	P	O	A

Account
Accrual
Allocation
Amortization
Appraisal
Assets
Balance
Bond
Budget
Depreciation
Diversify
Equity
Gross
Income
Interest
Invest
Liabilities
Margins
Market
Net
Percentage
Profit
Rate
Stock

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

MARCH 27

1513: Juan Ponce de León reaches the northern tip of The Bahamas on his first voyage to Florida.

1886: The Apache warrior, Geronimo, surrenders to the U.S. Army.

1964: The Good Friday earthquake hits Alaska with a magnitude of 9.2.

SUDOKU

WEEK 12

7			5			4		2
		2		8		6		
			3			5		
6	4		7					5
5						1		
	3		4				2	
		9	6				7	
8					3			
				7				9

Level: Advanced

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

See solution in next week's edition.

CRYPTO FUN

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Solve the code to discover words related to finance.
Each number corresponds to a letter.
(Hint: 26 = I)

A. 16 1 22 11 26 9
Clue: Buying something on deferment

B. 11 22 2 26 9
Clue: Deduction

C. 8 25 18 26 19 17 8
Clue: Nest egg

D. 26 19 18 22 8 9 20 22 19 9
Clue: Share or stock

Answers: A. credit B. debit C. savings D. investment

LETTER MIX-UP

How many words can you make by rearranging the letters in the phrase below? Use each letter only once.

PERCENTAGE

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____
18. _____
19. _____
20. _____

Riddle Me This

I have branches, but no fruit, trunk or leaves. What am I?

Answer: A bank

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to this week's theme.

QTYUIE

Answer: Equity

GUESS WHO?

I am a singer born in New York on March 28, 1986. I attended an all-girls school in Manhattan from age 11. Since releasing my debut album in 2008, I have won multiple Grammy Awards and have become known for fashion stunts. In 2018, I starred in a remake of a movie made popular by Barbra Streisand.

Answer: Lady Gaga



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PUZZLE SOLUTION

Week 11 Crossword Puzzle Solution

■	R	E	C	K	■	■	■	■	■	B	O	S	S	■
S	E	A	R	E	D	■	■	■	R	E	S	E	A	L
A	C	R	Y	L	I	C	■	B	E	A	S	T	L	Y
E	T	A	■	P	E	R	P	E	T	R	A	T	O	R
K	O	C	H	■	T	A	L	E	R	■	■	L	O	A
■	S	H	A	D	■	N	O	V	A	■	S	E	N	■
■	■	E	M	U	S	■	D	E	I	C	E	D	■	■
■	■	■	M	A	A	S	■	S	N	O	T	■	■	■
■	■	B	E	L	L	E	S	■	S	I	T	E	■	■
■	B	U	D	■	A	V	E	S	■	R	E	T	E	■
E	R	R	■	■	R	E	R	A	N	■	E	A	R	S
D	E	N	O	M	I	N	A	T	O	R	■	G	A	O
D	A	I	L	I	E	S	■	E	E	R	I	E	S	T
A	S	S	E	S	S	■	■	■	S	N	O	R	E	S
■	T	H	A	T	■	■	■	■	■	A	U	E	R	■

SUDOKU SOLUTION WEEK 11

5	4	2	3	1	6	8	7	9
7	6	9	4	2	8	5	1	3
8	1	3	9	7	5	2	4	6
4	8	5	2	6	7	3	9	1
9	2	6	1	3	4	7	8	5
3	7	1	5	8	9	4	6	2
6	3	4	7	9	2	1	5	8
2	5	8	6	4	1	9	3	7
1	9	7	8	5	3	6	2	4

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Brooxie Carlton, Assistant Commissioner of Community and Rural Development, spoke to McKenzie Rotary. Pictured (L to R): Christy Williams, Rotary President; Brooxie Carlton; Tessa Kyle, Business Development Consultant with TNDECD; Monica Heath, McKenzie Industrial Board; and Ricky Price, Rotary Vice-President.

Rotary Hears Update on Rural Development

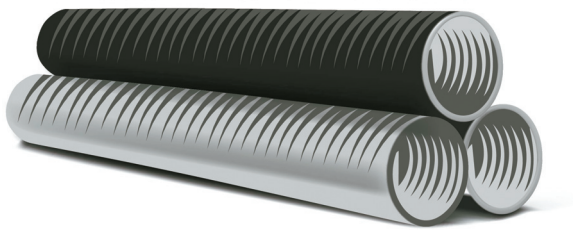
McKENZIE(March 18) — The McKenzie Rotary Club welcomed Brooxie Carlton, Assistant Commissioner of Community and Rural Development for the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development, as its guest speaker on Tuesday. Carlton provided insights into the state's efforts to bolster rural areas through federal grant funding.

Carlton detailed her role in overseeing grants from key federal agencies, including the Delta Regional Authority, the Appalachian Regional Commission, and the Community Development Block Grant program. She highlighted the significant impact of these initiatives in 2024.

Carlton reported, last year, all 95 counties in Tennessee benefited from 506 state grants, totaling $383 million. Notably, over 73% of this funding was directed to rural Tennessee communities. She further explained the state's tiered system for identifying counties in need, with 33% of the grants allocated to Tier 4, or "at-risk," counties. Distressed counties are defined as those in the bottom 10% nationally, while at-risk counties fall within the bottom 10-25%. Carlton confirmed that Carroll County is currently classified as an at-risk county.

Looking ahead, Carlton outlined the department's priorities. A key focus is securing federal funding for broadband expansion, with a mandate to demonstrate service to every household and business by August. Additionally, the department is actively supporting the development surrounding BlueOval City, assisting communities with population projections, housing market analysis, and other essential planning. Finally, they continue to provide guidance on asset-based planning and the creation of industrial sites for local growth.

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Above, West Carroll High School freshmen earning OSHA certifications. Below, West Carroll High School sophomores earning OSHA certifications.



West Carroll Students Earn OSHA Certifications

COURTESY WCSSD

ATWOOD — Freshmen and sophomores at West Carroll High School have taken a significant step toward workplace readiness by earning their Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) certifications through Career Exploration and Career Advising courses. A total of 33 students successfully passed the certification exam, achieving an impressive 97 percent pass rate.

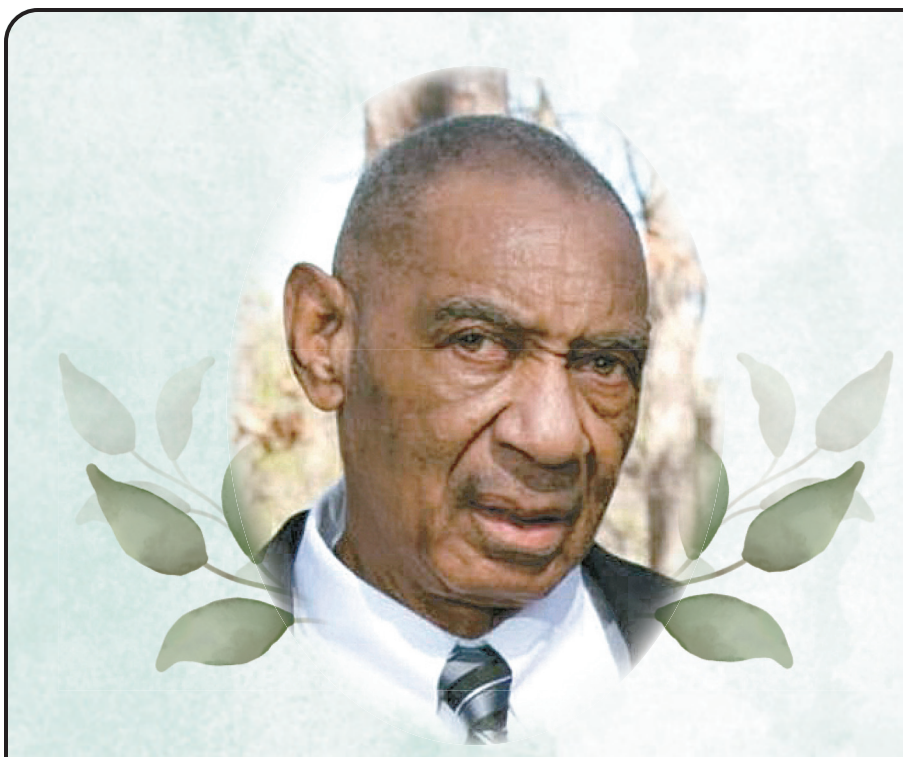
OSHA sets and enforces workplace safety standards to ensure a safe and healthy environment for all workers. By completing this certification, students have gained essential knowledge on workplace hazards, safety procedures and employee rights—skills that will benefit them in any career path.

The Career Exploration course, led by instructors Noah Rogers, Heather Martin and Victoria

Campbell, prepares freshmen with fundamental workplace knowledge. Sophomores advance their skills in Career Advising with instructors Erin Lewis, Mary Beth Dunagan and Kristen McCadams.

"We are incredibly proud of our students for their dedication to workplace safety and preparedness," said Dr. Adam Douglas, principal of West Carroll High School. "Earning an OSHA certification at such a young age sets them apart as they explore future careers and demonstrates their commitment to learning essential job skills."

West Carroll High School continues to prioritize career readiness, equipping students with the tools necessary for success beyond the classroom. Earning OSHA certification not only enhances their resumes but also reinforces the importance of safety in the workplace.



A Heartfelt Thank You

FROM THE FAMILY OF

William Clarence Milam Senior

On behalf of the entire Milam family, we would like to express our deepest gratitude to all those who attended the funeral service for our beloved William Clarence Milam Senior on Saturday, March 15th. Your presence and support during this difficult time have been a great source of comfort and strength for us. We appreciate the comfort, prayers, and kind words offered by all who attended the service.

We were deeply moved by the outpouring of love and respect shown for W.C. during the service. The attendance of so many friends, family members, and community members is a testament to the positive impact he had on countless lives during his 89 years. Your presence at the service helped us celebrate his life as a devoted husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. We are grateful for the shared memories and stories that have helped keep his spirit alive in our hearts.

