



We have had a very busy few weeks since the last issue of the newsletter. You'll see here that we have moved two road projects forward to the Department of Transportation for stimulus funding. Work on the Career Transition Assistance Fair is well under way. My staff is working with the Office on Aging to put together some help for our Mobile Meals program that you will be hearing more about very, very soon. This is something we are going to need your help with and I know we'll be able to count on you. We are putting together plans for our first County Government Week celebration in early May. There is a lot going on, but even with all the tough times out there, we are still moving forward, working hard and trying to make your government the best it can be, every day.

Mike Ragsdale

## **TPO approves two Knox road projects for stimulus funding**

The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization recommended two road projects totaling \$5.45M to the Tennessee Department of Transportation for funding under the federal American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009. Both of the west Knox County projects met the stringent list of criteria set out under the act, including having obtained the right of way, having been designed and being able to



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get under contract within 120 days.

One project will improve Lovell Road from the Pellissippi Parkway ramps to Shaffer Road and is valued at \$3.1M. The second will widen Campbell Station Road from Jamestown Road to Parkside Drive from three to five lanes and is valued at \$2.35M.

Once the Tennessee Department of Transportation approves the recommendations, they will go forward to the Federal Highway Agency for final vetting. According to Jeff Welch, Director of the Transportation Planning Organization, the two projects are the first to be sent forward for stimulus funding. The Board will vote on additional projects at their meeting in April.

## County boasts 21 National Merit Scholar finalists

Bearden, Farragut, Karns, Powell and West high schools have among their number 21 students who have been selected as finalists for National Merit Scholarships for 2009. The prestigious National Merit Scholarship Program allows high school students to vie for academic recognition and undergraduate college scholarships, including a minimum award of a college scholarship ranging from \$2,500 to full tuition.

National Merit Scholar competitors are screened based on their academic achievements, the results of their Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test, National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) and Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT). Semifinalists are announced in the fall of a student's senior year, and winners are announced the following spring. About 55,000 high school students nationwide compete each year for awards through the program.

## 20th anniversary of Black Church Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS

Sunday marks the 20th annual prayer vigil known as The Black Church Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS. It is a week-long education and awareness campaign highlighting the role of the African American Church in addressing the AIDS crisis. This year's events begin with a prayer vigil and celebration of hope from 4-6 p.m. at Eternal Life Harvest Center, located at 1801 Western Avenue. The finale, featuring keynote speaker Rev. Dr. Eric L. Leake, will be Saturday, March 7 from 5-7 p.m., at the same location.

Activities throughout the week will include testing at local colleges and night clubs, education/awareness workshops presented at churches, colleges and high schools, distribution of resource toolkits to churches containing HIV/AIDS sermons, litanies, bible study topics, devotions and prayers. Churches will be asked to participate in the Seven Days of Continuous Prayer Calendar by committing to a day of prayer during the week for the healing of HIV/AIDS.

For more information on The Black Church Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS or the FAITH Coalition, contact Trina Gallman, Knox County Health Department, at (865) 215-5535.

## Mayor's Neighborhood Night

## Career Transition Assistance Fair



Sponsored by: Innovation Valley Inc., Knox County, the City of Knoxville and the Knoxville Chamber

### Where:

Jacob Building,  
Chilhowee Park

### When:

March 10, 2009  
Noon - 7 p.m.

### FREE!

Free Admission and  
Free Parking

### The Fair includes:

- Resource Showcase: information about job searches, job training, health insurance options, 401k rollover options, unemployment services, etc.

- Transition Seminars: how to seminars like writing a resume, interviewing effectively, searching the internet for jobs, etc.

- Resume Assistance Center: human resources or public relations professionals review resumes and recommend improvement.

For more information please  
visit us online at:  
[www.careertransitionfair.com/](http://www.careertransitionfair.com/)

### Youth Health Board

#### March 20th Application Deadline

Knox County high schoolers from every high school who are interested in health issues are encouraged to submit the Youth Health Board applications. Contact Carrie Thomas for more information: 865.215.5174 or [carrie.thomas@knoxcounty.org](mailto:carrie.thomas@knoxcounty.org).

### Fairview Center's



Karns residents talk with Mayor Ragsdale and Commissioner Brad Anders at February 19th Neighborhood Night

## Seuss, the Treehouse, jazz and the big book sale...all in March from your public library

There is quite a list of events in March for you and yours to enjoy, courtesy of the Knox County Library and the Friends of the Library. The **Friends' Annual Used Book Sale** kicks off **March 1st** and lasts through the 7th. On **March 2nd**, there is the annual celebration of **Dr. Seuss's birthday**...and this year would have been his 105th.

The Knoxville Jazz Festival swings into town on March 4th with the Knoxville Jazz Youth Orchestra. During the festival, the library will host the Freddy Cole Quartet; Keith Brown and The Nu-Jazz Fourtet at The Square Room, 4 Market Square.

On **March 11th**, the library kicks off their **Brown Bag - Green Book** series. The new Lunch & Learn series from Knox County Public Library and the City of Knoxville will focus on the important topic of sustainability and will feature a prominent Knoxville talking about a timely "green book" with a particular look at how ideas in the book are relevant to issues of sustainability in East Tennessee. The series kicks off with Chamber CEO and President Mike Edwardson Wednesday, March 11 at 12 p.m. in the Café 4 Conference Room discussing Thomas Friedman's *Hot, Flat and Crowded: Why We Need a Green Revolution and How It Can Renew America*.

Still another big event in March is the *Magic Tree House: The Musical* at the Tennessee Theatre on Monday, March 30 at 7 p.m. Tickets are on sale now at the Tennessee Theatre box office (684-1200), through Tickets Unlimited (656-4444) and online. Library card holders can receive a discount—just use the first 5 digits of your Knox County Public Library card as the promotional code.

Information about all of the events going on at the library can be found on the [library's website](#).



## Startup Business Competition

*March 12th Application Deadline*

Two start-up businesses will receive cash grants, free office space, business consulting and more. Entry forms and more information available at [www.knoxdevelopment.org/](http://www.knoxdevelopment.org/).

## Knox County Calendar

### February 28

Close Read discussion group in Powell

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Countywide Creek Cleanup

### March 1-7

Black Church Week of Prayer for Healing of AIDS

\*

Friends of the Library Used Book Sale

### March 4

Knoxville Jazz Festival begins

### March 9

Young Williams Animal Center Volunteer Orientation

### March 10

Career Transition Assistance Fair

\*

Dine Out for Education

### March 11

Brown Bag - Green Book series begins

### March 12

Fairview Center Competition deadline

### March 16-20

County Schools Spring Break

### March 16

Commission Finance Committee

### March 17

Mobile Meals Meal-a-thon

\*

Commission Intergovernmental Committee

### March 20

Youth Health Board application

## Expansion of Beck Center



Attendees at February 25th public meeting see preliminary designs for expansion to Beck Cultural Exchange Center

Join us in our efforts to make Knox County *A Great American Community*. **Become a part of the conversation.** Tell us about our programs and services that are working for you, and the ones that aren't. **Support our teachers** and the great work they are doing to educate our children. **Get involved** with the workforce development effort. **Participate** in the great events our libraries and parks offer. County government starts with you, the citizen, so **join in!**

Sincerely,

Mike Ragsdale, County Mayor  
*Knox County, A Great American Community*

deadline

**March 23**  
Commission Meeting

**March 30**  
Magic Tree House: The Musical

### Suggestions or comments?

We'd love to get your input. Send your comments or questions to our [newsletter editor](#).

### Quick Links

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