A tornado made its way through much of Middle Tennessee Monday night, leaving a path of destruction and injuries in its wake. Wilson County Mayor Randall Hutto declared a state of emergency for the county Tuesday morning after an EF-3 tornado, with wind speeds around 155-160 mph, devastated areas in Mt. Juliet and Lebanon.

According to Wilson County Emergency Management Agency (WEMA) Director Joey Cooper, three people were confirmed dead in Mt. Juliet as of Tuesday morning. A couple, 84-year-old James Eaton Sr. and 81-year-old Donna Eaton, were found in their home on Catalpa Drive. Brandy Barker, age 38 of Lebanon, was killed at CEVA Logistics on Volunteer Boulevard where she worked as a security consultant.

At least 24 people were killed as the tornado moved through Davidson, Wilson, and other parts of Middle Tennessee were struck by a tornado Monday night, leaving many homes and businesses destroyed. Pictured above is West Wilson Middle School in Mt. Juliet. More photos can be found on page 10. | Photos by Sarah Tate

This week’s feature for Teacher of the Year is Diane Vaniman, a mathematics teacher at West Wilson Middle School.

Vaniman teaches algebra and eighth grade math at West Wilson, where she has been for two years. Prior to West Wilson, she taught at Mt. Juliet Middle School for 11 years.

Vaniman hasn’t always taught mathematics. She owned her own dance studio in Florida, where she taught dance for 17 years.

After moving to Tennessee, she decided to follow another career path. Because of her years of experience at her studio, education seemed like the right choice. Growing up in the studio, teaching hundreds of students and coaching competition teams, provided a full background
Wilson Books from Birth to hold fundraiser

By Sarah Tate
Managing Editor

Wilson Books from Birth is Wilson County’s implementation of Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library. The program is designed to mail a free, high quality, age-appropriate book every month to any and every child in the county, from birth to age 5.

More than 20,000 children in Wilson County have been served since the program began in 2005. As of Feb. 1, 2020, there are 5,955 children enrolled in the program in Wilson County, and over 14,000 have graduated out of the program when they reached their fifth birthday.

The program is administered as a partnership with the Dollywood Foundation, the Governor’s Books from Birth Foundation and Wilson Books from Birth.

Wilson Books from Birth identifies, enrolls and maintains participants of the program and is responsible for 50% of the cost of the monthly book costs. The Dollywood Foundation, through a blue ribbon committee, selects and mails the books each month. The Governor’s Books from Birth Foundation coordinates the State’s participation in the program and assists each county financially and logistically, contributing the other 50% of monthly book costs.

Wilson Books from Birth is hosting a “Wacky Waiter” Imagination Dinner on Thursday, April 2, 2020, at 6:30 p.m. Proceeds of the event will go toward monthly book costs. The event will be held at the Wilson County Expo Center in Lebanon. The cost for a table of 8 is $250.

Local boaters survive accident

Staff Reports

A Rutherford County man and his two sons found themselves in a distressed situation on Percy Priest Lake around 7 p.m. Friday evening. The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency and Metro Fire Department were called to the scene of a boating accident near Seven Points Campground in Hermitage around 8:30 p.m.

Brian Larry Pike planned on using a boat to arrive to a church group outing in Long Hunter State Park. He and his sons, ages 16 and 9, left Seven Points Campground at 7:15 p.m. A short time later, wind and waves became too strong for their boat and it capsized, leaving the Pikes in the water several hundred yards from shore. All three were wearing personal flotation devices (PFDs).

Pike’s older son swam toward a light on shore where a bank fisherman assisted in making the 9-1-1 call for help, while Mr. Pike and his 9 year old made it to the opposite shore.

The stranded boaters were in the frigid water for over an hour. Pike and his 16 year old were transported to Summit Medical Center and the 9 year old went to Vanderbilt Pediatric Hospital.

“We are fortunate that this situation turned out the way it did,” said TWRA Capt. Dale Grandstaff.

“Wintertime boating carries greater risks than boating in warmer weather, especially if you enter the water. There is the threat of hypothermia and the cold water can affect your ability to function normally. Thankfully these boaters were knowledgeable about wearing PFDs and had them on at the time of the accident, which probably saved their lives.”

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Wilson County stays on top of Coronavirus information

It’s flu season in Tennessee, and this year there is a great awareness of a new virus that is in the news but has not spread to Tennessee. In fact, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that Coronavirus, also known as COVID-19, has not spread in the U.S. community at this time even though approximately 50 cases have been identified in the U.S. outside of Tennessee. Wilson County government said there is no spread of COVID-19 disease in the county, however, an informed community is a prepared community that can go about its daily activities with peace and calm.

Wilson County government assures that its healthcare systems, healthcare providers, and first responders are fully informed by the Tennessee Department of Health and the CDC. Wilson County is part of the Vanderbilt healthcare system and is working closely with the Vanderbilt Wilson County Hospital team, which has exceptional capabilities for providing any level of care that is needed.

“The county health department is following the protocols of the TN Department of Health and the CDC,” said Tim Diffenderfer, county health director. The Tennessee Department of Health and the CDC are two reliable and consistent state and national organizations with comprehensive current information available to the public.

“It would be very rare for the Coronavirus to spread to Middle Tennessee,” said Wilson County EMA Director Joey Cooper. “Wilson County has a comprehensive plan in place for Pandemic that mirrors the State of Tennessee Plan. We stay in frequent communication with the Tennessee Department of Health throughout the year to stay abreast of all health-related threats to our county.”

