



MEDIA RELEASE

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Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs Joins US Navy Veteran Clarice Phelps to Recognize Women’s History Month

KNOXVILLE, TN – Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs continues to honor and recognize Women’s History Month today, this time with a special interview highlighting East Tennessee trailblazer Clarice Phelps.

Phelps is a US Navy veteran and an engineer with Oak Ridge National Laboratory. She helped contribute to the team that discovered the element Tennessine and its placement on the periodic table.

“Clarice Phelps is a great role model for girls and women overall,” said Mayor Jacobs. “Not only serving our nation in the U.S. Navy but also helping lead the way in science and technology so that when girls in our community see the work she has been a part of, it will inspire them to go into more science, engineering, and technologically driven fields.”

After her time in the US Navy, Phelps joined ORNL in 2009 and was part of the team that discovered Tennessine (Ts), or 117, the newest element listed on the periodic table. Her accomplishments created a full circle moment, as Phelps was interested in who would help make new scientific insights and discoveries as a high school student.

“Once we got confirmation, I was like ‘oh my gosh the little squares on the periodic table, we helped put that there,’” said Phelps. “I remember back when I was in high school and I had a great chemistry teacher, and I would look at all those empty squares. I just thought it was a full circle moment where you wonder how are they going to fill those squares and then you just become a part of it.”

In recognition of Women’s History Month, Mayor Jacobs also sat down for an interview with University of Tennessee Women’s Athletic Director Emeritus Joan Cronan earlier this March. Cronan served as the women’s athletics director at UT from 1983 to 2012 and was the university’s first female AD when she serviced as Interim Vice Chancellor and Athletics Director in 2011.

Both interviews are available on the Knox County government and Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs’ social media platforms as well as www.KnoxCounty.org.

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