Mt. Juliet Strong
Community comes together after tornado leaves path of destruction through county

The community has come together after a tornado left a path of destruction throughout Mt. Juliet and Middle Tennessee. An EF3 tornado made its way through Mt. Juliet in the early hours of March 3, 2020, damaging homes and businesses throughout the area and claiming the lives of three people in Wilson County. Jim and Donna Eaton, married for nearly 58 years, and Brandy Barker, a security guard.

Since the tornado, the city has seen an overwhelming response from many communities across the state, in addition to Mt. Juliet’s own residents. A prayer gathering was quickly organized for March 5 at Providence United Methodist Church. Mt. Juliet Police set up a website for people to register to volunteer for clean-up throughout the week. They received so many responses that they had to halt registration.

Commissioner Ray Justice said the city had more than 4,000 registered volunteers, with some being sent to Lebanon and Putnam County, which suffered extreme damage and where at least 18 people died.

In addition to the homes and businesses lost, West

By Sarah Tate
Managing Editor

WCS announces end of year plan

By Sarah Tate
Managing Editor

In a press conference held at Mt. Juliet High School on March 9, Wilson County Schools announced plans for the remainder of the school year on Monday after a tornado damaged Stoner Creek Elementary and West Wilson Middle schools. No plans have been announced for what will happen at the end of the school year.

Director of Wilson County Schools Donna Wright said that while there is shock and anger about the destruction left by the tornado, she is thankful it didn’t happen earlier in the day, while students and

BOC thanks city for tornado response

By Sarah Tate
Managing Editor

In their first meeting since the March 3 tornado, Mt. Juliet city commissioners each expressed their gratitude for the response from the community.

“It has been a heartbreaking and exhausting week, both emotionally and physically,” said Mayor Ed Hagerty. “They jumped in, went to work, sought no recognition.”

The community also

By Sarah Tate
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Community Calendar

March 12
Health Fair
MJ Senior Center

March 12
Parkinson’s Support Group
Green Hill Church

March 31
Work Session
BOE Office

Additional Information

Wwww.TcomJ.com

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The community also
MTEMC wrapping up power restoration after tornado

Staff Reports

As of 8 p.m. on Friday, March 6 and after 90 straight hours of work, the team at Middle Tennessee Electric (MTE) has reduced the electric power outages to just scattered outages attributed to the recent tornado in Wilson County. While there is still much work yet to be completed, MTE has returned electricity to virtually all MTE members and businesses. Member service became more evident.

After the devastating tornado tore across Middle Tennessee at more than 50 miles per hour early Tuesday morning on March 3, MTE ultimately found itself with more than 42,000 member accounts without electricity. The EF3 tornado caused massive damage to portions of Mt. Juliet and Lebanon. Damage was extensive; hundreds of homes and businesses were damaged—many were completely destroyed. A number of areas and neighborhoods have been closed while the damage is being assessed and searched. The number of destroyed homes and the actual dollar value is still being totaled.

Also crippled was nearly all of TVA’s and MTE’s electrical infrastructure in the path of the storm.

In all, 31 TVA transmission structures were damaged or downed and 17 high-voltage transmission lines were downed, including at least one crossing Interstate 40 near Lebanon and another crossing the Cumberland River. For Middle Tennessee Electric, the damage was even more catastrophic to its distribution grid. Eight substations were damaged and taken off-line; more than 325 poles were broken or downed; and miles of line was dislodged.

This damage to the electric grid resulted in the loss of electric power more than 42,000 member accounts serving in excess of 105,000 residents and businesses.

Middle Tennessee Electric’s response launched as soon as outage reports began coming into its 24/7 Control Center monitoring the cooperatives grid. By 2:40 a.m., seven crews were on their way from multiple MTE offices to the impacted areas to assess the damage and begin restoration. By sunrise, Tuesday March 3, the true extent of the devastation became more evident. Nonetheless, the crews and the control center worked together to drop the number of accounts out to 19,000 by 8:30 a.m. and to 12,500 by 3:15 p.m. as more crews were called in from the rest of MTE’s offices, all of its contractors and at least four neighboring utilities. Eventually, the workforce swelled to more than 620.

As more assets and resources were brought to bear, the number of outages dropped to 8,300 accounts by 5 p.m. that same day. Crews continued to work through the night, bringing the outage number even lower to 5,200 accounts at 8 a.m. Wednesday, March 4, just 29 hours from first arriving on scene and despite the debris and destruction surrounding their worksites, no injuries to crew members were reported.

Over the next 48 hours, the entire organization mobilized to support the emergency tornado relief effort and restoration. Miles of wire and poles were replaced in hours when the same project typically would take 8-12 weeks under normal circumstances. Engineers found practical ways to repair circuits and reroute electricity. Member service specialists kept members aware and informed. Coordination took place with TVA, FEMA, TEMA and WEMA. Support staff delivered meals to crews and members. Member services performed welfare checks at member homes. As members of the communities it serves, the Middle Tennessee Electric team came together to deliver its best when the situation was at its worst.

“It was a week where we saw incredible destruction, heartbreak and loss. But it was also a week when we saw Team MTEMC at its finest. Great teams respond in great ways to great challenges, so it comes as no surprise that’s just what happened,” said Chris Jones, president and CEO of MTE. “It has been incredible and historic; I couldn’t be prouder of every single MTE team member.”

Jones added that a great deal of work was yet to be done to rebuild the infrastructure and asked for the members’ continued patience and support as that work continued over the next several months.
The Community Foundation opens Emergency Response Fund

Staff Reports

In the wake of deadly and destructive tornadoes, power outages, road closures and rescues throughout Davidson and surrounding counties early Tuesday, The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee (CFMT) activated the Middle Tennessee Emergency Response Fund to support the affected communities and nonprofits helping victims address their ongoing needs. The Fund received more than $2.1 million in donations in just 36 hours.

Grants from the Fund will be made to nonprofits providing vital services both immediate and long term. Their work helps free nonprofits up to concentrate on delivering vital services while they “connect generosity with need” and the community sets out to rebuild lives.

“We know when disasters strike, there are no ‘quick fixes,’” said Ellen Lehman, president of The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee. “We need to support the affected communities and the nonprofits on the ground helping victims and addressing their needs.”