WEMA Captain Daniel Cowan stated that the county’s emergency management agency is in frequent communication with the Tennessee Department of Health.

“One of my roles is to liaison with outside agencies to keep our Agency up to date with the latest and most accurate information,” Cowan said. “Concerning the Coronavirus, we are monitoring information released from the Department of Health and the Center for Disease Control.”

Captain Cowan is the Emergency Management Planning Officer and liaison to outside agencies such as the Tennessee Department of Health.

“We are prepared to handle any threat or disaster we are presented with,” Cowan said. “Managing the Coronavirus locally would be a unified effort with our local, state and federal partners, in which we have great coordination with.”

The Coronavirus causes symptoms like the flu such as fever, cough, and shortness of breath. It spreads between people via droplets from a cough or a sneeze. Like the flu, the virus can spread quickly.

What can one do to prevent illness? Wilson County government believes it’s a good time to remind everyone of good hygiene actions, to prepare pantries with chicken soup and plenty of clear fluids for drinking, and to update cleaning supplies just like one would prepare for the winter cold and flu season.

• The best practice? Wash your hands often with soap and water for a good 20 seconds — after visiting the bathroom, before eating, after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose.
• Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue and then trash the tissue.
• Stay home if you are sick to help prevent spreading a virus to others.
• Go to the doctor if you have flu or virus symptoms. The doctor can test for the type of virus and eliminate your worst fears, treating a

See COUNTY, PAGE 4

MARCH 5

JECDB
The Joint Economic and Community Development Board Executive Committee will meet at 7:45 a.m. on Thursday, March 5, 2020, at the JECDB office located at 200 Aviation Way, Suite 202, Lebanon.

MARCH 10

Job Fair
The Goodwill Career Solutions Center at 1985 Providence West Parkway, Mt. Juliet, hosts a job fair featuring area employers from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month. More information is available at www.giveit2goodwill.org/job-fairs/.

MARCH 10

Wilson County Democratic Women
The Wilson County Democratic Women meet monthly on the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at Logan's Roadhouse in Mt. Juliet.

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.
This gave the Bison a spark amounting to 9 points. Ston shined in the second, a comeback. Eli Thurston led with 17 points, after 8 minutes of play. Station Camp mounted in the second quarter as after 8 minutes of play. The Bears only scored through the third quarter, but the Bison remained down until the final shot. Thurston threw up a three as time expired, and he hit the buzzer beater to put Station Camp up 31-30 going into the final quarter.

Pruitt heated up in the fourth quarter, filling up every slot of the scorebook. He put up 12 of Mt. Juliet’s 27 fourth-quarter points, as Abner, Clark, and Isaac Thompson combined for the other 15. The Bears jumped out to a massive lead, putting Station Camp in panic mode. Blankenship notched 7 points, as he was followed by Thurston with 5 and Gerlach with 4. Many of these points came in the final minute, as the Bison were not able to finish a comeback, leaving Mt. Juliet with a 57-47 victory.

Mt. Juliet claimed its third consecutive district title, while Will Pruitt had a phenomenal night. He finished with 24 points on 9-16 shooting. He was followed by Thompson with 13, Clark with 9, and Wells and Abner each with 5. For Station Camp, Eli Thurston led with 17 points, followed by Blankenship with 13. Gerlach managed 9 points, Die’ had 4, Jack Gold managed a three, and Tyler Moore had a single point.

Pruitt’s night was not over, as he had many accolades for the district. The All District and Tournament Teams are as follows:

**All District**

Mt. Juliet: Troy Allen (District Coach of the Year), Charles Clark, Gage Wells, Will Pruitt (District 9AAA Tournament MVP)

Beech: Jyquale Matthews

Station Camp: Blankenship, Eli Thurston, Cameron Gerlach

Lebanon: Gaven Reasonover, Davis Greene

Portland: Mitchell Eagle

**Tournament**

Mt. Juliet: Riggs Abner, Gage Wells, Will Pruitt (District 9AAA Tournament MVP)


Station Camp: Blankenship, Eli Thurston, Cameron Gerlach

Lebanon: Gaven Reasonover, Davis Greene

Portland: Mitchell Eagle

The top four teams, Mt. Juliet, Station Camp, Beech and Gallatin, move on to battle Kenwood, Henry County, Clarksville, and Clarksville Northwest, respectively.

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**FROM DISTRICT, PAGE 1**

Station Camp’s first quarter points, knocking down a basket and a pair of free throws. This put the score at 14-4 in favor of the Bears after 8 minutes of play.

The game intensified in the second quarter as Station Camp mounted a comeback. Eli Thurston shined in the second, amounting to 9 points. This gave the Bison a spark to catch up with the Bears, but it was superb defense that narrowed the game. Blankenship, Thurston, and truly all of the Station Camp floor, played lockdown defense on Pruitt and the Mt. Juliet offense. Pruitt only found a layup, and Riggs Abner managed a three. Charles Clark went 1-2 from the charity stripe, and that rounded out the Bears’ scoring. This put the score tied at 20 as both teams headed into the locker room.

