



# Knox Happenings

Newsletter

OFFICE OF COUNTY MAYOR TIM BURCHETT • 400 MAIN STREET, SUIT 615 • KNOXVILLE, TN 37902

VOLUME II, ISSUE I

JANUARY 2012



## IMPORTANT DATES

### Jan. 2

New Year's Day  
Observed (Offices closed)

### Jan. 16

Martin Luther King Day  
(Offices closed)

### Jan. 17

County Commission  
Work Session

### Jan. 23

County Commission  
Meeting

## WHATCHA GOT?

Do you have a story idea, picture, announcement or other good news about Knox County? If so, send it in!

Newsletter submissions can be sent to Knox County Communications Manager Michael Grider by emailing [michael.grider@knoxcounty.org](mailto:michael.grider@knoxcounty.org)

## Knox unemployment remains among lowest in Tennessee



Unemployment numbers are not yet available for the final month of 2011, but November's jobless rate is lower than previous months, and may continue a trend that could carry into the new year.

The November rate, released Dec. 22, in Knox County was 6.3 percent, down from 6.7 percent in

October. Knox County continues to have the lowest unemployment of all major metro counties and the third lowest unemployment statewide.

"Our relatively low unemployment numbers are further proof that Knox County is a great place to live and do business," Knox County Mayor Tim Burchett said. "If government stays out of the way of business, and we remain focused on providing high-quality, efficient service at a savings to our taxpayers, Knox County will see continued economic success in the new year."

Statewide data is online at <http://SourceTN.org>.

## Resolve to spend time in South Knox in 2012

The Henley Street Bridge might be closed, but South Knox County is open, and there is a long list of businesses hoping you'll stop by in the new year.

The closure of the 80-year-old bridge means there's one less route to South Knoxville, but that doesn't make the trip a difficult one. The Gay Street Bridge and James White Parkway detour routes are convenient and easy to navigate.

In addition to the many stores and shops, South Knox also offers several restaurant options for either a quick workday lunch or an evening out with family and friends.

If you have a little time on the weekends, you might want to get out and enjoy some of South Knox County's many parks, including Ijams Nature Center, Fort Dickerson Park, French Memorial Park, Bower Field and others.

So, occasionally, when you are driving around looking for a place to shop, eat or play, turn south, because South Knox is open for business. For more information about all South Knox has to offer, visit <http://SouthKnoxIsOpen.com>

## Knox Highway crews ready to keep roads safe this winter

This year, Knox County Highway Maintenance crews have a new tool to help keep county roads safe this winter. The department now has the ability to pre-treat roads ahead of winter weather using a newly-acquired salt brine system that spreads a liquid



solution to prevent snow and ice from sticking to the road surface. Solid road salt only works to melt away the snow and ice, after it's already fallen onto the road.

Before and during a winter storm, teams of at least two highway crewmembers will be dispatched to each of seven Knox County Highway districts. With a single load of solid road salt, teams can cover up to 15 lane miles. Depending on the size of the tank being used, the teams can spread a single tank of the brine solution over 25 to 40 lane miles of roadway.



In addition to the added safety benefits of being able to pre-treat roads ahead of icy conditions, the use of brine also saves taxpayer dollars. Brine is cheaper than salt, and pre-treating helps reduce the amount of salt used during a winter storm event.

## A message from Knox County Mayor Tim Burchett



We all mark the new year much in the same way: reflecting on the past 12 months, looking ahead at the coming year, and making resolutions to achieve a personal goal.

I welcome 2012, and I look forward to continuing the work that we have been doing over the past year. In the last year, Knox County government has become more responsive and accountable to our citizens, and more efficient with taxpayer money. An appropriate New Year's resolution for all of us would be to continue operating Knox County government in a transparent, efficient manner; to remain focused on the core functions and services of government; and to identify and realize savings for our taxpayers whenever possible.

This work requires the commitment of every Knox County employee and citizen. If you see a way that we can conduct business more efficiently or in a way that can save taxpayer money, I want to know about it. If you ever have a suggestion or comment, you can always call my office directly at 215-2005, or you can email me at [county.mayor@knoxcounty.org](mailto:county.mayor@knoxcounty.org).

2011 was a good year for Knox County, and I believe 2012 can and will be even better.

Sincerely,

### Bet you didn't know...

- More than 34,200 seniors participated in exercise programs at one of the five Knox County Senior centers, with more than 12,000 of those participating at the Strang center.
- 2011's most popular senior programs included: line dancing, Facebook class, pilates, SAIL, yoga and the senior prom.

Todd Oglesby has been a Parks & Recreation employee for 26 years.



## Law Director plans to hold training sessions in 2012

In the new year, Knox County Law Director Joe Jarret will offer informational courses to Knox County employees on topics including public records law, addressing violence in the workplace, interviewing techniques for supervisors, religious expression in the workplace, and avoiding liability.

The courses are geared toward assisting employees in enhancing their professionalism and broadening their skills in a particular session's subject area.

Each session will last about one hour and will be held in the City County Building.

Dates and times of these and other training sessions will be announced throughout the year, and department/division directors are invited to request specific trainings on issues involving local government law and administration.

Most trainings are conducted with the use of PowerPoint presentations and in a conversational, rather than lecture, format.

For more information, call 215-2327.

## Employee Spotlight

### Parks & Recreation employee winning by losing

Talk about a resolution! About a year ago, after eating 40 slices of pizza and catching a reflection of himself in a glass door, Knox County Parks & Recreation light equipment operator Todd Oglesby decided it was time to make a change.

"It just hit me all at once; it was like a light switch flipped. I was killing myself. And from that very day...I changed everything," he said. Since then, Todd has lost 115 pounds.

He goes to the gym almost daily; avoids potatoes, bread and other starches; and sticks to a strict eating schedule that includes eating seven small meals each day. Now, Todd has a lot more energy than he used to have, and sounds confident when he says he thinks he's healthier now than

he was in high school.

Todd is quick to point out that he hasn't done this alone, and has had a lot of help from his personal trainer, Jennifer L. Davis.

You can watch a complete interview with Todd at <http://bit.ly/Toglesby>.