The Titans Foundation and Titans Controlling Owner Amy Adams Strunk announced a donation of $1 million to the Fund following the devastation of a deadly EF-3 tornado that ripped through Nashville and surrounding areas early March 3 that left at least 24 people dead.

In addition, the NFL Foundation will make a $250,000 contribution to the Fund and will work with local schools to assess needs for football field repair and equipment.

The total thus far of $22,674.70 includes more than 7,000 online gifts.

“Everyone in this community and throughout Tennessee should be eternally grateful to the Tennessee Titans for their tremendous efforts in helping the victims of the tornadoes,” said Lehman. “This is an extraordinary gift toward our ability to respond and restore the damage caused by these disastrous storms.”

Among the nonprofits anticipated to receive aid through the donations include Hands On Nashville, Westminster Home Connection, Family and Children’s Service, the Community Resource Center, Crossroads Campus, and more.

“We are so encouraged about the amount of charity people have shown in the aftermath of Monday night’s tragedy,” Adams Strunk said. “As leaders in the community, we want to lend our help to this cause of healing and rebuilding. Together, we will help our neighbors through this long and difficult process. We are hopeful that others will join us in supporting this effort any way they can.”

To give to the Middle Tennessee Emergency Response Fund, go to www.cfmt.org.

The nonprofit Hands On Nashville is also working with the city’s Office of Emergency Management to determine what the volunteer needs are at this time. If you are interested in volunteering for disaster relief efforts, visit www.hon.org.

Anyone interested in donating goods can visit the nonprofit Community Resource Center’s website at www.crcnashville.org. It is the official agency for product donation. Currently, the CRC is specifically looking for personal hygiene products, bleach, trash bags, box cutters and gloves.

Staffers at The Crisis Line, which is part of the nonprofit Family & Children’s Service, are available 24/7 to listen if you need to talk (615) 244-7444.

The Community Foundation exists to promote and facilitate giving in the 40 counties of Middle Tennessee and beyond. It does this by accepting gifts of any size and by empowering individuals, families, companies, nonprofits, and communities to respond to needs and opportunities that matter.

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Zoomer Book Club

Stretching our MINDS

Contact kelly@zoneconditioning.com for class schedule and how to become connected.

MARCH 12

Health Fair

The Mt. Juliet Senior Activity Center is sponsoring a Health Fair on March 12, from 8-11 a.m. More than 20 healthcare facilities and providers are participating, and the event is open to the public. Call 615-758-9114 with any questions.

MARCH 12

Parkinson’s Support Group

Peterson Foundation for Parkinson’s is having its monthly meeting at 11:30 a.m. March 12 at Green Hill Church, 13251 Lebanon Road, Mt. Juliet.

MARCH 12

Town Hall Meeting

District 4 Commissioner Jennifer Milele will host a Town Hall meeting Thursday, March 12, at 6:30 p.m. at Grace Baptist Church, 201 Belinda Pkwy. Topics include the 2019-2020 Transportation Plan/Future plan for Mt. Juliet. Guest speaker is Linn Yeager (VP) of REHAB 23/Wilson County Emergency Services.

MARCH 13

Free Clothes

The Free Clothing Store at Life Church will be open every day this week by appointment Monday through Thursday for anyone who was affected by the tornadoes to come and shop for free clothes. It will be open to everyone to come shop for free clothes, some free groceries and free breakfast this Friday, March 13, from 9 a.m. until noon. If you were a victim of the tornadoes and would like to schedule an appointment, call 615-469-5190 or email info@LifeChurchFamily.com.

MARCH 17

Free Fitness Class

Free Fitness Class every Tuesday evening 6:30 p.m. at Life Church in the youth center. Life Church is located at 3688 Highway 109 Lebanon, Tn. Right across the street from The Dollar General Store. This is a great class for all ages and all fitness levels. For more information you can email info@LifeChurchFamily.com.

MARCH 31

Work Session

The Wilson County Board of Education will hold a Work Session on March 31, 2020, at 5 p.m. at the Wilson County BOE Administrative and Training Complex, 415 Harding Drive, Lebanon, TN 37087. The Work Session is for informational purposes only. No actions are taken, or voted on, by the Board at the Work Session.

APRIL 6

BOE Meeting

The Wilson County Board of Education will meet in a Regular Scheduled Board Meeting on April 6, 2020, at 6 p.m. at the Wilson County BOE Administrative and Training Complex, 415 Harding Drive, Lebanon, TN 37087. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss any matters legally brought before the Board.
FEMA teams canvassing impacted counties

By: Staff Reports

FEMA Disaster Survivor Assistance (DSA) teams are working in areas of Davidson, Putnam and Wilson counties affected by the March 3 tornadoes and storms. These teams help survivors register for assistance, identify and address potential needs, and make connections with local, state, federal and voluntary agencies with the resources to assist them.

Teams will be reaching out across the affected areas.

Like all FEMA field personnel, DSA team members can be identified by their photo identifications and the FEMA logo on their shirts. Residents are encouraged to ask for official identification before providing any personal information.

DSA staff can register survivors for disaster assistance, update their records and make referrals to local, state, and voluntary agency partners. During the registration process, specialists will ask for some personal information including social security number, annual income and bank information, as well as the names of occupants of the impacted property.

In addition to registering with DSA, survivors can apply for assistance by:

• Visiting DisasterAssistance.gov.
• Calling 800-621-3362 (800-462-7585 TTY users) (Multilingual operators are available). The toll-free numbers are open from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. local time, seven days a week.

After registering for disaster assistance, you may be referred to the U.S. Small Business Administration. In times of disasters, the SBA offers low-interest loans for businesses, homeowners and renters. The SBA will contact you by telephone with information on how to apply. There’s no obligation to accept a loan, but you may miss out on the largest source of federal disaster recovery funds if you don’t submit an application.

Information about low-interest SBA disaster loans and application forms are available online at SBA.gov/disaster. You may also call 800-659-2955 or email DisasterCustomerService@sba.gov. If you use TTY, call 800-877-8339.

Although the federal government cannot make you whole, it may help your recovery move forward by providing grants for basic repairs that make your home safe, sanitary and secure. FEMA disaster assistance also may provide temporary help with a place for you and your family to stay while you build your own recovery plan.