The game stayed tight throughout the third quarter. The Bears only scored 10 points in the third but had the lead for the majority of the quarter. The Bison struggled for most of the third, but they were able to launch off a few shots. Cameron Gerlach notched 5 points, and Kheller Die’ tallied a single basket. Tyler Moore went 1-2 from the free throw line in the quarter, but the Bison remained down until the final shot. Thurston threw up a three as time expired, and he hit the buzzer beater to put Station Camp up 31-30 going into the final quarter.

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**FROM COUNTY, PAGE 3**

flu virus caught early.

• Disinfect doorknobs and surfaces with a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

• Use an antibacterial wipe and swipe the tip of your nose for more disinfecting.

Since the Coronavirus originated in China, the CDC recommends avoiding travel to China and South Korea and limiting travel to Italy, Iran and Japan since they have some cases of the virus. For more information on travel advisories, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html.

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MJPD Guardian Shield leads to two arrests

Staff Reports

Mt. Juliet officers intercepted a wanted fugitive from justice, driving an overdue rental SUV, after the department’s Guardian Shield ALPR alerted on a stolen Maryland license plate.

Around 1:45 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 19, 2020, officers began to look for a blue Infiniti QX50 SUV after Guardian Shield alerted on the tag as it crossed through the Lebanon Road and North Greenhill Road intersection. The vehicle was intercepted by officers as it pulled into the post office, and the driver, 31-year-old Christopher McCreery of North Carolina, was found to be a fugitive from justice out of Louisiana and North Carolina.

Further investigation revealed the Maryland license plate was reported stolen out of Washington, D.C. on Nov. 22, 2019, and the Infiniti was an overdue rental car. McCreery was wanted out of Louisiana for a full-extradition, felony parole violation related to felony drug charges, and he was also wanted out of North Carolina for a probation violation related to weapon possession.

McCreery was arrested and booked into the Wilson County Jail, charged with the following: Use of a Stolen Plate, Possession of a Schedule I Drug, Fugitive from Justice — Awaiting Extradition to Louisiana.

Mt. Juliet Police apprehend Christopher McCreery, age 31 of North Carolina, after being alerted about a stolen car. McCreery was found to be a fugitive from justice out of Louisiana and North Carolina. | Photos courtesy of MJPD

Further investigation revealed the car was reported stolen out of Collegedale, about 147 miles away from Mt. Juliet, on Feb. 2, 2020. Lyu was arrested and booked into the Wilson County Jail until he be transferred to Collegedale for the theft charge.

Around 12:18 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 27, 2020, officers began to look for a silver 2010 Hyundai Sonata after Guardian Shield alerted on a plate associated with a stolen car.

Extradition to Louisiana. Officers also intercepted a wanted person driving a stolen car after Guardian Shield alerted on the tag as it crossed through the Lebanon Road and North Greenhill Road intersection. The vehicle was intercepted by officers on Lebanon Road near North Mt. Juliet Road, and the driver, 46-year-old John Byung Joon Lyu of Ooltewah, was found to be wanted by the Collegedale, Tennessee, Police Department for Theft of a Motor Vehicle.

Further investigation revealed the car was reported stolen out of Collegedale, about 147 miles away from Mt. Juliet, on Feb. 2, 2020. Lyu was arrested and booked into the Wilson County Jail until he be transferred to Collegedale for the theft charge.

The Wilson County Retired Teachers’ Association introduced Hannah Anderson to the membership at its December meeting. Anderson is the 2019-2020 WCRTA Scholarship recipient. The group said she is a very deserving and dedicated senior at Cumberland University majoring in Child Growth and Learning. Pictured is WCRTA President Dianne Cozart (L) and Scholarship Chairperson Barbara Thompson (R) with Anderson. The WCRTA scholarship is funded through donations from its membership.
Psalms 5:1-3 “Give ear to my words, O Lord, Consider my sighing. Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God, for you pray. In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.”

Not only will your relationship with Christ be strengthened as you cultivate your prayer life, but you will also find prayer beneficial during difficult and lonely times.

In Psalms 5:1-3 we find David crying out to God because of a stressful situation with his enemies. Not only did he cry out to God, he expected God to act. David committed the situation to the Lord with a confidence that only comes from an intimate relationship with his God. As you strive to know God intimately, strive to know Christ personally. There are many examples in scripture of people wanting to know God as a lifelong goal. Regular communication will be necessary and it will be a source of strength in difficult times.

No matter your age, God is preparing, guiding, inspecting, and so many things in your life. This is true when you are a child, student, or adult. So age is not the determining factor for maturity. Often times I meet an older man who is spiritually a child. Other times I meet a child/student who is a very mature believer. Share your faith. Be BOLD!
With warmer weather and storm season just around the corner in mind, I wanted to remind everyone to please take and make time to prepare a survival kit. This kit will help ensure your well-being in the event of an emergency or disaster. You must be prepared to be self-sufficient for 72 hours or until professional help arrives. It is very important to include all family members and pets in your survival plan. We must also plan for emergencies that might occur in our workplace, schools and vehicles.

As we all know, a disaster can strike without warning at any time. We are all prone to some type of natural disaster or serious storm. Whether it’s a blizzard, freezing temperatures, earthquakes, tornados, severe storms, or flash floods, when it comes to survival planning, there is no such thing as being too prepared or having too many resources working together for the safety and well-being of the community. Be sure you and your family are prepared.

