When Tony Britton saw the real estate market in Chattanooga heat up, it sparked a fire in him. Although he was secure in his profession as a teacher, he says he saw an opportunity to achieve greater financial success and wanted to follow his instincts.

However, Britton says he was hesitant because he didn’t see enough Realtors in Chattanooga who looked like him.

“I didn’t see many African Americans succeeding in real estate in Chattanooga, and that was a big concern,” he explains. “I knew I could become a successful Realtor, but I didn’t know if I could succeed here.”

A Nashville native and Vanderbilt-educated teacher who moved to the Scenic City in 2012, Britton says he needed to believe he could excel in real estate before switching from the security of a regular paycheck to a commission-based income, or, as he puts it, “from the W-2 mentality to the 1099 mentality.”

“I wanted to connect with a successful African American agent in the city because I knew that would give me the confidence I needed to move forward,” Britton adds.

When Marcus Holt of The Edrington Team at Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices J Douglas Properties reached out to the aspiring agent after learning about Britton’s ambition through a mutual friend.

Britton’s flip to real estate eased by Realtor who walked same path

By David Laprad

Follow the trailblazer

Tony Britton represents homebuyers and sellers as part of the Edrington Team at Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices J Douglas Properties. He felt encouraged to pursue a career in real estate when he saw the success of Marcus Holt.
An ethical obligation to ‘raise hell’

Moore proud to do whatever it takes to defend any criminal client

By David Laprad

Criminal defense attorney Steven Moore says some lawyers don’t like him because they think judges let him get away with what they can’t.

While representing a client in the Athens Park Bloods racketeering case last year, Moore says the way he went toe-to-toe with Judge Tom Greenholtz shocked some of the other defense lawyers with clients in the case.

"John Cavett and I were the only ones going at it with the judge, and some of the younger attorneys said, ‘I can’t believe you talk to him that way,’" recalls Moore, 57. "I said, ‘I can’t believe you don’t. This is a serious case.’"

Moore says the way he went toe-to-toe with Judge Tom Greenholtz shocked some of the other defense lawyers with clients in the case.

"But at the end, the jury found him not guilty. And that’s fine with me. I’m not afraid to do whatever it takes to defend any client," Moore insists.

When this happens, he offers a stock reply. "I’ll say, ‘Judge, I know I don’t need to remind the court, but the beginning of our ethical code uses the term ‘zealous advocate.’ I take that term to heart. I’m supposed to stand here and raise hell.’"

"That said, Moore insists he’s not a brazen maverick, but is respectful of the judge in every case.

"Some of my friends will say, ‘I can’t believe you walked that gangbanger. What if he kills someone?’ That’s not on me. I wasn’t in the room when the jury voted. If you have a gripe about how it ended, you can never know what those 12 people in the jury box are going to do. I tell some of my clients, ‘I don’t know what’s going to happen, but they’ll know we were here.’"

Moore has raised hell on behalf of murder defendants, accused gang members, people indicted for selling drugs, alleged sex criminals and more, leading some of his friends to question how he’s able to do what he does.

"Some of my friends will say, ‘I don’t know getting caught and going to prison is part of the cost of doing business,’ he explains. "But they won’t lie down, and they don’t want a lawyer who will lie down, either."

"And that’s fine with me. I’m not afraid to try any case. You can never know what those 12 people in the jury box are going to do. I tell some of my clients, ‘I don’t know what’s going to happen, but they’ll know we were here.’"

Regardless, Moore claims he has a reputation on the street for being a bullfighter.

"Gang members and career criminals know getting caught and going to prison is part of the cost of doing business," he clarifies. "But they won’t lie down, and they don’t want a lawyer who will lie down, either."

"And that’s fine with me. I’m not afraid to try any case. You can never know what those 12 people in the jury box are going to do. I tell some of my clients, ‘I don’t know what’s going to happen, but they’ll know we were here.’"