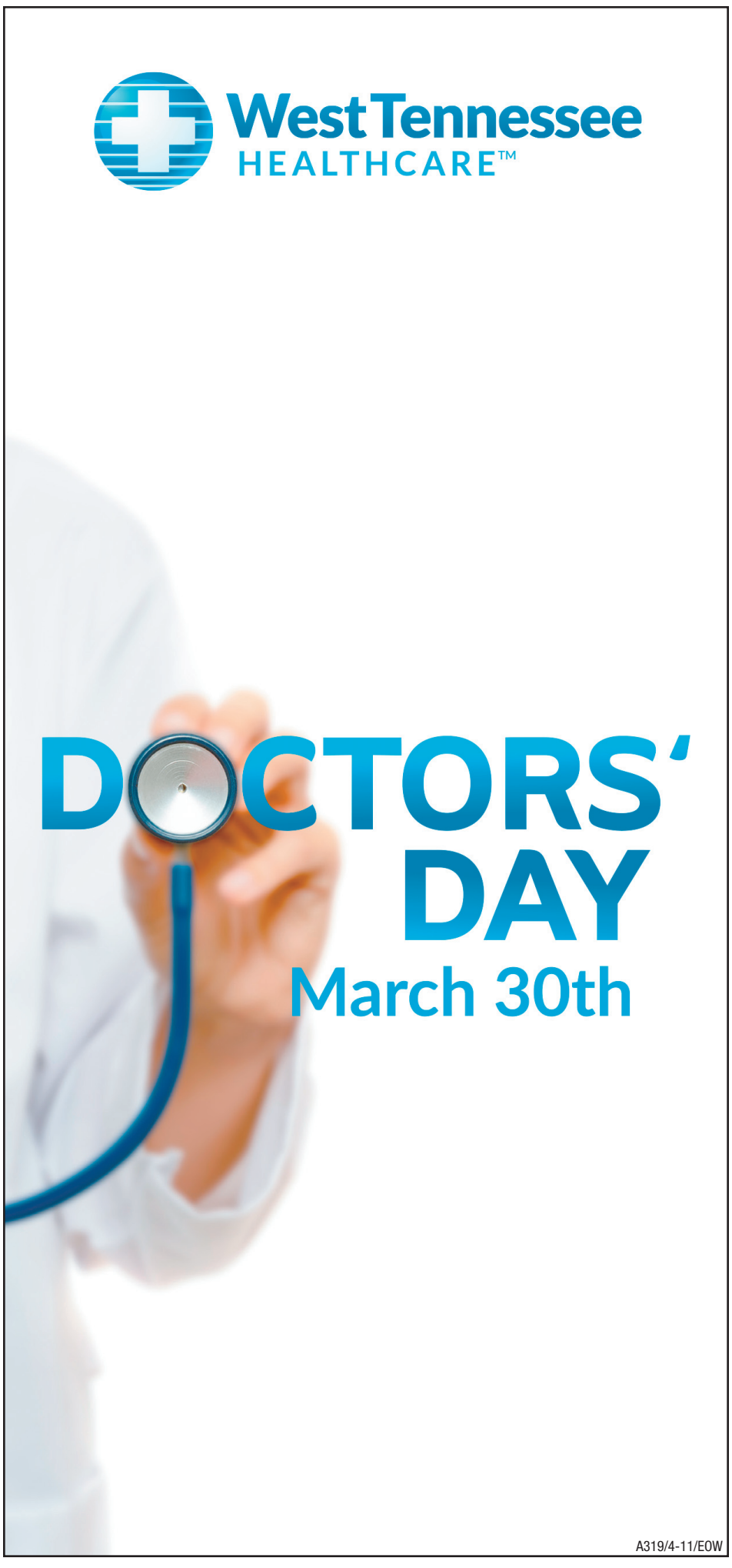
As we gathered to bid farewell to W.C., we were reminded of his unwavering faith and dedicated service to Cole's Chapel C.M.E. church in Henry. Your attendance honored his commitment to his faith and community, which were cornerstones of his life.

Once again, we extend our heartfelt appreciation to all who joined us in honoring the life of William Clarence Milam Senior. Your kindness and support will always be remembered and cherished by our family.

With sincere gratitude,

The Milam Family

West Tennessee HEALTHCARE™



A319/4-11/EOW



McKenzie, Tennessee
THE BANNER

A Tribute to WOMEN'S HISTORY

SPECIAL EDITION • TUESDAY, MARCH 25, 2025

Women Make It Happen

Did you know 100% of the people that have ever lived came from a woman? That in itself is quite an accomplishment, however women change the world every day in many ways. Whether by seeing a problem and inventing a solution; fighting for equal rights; or raising strong children, women affect every aspect of life.

Women's history is happening in real time. Women you know are making a difference right here in the local area. As the late Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg said, "Women belong in all places where decisions are being made."

So with this special edition we recognize the sacrifices and dedication of local women.

Thank you to the ladies that shared their stories and the sponsors that supported this edition, both are vital to making a special edition worth reading and keeping. Thank you for your support.

Hometown Health Clinic

Women Leading the Way in Patient-Centered Care

BY BRAD SAM
brad@mckenziebanner.com

Hometown Health Clinic, previously McKenzie Medical Center, serves patients at seven locations across northwest Tennessee.

The Banner spoke with six women in a variety of roles in the company and got their unique perspectives on being a woman in today's society.

Tammy Etheridge, Chief Operating Officer

Tammy Etheridge is a Greenfield native now residing in Gleason.

After high school, she worked at McKenzie's hospital, first in the nursery, then as a phone operator, then as an admissions clerk.

In 1988, she was recruited by Dr. Volker Winkler to work for McKenzie Medical Center, primarily at his clinic in Gleason (one day a week in McKenzie). Etheridge worked in management in Gleason for 28 years and managed satellite locations as the practice grew.

In 2016, she was promoted to assistant practice manager at the main office in McKenzie. For over five years, she has served as chief operating officer.

Etheridge told The Banner, "Through my career, there have been a lot of times when I was the only woman in the room. I've never felt uncomfortable with that. Women represent a large sector of the working population, so having a voice in those rooms when decisions are being made is important."

She noted, "Women, at times, may bring a level of empathy and communicativeness to the equation."

Etheridge said, "If there were any obstacles I faced were because I'm a woman, I was too focused on the obstacle and problem-solving to focus on whether it was because I was a woman."

She offered this advice to younger generations of women. "The best advice I give to anyone is they need to pray about their decisions. They need to follow their heart and be true to themselves. Stay true to your values. And one of the hardest things for a lot of people, including myself, is to embrace change. Change doesn't always mean that it's going to be bad. Embrace change with courage, because sometimes that can open doors that you don't see."

A common thread among comments from the six Hometown Health associates interviewed was a sense of cooperation and support, a point of great pride for the COO.

"Teamwork is what makes everything happen. I could not do my job without my team. I depend on them and lean on them. Honestly, I know I'm prejudiced, but I have the best team ever. They truly care about each other, and they care about our patients. That's the folks that you want to surround yourself with to be successful and to be a part of the community like we want to be.



Hometown Health Clinic associates (L to R): Holly Arnold, PA-C; Candi Lowe, administration; Amy Smith, PA-C; Angela Hacker, Quality and Revenue Cycle Director; Ellen Pruitt, marketing director; and Tammy Etheridge, COO. *Photo by Brad Sam/The Banner*

"We want our patients and each other to know that we're here for them. We meet people where they're at, our patients and each other. We take care of the whole person here. That's how we want the community to perceive us. That we're here for them. It takes teamwork to accomplish all the goals that we have and offer all of the services that we do and keep everything running day to day. I love my team and I could not do it without them.

According to Etheridge, those sentiments go all the way to the top. "We have the best owners ever. We have support from Dr. [Bryan] Merrick and Dr. [Terry] Colotta that is amazing. They make our jobs easy just because of who they are. And they are a huge asset to the community as well."

She concluded, "I tell my staff, 'We can't forget why we're here.' That's our patients. They keep us here. We want to be here, so we need to take the best care of them that we possibly can. And I tell them, 'Treat them like that's your granny.' And I truly believe our staff does. We're not perfect, but we try to be. We try to do our very best every day and learn from our mistakes to do better."

Ellen Pruitt, Marketing Director

Ellen Pruitt is a Trenton native now residing in McKenzie.

She earned a human services degree at Bethel University in 2011 and then worked there in admissions.

Four years ago, she was hired by a Nashville company operating at Hometown Health, and two years ago, she joined the clinic as marketing director.

She describes her role as "getting out in the community, doing outreach, blasting the name Hometown anywhere and everywhere I can." She also does in-house work such as graphic design, community events and scheduling activities for associates. "To keep the fun alive, we do dress up days, potlucks, different things to get everyone involved."

Pruitt described the benefits of being part of a female-led team. "Both my previous and current bosses are women. Having a direct line of contact that is a female has helped me run through barriers and push them down if there were any. Women tend to be more empathetic, more nurturing and loving, but also more detail-oriented. And it's a different generation. I think women are listened to a little more than they may have been in the past."

She offered this advice to younger generations of women. "I remember being little and being asked what I wanted to be when I grew up. The world tells you you have to know what you're going to do coming into high school, but you don't have to make up your mind, you don't have to know at this time. Things change, you grow. Things that matter become more prevalent to you. As you change and get older, you can change your career at any point that you feel like God's leading you to change, when it's right and best for you and your family. Never let somebody stand in the way of what you want to do or what you know God has laid out for you."

Angela Hacker, Quality and Revenue Cycle Director

Born in Ohio, Angela Hacker moved to Tennessee in 1975 and graduated high school in McKenzie, where she resides now.

She worked in broadcasting as on-air talent for WHDM and for several stations in Jackson.

After her children graduated high school, Hacker attended TCAT in Paris to become an LPN. She began her nursing career in labor and delivery in Paris before joining McKenzie Medical Center as a float nurse.

Hacker rose through the ranks as an assistant to the nursing manager, nursing director and quality director. She's been with MMC/Hometown for over 17 years, and has held her current titles for almost two years.

In these roles, she works with the billing and coding team to resolve issues and with the management team on workflow and improving patient care.

Hacker told The Banner of some negative experiences from early in her first career. "When I started in broadcasting I was quite young, and I did face some sexual harassment and salary discrepancies. I had a primetime show at a station and my male counterpart was making considerably more than me. I had to confront management with that and insist on equal pay for equal work, and they did it, so that was a win."

However, she had nothing but praise for three bosses she has had at the clinic.

She described current COO Etheridge as "a very powerful influence and just a very supportive person. She has definitely motivated me and changed how I view what a COO can be.

She also said, "Jill Mayo was the nursing director when I came on board here. She was the nicest, kindest, most intelligent person that I worked with. She really helped me kind of find my feet in management.

"And Patricia Turner was the COO. She was quite kind, and I just really felt like I found a home and a place where they wanted to foster and support women and to put them in the right position."

Hacker advised younger women, "We live in a time where everyone wants to be seen and wants to be heard, but they also want to conform, so you have this generation that wants to be like everyone else. My advice would be, you have a voice, use it wisely. Listen to others and don't surround yourself with people who are only going to agree with you. It's good to consider other people's opinions and then make your decision. When you work with people who respectfully challenge you and have a different perspective, it makes you better as a leader and better as a person."