Emergency preparedness is vital in every walk of life and at every level of the community. We need emergency preparedness plans at home, work, school, and on every level of government. We must take the time to put a plan together. Put your plan together a little at a time, so that you don’t overburden yourself. It is also important to remember to update your emergency preparedness plan and kit every six months. This will help ensure your plan and kit are up to date and viable.

Various items needed in your kit are as follows: bottled water for drinking, hygiene and food preparation, batteries, battery powered weather radio, canned food, dried fruit, first aid kit, blankets, extra clothing, canned meat, small tool kit, plastic and paper dishes, large plastic trash bags, duct tape, playing cards, books, manual can opener, waterless hand cleaner, jumper cables, a flashlight, pet food and so on. It is also very important to practice where and what to do should an emergency ever occur. Practicing your emergency plan scenarios will prepare both you and your family for both pre- and post-emergency situations no matter where you are.

In closing, please take the time to prepare yourself for any emergency. We want you safe, sound, secure and healthy.

Kenny Martin
City Manager
Mt. Juliet, TN

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New Criminal Justice Lab opens at Vol State

Staff Reports

Planning a crime isn’t easy. There is plenty to consider. Metro Nashville Police Lieutenant Frank Ragains is an instructor at Volunteer State Community College. He designs mock crime scenes so that students can collect evidence and document the scene with a critical eye.

Effective evidence processing is important in a criminal investigation. Mishandled evidence could be lost or found inadmissible in court. Vol State students now have more room, and more time, to investigate mock crime scenes thanks to a new Criminal Justice lab building at the college.

“It provides an area where we can create a crime scene and process it over several days,” said Criminal Justice Director Bradley Tracy. “We used it over several days,” said Criminal Justice Director Bradley Tracy.

And there are other attorneys teaching in the program, including Nashville lawyer Jeff Roberts. “I was in law enforcement for 10 years, mainly at the Gallatin Police Department,” Tracy said. “I then worked to get my law degree and I was an attorney for several years.” And there are other attorneys teaching in the program, including Nashville lawyer Jeff Roberts.

Vol State launched a Crime Scene Investigation class this semester, along with another specialty — Interview and Interrogation.

“We’re building an interview and interrogation room and working on a courtroom setting,” Tracy said. The new lab building will also house the use-of-force simulator that the college has been using for several years. A fully-equipped squad car and drones are just some of the other gear that students use in Criminal Justice classes.

Criminal Justice instructors at Vol State have extensive professional backgrounds.

“I was in law enforcement for 10 years, mainly at the Gallatin Police Department,” Tracy said. “I then worked to get my law degree and I was an attorney for several years.” And there are other attorneys teaching in the program, including Nashville lawyer Jeff Roberts. “Bradley and Bill Sorrels (a faculty member who is also assistant chief of the Gallatin Police Department) are both graduates of the Nashville School of Law. I came to Bill’s class last year as a guest speaker,” said Roberts. “I guess that’s when the teaching bug bit me.”

The professional connections pay off in other ways for students. Roberts recently held a class session that featured a live Facetime chat with James Freeman, the former FBI agent who led the investigation that caught the Unabomber in the 1990s.

Vol State instructor Frank Ragains demonstrates fingerprinting techniques. Students left to right: Mick Fairchild of Hendersonville; Abby Smith of Smith County; Caitlyn Cook of Portland; and Hannah King of Mt. Juliet. | Photo submitted

Vol State Criminal Justice classes focus on law enforcement, investigation, criminal law, and corrections. Students can use both the TN Promise tuition-free education program for graduating high school seniors and the TN Reconnect tuition-free education program for adults who haven’t completed a college degree.

Volunteer State Community College has more than 100 areas of study and offers two-year degrees, certificates and paths to university transfer. Workforce Development extends the college mission to the entire community. For more information, visit volstate.edu.

The College System of Tennessee, governed by the Tennessee Board of Regents, is the state’s largest public higher education system, with 13 community colleges, 27 colleges of applied technology and the online TN eCampus, serving more than 100,000 students.
Potential new heartburn drug studied at VUMC

Staff Reports

An investigational drug that binds bile acids in the stomach can reduce the severity of heartburn symptoms in patients with treatment-resistant gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) when combined with a proton pump inhibitor (PPI), a new study suggests.

Michael F. Vaezi, MD, PhD, MSc, director of the Center for Swallowing and Esophageal Disorders at Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC), is a corresponding author of the report published in the journal Gastroenterology. The study was conducted by Cambridge, Massachusetts-based Ironwood Pharmaceuticals, developer of the investigational drug IW-3718, which was developed by Ironwood Pharmaceuticals, combines an established drug that binds bile acids in the stomach with a technology that controls the release of drugs in the gastrointestinal tract.

“As a physician, it is very challenging to have nothing new to offer patients for whom standard treatments don’t work,” Vaezi said. “But the reality is many of our patients continue to struggle with frequent heartburn and regurgitation despite taking their PPIs. “These data provide strong evidence that bile acid plays a key role in refractory GERD and that IW-3718 may have the potential to make a meaningful difference for patients,” he added.

Vaezi is professor of Medicine and clinical director of the Division of Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition in the Department of Medicine, Vanderbilt University School of Medicine. PPIs such as Prilosec and Nexium reduce the production of stomach acid. Each week approximately 20% of the adult U.S. population reports GERD-related symptoms, including heartburn and regurgitation. Seven percent experience daily symptoms. Despite once-daily PPI therapy, the “mainstay” treatment for GERD, approximately 30% of patients continue to have symptoms. IW-3718, which was developed by Ironwood Pharmaceuticals, combines an established drug that binds bile acids in the stomach with a technology that controls the release of drugs in the gastrointestinal tract. Bile acids have been shown to injure the lining of the esophagus as well as stomach and colon.