Forbes recognizes five Pinnacle team members

By: Staff Reports

Five of Pinnacle Asset Management’s advisors — Sam Oakley, Brock Kidd, James Hare, Brick Sturgeon, and Barry Moody — are among the Raymond James-affiliated advisors named to the Forbes list of as “Best-In-State Wealth Advisors” for Tennessee. The list, which recognizes advisors from national, regional and independent firms, was released online Jan. 16, 2020.

The Forbes ranking of Best-In-State Wealth Advisors, developed by SHOOK Research, is based on an algorithm of qualitative criteria, mostly gained through telephone and in-person due diligence interviews, and quantitative data. Those advisors who are considered have a minimum of seven years’ experience, and the algorithm weights factors like revenue trends, assets under management, compliance records, industry experience and those that encompass best practices in their practices and approach to working with clients.

Portfolio performance is not a criteria due to varying client objectives and lack of audited data. Neither Forbes nor SHOOK receives a fee in exchange for rankings. This ranking is not indicative of advisor’s future performance, is not an endorsement, and may not be representative of individual clients’ experience. Neither Raymond James nor any of its Financial Advisors or RIA firms pay a fee in exchange for this award/rating.

Oakley, who joined Raymond James in 2017, has 36 years of experience in the financial services industry. Kidd joined Raymond James in 2000 and has 27 years of financial services experience. Hare, who joined Raymond James in 2007, has 22 years of industry experience. Sturgeon joined Raymond James in 2017 and has 30 years of financial services experience. Moody, who joined Raymond James in 2000, has 27 years of experience in the financial services industry.

The team at Pinnacle Financial Partners provides a full range of banking, investment, trust, mortgage and insurance products and services designed for businesses and their owners and individuals interested in a comprehensive relationship with their financial institution. The firm is the No. 1 bank in the Nashville-Murfreesboro-Franklin MSA, according to 2019 deposit data from the FDIC.

Pinnacle earned a spot on FORTUNE’s 2019 list of the 100 Best Companies to Work For® in the U.S., its third consecutive appearance. American Banker recognized Pinnacle as one of America’s Best Banks to Work For seven years in a row.

The firm began operations in a single location in downtown Nashville in October 2000 and has since grown to approximately $27.8 billion in assets as of Dec. 31, 2019. As the second-largest bank holding company headquartered in Tennessee, Pinnacle operates in 12 primarily urban markets in Tennessee, the Carolinas, Virginia and Georgia.
praised the faith community. Many local churches immediately stepped up, gathering donations and volunteers and feeding responders throughout the week. A prayer gathering was quickly organized and held Thursday at Providence United Methodist Church.

“I’m absolutely humbled by the response of our city employees and faith community, the churches and volunteers,” said Hagerty. The commissioners also were grateful for the response Mt. Juliet received from other cities and communities in Tennessee. Trucks from all over the state brought much needed help, donations and volunteers to assist in recovery and relief.

“Despite some difficult days ahead, we will come out of this better and stronger than before,” said Hagerty. “This event will not define us.”

Commissioner Ray Justice, who helped organize volunteer response, praised the first and second responders as well as all those who have come to the city’s aid. Vice Mayor James Maness said that everyone on the commission is grieving with all of those who were impacted and is sending hope and prayers of healing.

“A city we’ve been bent, but we’re not broken,” said Maness. “We’ve seen the worst of Mother Nature, but we’ve seen the best from our people.”

Maness also urged patience and compassion as the city continues to recover.

Commissioner Jennifer Miele said she couldn’t believe all of the damage, but is thankful for the donations and volunteers who have stepped forward to offer their help. She said her thoughts and prayers are with all those who have been impacted and who have lost loved ones.

“It’s an emotional state that most people have never experienced,” said Commissioner Art Giles, whose district was the main area affected by the tornado. Amidst the destruction left behind, Giles has been moved by the response from the community. The compassion and love that has been on display throughout the week is touching.

“Continue to pray for us as a city as we unite together,” said Giles. “We’re going to get out of this. We are Mt. Juliet Strong.”

From TOY, PAGE 1

ing, she believed she could reach more students and help more people by teaching.

“It was probably the best decision that I’ve ever made,” she said. She loves teaching middle school because she is able to help them develop and make an impact. “You set the framework for the rest of their life in middle school.”

This is Serbin’s first year teaching journalism at MJMS, where she previously taught physical education. Based on her background working with the yearbook at school, she was offered the chance to build a media arts program.

The Chronicle of Mt. Juliet, MARCH 11, 2020 Page 5

“Why I am standing here today is that as I’ve been watching, as they’ve grown up, I realize that the more I challenge, the more things they can have possibilities of as they grow up,” she said.

Serbin said it was meaningful to her to be chosen as Teacher of the Year because she knows that the time she puts in does not go unnoticed.

“I was totally shocked when they announced it,” she said. “I’m beyond grateful. There are so many people working in this building. We all work together.”

MJKMS is a special place, and she enjoys the support from everyone at the school, which she called “one big family.”

“I love my colleagues,” she said. “I love the people I work with.”

Encore Theatre presents ‘Barely Heirs’

Staff Reports

Encore Theatre continues its production this weekend of “Barely Heirs,” an adult comedy by David Lassig and directed by Sara Dhom. The show opened March 6 and will run March 13, 14 and 15. Friday and Saturday shows are 7:30 p.m. and the Sunday matinees are at 2:30 p.m. The house will open 30 minutes prior to show time.

This outrageous piece of comic farce brings the audience a full-filled evening of laughs, chaos and confusion as the main character, Jane (Victoria Beth), desperately tries to find a way to take delivery of her inheritance by meeting the one requirement that she be wed, which she isn’t. To pull this off she needs to “borrow” her best friend’s husband, Tom (Matt Smith). Complications ensuing with a slippery lawyer (Charles Stroud) and Tom’s real wife Claire (Tammy England), who joins the charade disguised as a second stand-in husband. Add Janie’s ex-boyfriend Paul (Stephen Stroud) who is moving back in today and another surprise visitor, Jane’s mother, Betty (Jodi Malitsky). Enter Officer Rickie (BUFFI Hollands), at the door to investigate all of these neighborhood shenanigans.