Candi Lowe, Administration

A lifelong McKenzie native, Candi Lowe worked for Walmart in McKenzie and in Huntingdon before spending six years at McKenzie Banking Company.

She has worked for MMC/Hometown for almost 18 years, beginning at the New Age specialty clinic and the OB department. She did some on-the-job training for nurses, but when her bosses learned about her banking background, she joined the administration team.

Lowe handles payroll, batches, invoices and accounts payable and serves as the go-between for the company's accountants.

Lowe is also a breast cancer survivor. She told The Banner, "As a working woman, you just have to try to stay as positive as you can and fight."

She said of COO Etheridge, "She helps us through everything. She has not only our back, but everyone here. We're a family here, and that's been the best thing."

Lowe suggested to younger women, "Follow your dreams, and don't ever think you can't do something. If it's school, go. You can go at your own pace. Even in college, people think you have to rush rush rush. My daughter is in college now, and we tell her to break things down. If it's what you truly want to do, just keep pushing. God could change your plan, but never give up."

Amy Smith, PA-C

Amy Smith is a native of Booneville, Mississippi, who now resides in McKenzie.

She attended Ole Miss for health information management and worked in that capacity for five years.

She then completed the Physician Assistant program at Bethel College in 2007. She began her PA career at a GI clinic in Memphis and then worked in McKenzie in pain management.

Smith joined MMC in December 2015.

She said one challenge in a male-dominated field is networking and building relationships. "You have to be confident and build strong communication in order to get your foot in the door."

She stressed the importance of diversity. "Bringing different perspectives to new things in health care, like drug development, healthcare policies, bridging gaps in healthcare disparities, serving underserved communities. And especially women's health, we bring better representation to the table. We can improve patient care, advocate for patient-centered care and address biases.

She offered this advice to younger generations of women, "Find your passion, know what excites you. Find a mentor, someone that you can look up to. Be confident in your ability and know what you're worth. Don't be afraid to ask and to negotiate for what you want. Find a way to balance work and life. And don't limit yourself, there's so much out there."

Holly Arnold, PA-C

Holly Arnold is a Tullahoma native now residing in McKenzie.

She graduated from Huntingdon College in Montgomery, Alabama, with a double major in Biology and Spanish.

Arnold completed the PA program at Bethel College in 2008 and immediately joined McKenzie Medical.

She cites her mother as a strong influence. "She was very much a part of pushing me to do more and be better and achieve goals that she didn't achieve in her lifetime. She stressed keeping commitments and encouraged me to not quit. If I started a sport, I had to finish the season. If I did poorly on a test, I studied harder to make sure the next one didn't happen that way.

"She encouraged me to continue playing soccer in college. I wanted to just focus on academics, but she said I was shy and it would be a good way to meet people. It was wonderful, I loved it, and it was very helpful.

"When it comes to budgeting, she's the reason I balance my checkbook to the penny.

She's encouraging, and taught me not to sell myself short."

Arnold said about women in leadership, "Having a different perspective is important. It's good to have all different opinions, races, genders, etc., involved because everybody is so different. Everybody thinks differently. If all the people making decisions are like-minded, you're going to miss out on lots of opportunities and lots of room for growth and things you don't think of."

She gave an example. "When the addition to the clinic was being built, me and another nurse practitioner were in the pediatric department. We were so excited to move into a bigger area. One of the owners showed us the blueprints. The first thing we noticed was that the feet of the exam beds faced the door. We did quite a few women's exams, so we saw that we needed to change the orientation. It's important to have women involved, because if it's something you've never been through, you might not think of certain things."

She suggested to younger women, "Don't be afraid to set the mark high. Reach for whatever you want to reach for. Anybody can achieve anything they want to, but they have to be willing to put in the work and the dedication it takes to get there. You shouldn't expect a handout. You've got to work to get what you want, but don't be afraid to."

CARROLL COUNTY

REGISTER OF DEEDS

Preserving History, Serving the Community

BY JOEL LANCASTER
jlancaster@mckenziebanner.com

HUNTINGDON — The Carroll County Register of Deeds Office has served as the official keeper of property records, legal documents, and historical archives for generations. Now, it also holds the distinction of being the county's first all-female department, marking a significant milestone in local government.

The office is led by Register of Deeds Natalie Porter, alongside 1st Deputy Denalda Hawks of Huntingdon and 2nd Deputy Natasha Cawthon of Clarksburg. Together, they are responsible for maintaining records that date back to 1822, ensuring the accuracy, accessibility, and preservation of property transfers, mortgages, powers of attorney, and legal filings that form the backbone of real estate transactions and historical records in Carroll County.

"We are the custodians of legal documents that pertain to real estate," Porter said. "That includes deeds, mortgages, powers of attorney, and property transfers. Our role is to ensure these records are accurate, accessible, and well-preserved for future generations."

For much of its history, the Register of Deeds Office was led by men, including W.A. Barber and Joe Gately in the 1950s. In 1964, Gloria Giles was elected as the first woman to hold the position, marking a shift toward female leadership in the office.

Giles remained in office until she became ill, at which point Judy Baker, who had been working in the office, was appointed by the Carroll County Commission. Baker later ran for election and won, serving until her retirement in 2006.

Porter, who worked under Baker, credits her with shaping the office and mentoring her during her early years in the department.

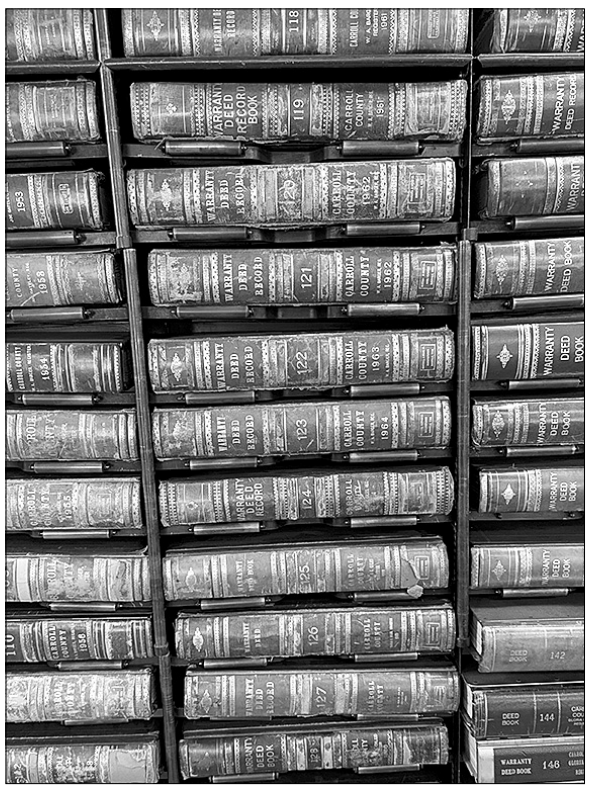
"She encouraged me to run for the position when she was getting ready to retire," Porter said. "She was a blessing and taught me the importance of accuracy, service, and maintaining the integrity of public records."

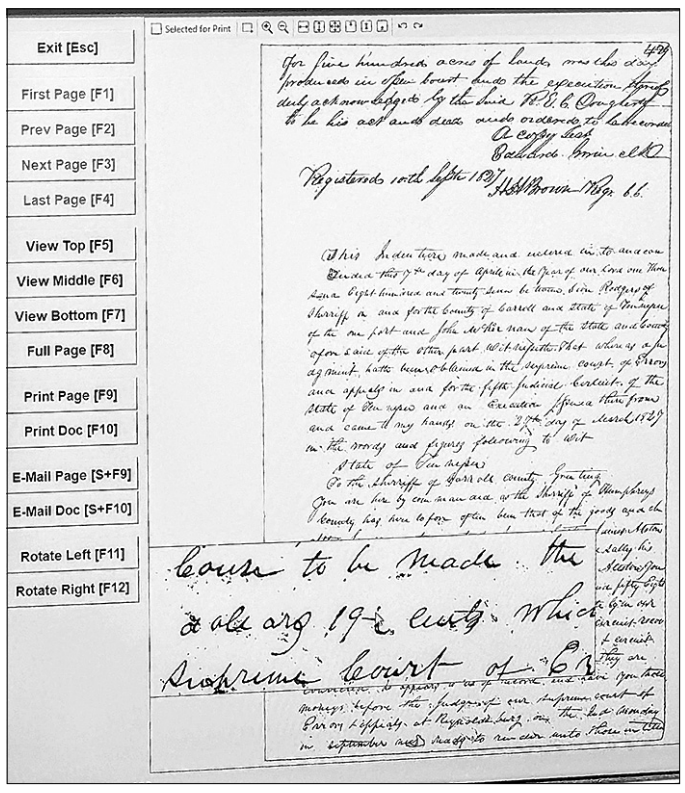
The Register of Deeds Office houses centuries of legal and historical records, including military land grants, property transfers, and bills of sale dating back to the early 1800s. These records provide valuable resources for residents researching family history and tracing property ownership through generations.

"People come in all the time researching their family history," Porter said. "We can trace land ownership back generations. It's incredible to see how land has changed hands over time and to help people connect with their past."

While handwritten records and bound books were once the primary method of documentation, the office has gradually transitioned to digital record-keeping. Records from 1957 forward have been digitized, with ongoing efforts to scan older documents.

"Many of these books are fragile, so we handle them carefully," Porter said. "We try to balance preservation with accessibility. Our goal is to ensure that even the oldest records remain available to the public without risking damage to the originals."





Left, Handwritten records and bound books were once the primary method of documentation. Right, The office gradually transitioned to digital record-keeping. Records from 1957 forward have been digitized, with ongoing efforts to scan older documents.

Beyond maintaining records, the Register of Deeds Office serves as a critical resource for the community. The team assists residents with understanding property records, accessing legal documents, and ensuring public records remain organized and accurate.

"Our mission is to provide accurate recording of public records for all who use the office," she said. "It is our goal to provide first-rate customer service and convenient access to the records utilizing the latest technology in an effective, cost-efficient, and customer-friendly manner."

As part of its mission to safeguard public records, the Register of Deeds Office has implemented My Land Alert, a service that notifies residents when a document is recorded in their name.

"It won't stop a document from being filed, but it will alert you," Porter said. "That way, if something is recorded fraudulently, you can address it quickly."

Although fraudulent filings are rare in Carroll County, similar cases have been reported in other parts of Tennessee, making early detection crucial.

"There have been cases where people have had their property falsely transferred or liens placed against them without their knowledge," Porter said. "This service gives people an early warning so they can take legal action if necessary."