Fifty-two centers in the United States, including VUMC, participated in the randomized, double-blind study from March 2016 to April 2017. A total of 280 adult patients with refractory GERD were divided into four groups, one which received an inactive placebo and the others ascending doses of IW-3718 twice a day. Heartburn symptoms were significantly reduced in the group receiving the highest dose, 1,500-milligrams twice daily, compared to the placebo group. Regurgitation symptoms also decreased. The drug was well tolerated. There were no drug-related serious adverse events.

“These results suggest that IW-3718 may provide a therapeutic option for refractory-GERD patients with continued symptoms despite once-daily PPI therapy,” the researchers concluded.
From TORNADO, PAGE 1

Smith and Putnam counties. Eighteen of the 24 fatalities were in Putnam, five of whom were children under the age of 13. As of Wednesday morning, 21 people were still unaccounted for. Schools across Middle Tennessee have also closed for the remainder of the week.

President Donald Trump tweeted Tuesday morning that the federal government will continue monitoring the situation. He will also visit Middle Tennessee and impacted areas on Friday.

Multiple businesses were impacted and many homes were severely damaged or destroyed. Mt. Juliet Police said Tuesday night that all destroyed structures had been thoroughly searched by multiple crews and that there were no outstanding reports of missing persons.

Parts of Mt. Juliet and Lebanon, especially around the Interstate 40 corridor, experienced extended power outages. Cooper said Middle Tennessee Electric Corporation is working continuously to quickly restore as many power facilities as they can, however outages could last days.

“We have made preparations already for hospitals, nursing homes, thing like that, that can or cannot go without power for that long,” said Cooper.

Wilson County Schools, which were closed Tuesday for the election, will remain closed through the rest of the week. Schools are also out next week for spring break, which will allow for more damage assessment and cleanup as well as planning for the final two months of the school year.

Much of the damage was focused along North Mt. Juliet Road. West Wilson Middle School and Stoner Creek Elementary School were the direct path of the tornado and both suffered severe damage.

“I’m so thankful that we weren’t in school and that there were no children sitting in the building when this happened,” said Director of Wilson County Schools Donna Wright. “This is really devastating for this community and really across Wilson County as well.”

Wright stressed that while the damage is shocking and heartbreaking, buildings can be replaced.

“It’s a day we’ll never forget,” read a statement from Wilson County Schools. “But it’s also a day where our cup of thankfulness overflows that this weather disaster did not happen during a school day. “We say thank you to all the kind words of encouragement, thoughts and prayers that have been sent to us from across our great state of Tennessee, the United States and even across the world.”

See TORNADO, PAGE 13
DENLEY, Barbara Sue Sullivan

Barbara Sue Sullivan Denley, age 72 of Mt. Juliet, died Feb. 27, 2020. Barbara was the daughter of the late Thaxton Guill Sullivan, Sr. and Charlotte Elisabeth Armistead Sullivan. Barbara was also preceded in death by her brother, Bryan Sullivan.

She is survived by: Sons – Dwayne (Penny) Wright and Chris (Christa) Wright; Brothers – T.G. “Binky” (Janice) Sullivan and Michael Dennis B. Woy; Grandson – Cooper Wright; Aunt – Dot (Curtis) Honeycutt; Niece – Kim Armistead and several other nieces and nephews.

Funeral services will be conducted 4 p.m. Wednesday, March 4, 2020, at Bond Memorial Chapel. Flowers accepted or memorials may be made to the Old Friends Senior Dog Sanctuary, 12110 Lebanon Road, Mt. Juliet, TN 37122.

Visitation will be 2-4 p.m. Wednesday at Bond Memorial Chapel, N. Mt. Juliet Road and Weston Drive, Mt. Juliet, TN. (615) 773-2663. www.bondmemorial.com

EDWARDS, Ruby Mae

Ruby Edwards passed away Feb. 26, 2020, at age 88. A funeral service was held March 1 at Sellars Funeral Home, Lebanon, and interment followed at Cedar Grove Cemetery.

Mrs. Edwards is survived by: children: Katha (Howard) Wrye, Don (Ava) Cozart, Cliff (Dianne) Cozart, and Gary (Terry) Cozart; grandchildren: 11 great-grandchildren; and sister Nell Wrye. She is preceeded in death by her husband, George Mallard; daughter, Lydia Duronse; and grandson, Jay Mallard.

She leaves to celebrate her journey into Heaven: Son – John (Mary) Mallard; Daughther – Mickey (Brian) Keen; Brother – Dan (Mary) Ealick; Sisters – Daphine (Vernon) Holland, Elaine (Jimmy) Mayfield and Vanessa (Burrell) Hall; Grandchildren – Rachel Mallard, Devin Duronset and Alyssa Keen; Great-grandchildren – Austin Mallard, Brandon Mallard and Dawny Duronse; Many beloved nieces and nephews.

Funeral services will be conducted 12:30-p.m. Thursday, March 5, at Bond Memorial Chapel. Interment will follow at Nashville National Cemetery.