Tickets can be purchased online at Tickets Nashville: $16 for adults and $13 for seniors. Seats can also be reserved by calling 615-598-8950.

Encore Theatre Company is located at 6978 Lebanon Road in Mt. Juliet, just west of Highway 109. For auditions and upcoming productions, visit Encore-Theatre-Company.org.

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“It’s been a challenge after being in physical education for 21 years, but I looked at it as a new challenge, something new to help create,” she said.

As the new journalism teacher, she came up with a curriculum that allows her students to learn about different aspects of media, such as news, blogs, photography, digital and more. Next year, Serbin hopes to introduce her students to broadcasting. She also said it’s important for students to have an outlet to express their creative side in school when they may not have the chance at home.

“I think the more opportunities we give our students, the better they are in society, the more things they can have possibilities of as they grow up,” she said.

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From BOC, PAGE 1

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“Continue to pray for us as a city as we unite together,” said Giles. “We’re going to get out of this. We are Mt. Juliet Strong.”

Notice is hereby given that a Republican and Democratic State Primary Election will be held in all precincts in Wilson County, Tennessee on Thursday, August 6, 2020 for the purpose of nominating a U.S. Senator, U.S. House of Representative Congressional District 6, Tennessee State Representative District 46, Tennessee State Representative District 57 and Democratic State Executive Commissioner—District 17 to fill a vacancy in that position until 2022.

Election Notice

Wilson County Election Commission

FEDERAL & STATE PRIMARY ELECTION

LEBANON SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT ELECTION

AUGUST 6, 2020

Notice is hereby given that the Republican and Democratic Federal and State Primary Election will be held in all precincts in Wilson County, Tennessee on Thursday, August 6, 2020 for the purpose of nominating a U.S. Senator, U.S. House of Representative Congressional District 6, Tennessee State Representative District 46, Tennessee State Representative District 57 and Democratic State Executive Commissioner—District 17 to fill a vacancy in that position until 2022.

The Chroni...
As a pastor, I get to hear a lot of well-meaning philosophies addressing the idea of attending a particular church on a particular day. One that seems popular is to downplay the value of gathering with God’s saints for worship and fellowship. As I was thinking about these theories and the value of regular church involvement, I was reminded of what Luke recorded concerning our Lord Jesus in chapter 6 of his gospel. “…as was His custom, He went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day.” It’s pretty clear how Jesus felt about gathering with God’s people at a particular place on a particular day. Luke recognized that it was customary for Him to go each Sabbath and join with the fellow believers in the synagogue. Now, this isn’t an article to beat people up with a condemning word about church attendance. Rather, it is an attempt to get us to see the value, and yes obedience, of allowing ourselves to become a part of a local body of believers and integrate with that body as a customary thing.

The issue isn’t whether or not we are in a room at a particular time at a particular place so we can be counted as present. The heart of the matter is are we one of the “living stones” who make up this organic group known as the church?

As was His custom...

Larry Grainger
Abundant Life Church
As you awake each day, do you have a routine or plan for your day? For most of us, we sometimes feel as if we are simply going through the motions where one day leads to the next and so on. Unfortunately, before you know it, your days can sort of become mundane and repetitive.

Let me explain. Most people work a Monday through Friday job. Your routine more than likely sounds something like this: You awake in the morning and either exercise, shower, set out the clothes you will wear for the day, eat breakfast at home, in the car or at work. After your first four hours of work you take a lunch break for either 30 minutes or an hour. Sometimes you take more, but we won’t tell. You then work another four hours or more before leaving work. You either stop to pick up the kids, or they are now driving, you then either pickup dinner/supper or you go home and cook.

After dinner or supper, you help with homework, do homework or do chores, before finally getting in a little relaxation time. At the end of the night you get ready for bed, go to bed and awake to do it all over again. When Friday and the weekend arrives, you feel somewhat rejuvenated but wonder what you will do for the weekend. Not sure what there is to do you settle on dinner and a movie Friday night if you have the energy. Saturday arrives and again you find yourself wondering what to do and likely spend the day doing yardwork and chores. Sunday arrives and you go to church. After church you have lunch before returning home the remainder of the day in order to rest up for a new workweek.

This may not sound exactly like your life, but for the most part our days can feel as though they are turning into a routine. There are peaks and valleys in life that everyone goes through. Life is a gift that should be enjoyed. There are some that even wish the weekdays away in order to get to the weekend sooner.

As we all know, there are 365 days in a year, 12 months in a year, 52 weeks in a year, 7 days in a week, 24 hours in a day, 60 minutes in an hour, 86,400 seconds in a day. What are you going to do with your 86,400 seconds today? Life is not dull, life is not routine, and life is not guaranteed. We all have one life to live and as each second passes we lose another precious moment of life that we can never ever get back. The seconds pass quickly so please enjoy each one of your 86,400 seconds each day. Life is much too precious to waste. So please live life to the very fullest.

REFLECTIONS FROM AN OLD FRIEND

86,400 seconds

Kenny Martin
City Manager
Mt. Juliet, TN

As you awake each day, do you have a routine or plan for your day? For most of us, we sometimes feel as if we are simply going through the motions where one day leads to the next and so on. Unfortunately, before you know it, your days can sort of become mundane and repetitive.

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Top — Prayer services were held Thursday, March 5, at Providence United Methodist Church, bringing the community together to pray for first responders and those impacted by the tornado. (Photo by Phyllis Robinson) | Bottom — The Mt. Juliet Community Center received many donations in the days following the tornado that ripped through Middle Tennessee in the early hours of March 3. (Photo by Sarah Tate)

From TOGETHER, PAGE 1

Wilson Middle School, Stoner Creek Elementary School and Mt. Juliet Christian Academy were damaged in the storms. Information on Wilson County Schools plans for the rest of the year can be found on Page 1.

Clean-up is ongoing, and city officials urge patience and compassion while the community continues to recover.