Despite the challenges that come with the job, Porter and her team remain dedicated to their work, seeing it as both a responsibility and a privilege to serve the residents of Carroll County.

"I truly enjoy coming to work each day," Porter said. "This office isn't just about paperwork—it's about protecting records, helping people, and preserving the history of Carroll County."

The Register of Deeds Office also plays a key role in responding to legal and real estate disputes, often assisting residents facing complex situations. Porter recalled one instance in which a woman, overwhelmed by a family estate dispute, came in deeply distressed.

"She was really upset," Porter said. "She came back the next day and apologized. Sometimes, people just need someone to listen. We try to provide the guidance and resources they need to understand their options."

Porter also reflects on the values that guide her leadership and approach to public service, drawing inspiration from her parents.

"They always said, 'God first, family second, community third,'" she said. "They taught us that the life you lead may be the only Bible someone reads, so your actions should match your words."

Porter and her team continue their mission to uphold the integrity of Carroll County's records, ensuring history remains preserved and accessible for generations to come. Whether through digitization efforts, fraud prevention initiatives, or daily interactions with the public, the Register of Deeds Office remains a cornerstone of the county's legal and historical foundation.

"It is great to serve in this role," Porter said. "I appreciate the ability to do so, and I am grateful for the trust the people of Carroll County have placed in us."

RITA JONES

Assessor of Property, Singer

BY JOEL LANCASTER
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HUNTINGDON — For more than two decades, Rita Jones has served Carroll County as a dedicated public official in the Assessor of Property office. From mapping parcels to overseeing property assessments, her career has been marked by precision, adaptability, and a commitment to the community. Now, as she nears retirement in 2026, Jones reflects on her years of service and the many changes she has witnessed in her field.

Jones began her tenure in the Assessor of Property office in 1999, initially working as a mapper and clerk. In 2011, following the passing of then-Assessor Johnny Bradford, she was appointed to the role before being elected in 2012. She has remained the county's Assessor of Property ever since, overseeing real estate assessments, maintaining property records, and ensuring compliance with state regulations.

"The job changes every year," Jones said. "It's the same work, but policies, regulations, and circumstances shift constantly. You have to stay on top of it."

One of the most significant projects during her tenure was the development of the Thousand Acre Lake area. "They bought all that land out there, and we had to track what was being dug out for the lake," she recalled. "That was a unique and memorable project."

Jones takes great pride in the accuracy and transparency of her office, noting that she has received clean audits every year since assuming the assessor role. "That's something I'm really proud of," she said. "It's important that the public trusts our work and that everything is handled properly."

Her dedication has not gone unnoticed. Jones was honored as Assessor of the Year in 2021.

A native of Carroll County, Jones grew up between McLemoresville and Trezevant. She attended McLemoresville Elementary and later graduated from Trezevant High School before taking courses at both the University of Tennessee and Jackson State.

Beyond her work in public service, Jones has another passion: gospel music. A singer for more than 50 years, she has traveled throughout West Tennessee, Mississippi, and Arkansas, performing with multiple groups. In the 1970s and early 1980s, she was a member of the Young Harvesters, a gospel group that included Richard Welch, the former basketball coach at Trezevant High School. Later, she sang with Gospel Edition, a group that even had the opportunity to perform at the Grand Ole Opry.

"We traveled quite a bit back then," Jones said. "It was an incredible experience." While she doesn't perform as often today, she still sings occasionally, though her growing number of grandchildren keeps her plenty busy.

In addition to her work and music, Jones is a devoted mother and grandmother. Her son, Dusty Jones, has followed a path of public service, working as a paramedic and nurse. Family remains at the center of her life, and she cherishes the time spent with her loved ones.

As she prepares to retire in 2026, Jones is looking forward to the next chapter of her life, but she remains deeply grateful for the opportunity to have served her community. "It's been an honor," she said. "I've met so many great people over the years, traveling all over the county, attending barbecues, fish fries—you name it. It's been a wonderful experience."

Though her time as Assessor of Property will soon come to a close, her legacy of service and commitment to Carroll County will remain, both in the records she has helped maintain and in the voices of those who have heard her sing.

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CHRISTIE CHAPPELL

Leadership in Finance, Family

BY JOEL LANCASTER
jlancaster@mckenziebanner.com



McKENZIE — Balancing a high-powered corporate career with a strong commitment to family is no small feat, yet Christie Chappell has managed both with determination and success. As Vice President of Finance for Electrification and Business Unit Controller for the Commercial Vehicle Segment of Dana Incorporated, she oversees financial operations across 38 global plants and technical centers, representing $2.5 billion in annual revenue.

Chappell, a McKenzie native and graduate of McKenzie High School and Bethel University, attributes much of her success to the strong educational foundation she received in her hometown. "The small schools I attended really shaped who I am and ultimately benefited me professionally," she said. While her background in math and accounting was essential for her career, she also credits exceptional English and literature teachers for equipping her with the communication skills necessary to thrive in leadership roles. "I'm not always the smartest person in the boardroom, but I can string a sentence together, present data in a way that is understandable, and am comfortable speaking up when I see a problem or have a concern."

Chappell's career at Dana Incorporated spans 27 years, during which she has held various roles in finance and strategic planning. Her current responsibilities include financial reporting, budgeting, compliance with both domestic and international accounting regulations, and managing Dana's global finance team. She also serves as a managing director for TM4, the company's electrification joint venture. In an industry historically dominated by men, she has navigated the challenges of inclusion and equality while building a successful career.

While she has achieved remarkable professional success, Chappell considers her greatest accomplishment to be raising her four children alongside her husband of 33 years, Brad Chappell. "Being able to manage a very demanding career while raising four wonderful children is more meaningful to me than any award or professional accomplishment," she said. Their children, Nick, Jake, Allie, and Drew, have pursued careers in education, sales, and science, and she takes great pride in their achievements. She also cherishes time spent with her daughters-in-law, Brittney and Lindsey, and her three granddaughters, Madilyn, Landry, and Lydia.

Chappell describes her family as close-knit, with strong influences from both her parents, Mike and Laura Bateman, and her in-laws, Richard and Peggy Chappell. Her father, in particular, always encouraged her to think critically and express herself. "My dad told me once that I should have been a lawyer because I sure do like to argue," she recalled with a laugh. Her family shares a love for travel, with the beach and the Rocky Mountains among their favorite destinations.

Reflecting on Women's History Month, Chappell acknowledges the importance of recognizing the achievements of women but ultimately wants to be seen as part of the broader professional landscape. "I certainly can see the benefit of highlighting women and their successes, but ultimately I don't want to be part of only women's professional groups and women's history – I want to be part of THE group, THE history." She remains hopeful that future generations of women, including her daughters and granddaughters, will live in a world where they are valued and respected in all industries. She also believes in supporting fellow women in their careers, citing one of her favorite quotes: "Be the woman who fixes another woman's crown without telling the world it was crooked."

Beyond her corporate career, Chappell's experiences traveling the world have given her a broader perspective on people and cultures. She has visited Canada, Germany, France, Brazil, and China, working with diverse teams and gaining insight into different ways of life. "Most people are good, regardless of gender, race, culture, or religion, and are all just trying to make their way through life," she said. Exposing her children to these experiences has been one of the most rewarding aspects of her career.

As the automotive industry undergoes rapid transformation, Chappell sees electrification as more than just an inevitable shift—it's an opportunity for innovation and progress. "The transition to electrification isn't just about new technology; it's about redefining how we approach transportation and sustainability," she said. She remains engaged in advancing the financial strategies that will support these developments, ensuring that businesses and consumers alike can adapt to the changing landscape.

Chappell's story is one of perseverance, leadership, and dedication to both career and family. She has broken barriers in the automotive finance industry while maintaining strong roots in her community. As she continues to lead in the corporate world, she also remains committed to the values of hard work, education, and family that have shaped her journey. Whether in the boardroom or at home, her influence is evident in the lives she has touched and the example she sets for future generations.

Peg Hamlett

Ensuring Fair, Impartial Elections in Carroll County

BY JOEL LANCASTER
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For Peg Hamlett, serving as the Certified Administrator of Elections (AOE) for Carroll County is about more than managing ballots—it's about upholding the integrity of the democratic process. As the chief administrative officer of the County Election Commission, she oversees elections at the local, state, and federal levels, ensuring that every vote is counted accurately and fairly.

With a background in law and election governance, Hamlett's responsibilities extend beyond Election Day. She maintains voter registration records, supervises election officials, and ensures compliance with Tennessee election laws. From budgeting and campaign finance disclosures to biennial list maintenance verifying voter eligibility, her role is critical in keeping the electoral process transparent and secure.

When asked about her proudest accomplishments, Hamlett keeps it simple: conducting fair and impartial elections and making sure deployed military personnel can exercise their right to vote. For her, the job itself is the reward, and she views the salary as recognition for doing what needs to be done.

A Memphis native, Hamlett pursued academics at UT Martin, UT Knoxville, and Texas A&M University. Her experiences extended beyond Tennessee, having lived and worked professionally in Morocco, Mexico, Honduras, and East Africa, gaining a global perspective that informs her work.

For Women's History Month, Hamlett reflects on the suffrage movement, citing Anne Dallas Dudley and other pioneers who fought for women's right to vote. She also acknowledges Pat Head Summitt, whose contributions to women's athletics helped strengthen high school and university sports programs across Tennessee. Above all, Hamlett says what matters most to her is "knowing exactly who I am in Christ."

As Carroll County's elections administrator, she plays a vital role in ensuring democracy functions at the local level, carrying on the legacy of women who have shaped history by safeguarding the right to vote.

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Left, Pam Joyner reads to students at West Carroll Primary School earlier this month. *Photo courtesy WCSSD* **Above, Trezevant Vice-Mayor Pam Joyner with Mayor Bobby Blaylock and fellow aldermen.** *File photo* **Below, Pam (Hall) Joyner early in her teaching career.** *Photo courtesy Pam Joyner*

Pam Joyner

From Lifelong Educator to Vice-Mayor

BY BRAD SAM
brad@mckenziebanner.com

Pam Joyner is a McLemoresville native who dedicated her life to education and has now answered a second calling in public service as the vice-mayor of Trezevant.

Pam's mother, Luella Hall, was a maid, and her father, David Hall, worked at the Milan Arsenal and was a lifelong farmer. She told The Banner, "I grew up on a big farm in McLemoresville. We had cows, pigs, rabbits, chickens and we grew mostly cotton."

Pam attended MTA and McLemoresville Elementary and graduated from Trezevant High School in 1974. She was a four-year basketball player and a member of the state championship team her senior year.