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"Some of my friends will say, ‘I can’t believe you walked that gangbanger. What if he kills someone?’ That’s not on me. I wasn’t in the room when the jury voted. If you have a gripe about how it ended, call the people who sat in that box and went behind a closed door and discussed the case and took a vote and came out and announced a unanimous verdict. I didn’t set him free; those 12 people did.’"

It’s not that Moore lacks a conscience, he simply has a job to do, he says.
“My client might have confessed, or his crime might be on video, or the prosecutors might have the murder weapon, and his fingerprints are all over it, but he’s still entitled to a defense, and it’s my job to give him the best defense I can.” Moore’s efforts to provide a client with his best possible work begins with a single question: “What led you for being arrested for this?”

It does not begin with — nor does Moore ever ask — “Did you do it?”

“I say, ‘I’m not here to judge you. You’re going to have to answer for your conduct in front of 12 people, but ultimately, your judgement will come from God, not me.’

“I can’t say that, then get out of criminal court and go separate pots and pans or be a tax lawyer. There’s too much at stake.”

Even when a defendant is not facing the death penalty, the potential costs are high, Moore says.

So is the toll a case can take on him. In the 2019 murder trial of Reginald Woods, who was charged with killing his girlfriend, Katrina Holloway, during an argument in 2017, Moore’s client faced a lengthy prison sentence.

During Woods’ two-year incarceration while awaiting trial, Moore had come to know his client personally and grown to like him. Moore says their meetings often turned into “BS” sessions, where they gabbled about everything but the trial. Since Moore thought the evidence in Woods’ case suggested the shooting that killed Holloway was accidental, he says he believed he had a shot at winning. This, combined with him knowing Woods as a person, placed considerable stress on Moore.

Moore ultimately prevailed, but even after the release of the intense pressure that accompanied the case he continues to feel the disappointment of the victim’s family and general public.

“People judge folks like Reggie and judge folks like Larry and Arvine Phelps in 2002. That’s OK, Moore insists, because he can’t physically do much, you work.”

Moore has either assembled a good set of armor or was born wearing one because he claims arrows of condemnation bounce off him. As an example, he mentions an incident which occurred during the trial of Donnie Hulett in 2004.

Moore represented Hulett, who was accused of robbing, beating and shooting brothers Larry and Arvine Phelps in 2002. As Moore was walking to the lectern to ask the judge to instruct the jury, the man’s mother wrote, “We expect you to do your job and maintain a sense of justice for our son.”

Moore says his mother often expresses...
Wash, rinse, repeat

Mundane can be golden in times of turbulence

Some years back a friend and I were navigating remarkably similar uncharted waters on the sea of life. We lived hundreds of miles apart but kept regular tabs on each other’s doings via the most advanced communication devices of the day: landline telephones.

Calls would typically start with something like this: How are you? What are you up to?

The response, from either side, was typically this: OK, just doing the dishes.

We meant “doing the dishes” partly in the literal sense, there being no one else in our households to tend to the task. But it was also figurative, a metaphor of sorts—shorthand—for taking care of all the unexciting, mundane chores that help reinstate order and sanity to lives that had been seriously lacking in both.

Whatever else might or might not have been going on with us, the dishes had to be done. Even now, with a full-time partner on the premises to share household duties as well as an appliance whose sole function is it to render dishes clean, I often prefer taking the task on by hand.

For one thing, there are few activities that provide such immediate and appreciable evidence of the progress made. Start with an unruly stack of dirty stuff and then, at the end of the process, behold a neat stack of spotless stuff.

I’m big on quantifiable results. Mowing the lawn is a close second in terms of the before-and-after payday. But I don’t mow anymore. A lawn SWAT team appears every so often and (noisily) renders the job done in no time flat. Worth every penny.

It’s true, for dishes, over the years I’ve developed a standard approach, which rarely varies:

Start with cups and glasses; then bowls or other vessels; then the plates and saucers; then whisks, spatulas and any other of our bizarrely vast collection of utensils; and then the flatware. Pox and pans, usually the most challenging, come last.