Top — First Baptist Church Mt. Juliet, which was damaged in the tornado, had its Sunday worship service at Mt. Juliet High School. (Photo by Nicholas Fontenot) | Middle — President Donald Trump greets Mt. Juliet Mayor Ed Hagerty after landing in Nashville on Friday, March 5. (Photo courtesy of MJPD) | Bottom — A bus of volunteers prepares to help clean-up efforts around Mt. Juliet. (Photo courtesy of MJPD)

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- Ron Warren

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Gov. Lee proclaims
‘Tennessee’s Day of Hope’

Staff Reports

Governor Bill Lee recently proclaimed Tuesday, March 10, 2020, as “Tennessee’s Day of Hope.” The proclamation is in recognition of community events that were planned across the state to educate, energize and empower Tennesseans to do what they can to get involved and reverse the trends of deadly drug overdoses and suicides.

The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, its Faith-Based Community Coordinators, Lifeline Peer Project Coordinators, and Substance Abuse Prevention Coalitions across the state organized Day of Hope events that included information on addiction, what treatment looks like, connecting to recovery supports, opioid overdose reversal, and suicide prevention.

While evidence-based treatment and recovery services are foundational to overcoming substance use disorder or mental illness, there is powerful motivation for change found in the act of hope,” said Marie Williams, LCSW, Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services commissioner. “Whether it’s hope for a new life in recovery, hope for long-prayed-for reconnection with family, or hope for healing and happiness, hope is a force for good in our state.”

In addition to information and education, some Day of Hope event organizers touched on related topics including criminal justice alternatives and human trafficking. In Jackson, members of the Jackson-Madison Prevention Coalition and their partners organized a day full of events including a service project.

“We recognize that no social problem occurs in isolation. If we touch addiction, we also touch human trafficking, domestic violence, mental health, physical wellness, and more,” said Amy Mitchell Bechtol, Faith-Based Community Coordinator for West Tennessee. “The whole day is about all of us coming together to bring the issue home and acknowledging the many partners in this life-saving work.”

From SCHOOLS, PAGE 1

Teachers were in school, as there would have been many more fatalities.

In an effort retain some sense of normalcy for students, WCS determined the best course of action is to go into split shifts at surrounding schools. This action has previously been successful within the county. Stoner Creek will split the school day with Springdale Elementary while West Wilson will split with Mt. Juliet Middle School. Each school will meet in four-hour blocks.

By moving to split shifts, the students at the impacted schools will stay together and have the same teachers.

Stoner Creek will meet from 6:45 to 10:45 a.m. at Springdale Elementary’s campus while Springdale will hold classes from 12-4 p.m.

Mt. Juliet Middle School will meet from 8 a.m. until noon, while West Wilson will use the MJMS campus from 1-5 p.m.

In the days following the storms, Wright said she received many suggestions about what to do, including dividing the students among multiple schools. She said that while that suggestion was well intended, WCS does not “sort and distribute” their students. Keeping them together allows students the chance to get through this transition together, surrounded by friends and teachers they are familiar with.

The need for students to have a normal, structured routine will be necessary in helping them overcome the stress of such a traumatic event, even for those whose families were not directly impacted by the storms. Addressing the teachers in attendance, Wright encouraged them to love their students and to be nurturing and sensitive to their needs.

WCS will also offer before/after-school care, and they are working to provide this with no expense for parents. The before-school program will be available for the children in the second shift of the day. For example, Springdale students can come to school during the first shift, staying with the before-school program, and then go to their normal classes once the Stoner Creek shift is complete.

The same goes for Stoner Creek; those students can move from their shift into the after-school program.

New traffic plans will be announced for Mt. Juliet Middle and West Wilson, and Stoner Creek parents are encouraged to check Springdale’s website for their traffic pattern. The traffic for MJMS will affect parent traffic at Elzie D. Patton Elementary as the afternoon pickup line will not start before 1:30 p.m. The district asks for patience in acclimating to the new traffic patterns and schedules.

District-wide, all field trips will be suspended for the remainder of the school year, with the exception of career day and Special Olympics. The district did say, however, that they will accommodate academic competitions and athletic trips. Spring sports will go on.

For more information about the new schedules, or to submit any questions to WCS, visit the district’s website at www.wcschools.com.

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Mt. Juliet’s World Champion “Ringer Slinger”

By Beth Lewis-Hinds

Some things just say “country.” Things like fried chicken, apple butter and horseshoe pitching in the backyard. These days, horseshoes have gone from family reunions to an internationally recognized sport, and Mt. Juliet boasts the best female pitcher in the world.

Mt. Juliet resident Joan Elmore won her seventh World Horseshoe Pitching Championship in Hamilton/Buffalo, NY in July, 2018. She went undefeated in the championship round finishing 15-0 with impressive 86.91 percent average, the highest average of the tournament’s more than 1,200 pitchers. This is the second highest average ever pitched by a woman in championship competition. She pitched 726 shoes in world championship competition. She is also the only woman to pitch 726 shoes in the tournament’s more than 1,200 pitchers. This is the highest average of the tournament’s more than 1,200 pitchers. This is the second highest average ever pitched by a woman in championship competition. She pitched 726 shoes in world championship competition.

Joan Elmore was born and raised in the country in Fentress County. She never pitched growing up or even after she married and raised two daughters of her own. Elmore only gave pitching a try after her youngest finished her own career in softball and left her with time on her hands.

From the beginning, this southpaw was a natural, but as stellar as her subsequent career as a ringer slinger has been, she is still better recognized in other places than she is in Mt. Juliet, where she has lived for 33 years. Events like the Mt. Juliet Homecoming and demonstrations at the local senior citizens center give locals a chance to meet the world champion next door.

“I enjoy coming to the Mt. Juliet Homecoming and seeing all the people and events,” she said. “They always serve a great meal and, who knows, I could influence someone in the crowd to take up horseshoes.”

The homecoming is a natural event for this country girl. She is known in her family for her home cooking – chicken and dumplings and chocolate pies being among her specialties – as she is for her pitching. Elmore is holding out hope that eventually the City of Mt. Juliet will install public horseshoe courts that comply with the regulations of the NHPA. If that ever happens, she thinks there is a chance the city could host state and national competitions that bring pitchers from around the country and world, and all their tourist dollars with them.

“Horseshoe pitchers are a congenial, family-oriented group, with money to spend,” she added. “They stay in hotels, eat at local restaurants and shop locally while visiting an area. Given that we are a well-behaved group, there’s really no downside.”