She earned her degree in Distributive English from Austin Peay and her Masters in Education from Bethel College.

She began her teaching career at Huntingdon High School in 1979 before moving to West Carroll Middle School in 1983. She taught primarily eighth grade up until her retirement from West Carroll Junior Senior High School in 2016.

She was called back to teach part of the following year and then continued as a substitute until 2019.

Pam was sworn in as a fill-in alderman for the Town of Trezevant in December 2016 and has been reelected twice since. She has served as vice-mayor for the majority of her tenure.

She also serves on the board of trustees for the Carroll County Library, as a clerk at McLemoresville Cumberland Presbyterian Church in America and as a member of the Order of the Eastern Star.

She is a charter member of the Austin Peay chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha, one of the "Divine Nine" historically black Greek organizations.

Pam told The Banner, "I knew I wanted to be a teacher all my life. There were quite a few educators in my family. When I was little, I would always play teacher.

"I always wanted to be an English teacher. Ezra Martin, who was one of my English teachers in middle school, as well as my band teacher and basketball coach, really led me to develop a love for English."

She says she didn't get enough experience writing during high school, so it was a struggle in college. "When I became a teacher, I was going to make sure that my students were well-prepared for writing."

She said, "I loved my students, I think I was probably hard on them, strict, but I wanted them to get the most out of their education.

"To see these young people come back and become doctors, lawyers, teachers, it just touches you. It seems like no matter how old you get, they remember you. It's amazing to see them. I just love them all. They have really inspired me and touched my heart. I'm grateful to our dear Lord for allowing me this privilege of teaching.They have taught me as well. It's been a gratifying, humbling experience."

Her foray into politics came at the request of fellow teacher and classmate Alderman Pam Bryant and Mayor Dennis Mitchell, whose children Pam (Joyner) taught.

"I'm not a politician. Any little thing touches my heart; it bothers me if I think somebody is being mistreated. When you're trying to help the citizens of Trezevant, and they know you're trying, it helps. It's hard, not having the finances to do a lot of the things that would help the citizens.

"You have to put yourself in someone else's position. If you were there, you would hope and pray that someone would be there to help. To care about people, I think, is the most important thing. The Lord wants us to be an example as he is to all of us to show love and compassion.

"I just want to do the best for the citizens of the town of Trezevant and always consider what's in the best interest of them. And I pray that they will understand that we are really trying our best. We're here to listen. We don't have the finances all the time, most of the time. But let's work together and try to make our town beautiful. I want



to see our town grow and be a beautiful place to live."

She spoke about some of the obstacles she's faced in the different aspects of her life.

"As a woman, and as an African-American, many don't feel that you are qualified. I've had experiences where I've said something, and people will go behind you to verify, as though they have to hear it from someone else."

"But," she said, "They may take away a lot of things, but they can't take what's in your mind. I guess after teaching for many years, I've decided that I'm gonna speak up."

She spoke about one small victory early in her career. "When I first started at Huntingdon, there was a male in a role, he was my boss, and was of course making more money than I was. He was going to leave, and I would assume that position. I was going to be doing my job plus his job, so I asked for a raise, simply for what he had been getting. I was told, 'Well I don't know if you deserve it.' I said, 'I don't know if I want to work here anymore.' I think it was important to speak up. For a long time, and there are still times now, when I don't like to say anything. My dad taught me to just listen to people and you'll find out a lot about them. But I did speak up, and I got my pay raise."

She noted, "I'm just used to being in a role when you aren't taken at your value anyway, so I've just pushed it to the back and said, 'I'm just going to do my best'. I don't worry about it."

She spoke about the strength of women. "I think about my mom. She is my rock. She had to endure so much. The strength of women is just amazing. I think of Ruby Bridges, Rosa Parks, you could name so many. And the women of McLemoresville. They were just so strong. I'm so proud to be from there."

She opined on the source of that strength. "I think it's faith. Regardless of how you're treated and misunderstood, if you've got a strong faith in the good Lord, He's going to take care of it in good time."

She offered this advice to younger generations of women. "Make sure that you have a good knowledge of what you're doing. Stand up, be a good advocate for yourself, be firm, look them in the eye. You've got to do that. Be consistent, have confidence in yourself and your knowledge. If you don't believe in yourself, no one else will. Whatever you do, make sure you take the good Lord with you. You have to have a strong faith and pray and know that whatever storm you go through, God's gonna be there.

"Have a friend that has the same values as you. One with good moral character. That's what I've been blessed to have in my best friend Psyanita McCullough, since we were five years old. When you have somebody that has the same moral character, even though sometimes you fall, you get back up. You may be going one way and they know that it's wrong; they're going to tell you. We're there to help each other. It's the same with my husband, Ronnie."

Pam is currently the only woman on the Trezevant council, of which she says, "I think it's very important that we are involved. Women need to have a voice."

Remembering Ruth Morris

A Pillar of McKenzie Community

BY JOEL LANCASTER
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McKENZIE — For decades, Ruth Coleman Morris played a pivotal role in shaping McKenzie's financial, educational, and religious institutions. A pioneering banking executive and dedicated philanthropist, she left an indelible mark on the community through her leadership and generosity. Her influence is still felt today, from the institutions she helped grow to the lives she improved through her philanthropy.

Trailblazing in Banking

Morris began her career at McKenzie Banking Company, where she steadily advanced through the ranks. She became bank president in 1975, making her one of the first women in Tennessee to hold such a position. In an era when female executives in the banking industry were rare, she was a force for progress, modernizing operations while maintaining the bank's commitment to local families and businesses.

During her tenure, McKenzie Banking Company expanded its lending programs, offering more opportunities for small businesses to thrive. She ensured that the bank remained a pillar of financial stability in the region, providing mortgages, personal loans, and business financing that enabled steady economic growth. Her leadership emphasized both customer service and financial literacy, helping residents navigate complex financial decisions.

As president, Morris also believed in mentorship. She took the time to train young professionals entering the field, ensuring that the bank's legacy of integrity and service continued beyond her tenure. Her commitment to developing the next generation of financial leaders remains one of her most enduring contributions.

Commitment to Education

Higher education remained a priority for Morris throughout her life. She contributed $500,000 to Bethel University, part of a larger $1 million bequest that funded student scholarships, faculty support, and campus development projects. This donation allowed for the creation of new academic programs, library resources, and facility upgrades that continue to benefit students today.

She was also a strong advocate for financial education in local schools. Understanding the importance of financial literacy, she worked with educators to develop programs that taught students the fundamentals of banking, credit, and responsible money management. Her efforts helped ensure that young people in Carroll County had access to the financial knowledge they needed to build stable futures.

Her contributions to education extended beyond funding. She regularly met with Bethel University faculty and administrators to discuss the school's future, offering insights and strategic support. Her dedication to improving educational opportunities made a lasting impact, strengthening the university's role in the community.

Faith and Philanthropy

A devoted member of First Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Morris and her husband, John Morris, made a $500,000 donation that helped fund church expansions and renovations. This contribution strengthened the church's role as a hub for community outreach and faith-based programs. The funds helped restore the church's historic sanctuary, modernize community spaces, and support local ministries that provide food and clothing assistance to those in need.

Beyond her work with the church, Morris was deeply involved in charitable giving. She regularly donated to local nonprofits, ensuring that families facing hardship had access to essential resources. She supported programs that provided food security, emergency housing, and medical assistance, always choosing to give quietly rather than seeking recognition.

She also played a role in preserving McKenzie's cultural history, advocating for the restoration of Park Theatre. She, along with other community leaders such as the Ruth & John H. Morris Memorial, was instrumental in securing funding to renovate the historic venue, ensuring its preservation for future generations. She recognized that community spaces like the Park Theatre were more than buildings—they were places where history and culture could be shared for years to come.

A Lasting Impact

Her contributions were widely recognized by the community and continue to have a lasting impact on McKenzie. The institutions she supported remain a testament to her legacy.

McKenzie Banking Company continues to be a cornerstone of financial stability for the region, offering a wide range of financial services that empower individuals and businesses. Bethel University has expanded its programs with the support of her financial contributions, allowing future generations of students to receive a quality education. First Cumberland Presbyterian Church continues to serve as a beacon of faith and community, thanks in part to her generosity.

Morris's legacy is not only measured in the buildings that bear the mark of her contributions but also in the lives she touched. Those who worked with her remember her not just as a financial leader but as a woman who genuinely cared about the well-being of her neighbors. Whether through quiet acts of charity, financial leadership, or her deep commitment to education, she helped shape McKenzie into a stronger community.

Even after her passing in 2016, the impact of her leadership and generosity continues to shape the town she dedicated her life to serving. The lessons she imparted—of service, faith, and responsibility—live on in the institutions she helped build and the people who strive to carry her mission forward.

Her work was never about recognition. She gave because she believed in the power of community and the responsibility of those with resources to uplift others. That sense of duty to her town and its people is what defined her, and it is what continues to define her legacy today.





Left, Juanita Jones in her Marine Corps and McKenzie Police Department uniforms. Right, Juanita Jones (center) with her mother, Beatrice (left) and her friend, Brenda Smith after Jones received an award for Keep My Hood Good. *Photos courtesy Juanita Jones*

JUANITA JONES

A Force for Breaking Generational Cycles

BY BRAD SAM
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Juanita Jones is a McKenzie native now working to improve the lives of youth in Jackson with the ultimate goal of breaking generational cycles as founder and executive director of Keep My Hood Good.

A 1984 graduate of McKenzie High School, she attended the University of Tennessee at Martin to study criminal justice and psychology. During that time, she worked in dispatch at the McKenzie Police Department and directed traffic at schools in the morning.

After four years, she was nearing completion of her degree when some of her classes were delayed.

Unfortunately for Juanita, she had already enlisted and been sworn into the U.S. Marine Corps, so her education was put on hold.

She enlisted for eight years and served as a supply specialist, stationed in California, Hawaii, South Carolina and North Carolina.

"It was difficult to be a woman Marine. In boot camp, our drill instructors groomed us for what was to become of us when we got into the fleet world. I had to prove myself to male Marines that I was like them. Once I had shown that I could hold my own, it was nothing but love and respect."

Juanita is now part of a Marine Corps detachment in Jackson with other retirees and honorably-discharged Marines.

Following her service, Juanita returned to McKenzie to be near her mother, whom she wanted to help with her own daughter. "I didn't think I was mother material."

She worked as a server at Hig's Restaurant, held road construction signs for TDOT and was a volunteer firefighter.

She worked for Manpower in McKenzie before transferring to Jackson, where she became branch manager. She worked for Manpower for six years.