Have I mentioned before that I might be just a tad obsessive/compulsive?

That tendency aside, the washing protocol helps turn the whole process into a sort of meditation. It has structure. It has meaning. It has purpose beyond the obvious and immediate goal of dishware maintenance: conscious awareness and living in the present moment, leaving past and future to their own devices.

It’s also a reminder of one of my favorite, too-often-neglected, mantras: Be. Here. Now.

It strikes me that what’s called for in this pandemic time is the same as what was called for in those chubby-water times of years ago.

By which I mean coping. Getting by. Doing what needs doing, not doing what doesn’t. And focusing on the task in front of me, however humdrum that task might be.

True, it’s hard not to let my mind wander off into the past, and think about the days of times when getting together with friends actually took place in the same room and didn’t require clearance from the Health Department.

When the only danger associated with going out to shoot pool was the embarrassment of absorbing another trouncing. When watching a baseball game could take place from the stands. It’s also hard not to drift into the mental future, and wonder whether it will ever feel safe to sit in an airplane again and fly off to a real British pub. Or to eat in a crowded restaurant. Get back into a pew.

But life, as always, is taking place in the now, and, as the cliché so inarguably notes, It is what it is. So, I’m doing the dishes.

Trying to Be. Here. Now. Wearing a mask. And worrying about the crazies who think this is all a hoax.

Footnote

I’ll be taking a little break from writing while I tackle a couple of other projects that have been nagging at me. I hope to see you again soon.

Joe Rogers is a former writer for The Tennessean and editor for The New York Times. He is retired and living in Nashville. He can be reached at jrogie@gmail.com.
Local nonprofit provides aid to area military families during pandemic

 Chattanooga-based nonprofit Friends of the Troops is meeting the needs of area service members and their families during the pandemic.

 The organization, which supports deployed troops, veterans and state-side service members, has seen increased need from the area’s military families since the Easter tornado and during the ongoing COVID-19 crisis.

 After learning that a number of reservists and military spouses had lost their regular jobs due to COVID-19 cutbacks, Friends of the Troops stepped up with cleaning supplies, hygiene items and snacks, and distributed pallets of the items to area military families.

 “The 327th Chemical Company and other units in the Chattanooga area cannot thank Friends of the Troops enough for their kind and thoughtful donations,” says Sgt. First Class Kevin Chitwood of the Army Reserves. “The donations put smiles on faces and eased financial burdens within our ranks in these trying times.”

 Friends of the Troops receives donated items and financial support through partnerships with area corporations and businesses.

 CEO Jessica Duke says, “We rely on corporate donations to support our service members and their families. We’re grateful for every item received and ensure every donation makes its way to our service members or their families, or to support veterans.”

 Friends of the Troops is looking for area businesses partners to help support the military community, including a local National Guard unit that just deployed overseas.

 For more information about Friends of the Troops, visit their website at www.friensofthetroops.org or call 423 599-9901.

 Sheriff names Wamp to new counsel post

 Sheriff Jim Hammond has tapped Cory Wamp to be his department’s general counsel.

 In this newly created in-house position, Wamp will provide counsel to the sheriff and his command staff on matters pertaining to investigations, daily operations, policy matters and media inquiries.

 As general counsel, Wamp will work with the Hamilton County Attorney’s Office to gather information related to anticipated and pending litigation, the procurement and preservation of evidence, and to identify other items necessary for discovery and trial work.

 The Hamilton County Attorney’s Office will continue to provide legal representation and counsel for the office of the sheriff in lawsuits and trial advocacy.

 In hiring Wamp, Hammond’s office joins other large law enforcement agencies in Tennessee and the nation by incorporating in-house legal counsel.