Until then, she is the guest of honor at the Joan Elmore Invitational tournament held each June in Crossville. Like most tournaments, the Invitational offers categories for pitchers of different ages and skill levels – men, women, elders and teens. It’s a sport that offers something for everyone and it’s one of the most affordable sports. It also offers a chance for diverse people to get to know one another.

“Over the best things about being a horseshoe pitcher is meeting people from all around the country and from other counties as well,” Elmore said. “I have made some life-long friends among my fellow pitchers.”

So, if you’re looking for a new hobby, or just want to see a fellow Mt. Julian who is the best in the world at her sport, come down to the Mt. Juliet Homecoming and see if inspiration strikes.

The stories from Tales from Homecoming can be found in the book “Homecoming: The Stories of Mount Juliet, Tennessee.”

Mt. Juliet’s World Champion “Ringer Slinger”

Joan Elmore, World Horseshoe Pitching Champion

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BARKER, Brandy Nicole

Brandy Barker passed away March 3, 2020, at age 39. A memorial service was held March 7 at Sellars Funeral Home in Lebanon.

Mrs. Barker is survived by two children: Cailey Apple and Dalsten Bennett; fiancé: Chad Berryhill; mother: Connie Hill; stepfather: William Howard; and niece: Chelsea Sanders. She is preceded in death by father Robert Howard and grandparenaces Dorthy and Rob Kay Jr.

Mrs. Sellars Funeral Home, Lebanon TN, 615.444.9393.

EATON, James Monroe and Donna Yvonne Mayfield


Mr. Eaton was born in Antioch, Tennessee, on March 4, 1935, to the late Herbert and Susie Pearl Hartman Eaton. Mrs. Eaton was born on Nov. 4, 1950, in Smyrna, Tennessee, to the late William and Thelma Jones Mayfield.

They are survived by their 3 children: James Monroe “Monte” Eaton Jr. (Becky); Kristi Dawn Lane (Brian) and Mitchell Alan Eaton (Crystal McDonald); grandchildren: Derek Austin Hardy-Moore (Karen), Andrew “Drew” Hardy-Moore, Cara Dawn Smith and Jacob Aaron “Jake” Hardy-Moore (Eva); as well as nine great-grandchildren.

Mr. Eaton is also survived by his siblings, Esther Mae Hand and Bobby Eaton Jr. Mrs. Eaton is also survived by her siblings, Richard Mayfield, Debra Mayfield, Arnold Mayfield and Ronald Mayfield.

Jim and Donna Eaton were married more than 57 years and were heavily involved with First Baptist Church Mt. Juliet.

A gathering of family and friends was held March 6 at Woodlawn-Roesch-Patton Funeral Home. Another gathering was held March 7 at Green Hill Church, followed by Celebration of Life services.

In lieu of flowers, donations are highly requested to be made to First Baptist Church Mount Juliet, 735 North Mt Juliet Rd, Mt. Juliet, TN 37122 to help with cleanup and restoration from the tornado.

A full obituary for Jim and Donna Eaton can be found at dignitymemorial.com

GARNER, Davis Eugene

Davis Garner passed away March 5, 2020, at age 71. A funeral service was held March 10 at Sellars Funeral Home, and interment followed at Cedar Grove Cemetery.

Mr. Garner is survived by wife; Sonnie Garner; son; Dwayne (Letrenia) Garner; father-in-law Tony Duke; sister Faye (Jim) Brinley; grandchildren Corey, Courtney, Carrie, Caleb, Cassie, and Cammie Garner; three great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Mrs. Garner is survived by her father; Frank Garner and mother-in-law; James McGinley, as well as various nieces and nephews.

Mr. Garner is preceded in death by his parents, James Webb and Susie Pearl Hartman Garner; three great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews.

A Celebration of Life will be held Saturday, March 14, at Hermitage United Methodist Church. Visitation will be 1-3 p.m., with the service beginning at 3 p.m.

In lieu of flowers the family requests donations be made to Hermitage United Methodist Church (205 Belinda Dr, Hermitage, TN 37076) or Ronald McDonald House (2144 Fairfax Ave, Nashville 37212).

KELLOM, Oscar Sr.

Oscar Kellyom Sr. passed away on Lebanon Feb. 13, 2020, at age 77. No services are scheduled.

Oscar leaves behind two sons, Oscar Kellyom Jr. and Mark Kellem, along with several nieces, nephews and grandchildren.

Sellars Funeral Home, Lebanon TN, 615.444.9393.

MORAVEC, David A.

David A. Moravec, age 35 of Lebanon, passed away March 2, 2020. A funeral service was held March 8 at Sellars Funeral Home in Mt. Juliet, and interment followed at Mt. Juliet Memorial Gardens.

In addition to his parents, Steve and Shirley Moravec, he is survived by children, Cameron Moravec, Carly Moravec, Parker Moravec, and Cade Moravec; wife, Stacey Neely Moravec; and older brother, Christopher A. Moravec.


SCHROEDER, Karen Elaine

Karen Schroeder passed away Feb. 27, 2020, at age 68. A Celebration of Life was held at Sellars Funeral Home in Lebanon.

Karen is survived by her husband of 45 years Shay Schroeder; children Shanee Harrell (Matthew) Young and Shay L. Schroeder; grandchildren Callie Harrell, Brandi Harrell, Savanna Harrell, Ciera Young, and Sophie Young; and brother Johnny (Lourie Ann) Gilbert.

She is preceded in death by parents J.D. and Betty McCoy Gilbert.

Sellars Funeral Home, Lebanon TN, 615.444.9393.

PARTLOW, Eddie Arnold

Eddie Arnold Partlow was born Jan. 15, 1943.

He was preceded in death by his parents Richard Ben Partlow and Marie Partlow Hogan, brother Richard Ben “Dickie” Partlow II, and sister Donna Partlow Gaines.

He is survived by his wife Barbara Farris Partlow, son Troy Wayne (Valerie) Partlow, daughter Amy Partlow Apple, grandchildren Tyler Robert Apple and Rebecca Jane Apple, and sister Annetta Henley.

A Celebration of Life will be held Saturday, March 14, at Hermitage United Methodist Church. Visitation will be 1-3 p.m., with the service beginning at 3 p.m.

In lieu of flowers the family requests donations be made to Hermitage United Methodist Church (205 Belinda Dr, Hermitage, TN 37076) or Ronald McDonald House (2144 Fairfax Ave, Nashville 37212).

