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New facility opens doors for Scouts

Merit badges offered include auto maintenance, welding and plumbing

BY CHANDLER INIONS
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Scouts of America is known for teaching members how to tie knots and pitch tents, but what about the merit badges for welding and plumbing?

With a new facility being built in Wilson County, scouts can earn these and a whole lot more.

Officials from the Boy Scouts of America Middle Tennessee

Council (BSA-MTC) recently held a groundbreaking ceremony at Lebanon's Boxwell Scout Reservation for a facility designed to hold courses in those areas. Through those courses, those officials plan to offer scouts hands-on experience in what could become potential career fields.

Linda Carter, the associate development director for BSA-

MTC, said that with any hope, the facility might spark an interest in a scout's mind about what they want their future to look like.

Training tomorrow's skilled-trades workers is a major driving force behind this project.

"There has been no greater time than the present when the training of skilled trades workers has been more needed," said (Ret.) U.S. Army Major General William B. Hickman and chair of BSA-MTC's skilled trades

SEE SCOUTS/PAGE A4



Submitted

Pictured is a rendering of the Roy Grindstaff Skilled Trades Center, which is part of the Boy Scouts of America Middle Tennessee Council's Building for the New Century campaign at the Boxwell Scout Reservation in Lebanon. A groundbreaking ceremony was held recently, and plans are for it to be completed by next summer.

Watertown rallies to join Lebanon, Green Hill in champions circle

BY ANDY REED
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Region champions Lebanon and Green Hill were joined by Watertown last Friday night as the visiting Purple Tigers came from behind to capture a 31-21 victory over Trousdale County for the fourth consecutive regular season at John Kerr Field in Hartsville, giving the Purple Tigers their fourth consecutive Region 4-2A championship.

At Wilson Central, the host Wildcats kept their season going by cooling off red-hot Hillsboro, winning 24-16, to snag the fourth and final play-off berth in Region 5-5A.

Wilson Central's win pushed Mt. Juliet into third place.

However, the Golden Bears' attention was on their new, cross-town rival Green Hill, which rallied from a two-touchdown deficit over the final 8:07 to claim a 25-21 win at Elzie Patton Stadium.

Writing their names in the annals of the infant rivalry were quarterback Cade Mahoney and receiver Sean Aldridge, whose 4-yard hookup with four seconds to play lifted the Hawks to victory in Wilson County's first true city rivalry.

Friendship Christian School was looking for a chance to give the county four region champions but needed help. However, the Commanders didn't get that assistance as King's Academy rolled past Notre Dame, 41-7, in Chattanooga. It didn't matter anyway as Middle Tennessee Christian crushed the Commanders,



Photo courtesy of Aaliyah Rankhorn/Wilson Central Sports Information

Wilson Central sophomore Dakota McDermott celebrates following the Wildcats' 24-16 victory over visiting Hillsboro on Friday evening, securing the Wildcats a berth in the Class 5A playoffs.

SEE CHAMPIONS/PAGE A4

WCS addresses education town hall on money

Director: We need more funding from the state

BY CHRIS GREGORY
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The ranking education official in Tennessee kicked off a statewide tour to gauge Tennessee's appetite for school funding.

Wilson County Schools (WCS) Board of Education members say that the Tennessee Department of Education just needs to look in the mirror.

During the first of eight planned town-hall sessions, Tennessee Education Commissioner Penny Schwinn addressed a group of parents and educators in Hendersonville last week to solicit public comments on revamping the Basic Education Program (BEP), the funding formula for Tennessee schools.

While they acknowledged the town halls as a positive method of engagement, members of Wilson County's board of education said simply that state funding needs to improve.

"As director of schools, my priority is to get increased funding from the state level," Director of Wilson County Schools Jeff Luttrell said during a work session the following day.

According to Luttrell, the state has set the bar to low. Funds generated by the BEP are what the state has defined as sufficient to provide a basic level of education for Tennessee students. This basic level of funding includes both a state share of the BEP and a local share of the BEP.

"You can talk about how to divide up the slices all you want, but eventually, you have to increase the amount that goes into the pie," said Luttrell.

As for sufficing for what the



Jeff Luttrell

SEE WCS/PAGE A4

Milele to host town hall meeting in Mt. Juliet

BY MIGUEL DETILLIER
FOR THE DEMOCRAT

Mt. Juliet District 4 Commissioner Jennifer Milele plans to host a town hall meeting at Victory Baptist Church — located at 1777 Tate Lane in Mt. Juliet — on Thursday.

Milele will be discussing with residents of her district over future redistricting, District 4's growth and upcoming projects around the district.

She and the rest of the Mt. Juliet Board of Commissioners



Jennifer Milele

held workshops over the city's redistricted zones last month. They have looked over three options of the redrawing of Mt. Juliet's four city voting districts.

District 4 has more than 12,160 residents according to the 2020 U.S. Census. In the three different redrawing proposals, that district will get smaller to offset the city's growth.

She feared this will cause her to lose the western portion of District 4, which contains all city limits

south of Interstate-40.

"I have heard from a few constituents inquiring about options to keep more of my current district," said Milele. "Maintaining my district as it is today would be incredibly difficult because of its density."

Milele is also concerned that Mt. Juliet's prosperity would lead to its tax revenues leveling off and a massive expansion of multi-family housing across the city of Mt. Juliet.

"So far, thankfully, our revenues still are promising and above average, as is the demand for growth," said Milele.

She will present a visual presentation over Mt. Juliet's future growth and the future of its housing market during Thursday's town hall meeting.

Civil Site Design Group, a civil engineering group, will be discussing information with Milele over Beckwith Pointe, an industrial project, located on 75 acres south of I-40, behind Belinda City.

The Mt. Juliet Planning Commission gave a positive recommendation on providing Civil Site Design Group an

SEE MILELE/PAGE A4

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OBITUARIES

Marilyn Lasco
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Page A3

INSIDE

Classifieds B5 Sports B1-3, B6
Comics B4 Television A5
Obituaries A3

VIEWS. NOW.



Hawks score twice in final 56 seconds to stun Mt. Juliet
Page B1