Visitation will be 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Thursday at Bond Memorial Chapel, N. Mt. Juliet Road and Weston Drive, Mt. Juliet, TN. (615) 773-2663. www.bondmemorial.com

ROBERTS, William Connor

Blanche Ellen McGee, age 85 of Mt. Juliet, died Feb. 26, 2020. Blanche was the daughter of the late Fred and Myrtle Blackburn Green. She was also preceded in death by her daughter, Diana Elsten; siblings, Samuel Green and Louise Blackburn; and step-grandchildren, Chuck Yowler and Bobby Yowler.

She is survived by: Husband of Nearly 60 years – Lee Roy McGee; Sons – Larry (Margo) McClanahan, Garry (Linda) McClanahan, Jeffrey (Carla) McGee; Brother – Jimmy Keys; Grandchildren – Kelly (Jason) Smith, Nathan (Nena) Whitesell, Elizabeth (Brad) Rector, Leah (Steve) Fields and Timothy Elsten; II; Step-grandchildren – James (Amber) Yowl- ler, Jennifer Lupa, Stephanie (Daryl) Peterson, Jeffrey Moritz, Trevor Nixon and Hannah Nixon.

Funeral services were held Feb. 28 at Bond Memorial Chapel, and graveside services were held March 2 at Grove Lawn Cemetery in Pendleton, Indiana.

Bond Memorial Chapel, N. Mt. Juliet Road and Weston Drive, Mt. Juliet, TN. (615) 773-2663. www.bondmemorial.com

PUMPHREY, Tyler Raye

Tyler Raye Pumphrey, age 30 of Lebanon, died Feb. 26, 2020. Tyler was preceded in death by his grandfather, Ronnie Yток.

He is survived by: Mother – Dana (Buddy) Dixon; Father – Derek (Courtney) Pumphrey; Grandmother – Barbara York; Aunts and Uncles – Mitzi (Kevin) Smith and Tami (Shane) Bramble; Cousins – Carley Shults, Elijah Smith and Hayden Bramble; Step-siblings – Anna Elizabeth Pumphrey, Logan Derek Pumphrey and Hayley Grace Pumphrey.

Funeral services were held Feb. 29 at Bond Memorial Chapel, and interment followed at Mt. Juliet Memorial Gardens. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the American Cancer Society. Bond Memorial Chapel, N. Mt. Juliet Road and Weston Drive, Mt. Juliet, TN. (615) 773-2663. www.bondmemorial.com

SIRCY, Michael Alan

Mike SirCy passed away Feb. 22, 2020, at age 60. A funeral service was held Feb. 26 at Sellars Funeral Home in Lebanon. Burial service will be private.

Mr. SirCy is survived by: children: Bridgett Fowler and Brett SirCy; grandchildren: Layla, Nora, and Hallie Fowl; siblings: Donna (Bobby) Barnes and Randy SirCy; step-siblings: Timothy (Mar- i lyn) Dillard, Gary (Brenda) Dillard, Anna (George) Wahl, and Sandra (Doug) Hollis; nieces: Kimberly (Keith) Hudson; and grand-nieces and nephews: Lilli, Dahlia, and Lucien. He is preceded in death by parents Denis and Billie SirCy, and mother Emily SirCy.

Sellars Funeral Home, Lebanon TN, 615.444.9393.
The Board of Commissioners of the City of Mt. Juliet will have a Public Hearing on March 9, 2020 at 6:15 PM on the following items to be considered on 2nd and Final Reading:

- Amend Zoning Regulations by amending Article VIII, Overlay Districts, Section 8-207.1 Minimum Size of Residential PUD by adding a 20 acre minimum gross area requirement for RM-8 and RM-16 Planned Unit Developments (PUD) and Section 8-207.5, Open Space Requirements, by requiring 10% Improved Recreational Open Space for RM-8 and RM-16 Residential Planned Unit Developments
- Rezone the property at 98 Hatfield Lane, Map 054, Parcel 111.00 from Residential RS-40 to Commercial Town Center (CTC)
- Adopt the Preliminary Master Development Plan (PMDP) for “The District” located at 108 Stoney Creek Road, Map 077, Parcel 023.00
- Use of a Combination of Open Space Requirements, by requiring 10% Improved Recreational Open Space for RM-8 and RM-16 Residential Planned Unit Developments, by requiring 10% Improved Recreational Open Space for RM-8 and RM-16 Residential Planned Unit Developments
- Use of a Combination of Open Space Requirements, by requiring 10% Improved Recreational Open Space for RM-8 and RM-16 Residential Planned Unit Developments

The Public is Invited to attend and Comment.

Kenny Martin, City Manager
City of Mt. Juliet

The Public is Invited to attend and Comment.

The City of Mt. Juliet Alcoholic Beverages Board will meet in City Hall at 6:30 P.M. on Tuesday, March 10, 2020 to consider the following:

- Terms of revocation of beer permit for Kat’s Bar & Grill, located at 2037 N. Mt. Juliet Rd. #103 Mt. Juliet, TN 37122
- Terms of suspension of beer permit for Blue Coast Burrito, located at 640 S. Mt. Juliet Rd., #230 Mt. Juliet, TN 37122
- And to consider violations of selling beer to a minor for the following locations:
  - Speedyway, located at 12115 Lebanon Rd. Mt. Juliet, TN 37122
  - Mori Mori, located at 649 S. Mt. Juliet Rd. Mt. Juliet, TN 37122
  - Cedar Creek Marina, located at 9120 Saundersville Rd. Mt. Juliet, TN 37122
  - Cheddar’s Scratch Kitchen, located at 50 Pleasant Grove Rd. Mt. Juliet, TN 37122
  - PDK Southern Kitchen & Pantry, located at 1984 Providence Pkwy Ste 101 Mt. Juliet, TN 37122

And any other topics arising therefrom or generally related thereto. The public is invited to attend and comment.