 “My staff and I have discussed instituting a general counsel to support our daily legal needs for some time,” Hammond explains. “With the growing number of legal requests for discovery items, the amount of inquiries from members of the media, the upcoming transition of Silverdale Detention Facility and the increase in evidentiary requests, there couldn’t be a more pressing and important time for us to incorporate the services of a general counsel.”

 Wamp began her career as an assistant public defender in the Hamilton County Public Defender’s Office. For the last three years, she has served as an assistant district attorney in Bradley County.

 In her roles of assistant public defender and assistant district attorney, Wamp spent most of her time as an advocate in the courtroom – working to develop both the Mental Health Court in Hamilton County and Juvenile Recovery Court in Bradley County. While prosecuting, Wamp also became certified in gang prosecution through the National Gang Crime Research Center in 2019.

 Wamp has taken 10 felony cases to jury trials in the last six years.

 “My role will be multifaceted and my experience in criminal law as both a defense attorney and a prosecutor will give me a perspective that will benefit the office of the sheriff and the citizens of Hamilton County,” says Wamp. “I understand how important it is to protect both the rights of criminal defendants as well as support and uphold law enforcement for the sacrifices they make every single day.”

 Born and raised in Hamilton County, Wamp graduated from Chattanooga Christian School. She is a graduate of the University of Tennessee and the University of Tennessee College of Law.

 A Step Ahead Chattanooga announces partnership pregnancy prevention

 A Step Ahead Chattanooga is one of eight subcontractors nationwide selected to participate in a project replicating evidence-based pregnancy prevention programs.

 ASAC researched and adapted Healthy Teen Network's Power Through Choices program to be applicable to teens in its 11-county service area.

 The program educates youth ages 12 to 16 about the prevention of behaviors that result in HIV, sexually transmitted infections and unintended pregnancies. Over a five-week period in June and July, ASAC implemented the first round of classes in coordination with its network of referral partner agencies.

 ASAC is now looking forward to expanding and continuing the programming throughout its service area. Power Through Choices consists of 10 90-minute sessions, held during a period of five weeks, with each class consisting of three to 15 students.

 Each session addresses a specific risk factor, such as understanding sexually transmitted infections, contraception options and communicating about personal choices.

 The initial offering of the program reached 125 teenagers. Partner organizations included Bridge Chattanooga, The Bethlehem Center, The Heard, Net Resource Foundation, The Pearl Group, Reach One Teach One and Youth of First Cumberland Presbyterian.

 ASAC serves Bledsoe, Bradley, Franklin, Grundy, Hamilton Marion, McMinn, Meigs, Polk, Rhea and Sequatchie counties.

 Information: AStepAheadChattanooga.org.
How can you help lower your longevity risk?

The investment world contains different types of risk. Your stocks or stock-based mutual funds could lose value during periods of market volatility. The price of your bonds or bond funds could also decline, if new bonds are issued at higher interest rates. But have you ever thought about longevity risk?

Insurance companies and pension funds view longevity risk as the risk they incur when their assumptions about life expectancies and mortality rates are incorrect, leading to higher payout levels. But for you, as an individual investor, longevity risk is less technical and more emotional: it’s the risk of outliving your money.

To assess your own longevity risk, you’ll first want to make an educated guess about your life span, based on your health and family history. Plus, you’ve got some statistics to consider: Women who turned 65 in April of this year can expect to live, on average, until age 86.5; for men, the corresponding figure is 84, according to the Social Security Administration.

Once you have a reasonable estimate of the number of years that lie ahead, you’ll want to take steps to reduce your longevity risk. For starters, try to build your financial resources as much as possible, because the greater your level of assets, the lower the risk of outliving them. So, during your working years, keep contributing to your IRA and your 401(k) or similar employer-sponsored retirement plan.

Then, as you near retirement, you will need to do some planning. Specifically, you will need to compare your essential living expenses — mortgage/rent, utilities, food, clothing, etc. — with the amount of income you’ll get from guaranteed sources, such as Social Security or pensions. You do have some flexibility with this guaranteed income pool.