She then worked for four years as office manager at a Save-a-Lot warehouse. "That was one of the most boring jobs," she said with a laugh. "I did not like to sit in the office environment. I needed to be out, so I found myself driving a forklift, pulling groceries."

In 2006, Juanita opened a transportation business. She transported children to and from school and extracurricular activities and soon had contracts with five Jackson daycares and the Department of Children's Services, facilitating visitation.

That business would set the stage for her true calling.

When Juanita would serve children and families in certain neighborhoods, she began to witness and experience troubling patterns and cycles.

In Parkway East, gang members would allow her into the neighborhood but would hinder her leaving. "This was three to four days a week. After about four months, one gang member walked up to my bus and asked who I was. He said they had been trying to scare me away. I told him I wasn't the police, I wasn't a threat to them. From then on, they allowed me in and out.

"I met a 40-year-old great-grandmother. I thought, wow, this is a generational cycle.

"I saw a mother bring a child to Lincoln Court and make them get out. She said, 'Whoever makes your sister cry, you've got to make them cry.' So that mom brought her child to fight another child. That's another cycle I saw, children fighting.



Juanita Jones

"God placed it on my heart to help the children. For two years, I said 'I'm not doing that. I don't even like children.' In those two years, I had a lot of rises and falls in life. Finances, vehicles, housing.

"So I surrendered in April 2009. It began on a corner in Lincoln Court. I offered free ice cream and a kickball game. I had four towels and a beach ball. I had no idea what I was going to do with the children, other than to teach them how to respect themselves and each other.

"I named it Keep My Hood Good."

She soon decided she just wanted boys. "I thought, if I could get the boys straight, the girls would follow."

She put up flyers for basketball, and soon found herself in a circle of young men. "I still didn't know what I was doing. But as I was talking, one boy came and punched me in the arm and ran. Everyone laughed. Another came and hit me hard in the back. They laughed again. So I chased one down and caught him. I had him secured on his stomach, with his feet back to his head, and made him say he was sorry in front of all of those boys. Then I caught the other one and made him tell me he loved me and he was sorry. After that, there were no more problems."

She moved on to other neighborhoods. Still without a center of operation, she would meet groups at laundromats, car washes and in people's backyards.

"I taught them accountability, excellence, integrity and respect. I gave them three options after graduation. College or trade school, and I would help them enroll; the military, which I've had four enlist; or get a job where you can be self-sufficient. I encouraged them to get out of Jackson in order to break the generational cycle."

Keep My Hood Good now has that central location, a center that opened eight years ago. Serving boys and girls ages 8-18, the center features a community garden.

"When I was walking the streets, I would get hungry. It was a food desert area, and the only grocery nearby had fruits and vegetables that were wilted. I know kids would use their EBT for chips, cookies and soda. Health is a concern, especially obesity, high blood pressure, hypertension. So we started the garden. I taught children that if they had no money, but they had a seed, they could grow their own food."

During harvest, children distribute the food in their neighborhoods.

After shutting down her transportation company in 2013, Juanita waited tables on the weekends. At the time, she was receiving no grants or other money for Keep My Hood Good, so she was working to pay her bills and sustain the group.

Juanita also finally completed her education, graduating from UTM in 2017 with a degree in interdisciplinary studies with a focus in health, education and behavioral science.

The non-profit was finally able to start paying Juanita in 2022.

"In Keep My Hood Good, I teach them not to forget me, and they don't. They come back to volunteer and help teach the children."

Juanita estimates that at least 250 children have been in her program, noting that she's had custody of four of them, now grown.

Juanita spoke about the influence of her mother, Avis Beatrice Dudley Jones, who died in February of last year.

"My mother was the opposite of me. She was never in a bad mood, even up to death. She said 'God's got my back.' She was humble and gentle. I could see that Jesus and God had their arms wrapped around my mother. My greatest memory of my mother was that she said over and over, 'Pray.'

"She taught me a whole lot. How to sit, how to eat, how to smile. Everything."

Beatrice was the first black graduate of McKenzie High School, the only senior among the first group of black students to transfer from Webb School to MHS in 1966.

Juanita says she never really talked about that experience, other than one example. "I remember when my mother would walk me into school. She would tell me, 'This is what I did. I walked with my head up and I just strutted into the school.' And that's what I did. Maybe that was her mentality. That's what she had to do, don't look back, just look straight ahead."

Juanita offered this advice to younger generations of women. "Don't stop. Keep searching from within. Don't look to be a people pleaser. Look in that mirror. That's your best friend. That mirror will be your guidance. Believe from your heart and not from what someone else has told you, because what works for one may not work for you. Jump ship if you have to, no need to look back."





Qualities Women Bring to Business



Women continue to thrive in the workforce. Wells Fargo reports that, from 2019 to 2023, the growth rate of women-owned businesses outpaced the rate of men-owned businesses in relation to number of firms, rate of employment and revenue earned. LinkedIn also indicates there are 114 percent more women entrepreneurs now than there were 20 years ago.

Every business owner or employee brings something unique to the employment landscape and certain characteristics are universal, regardless of gender. Still, there are certain qualities that women bring to the workforce that can help businesses excel. Forbes indicates women employees offer traits that can help drive engagement, productivity, satisfaction, and various other attributes. The following are some of the traits women may bring to business.

Emotional Intelligence

Women First Jobs says that women often bring high emotional intelligence to the table. Emotional intelligence involves understanding and managing emotions and the emotions of others. Women may be more inclined to understand different perspectives and to help resolve conflicts and build relationships.

Collaboration

Women employees often have traits that can foster collaboration in the workplace, such as reading non-verbal cues and willingness to take turns in conversations, indicates Forbes. This can help everyone collaborate more effectively.

Room for Improvement

Women in the workplace continually seek opportunities for improvement, advises Sparklight Business. This can involve taking advice from other workers and peers. Women leaders embrace opportunities to do things better and work to improve their skills for the greater good.

Communication

The IWEC Foundation, which empowers women entrepreneurs, says women tend to be effective communicators and often make great leaders because of this trait and their ability to inspire others. Communication often is key to any relationship, whether personal or in a business setting.

Organization and Planning

Women may excel at organizing and planning. Women can look at things with a detail-oriented eye and recognize flaws in plans even before getting started. This means women can be in charge of distributing workloads or organizing the schedules of others.

Adaptability

Even though it is a cliche, women tend to be natural multi-taskers. Handling multiple jobs at the same time means women can adapt to changing situations.

Generally speaking, there are some inherent characteristics women may possess that can make them viable assets as business owners or leaders in their fields.

Considerations For Your Second Act



Many people see their careers as one of their defining characteristics. Children are often asked what they want to be when they grow up, and as adults they will likely be asked "What do you do for a living?" more times than they can remember. Work is undoubtedly a major component of life for most people from the time they leave school to the day when they retire. And a growing number of adults value work so much that they pivot to second careers.

A phenomenon known as "unretirement" occurs when people who have previously retired return to the workforce. A 2010 paper published in the Journal of Human Resources found nearly 50 percent of retirees followed a nontraditional retirement path that involved partial retirement or unretirement. According to a recent Retirement Saving & Spending Study from T. Rowe Price, around 20 percent of retirees are working either full- or part-time, while 7 percent of study respondents are looking for employment. Some people return to work for financial reasons while others seek the social and emotional benefits employment can bring. But individuals mulling a return to work or those currently working but trying to determine a second act should not feel beholden to previous career paths. A second trip around the employment block can involve an entirely different line of work. The following are some things to look for in a second act.

- **Flexibility:** Choose a career path that enables you to set your own schedule or possibly work part-time if that is your preference. This way you can still reap some of the benefits of retirement, including the flexibility to travel.
- **Social interaction:** Adults may lose daily opportunities to be social when they retire, which can compound feelings of isolation common among retirees. Consider a second career that lets you interact with a number of people and continue to build relationships and a good network.
- **Personal passions:** Reflect on what you might do for work if money were no object. This may help you narrow down new opportunities that are in line with your interests and passions. Find a job that utilizes your skills and experience and meshes with your interests. A former graphic artist, for example, may decide to teach design to young people.
- **Nonprofit opportunities:** Many retirees spent years in high-stress corporate environments where bottom lines may be more important than the bigger picture. Shifting to a career in the nonprofit sector can be a personally fulfilling job that utilizes skills learned in the corporate world.
- **Consulting or contract work:** If you're a retiree who loved your job, you might want to have a second career as a consultant or contractor in the same field.

A number of retirees ultimately explore second careers. Finding a match may be easier than one could have imagined.

8 Ways to Thank Women in Your Life

BY BRITTANY MARTIN
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I know we are all usually living life in fast forward and it seems like the days turn into weeks turn into months — so quickly. It is hard to stop and find time to express thanks to the important women in our lives. It doesn't take a lot of money or effort to show gratitude and little moments can make a world of difference. So here are a few ideas of ways to say thanks.

1. Saying Thank You — Yes, saying thank you is sometimes the easiest, yet most overlooked way to express gratitude. Be specific about the thing you are thankful for as this shows you are paying attention. The best part is it costs nothing to say thank you, but has a long-term positive effect on the thanked person. Also, thank you notes mean a lot to some people; knowing you took the time to write a personal note speaks volumes.

2. Taking Care of It — A lot goes into making life happen. Laundry and dishes are never-ending! "I already took care of it," can be a relief when she is feeling overwhelmed. As long as you don't wash new reds with the whites or put thin plastics on the bottom rack of the dishwasher.

3. It's the Thought that Counts — Asking about her day, checking in or showing you care through a text or phone call can be motivation to get through the day. Sending a joke or funny meme can also give a boost.

4. A Small Gift — A small gift that costs little or nothing or a functional gift that helps resolve an issue are great ways to show your heart is in the right place. Like, a hand painted bird feeder; a new screen protector; a surprise visit; a car wash or tank of gas; making her coffee; getting her favorite candy; sending a song to hear or book to read; making her favorite meal; buying/picking flowers; watching her favorite movie; or simply spending time together.

5. Time for Favorites — Block out some uninterrupted time to watch her favorite show, movie, read a book or enjoy a hobby. I rarely get time to do things I enjoy because of work, family or household chores. I would love to sit and do something completely unproductive that makes me happy.

6. Girls' Night — As women, we need social interaction, that's why we talk your ear off as soon as you get in the door. If we are stuck all day in work mode or mom mode, we need the normalcy of adult conversation. We crave interaction with other people that recharge us. Something as simple as a good conversation via phone or in person can help reground us.

7. A Night Off — Parents that have a full-time role of raising tiny humans (often after a full day of work) need a break from time to time. Scheduling time for the kids to stay the night with family or friends or watching the kids while Mom goes out (even if it is going out just to sit somewhere in silence) is a huge sanity saver. Sometimes, all I need is an hour or so to decompress. When we have time to mentally "clock out" it helps us be better parents when we "clock back in."