PARTLOW, David A.

David A. Partlow, age 35 of Lebanon, passed away March 2, 2020. A funeral service was held March 8 at Sellars Funeral Home in Mt. Juliet, and interment followed at Mt. Juliet Memorial Gardens.

In addition to his parents, Steve and Shirley Moravec, he is survived by children, Cameron Moravec, Carly Moravec, Parker Moravec, and Cade Moravec; wife, Stacey Neely Moravec; and older brother, Christopher A. Moravec.


SMITH, Albert A.

Albert A. Smith, age 81 of Dauphin Island, Alabama, formerly of Lebanon, passed away March 4, 2020. He was preceded in death by parents, James Webb and Johnnie Fish Smith and siblings, Alice Smith Little, Mayme Smith Wilson, Nancy Smith McMillan, and Robert Sloan Smith; brothers-in-law, Melvin Holland Smith and Tavrogan, and sister-in-law, Shirley Smith. He is survived by wife of 58 years, Nancy Jean McElhaney Smith; sons, Ricky Smith and Howard (Eva Brown) Smith; brothers, Edwin (Charline) Smith, James “Jay” Smith; sisters, Naomi Holland, Marty (Stratten) Bone, and Mary Hagan; grandchildren, Derrick Clark Smith and his fiancée, Darragh Lynch, Jeremy Thomas Smith and his fiancée, Haley Presser, and Daniel Tyler Smith; and several nieces, nephews and other loving family members.

Visitation will be held Friday, March 13, at First Presbyterian Church in Lebanon from 5-7 p.m. with a Masonic service to follow at 7 p.m. Funeral services will be Saturday, March 14, at 2 p.m. with visitation one hour prior to the service at the church, and interment will follow in the Wilson County Memorial Gardens.


HUFF, David A.

David A. Huff, age 59 of Mt. Juliet, went Home to be with his Lord and Savior on March 4, 2020. A funeral service was held March 9 at Sellars Funeral Home in Mt. Juliet, and interment followed at Suggs Creek Cemetery.

He is survived by loving wife of 37 years, Dianne Huff; son, David Allen (Bianca Blue) Huff, Jr.; like a daughter, Ashley Zerby; step-daughter Ann Gentry Garner; son Dwayne (Letrenia) Garner; father-in-law Tony Duke; sister Faye (Jim) Brinley; grandchildren Corey, Courtney, Carrie, Caleb, Cassie, and Cammie Garner; three great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Mr. Garner is preceded in death by his parents, James Webb and Susie Pearl Hartman Garner; three great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews.

A Celebration of Life will be held Saturday, March 14, at Hermitage United Methodist Church. Visitation will be 1-3 p.m., with the service beginning at 3 p.m.

In lieu of flowers the family requests donations be made to Hermitage United Methodist Church (205 Belinda Dr, Hermitage, TN 37076) or Ronald McDonald House (2144 Fairfax Ave, Nashville 37212).


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6501.
Tennessee State Parks to host Spring Hikes

Staff Reports

Fresh air and a new season await Tennesseans on Saturday, March 21, as Tennessee State Parks host the annual Spring Hikes at all 56 state parks. Hikes of all levels of difficulty will be available, each guided by a park ranger.

“This is a great time to get together with family and friends, make new friends and enjoy nature with our Spring Hikes,” said Jim Bryson, deputy commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation. “We have a beautiful state, and a hike at a state park is a great way to take it in. It’s an opportunity to learn about our parks and learn about nature. These hikes continue to be very popular and we look forward to another exciting day at locations across our state.”

The Spring Hikes are part of a series of Signature Hikes at the parks. Tennessee State Parks saw 3,607 participants at its First Day Hikes on January 1. The Spring Hikes offer a chance to study aspects of individual parks, discuss wildlife and admire the scenery, especially the wildflowers, as the seasons change.

A wide variety of hikes are available. Hikers can enjoy the views of Chickamauga Lake at Harrison Bay State Park; travel the half-mile boardwalk over Dismal Swamp or climb the 70-foot observation tower at Big Hill Pond State Park; see three large waterfalls at Burgess Falls State Park; learn about the history of a thriving river port at Port Royal State Park; view the cedar glades at Cedars of Lebanon State Park; admire the flowers at Dog Cove at Fall Creek Falls State Park; see old home sites at Johnsonville State Historic Park; enjoy scenic points of interest including the Chucalissa Indian Village at T.O. Fuller State Park; see spring wildflowers at Norris Dam State Park; watch waterfowl at Reelfoot Lake State Park; enjoy birdwatching and other wildlife at Seven Islands State Birding Park; and much more.

Hikers are urged to have sturdy footwear and bring water and snacks. Some may want to bring hiking sticks. Participants can go online to find a hike that best fits their interest at https://tnstateparks.com/about/special-events/spring-hikes/.

Tennessee State Parks host a series of Signature Hikes each year. They include First Day Hikes, Spring Hikes, National Trails Day Hikes in June, National Public Lands Day Hikes in September, and After-Thanksgiving Hikes the day after Thanksgiving.
I have a confession. I can’t keep my house clean and organized. Not all at once anyway. It’s me. I’ve tried to fight it, but clearly genetics are at work here and like the cellulite that resides on my backside (no matter how thin I’ve been) this sloppy part of me is here to stay.

But as of late, the lack of neatness on the home front is driving me nuts. It could be that I should take a break from social media because it appears that NO ONE else has this problem. Seriously, where do you people find the time to clean, decorate, exercise, be thin, work and take flawless photos?

Last week I walked upstairs and caught a whiff of something coming from my boy’s bathroom. I pulled a Scarlett and declared “As God as my witness this would be the last time the smell of urine would greet me at the top of the stairs.” I’ve demanded that from now on they all sit pee until further notice!

Over the years, I’ve tried everything from bins and labels to purging anything that doesn’t spark joy per advice from Marie Kondo. I took a different approach this time. I decided to do something that the woman in my family never do. I asked for help. For two days, two fairy godmothers swept, scrubbed and polished. Every baseboard, doorknob, sink, countertop, was clean by the time they left. Midway through the first day, fairy godmother #1 asked me to stop apologizing. So, I apologized for apologizing. She assured me that our house looked like a family “loved” here and that’s a wonderful thing. She may feel like it’s OK to be us. Messy, dishes in the sink, clean clothes piled up three feet high waiting to be folded US.