For example, you can file for Social Security benefits as early as 62, but your monthly checks will then be reduced by about 30% from what you’d receive if you waited until your full retirement age, which is likely between 66 and 67.

You might also consider other investments that can provide you with a steady income stream. A financial professional can help you choose the income-producing investments that are appropriate for your needs and that fit well with the rest of your portfolio.

After you’ve determined that your guaranteed income will be sufficient to meet your essential living expenses, have you eliminated longevity risk? Not necessarily — because “essential” expenses don’t include unexpected costs, of which there may be many, such as costly home maintenance, auto repairs and so on. And during your retirement years, you’ll always need to be aware of health care costs.

If you have to dip into your guaranteed income sources to pay for these types of bills, you might increase the risk of outliving your money.

To avoid this scenario, you may want to establish a separate fund, possibly containing at least a year’s worth of living expenses, with the money held in cash or cash equivalents. This money won’t grow much, if at all, but it will be there for you when you need it.

With careful planning, adequate guaranteed income, a sufficient emergency fund and enough other investments to handle nonessential costs, you’ll be doing what you can to reduce your own longevity risk. And that may lead to a more enjoyable retirement.

Edward Jones, its employees and financial advisors cannot provide tax or legal advice. You should consult your attorney or qualified tax advisor regarding your situation.

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Financial Focus
Stan Russell
Stan.Russell@edwardjones.com

Chattanooga State students meet disabilities head-on

By Betty Proctor

Madison Cothern, who is getting ready to enter her senior year as a Hamilton County Collegiate High student at Chattanooga State Community College, has made overcoming obstacles her life goal.

Cothern developed hearing loss in both ears as a toddler. She was fitted with a bone anchored hearing aid, a surgically implanted device that allows sound waves to vibrate into her inner ear, enabling her to hear.

Although Cothern says the hearing aid has made a difference, hearing loss still impacts her daily life.

“Hearing loss can make school and social activities difficult — and sometimes impossible!” Madison says. “Also, not everyone is educated about hearing loss, or knows American Sign Language, so I encounter obstacles.”

Despite hearing loss and illnesses, Cothern excels.

Following graduation in 2021, she plans to attend the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, where she intends to major in secondary education and history.

Performing ballet both locally and nationally for six years, Cothern shares her love of dance and sign language with elementary students at Barger Elementary and other recreational centers around Chattanooga.

Named to the spring 2020 dean’s list, Cothern holds membership in Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and the Global Scholars Honors Program.

Cothern embraces volunteerism by taking on roles as a peer mentor, English tutor, dance instructor and anti-bullying advocate. National recognition for her volunteer work has come in the form of grants from Youth Service America’s Start a Snowball and Disney’s Friends for Change programs.

Within the community, Cothern received the Kids Who Show Courage award and was one of four recipients of the 2020 Black Girls Roar award.

The Americans with Disabilities Act celebrated its 30th anniversary July 26. At Chattanooga State, the Disabilities Support Services office serves close to 400 eligible students who might require accommodations for a variety of disabilities.

Chattanooga State students requesting accommodations must self-disclose, provide appropriate documentation and meet with DSS staff to devise an accommodation plan.

Cothern receives CART services (Communication Access Realtime Translation) and note-taking assistance, while fellow DSS student Danielle Freeman, who has a vision and learning disability, is allowed extra time to take tests and receives large print handouts to see fonts more legibly.

Due to her initial undiagnosed struggles, Freeman had trouble completing simple tasks and understanding math, and dropped out of high school in ninth grade. After attaining her GED, she enrolled at Chattanooga State Dayton, and was fortunate to meet Jerry Hendrix, site director, who recognized a possible disability and referred her to DSS.

Like her counterpart, Freeman also was named to the spring 2020 dean’s list. She has learned to advocate for herself, but knows the DSS staff “has her back” if needed.

“They’re ready to help in any situation and have given me the confidence I needed to continue my education,” says Freeman, who will graduate in 2021 with a University Parallel degree in science and transfer to the University of Tennessee at Knoxville to become a speech therapist.