8. Simple Tasks — Getting the mail for her, picking up sticks after a storm (so she doesn't have to), bringing the trash can back up to the house on trash day, paying a balance, or completing other simple tasks can help reduce stress for anyone in your life.

Whatever ways you come up with to show gratitude, remember that it doesn't have to be elaborate or a grand gesture to be effective, it is the thought that counts.

Notable Moments in Women's History

Heroic efforts and milestone moments dot the landscape of women's history. Often forced to fight for equality and inclusion, women have blazed trails and broken down barriers, all the while inspiring millions from their own era as well as future generations.

There's been no shortage of notable events in women's history. Recognition of notable moments in women's history can provide significant insight into the individuals who made them possible.

Women's Rights Convention

Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott played pivotal roles in organizing the first women's rights convention in 1848. The Seneca Falls Convention was held in New York on July 19 and 20, and abolitionist Frederick Douglass was among the noteworthy attendees. According to History.com, the work done at the Seneca Falls Convention, including the signing of the Declaration of Sentiments, sparked women's rights advocacy and ultimately lead to suffrage for women, which was granted with the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment.

Earns A Medical Degree

Within months of the Seneca Falls Convention, England-born Elizabeth Blackwell graduates from the medical school at Geneva College in New York. Blackwell not only earns her medical degree, but also finishes with the highest marks in her graduating class. Blackwell's trailblazing days did not end with the completion of her degree, as she ultimately became the first woman on the Medical Register of the General Medical Council for the United Kingdom.

"And Ain't I A Woman?"

School children in the United States undoubtedly are familiar with the name Sojourner Truth, a noted abolitionist and former slave. In 1851, Truth, speaking at the Women's Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio, asked, "And ain't I a woman?" as she advocated for equal rights. The speech has been noted in popular culture over the last 170 years, but Truth's now-famous query first gained considerable attention in 1863 during the American Civil War.

A Woman Sits on The Supreme Court

The Supreme Court of the United States was initially established by Congress through the Judiciary Act of 1789. Despite that lengthy history, no woman was sworn in as a Supreme Court Justice until 1981, when Sandra Day O'Connor was sworn in by then-U.S. President Ronald Reagan. Justice O'Connor, who passed away in late 2023 at the age of 93, served on the Supreme Court for roughly a quarter century, retiring in 2006.

These are just a handful of the many notable events in women's history that have shed light on the bravery and invaluable contributions women have made through the years.

7 Ways To Celebrate Women's History Month

The month of March is notable for various reasons, not the least of which is it serves as Women's History Month.

Although any time of year is an opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of women and pay homage to those special women in one's life, each March extra attention is given to the impact women make in their local communities and across the world.

According to the World Bank, as of 2022, 49.7 percent of the world was made up of women. Here are some ways to commemorate Women's History Month this year.

1. Support women entrepreneurs. Make it a point to shop at stores owned and run by women, or purchase products that were developed by women.

2. Mentor young or adolescent girls. People can make a difference in the lives of young women and set them on the course for success by sharing their own experiences through mentored guidance.

3. Express personal gratitude. Send a thoughtful letter of gratitude to a woman who has made an impact on your life and explain how her influence helped you in some way.

4. Celebrate women artists and authors. Take the time to view and experience creative works by women, which may include reading books authored by women or viewing crafts and artwork made by women.

5. Start a business resource group. Woman entrepreneurs can encourage others to start their own businesses by hosting a business resource group that meets periodically and enables others to network easily.

6. Learn about women's rights. Take a step back into history and read up on the journey to establish women's rights, starting with the right to vote.

7. Post on social media. Share stories of inspirational women with others on a global scale by posting thoughts to various social media platforms.

Women's History Month is a time to reinforce the accomplishments of women across the country and the world.

Trailblazing Women Who Changed The World

Throughout history, many dedicated, intelligent and perseverant women have made an impact that not only affected their lives, but also the lives of millions of others. Many of these noteworthy women blazed trails and opened doors for others, forever changing the world with their efforts.

Marie Curie

Curie founded the science of radioactivity, which proved vital in treating cancer. Curie also was the first woman to win a Nobel Prize and the first woman professor at the University of Paris. Curie also holds the distinction of being the first person to win a second Nobel Prize.

Jane Austen

Few students will make it through a high school or college English seminar without reading at least one Jane Austen book. In fact, Austen may be credited with establishing the romantic comedy genre that still has its devotees in the twenty-first century. Her "Pride and Prejudice" remains a popular novel and has been adapted to film and television many times.

Grace Hopper

After earning a doctorate in mathematics, Hopper became one of the very few women to obtain such a degree. She became a rear admiral in the United States Navy, and helped develop a compiler that was a precursor to the COBOL language used for computers.

Sally Ride

Ride was an American physicist and astronaut who joined NASA in 1978. She was the first American woman and the third woman to fly into space.

Diana, Princess of Wales

Diana Spencer was the first wife of Charles, heir apparent to the British throne, who has since become King of England. The Princess won acclaim for her charitable work for children and for raising awareness for HIV/AIDS and mental illnesses.

Lucille Ball

Not only a prolific woman comic, which was not so common during her tenure, Ball also was a savvy business woman. She and her husband spearheaded her own production company. Ball also was known for tackling groundbreaking topics (at the time) on her television show, including women in the workforce, marital issues and pregnancy.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Ginsburg made history as the first Jewish woman to be appointed to the United States Supreme Court. She was a strong women's rights activist, and she co-founded the Women's Rights Project at the American Civil Liberties Union.

Lola Baldwin

Baldwin became the first sworn woman police officer in 1908, when she was hired to work in Portland, Oregon. Her work mainly revolved around protecting women, including acting as a lobbyist for laws to protect women and advising other departments on women's law enforcement issues.

Elizabeth Blackwell

In 1849, Blackwell became the first woman in the United States to earn a medical degree. Blackwell was inspired to become a doctor after a deathly ill friend insisted she would have received better care from a female doctor.

Throughout history, many women have helped to change the course of the world, blazing trails for future generations along the way.

KASEY MUENCH

A Passion for Community, Tourism

BY JOEL LANCASTER
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PARIS — Throughout history, women have played a vital role in shaping communities, often blending creativity, leadership, and service. In Northwest Tennessee, Kasey Muench exemplifies that spirit, combining her passion for design and tourism to promote and strengthen the region. As Executive Director of Northwest Tennessee Tourism, she now leads efforts to showcase the area's attractions while ensuring its small-town charm remains at the heart of its appeal.

A Paris native, Muench studied at the University of Memphis, earning a Fine Arts degree with a concentration in graphic design. In her senior year, she was inducted into the Carson Circle, the university's highest honor for student leaders, recognizing her outstanding contributions to campus life and leadership. After graduation, she returned home and started her career in the print and design industry, working at Abbott's Print Shop.

"I worked at Abbott's for 10 years, with a little break in between," she said. "I was able to learn so much there. At a print shop, you get to work on all sorts of things."

Her role allowed her to contribute to local projects, deepening her connection to the community. That experience led her to the Paris-Henry County Chamber of Commerce, where she became the community relations director. While there, she helped develop branding for the Tennessee River Jam, the Downtown Paris Association, and the Chamber of Commerce. "Even though I may not be with certain organizations anymore, my work is still out there being used," she said.

Working at the Chamber gave her a deeper understanding of tourism's impact. "Graphic design, marketing, all that goes into building up a community and branding what we have to offer," she said. "I can literally look at Tennessee River Jam, The Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Paris Association—those are brands I created. They're still in use, and it's humbling to know that something I designed continues to represent the community."

Her growing involvement in tourism led to her role at Northwest Tennessee Tourism in January 2023, where she oversees tourism initiatives for the nine counties that make up the region. Her work involves promoting attractions, managing events, and highlighting the area's strengths.

"Northwest Tennessee is framed by Reelfoot Lake on one side and Kentucky Lake on the other, with rivers, streams, and outdoor spaces in between," she said. "Our outdoors have always been a core of who we are, whether it's hunting, fishing, boating, or just hiking and camping."

She emphasized that people today are seeking a break from the fast pace of urban life. "Travelers want authentic experiences," she said. "They want to get away from the hustle and bustle, and we have that here. Our small-town main streets, our historic buildings, our local diners and mom-and-pop restaurants—those are what make Northwest Tennessee special."



Under her leadership, the organization has developed a new website, increased its membership, and published a visitor's guide. One of her biggest initiatives has been launching the Cornerstone Tourism Awards, which will recognize individuals who contribute to the region's tourism industry. The inaugural event, set for April 3 at The Dixie in Huntingdon, has already received nearly 200 nominations.

"We want to recognize the people who make visitors' experiences special," she said. "They're the ones who make this region welcoming."

Muench also established the Northwest Tennessee Legislative Breakfast, now in its third year, to connect local leaders with state representatives. This year's event will take place on May 23 at Discovery Park of America.

In addition to these key events, Northwest Tennessee Tourism is working on new digital marketing campaigns and video projects to highlight the region's attractions. "We're creating digital ads and video content to showcase what we have to offer," Muench said. "It's important to give people a visual connection to our area before they visit."

Beyond her professional work, Muench sees tourism as a personal passion. She lives in Paris with her husband, Ryan, and their two children, Aubrey and Grant. Her role has allowed her family to experience Northwest Tennessee in new ways.

"This job has allowed us to get to know the region as a family," she said. "I take them with me whenever I can, and I hope my children grow up appreciating where we live."

She spoke about the unique accommodations that make the region special. "We have places like Green Frog Farm Cabins, where they've restored 200-year-old cabins for people to stay in. It's not your Hampton Inn—it's rustic, off the beaten path, and a way to unplug."

In addition to tourism attractions, Muench credits the people of Northwest Tennessee for making the region a welcoming destination. "You won't find people like this anywhere else," she said. "When visitors come here, they're met with open arms. That's something you don't get everywhere, and we take it for granted sometimes."

As Northwest Tennessee continues to grow, Muench remains dedicated to preserving its history while embracing new opportunities. Her work is part of a long tradition of women shaping the places they call home, ensuring that future generations can experience the same warmth, hospitality, and charm that make the region special.



Kathy Dean and her sister Florence. *Photo courtesy American Legion Post #47*

Kathy Dean

A Giant Patriot in A Small Package

COURTESY PATRICIA BINKLEY
American Legion Post #47, Huntingdon

Kathy Dean of Huntingdon, Tennessee, was a big part of American military history when she and her sister Florence joined the first group of women to enlist in the Army in July 1948.