Some people can’t have a good day if they don’t make their bed; some don’t see the point. This isn’t to say I do not make my bed every day. I don’t make my bed every day, but I do on special occasions so that counts for something, I think. Some people can’t sleep well if there’s dirty dishes in the sink; some people install a farmhouse sink in their kitchen because they can stack every single plate and bowl they own in the sink while they enjoy family visiting for the holidays. Some people fold their clothes as soon as they finish baking in the oven; some know this is dumb.

My husband is tidy. Mostly, with his side of the dresser of our son who has been back at college for more than two months. The remote control for our downstairs television recently turned up on the dresser of our son who was born this way. And because of this I know my DNA lives on in my children. The remote control for our downstairs television recently turned up on the dresser of our son who has been back at college for more than two months.

This house may not ever be Instagram or Pinterest worthy; except for every other Wednesday. On that day I can count on the brave and cheerful woman who trudges through the house with her magic wand and sparkly bottle of glass cleaner to make my mess of a house look perfectly polished. And she does this all while I apologize to her incessantly.

Comments? Email becky@wilsonlivingmagazine.com
Study suggests biomarker in saliva predicts childhood obesity risk

Staff Reports

A molecular marker in saliva is associated with the emergence of childhood obesity in a group of preschool-aged Hispanic children.

The intriguing discovery, reported in the journal BMC Medical Genetics, supports ongoing efforts to identify biomarkers associated with the emergence of childhood obesity before body mass index (BMI) is designated as obese, said Shari Barkin, MD, MS(N), director of Pediatric Obesity Research at Monroe Carell Jr. Children’s Hospital at Vanderbilt.

“Understanding the factors that predispose children to obesity is important and will pave the way toward better prevention and early intervention,” said Barkin, William K. Warren Foundation Professor of Medicine and chief of the Division of General Pediatrics.

The prevalence of pediatric obesity has been increasing at an alarming rate, Barkin noted, with a disproportionate burden in Hispanic populations. Pediatric obesity is associated with the onset of later comorbidities including Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure and cancer.

“Right now, we only have crude markers to predict the emergence of obesity; we wait until the BMI is a certain number to intervene,” Barkin said. “We’re looking for markers that will allow us to intervene much earlier.”

Barkin and her colleagues collected saliva samples at baseline from children who were enrolled in the Growing Right Onto Wellness (GROW) trial. A total of 610 parent-preschool child pairs, 90% of whom were Hispanic, received high-dose behavioral intervention during a three-year study period.

At enrollment, the children were at-risk for obesity, but not yet obese.

“Even though many of the children in our intervention group compared to our control group improved their nutrition, maintained physical activity consistent with guidelines and got sufficient sleep, 30% of them still emerged into obesity,” Barkin said. “This sheds new light on how we think about the interaction of behavior and genetics and how that might contribute to health disparities.”

The investigators had collected saliva samples from a subset of the enrolled children for methylation of genes associated with obesity. Methylation is an epigenetic “mark” on DNA that regulates gene expression. They found that methylation at 17 DNA sites in the child’s genome predicted the likelihood of obesity.

In a previous study, they analyzed saliva samples from a subset of the enrolled children for methylation of genes associated with obesity. Methylation is an epigenetic “mark” on DNA that regulates gene expression. They found that methylation at 17 DNA sites in the child’s genome predicted the likelihood of obesity.

Gloria Guzman Jimenez and her children, Sophia Sapulveda, 8, left, Eduardo Sapulveda, 10, and Andrea Sapulveda, 6, participated in the GROW trial on pediatric obesity. | Photo by John Russell

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The Hermitage holds Black History Month program

Staff Reports

On Friday, Feb. 29, 2020, Bob McDonald, president and CEO of CedarStone Bank, served as the Master of Ceremonies at the church on the grounds of Andrew Jackson’s The Hermitage. The ceremony celebrated Black History Month and honored the enslaved persons at The Hermitage and around Middle Tennessee.

The program included a keynote address from Krista Castillo, site manager and museum coordinator for Fort Negley in Nashville, and a musical performance by the Voices of Vision Children’s Choir, consisting of students from various Nashville public schools, under the direction of Franklin Willis.

“This is a beautiful service and ceremony, and of all of the programs that we do at Andrew Jackson’s Hermitage, this is my favorite,” said McDonald. “We pay tribute to those who were enslaved and honor their many skills and talents. Each person in attendance is given a flower with the name of an enslaved person. It is very meaningful and special.”

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baseline saliva was associated with the mother’s BMI and waist circumference, suggesting that obesity risk may be transmitted from mother to child.

Now, they have evaluated associations between baseline salivary methylation and objective changes in child BMI after three years in the study.

“At baseline, these children were all non-obese, but based on their maternal BMI, their DNA was methylated differently at 17 sites,” Barkin said. “Now we know that some of them emerged into obesity. We asked, ‘Could we have predicted that from differences in methylation, even after accounting for maternal BMI and assessing other behavioral factors?’

The answer looks like it is “yes.” The investigators found that methylation of a gene called NRF1, which has roles in adipose tissue inflammation, was associated with childhood obesity. A child with the NRF1 methylation at baseline had a three-fold increased odds of being obese three years later, after controlling for maternal BMI and other factors.

“This is a proof-of-principle study; it needs to be repeated with larger numbers of children,” Barkin said. “But even with small numbers, we found a really important signal using salivary epigenetics.”

The study demonstrates the utility of using saliva for epigenetic studies and points to at least one gene, NRF1, that should be more extensively studied for its role in the emergence of obesity.

“Most studies have looked for factors in children who are already obese,” Barkin said. “Our study demonstrates that there are already changes in the physiology — a pathway to obesity — even before the phenotype of obesity emerges. If we can define a predictive epigenetic signature, we can intervene earlier to reduce health disparities in common conditions like obesity.”

Other authors of the current study included Amanda Rushing, Evan Sommer, Shilin Zhao, PhD, and Eli Pwe. This research was supported by grants from the National Institutes of Health (HL103620, DK092986, TR000445).

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