“The degree for speech therapy requires a master’s degree, but with the skills I’ve learned at Chattanooga State, I feel like I can advocate for myself and achieve lasting success,” Freeman says.

“I tell students that accommodations are not special treatment, it’s their right under the law,” says Kristi Strode, DSS counselor.

To learn more about Disabilities Support Services, call 423-697-4452 or go to chattanoogastate.edu/disability-support-services.

Source: Chattanooga State Community College

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The Chattanooga Symphony & Opera has announced plans for its 2020-21 season, which will include performances of reduced instrumentation and audience sizes due to COVID-19.

The CSO has postponed the 2020-21 season as originally planned until the 2021-22 season. Executive Director Samantha Teter hopes the organization will be able to move most of the programs to the following season.

“We’re working with the guest artists who were scheduled to perform during our 2020-21 season to move them to new dates during the 2021-22 season. The original 2020-21 season offered a variety of fabulous programming and world-class performers, and we want to keep that as intact as possible.”

Instead, the CSO will be performing smaller concerts with fewer musicians and significantly smaller audiences.

“Depending on the severity of the pandemic at the time of each scheduled concert, we anticipate having 20 or less musicians perform and 100 or less audience members present,” Teter says. “However, we will be offering two or three performances for most programs, as well as offering several livestream and recorded opportunities for patrons to view online.”

The CSO is working with its subscribers on offering access to these live concerts. Once subscribers have been allocated to performances, there might be an opportunity for more of the public to attend, as well.

In addition, some live, free performances will be offered on a reservation basis to the public.

“It is important to us that we keep our musicians, staff and patrons safe. So, we will be instituting several safety protocols, such as mask-wearing, socially distanced seating for musicians and the audience, and open-air venues during warmer months,” says Teter.

Kayoko Dan, CSO music director, has been working on new repertoire to offer at these condensed performances.

“We’re building programs that will highlight every musician of the CSO with works with smaller instrumentations to allow social distancing onstage. While challenging, it’s an opportunity for the CSO to perform works and present musicians in new ways,” Dan says. “I’m looking forward to exploring diverse, interesting and some new-to-me works this season, as well as ensembles such as brass quintet and percussion trio, which we rarely present. We’re also looking forward to presenting our programs to different parts of our community.”

CSO leadership has been working with Tri-State Musicians’ Union, AFM Local 80, on creating a new collective bargaining agreement for the unique challenges of the 2020-21 season.

The new agreement guarantees musicians will receive 66% of the services and pay they would have received in a normal season and includes several health and safety guidelines to keep musicians safe.

“The musicians of the CSO were able to collaborate with CSO leadership to get back onstage safely this season. This won’t be a typical season, but we all found it important to modify how we do things this year in order to get live music to our community,” says Joey Demko, CSO horn player and negotiation committee chair for the AFM Local 80.

The CSO will release more details about concert dates and programming in early August.

For more information, visit www.chattanoogasymphony.org.
Also, African American, Holt was able to serve as an exemplar to Britton in more ways than one. In addition to being a Realtor who achieved quick success when he entered the profession in 2016, Holt also left a stable job to do so.

Holt joined the Edrington Team after resigning from his position as a vice president at First Tennessee Bank and sold more than 50 homes during the first half of his rookie year, exceeding the income he would have earned at the bank for the entire year.

Holt had also risen through the ranks of the Edrington Team to become its director of recruiting and a mentor to new agents.

Britton, presented with the picture of success he needed to see, interviewed several smaller, boutique real estate companies in the hopes of finding a good fit.

“I wanted to become part of something that wasn’t already formed but was evolving,” he recalls. “I wanted to make sure the culture was organic and on the cutting edge.”

When J Douglas Properties CEO Doug Edrington shared his vision of opportunity and growth with Britton, the former teacher said he wanted to make the brokerage his professional home.