President Harry S. Truman signed into law on June 12, 1948, Public Law 625: The Women's Armed Services Integration Act of 1948. This allowed, for the first time, women to serve as regular members of the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines Corps.

Kathy and Flo were born and raised on the family farm in Mulkeytown, Illinois, which today has a population of only 63. Sadly, the population has decreased since the last census of 2020 when they boasted a population of 128.

In 1948, it was uncommon for women to leave the family farm and go off into the military. They were faced with an arduous task to convince their father to allow it. Finally, he gave in. Florence was underage, so her father had to sign a consent so she could enlist in the military.

The girls flew to San Francisco, California, to enlist in WAC, the Women's Army Corps. They both had visions of traveling and seeing the world, quite an adventure for two girls from such a small town. Kathy and Flo were excited to be trained in a career which might not have been possible in tiny Mulkeytown.

They went to boot camp at Fort Gregg in Virginia. In a brief time, they traveled across the entire United States. Kathy never forgot when she led a large rank of women in the front line of a parade. She was terrified of being trampled because she stood barely five feet tall.

Kathy and Flo went to tech school in San Antonio, Texas, and became dental assistants. Together they were transferred to their permanent duty station at Greenville AFB, in South Carolina.

Kathy met her husband, Captain Dean, a dentist from Michigan. After he served his two-year commitment and she served her four-year commitment, they moved back to Michigan. He practiced as a dentist in that state.

They had five children; one daughter and four sons. Two of their four sons followed their family's military history and served in the United States military. Kathy's brothers also served in the military. One of her brothers served in WWII and was part of the invasion of Normandy. Today, Kathy has grandchildren serving.

This is an unbelievable story of a family of true American patriotism. It shows in Kathy's face that she loves America and is filled with pride that she served her country! Even in her now under-five-foot size she is "a giant patriot in a small package".

"You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, 'I lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along.'" — Eleanor Roosevelt

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Left, LaShonda Williams is a 2025 Sterling Award Recipient. *Photo by Darren Lykes* **Center, From left, LaShonda Williams at her store Lakeway Nutrition with daughters Aleecia and Alajah. Right, McKenzie school board Chairman LaShonda Williams with her fellow board members. Pictured are (L to R): Misty Aird, George Cassidy, Williams, Bobby Young, Director of Schools Dr. Justin Barden and Chad Brown.** *Photos courtesy LaShonda Williams*

LASHONDA WILLIAMS

Determined to Succeed, Called to Serve

BY BRAD SAM
brad@mckenziebanner.com

LaShonda Williams has proven herself to be a pillar of the community as an accomplished entrepreneur and a diligent public servant.

She was born in Texas to Oscar Lee Williams and Denecia Paschall. Her military father was a native of the Wingo community between Trezevant and McKenzie.

LaShonda's mother was an alcoholic, and at age three she was adopted by her great aunt, Joan Taylor, and moved to Wingo.

Her father died when she was eight, and she didn't see her mother again until she was 18 years old.

She was expecting a visit from her estranged biological mother at some point, and it came during cheer practice at West Carroll High School. LaShonda told The Banner, "She came in, and I knew right away it was her."

Denecia relocated to the area, started a life and got married. "There was still a disconnect. I was raised in Wingo with such strong family values, but I still respected her as my mother. I saw her on holidays." Denecia died of cirrhosis of the liver, but was able to see three of her grandchildren, including LaShonda's oldest daughter Alajah.

LaShonda graduated from West Carroll in 1998. She was chosen as Most School Spirit by her class and earned Who's Who honors. She served as a principal's assistant and was admittedly a "teacher's pet".

She attended Jackson State Community College on a cheer scholarship, studying business and marketing. After a few months, she decided it wasn't for her.

"When I told my family [I was quitting school], it was the end of the world, oh my gosh… But as they see, I had a motivation like no other. I was determined to be successful."

Having worked at E.W. James in McKenzie during school, she then worked in marketing at a local window company.

She read an ad in The Banner for Rainbow, a vacuum company seeking sales reps. LaShonda was one of many to be interviewed but made the cut.

What would become a long, successful career got off to a rough start for the young, eager seller. "My first 12 appointments, I didn't sell anything," she lamented. "But then it was like a rocket taking off, I sold everything."

She was promoted to sales manager after several months. After several years, she opened her first office in Milan, then another in McKenzie. She employed as many as 20 people at one time.

Despite her business burgeoning as a manager, she never lost the itch for sales, so she returned to sales rep work. That continued until the pandemic, as it felt unsafe to do in-home demonstrations with a daughter with asthma back at home. She scaled back her involvement with Rainbow, but continued to do sales calls.

Around that time, a friend introduced her to the multi-level marketing nutrition business. LaShonda opened Lakeway Nutrition in Paris, followed by stores in Mayfield, Paducah, Stewart County and Jackson. She has since sold the others, but there are still seven stores in her "down line," meaning she gets a portion of sales from those stores.

When she narrowed her focus to Lakeway, it took off. "I was amazed at how the community welcomed us with open arms." She tapped into the school systems and says they probably deliver 200 drinks per week to area schools.

"It was so busy, I couldn't even think about Rainbow for probably two years."

After six months, Lakeway had to be expanded to accommodate the customer base. Eventually, LaShonda hired a manager to run the shop day-to-day.

"I tried to create different marketing strategies to separate my loaded tea store from the others, and it's paid off so far."

Lakeway's success allowed LaShonda to resume Rainbow demonstrations.

She has been with Rainbow for over 25 years, and Lakeway Nutrition celebrates its fifth anniversary on July 3.

Both of LaShonda's daughters, Alajah and Aleecia, have worked at Lakeway, and Aleecia recently began selling for Rainbow.

Somehow, over the years, LaShonda has found the time to serve the public in a plethora of capacities.

She served on the policy council at Head Start for six years, including as vice chairman and chairman.

In 2018, she ran for McKenzie's school board as a write-in candidate and won with 204 votes. She again rose through the ranks to vice chairman, and has served as chairman for two years.

She serves on the McKenzie Middle School Parent Advisory Board and was president when her kids attended. She also serves on the Pre-K Advisory Board.

She serves on the local foster care board, serves the Miss Teen Volunteer America program and is a member of the McKenzie Rotary Club.

In 2021, she joined the Henry County Chamber board.

She serves on the Henry County Healthcare Foundation Board and completed the Henry County Leadership class.

LaShonda also completed the WestStar program, earning the CP Boyd Award for top leadership. She said, "WestStar was by far the best thing I've ever done."

Recently, LaShonda was nominated for a Sterling Award by the Jackson Area Business and Professional Women as one of the 20 Most Influential Women in West Tennessee 2025.

Lakeway was named Henry County's Small Business of the Year two years ago.

LaShonda spoke to The Banner about the challenges of being a female in business and in society at large.

"In general, and especially when you're in leadership positions or an entrepreneur, people look at you differently because you're a woman. And not only am I a woman, I'm a black woman, a single mom, and a woman that doesn't have the degrees behind her name. It's challenging. I've had to prove myself.

"Sometimes as a woman, you don't have the support you think you should have. Sometimes, when I deal with men in certain roles, I feel like they don't respect things like they should because they're coming from a woman. I wish I could say in 2025 we're not still facing that, but the truth of the matter is we are. But if you look over the last five to ten years, women are really stepping up. There are a lot of women in leadership positions now. I just want people to realize just because you're a woman doesn't mean you can't do it. I do think it takes a strong woman to be in a leadership position, but it doesn't necessarily have to be a strong, educated woman. If you have experience and passion, somebody will give you a chance."

LaShonda spoke about one recent challenge. "Hiring a superintendent in a small town was a big deal, and I had to be the lead in that. There were some conversations that made me think people probably thought I couldn't do it. But I worked tirelessly day and night to make sure I succeeded, and we worked together and got the cream of the crop."

LaShonda credits her adoptive mother, her "Momma", who died just over a decade ago and would have been 100 this year, for the woman she is today.

"She shaped me in everything I am today. She was my all. She taught me how to clean, cook, how to be a mother, she taught me everything I know. I know she would be very proud of me today. A lot of times people will say, 'why do you do so much?'. It's me letting her know. That, and leaving a legacy for my kids.

"She didn't have to take me in. She was elderly, in her 60s when she adopted me, so that was a challenge in itself. But she didn't miss a beat. She made sure I had everything I needed and more.

"I think that's the reason why I have such a big heart and try to help the less fortunate. I was never less fortunate because of Wingo as a community. Everybody works together. But I could have been. Having a mother that's an alcoholic that didn't raise us, I could have been that kid that was thrown out there to either swim or drown."

"Wingo is a place like no other. It's a wide-open community, and most everybody is relatives. They come together for everything. They still cook every Sunday. To this day, we all go back.

"They support you 110 percent. I'm glad my kids have gotten to see how it is. I couldn't imagine having been raised anywhere else. With really good morals, family values. They always have that strong bond. And there have been a lot of successful people to come out of Wingo."

LaShonda finds herself on the other side of that equation as a mother.

"I'm trying my best to raise my daughters to be strong. Being a single mother was obviously not ideal, but I overcame it. If I had to work six or seven days a week to make ends meet, that's what I did. I didn't want my kids to grow up without just because they grew up in a single-parent home.

"I first taught them they need to have a good relationship with God, because in this world today we need it, and as a single mother, if I didn't have that, I don't know what I would have done.

"I taught them they needed to work, so when I started [Lakeway] they worked when they turned 14. I've been strict when it comes to school work, because it's important.

"I'm very proud of them. They've done extremely well, they're good kids. I try my best not to spoil them. I teach them that you have to work in life to have things.

"They're my greatest accomplishment. My momma would be proud of them too."

LaShonda shared her advice to younger generations of women. "You need to fight for what you believe in, whether you're a woman or not, and I know sometimes when you're a woman, you think people aren't going to listen. But if you're passionate about it, you fight and speak up anyway. If you're at the table (and if you are, that's already a plus), while you're at that table, you've got to speak up. And do your research. If you're going to talk about it and be involved, you need to know the back ends of it."

She added, "Support other women. Just because it's not me at that table, if it's another woman that got it over me, we've gotta support one another. That's one of the biggest challenges is supporting each other. And it doesn't matter if they're black or white, they're a woman at the end of the day."

She also offered this advice to men. "Respect women. Respect that woman that's in that position or that leadership role. She's there for a reason. I know sometimes it's hard, and a lot of times it's the way men grew up. Not all men were taught to respect women. But respect that woman. And give that woman your feedback. Just because she's a woman doesn't mean she won't listen to a man. Support that woman, but most importantly, respect that woman."

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