Sheila S. Luckett, MMC
Deputy City Manager
“We will get through this,” the statement continued. “We are family. We are Wilson County Schools #WilsonStrong #StrongerTogether.”

Mt. Juliet and Wilson County law enforcement are coordinating with responders from surrounding areas, such as Murfreesboro and Sumner County, in efforts to support and restore affected areas.

“I ask the public to keep their thoughts and prayers for everybody impacted by this horrific event we had [Monday] night,” said Wilson County Sheriff Robert Bryan.

Bryan also said that law enforcement will have an increased presence in the areas most affected by the storms as a way to serve the area and deter criminal activity, such as looting, and taking advantage of individuals who are not property owners or guests of property owners are prohibited from remaining or traveling on public or private property in the designated curfew areas between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. The curfew is applied to the following areas:

- Triple Crown neighborhood, Catalpa Drive, Fescue Drive, Dogwood Drive, Clearview Drive, Barrett Drive, Volunteer Boulevard, Athletes Way, Athletes Way North.

Public Works crews are going through impacted areas collecting debris. They ask that debris is sorted and placed close to the roadways, and that trash, such as trees, bushes and fallen limbs.

Businesses and members of the community stepped up to provide shelter, food and a place to rest for displaced victims, first responders and volunteers. Baymont Inn locations in Mt. Juliet and Hermitage as well as Holiday Inn in Providence provided overnight stays for displaced victims.

Victory Baptist Church, 1777 Tate Lane, opened its doors Tuesday to house many victims and provide extra resources for responders. Highland Heights Church of Christ, 505 N. Cumberland Street in Lebanon, also provided shelter and resources for people affected in their community.

A prayer vigil will be held Thursday, March 5, at 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. at Providence Church, 2293 S. Rutland Road in Mt. Juliet. This will give the community a chance to unite in thoughts and prayers for everyone impacted by the storms and for the responders and volunteers.

Mayor Hutto said it was a blessing, in the midst of tragedy, that the tornado hit at midnight rather than midday as the casualties would have been unlimited. He also praised the amount of people who have already volunteered to assist in whatever way they can.

“As you settle in tonight, I ask that you count your blessings, look around at your home, hug your families,” said Hutto. “Tomorrow will be another day that you can help a neighbor. I ask you to go find them.”

A committee has been created to handle the support from the community and across the nation, which will organize volunteer assistance and donations. Police say that volunteers are discouraged from entering neighborhoods at the moment due to priority work being conducted by government agencies and public utilities, but this weekend would be the best time to volunteer.

People wishing to volunteer within the city can complete a registration form on the Mt. Juliet Tornado Clean-up Volunteer Portal at www.mjpdnews.org/volunteer/.
TELLING TALES

By Becky Andrews
Wilson Living Magazine

It's not like we can't remember the deadline. Just like Christmas is always on Dec. 25, Uncle Sam's birthday presents from Aunt Becky are always due on April 15. Even so, every year, I find myself scrambling through faded receipts making sure to count every deduction.

We couldn't get through this season without our abnormally patient accountant. He's brilliant and not because he knows his stuff, which he does. And not because he knows some secret IRS handshake, I've asked, he doesn't. It's because no matter how many times he asks me to do a better job of keeping track of expenses, he's always so nice about it.

I can only imagine what he thinks after getting off the phone with me and for the tenth year in a row explaining, "I noticed you listed a receipt for getting your hair colored under 'aging deduction.' There's still no such category. I think you may have gotten confused with home improvements ... again. And I think there's a receipt for a new skirt listed under 'office supplies.'"

"But", I said, "what if I need therapy after that lunch? Wouldn't that technically be considered 'medical reimbursement'?" And this is how great our accountant is. He responded, "No. Now let's move on to mileage." After we finish with mileage — one of the only tax season tasks I'm actually organized about — we go through another familiar song and dance. I insist skincare should be a write-off. He then explains that even if there were a "self-esteem" category, there would probably be a limit to the number of self-tanning creams one could deduct. That's the last time I listen to the woman behind the Clinique makeup counter!

So, in an attempt to avoid turning in an old GAP bag stuffed with receipts this year, I assigned each of my children a time-saving tax task. Because if you are going to count as a deduction in this house, you're going to start working for it, damnit! This is the point that my almost-20 year old said he had to bounce back to Chat. Because you know, college. I said "no." Then we got back to receipts.

Deduction #1, the oldest, is assigned to straightening and flattening each receipt. But before #1 can get started, Deduction #2, the 15 year old, is in charge of going through every jacket, coat, blazer, handbag, purse, clutch, glove compartment, car console and reusable Publix grocery bag, I may have used (or looked at) last year in an effort to find missing receipts.

Before getting started, #2 declares that we should go through my desk too. Brilliant, #2! This is why I'll make sure he gets the lion share of his Papa's estate. Poor kid doesn't need to know that means he stands to collect 1,232 ultra-white light bulbs, 10 bottles of stevia concentrate and every issue of Mother Earth News from 1972-2009.