However, he had to prove he would be a good addition before being invited to join.

“Everybody wants you coming out of real estate school,” Britton points out. “But the Edrington Team was selective, and I liked that.”

Holt says the Edrington Team is not looking to simply swell its numbers and build a large sales entity but to create a culture populated with “the right people.”

“It seems like it’s easy to get into the real estate business. You take two courses, pass a test, apply for your license and you’re an agent — technically,” he notes.

“But we don’t want to hire just anyone or as many people as possible; we want to hire people who can foster the relationships we’re trying to build with our clients and the community, and who can do it in a way that meets the standards we’ve set for ourselves.”

The vetting process at the Edrington Team is not quick or easy, Holt says, but it is effective.

“We’re looking for people who are hardworking, humble and professionally mature — and who carry a bit of swagger,” he clarifies. “Those people tend to thrive.”

After putting Britton through the grinder—which included Thursday evening socials with the entire J Douglas Properties firm—the team offered him a spot listing and selling homes. But real estate boot camp, as it were, was only beginning.

“We have a mentorship program for everyone who comes on because learning real estate is like going to college,” Holt says. “When you first go to college, you’re excited and ready to go, but there’s a lot to learn. And it helps to have someone guide you through it.

“That’s the difference between someone saying, ‘I’m going to be a Realtor,’ and then six months later, they’re either out of the business or they have their footing.”

As a new agent, Britton learned the business in steps, starting with contracts. He then moved on to role-playing, after which he tackled his buyer’s presentation.

Meanwhile, he was joining the rest of the Edrington Team for its regular training sessions, including sales training on Mondays.

“It can be overwhelming in the beginning, but that period of time weeds out the people who aren’t going to make it,” Britton acknowledges.

“We don’t want anyone to feel like they’re coming into this industry and trying to figure things out on their own,” Holt adds. “You’re never going to be alone. There’s always going to be someone with you to help you move your career forward.”

“This includes an agent’s first 10 transactions, during which a fellow agent is glued to the trainee’s side to “help with the big questions and the fires,” Holt says, “and with the small questions that could become fires. Having someone with you during that time is crucial. This business is much easier when you have someone you can depend on.”

“I don’t see how anyone starts off on their own,” Britton says. “I preach teams to anyone who’s coming into the field.”

Like Holt, Britton found quick success.

“I made way more money than I did teaching,” he says with a smile.

Holt adds that the Edrington Team, which in 2019 did more transactions than any other real estate team in Chattanooga, according to the Multiple Listing Service, did not carry Britton, but that Britton added his “hard work, humility, professional maturity and swagger,” to the team and made a significant contribution.

“Tony worked very hard, and the numbers were the byproduct,” Holt maintains. “There was a direct path from his hard work to the success that came from it.

“When he started, he was hungry. You could see it every day in his work ethic. The drive Tony had then is what continues to fuel his success.”

Britton has since risen through the ranks of the Edrington Team to become a mentor, like Holt. This places him in a position to serve as inspiration for another aspiring Realtor—regardless of their color.

“It’s not our intention to just hire African Americans,” Britton says. “We’re focused on bringing on exceptional agents.”

Still, Britton hopes he’s at the vanguard of a new lineage of African American Realtors in Chattanooga—of people who hunger for more than their station in life and need someone who looks like them to not just serve as an example of success but to also guide them until they find their footing.

“I would like to see more diversity, not just in terms of color but also thought and culture,” Britton says. “Diversity gives an organization strength and a broader perspective. You can’t be one-sided and expect to grow.

“Minorities are doing great, it’s just a matter of identifying the talent and giving them an opportunity to shine,” Britton continues. “There are a lot of people like me, and we want to do our part to encourage them and bring them along with us.”

Holt says greater diversity in real estate begins with a conversation. “I would like to see more African Americans in the business, too, so we need to have a conversation about overcoming people’s fears or lack of knowledge.