While going through files (Note: by "files" I'm referring to the stack of papers that's accumulated on the kitchen bar since April 16), I came across receipts from our dog's weeklong stay at a puppy daycare and our cat's short stay at the vet for a skin infection. After doing a quick google search and realizing this too CAN'T be deducted, my husband said until we can figure out a way for them to pull their weight, they will no longer be referred to as our "furry children." Instead "financial burdens number 1 and 2."

It's embarrassing. Every year I promise "next year will be different!" This time it's different. I'll start on Jan. 1 — or April 16! I'll keep meticulous records with spreadsheets, attachments, and a bunch of other really good things that accountants and the IRS love to see. To avoid further embarrassment I'm tempted to file on my own. But since I'm a passivist and khaki jumpsuits totally wash me out, I decide against it. Instead I will say a prayer for our accountant. The man who spends more time on us than he charges and always believes me when I say, "Next year I promise to have everything organized."
working with children. "Teaching was just a natural thing, because really I'd been a teacher my whole life," she said.

Vaniman completed an online curriculum with Western Governor’s University in mathematics education, focusing on middle school math content. She was interested in middle school because that is the age where many students struggle with math. Middle school mathematics, and especially algebra, is more difficult than any math class the students have experienced at that point in their education.

"I feel like you can still relate to them and catch them," Vaniman said. She said you can show them that they can overcome a difficult subject and help build their confidence.

Her dance background influences how she teaches in the classroom. Difficult new subjects can sometimes be dull for students, so she finds ways to pique their interest.

"I'll start a chant about something we're learning or we'll get up and do a little dance," she said. "I think that's what makes it a little bit different."

"Try to find something to keep them engaged besides just moving their pencil," she continued.

Because algebra is an honors course, Vaniman likes to challenge her students.

"I love to see productive struggle on the kids," she said. "There's times we have to parent, times we do social work. We don't just teach. Teaching algebra is just a small portion of what we do."

Vaniman learned that she was chosen Teacher of the Year at a faculty meeting on her 60th birthday. She has been nominated every year for the past 10 years.

"Being nominated every year by your peers in an honor," she said. "It's humbling. Sometimes we don't even get to talk to each other we get so busy, so you wonder does anybody really know what you're doing in the classroom. It was very touching."

Astronaut to visit Lebanon

Staff Reports

Mt. Juliet native and NASA Astronaut Captain Barry Wilmore (USN) Ret., is set to visit Wilson County next week.

The Wilson County Veterans Service Office will host a meet-and-greet with Captain Barry Wilmore on Thursday, March 12, 2020, from 5-6 p.m. Captain Wilmore is a native of Mt. Juliet, Tennessee, and a graduate of Mt. Juliet High School. After high school, Captain Wilmore graduated from Tennessee Technological University, the University of Tennessee, and the United States Naval Test Pilot School (USNTPS).

Captain Wilmore was selected by NASA as an astronaut in July 2000 and has logged a total of 178 days in space, along with four spacewalks.

Captain Wilmore will be present at the Wilson County Veterans Service Office, located at 304 E. Main Street, Lebanon, on Thursday, March 12 from 5-6 p.m. This meet-and-greet will be free and open to the public.

Staff Reports

Photo courtesy of NASA

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Advanced Hearing Solutions
United Communications awarded $3.3 million from USDA for broadband targeting in rural TN communities

The Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue recently announced the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has invested $9 million in high-speed broadband infrastructure projects that will create or improve rural e-Connectivity for many rural households, businesses, and farms. This is one of many funding announcements in the first round of USDA’s ReConnect Pilot Program investments.

United Communications Inc. has been awarded a $3.3 million portion of the ReConnect Program grant to provide broadband service to residents and businesses in rural Lincoln, Marshall, Williamson, and Wilson counties. The partnership of United Communications and Middle Tennessee Electric Membership Corporation will match this $3.3 million with $3.3 million of their own money to help bring fiber service to many rural households with inadequate or no bandwidth.

The funded service areas include approximately 1,154 households, businesses, and farms in areas of Wilson County, Triune, Almaville, Peytonsville, Bethesda, Petersburg and adjoining areas of the build.

“We celebrate another huge step in executing on our mission of enriching our communities and the lives of our neighbors through reliable connections and passionate service,” said William Brad- ford, president and CEO, United Communications. “These folks deserve the quality of life that broadband provides and we are very excited to be the community-focused company to bridge the broadband gap for our rural neighbors.”

United Communications is a leading provider of Internet, digital TV, and phone services to enterprise-class businesses and residential customers in Middle Tennessee. United Communications’ network includes more than 1,000 route miles of fiber connecting in Nashville and Murfreesboro and covering portions of Williamson, Marshall, Bedford, Franklin, and Rutherford counties.

Middle Tennessee Electric Membership Corporation is a member-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperative providing electricity to more than 235,000 residential and business members in Williamson, Wilson, Rutherford and Cannon counties.

“Is a little chest pain normal?”

Not all signs of an emergency are obvious. Ongoing symptoms like dizziness, shortness of breath and chest pain could be an emergency in disguise. Thankfully, the ER at TriStar Summit and TriStar Mt. Juliet ER are here to help.

With dedicated emergency experts and fast wait times, you can trust us for even better care. We’re here 24/7 to help you through any emergency — even the tricky ones.