“There are a lot of people who won’t think they can succeed in this business until they see someone who looks like them do it first. But we want you to know whether you’re Black, brown or any other color, there’s a place for, and there are people who will guide you and make sure you’re successful.”
Hot temps and hot housing markets around the nation

We’ve all felt the heat the past few weeks, and the real estate market has been as hot as a summer sidewalk. As we reported locally, for the month of June, pending sales in the greater Chattanooga market were up almost 42%, or 142 houses, over the same time last year.

The Chattanooga area reflects the regional trend. Recent data from the National Association of Realtors shows existing-home sales in the South jumped 26% to an annual rate of 2.18 million in June. The median price in the South was $258,500 – a 4.4% increase from one year ago.

In the Northeast, June existing-home sales rose 4.3% with a median price in of $332,900, an increase of 3.6% from June 2019.

In the Midwest, existing-home sales increased 11.1%, and the median price in the Midwest was $236,900 – a 3.2% increase from June 2019.

Lastly, existing-home sales in the West ascended 31.9% to an annual rate of 950,000 in June, and the median price in the West was $432,600 – up 5.4% from June 2019. Clearly, the market is hot all over the country!

Dr. Lawrence Yun, chief economist for NAR, spoke with our association this month, and explained that due to COVID-19, mortgage applications dipped in April, but beginning in May, they spiked back to where they were in the first quarter or higher. While still in a pandemic, real estate activity continues.

Local RE/MAX team helps nursing homes through virus

By David Laprad

RE/MAX Properties and RE/MAX Renaissance agents were moved to act when they learned about the high number of COVID-19 cases reported at NHC HealthCare in Rossville.

Not knowing what the residents’ needs were, Brenda Purcell, community relations liaison for the two RE/MAX firms, placed a call to the nursing home’s social service director and asked, “What can we do to help?”

“Our goal was to lift spirits and boost morale,” Purcell says.

The director shared the need for iPads and specially designed head phones for the hearing impaired, which could be used to allow residents to read their daily devotions, play games and have Facetime visits with clergy and families.

“The technology could open up the outside world and allow more seniors to communicate,” Purcell says. “We knew time was of the essence, so our agents quickly contributed to this cause.”

Longtime Realtor Sheila Cross, whose husband recently suffered a stroke and rehabbed at a few nursing homes, saw the loneliness residents feel. So, she donated funds to the project.

“I’m glad the company saw the need and responded,” she says.

Broker Jennifer Cooper’s grandmother was a resident at NHC HealthCare in Rossville several years ago, so the project allowed her to give back to the place that once cared for her loved one.

“There’s a saying that goes, ‘When you don’t know what to do, just do something,’“ Cooper says. “We will continue to look for ways to make a difference and meet needs in the communities we serve.”
Four things to know about your home’s water use

Guess where most of it goes

Things are really heating up outside in the Chattanooga area, and residential water usage has increased as most homeowners have been spending more time at home this year. Whether watering the lawn, taking a shower or cooking, you might be surprised to learn these facts about where and how your home uses water.

Indoor water use

The majority of indoor water is used in your home’s bathrooms. Toilets are the biggest water users inside the house, with each flush requiring gallons of water. Shower faucets land in second place.

Leaks are your enemy

While bathrooms and clothes washers are necessary consumers of water, leaks come in third place as users of indoor household water. Make sure you’re not throwing money down the drain by ignoring seemingly small leaks.

Just one dripping faucet wastes gallons of water per day and could have a sizable effect on your water bill. It’s worth the time and effort to find a professional to come in and fix the leaks you know about and ask them to check out all your pipes to make sure everything is sealed tight and working properly.

Kitchens are surprisingly efficient

You might be pleased to learn that, when it comes to water use, kitchens are relatively low on the list of consumers. Dishwashers are extremely common in modern homes, and they use far less water than washing dishes by hand. You can save water, time, and money by loading and running your dishwasher regularly.

Lawns, gardens, pools

A recent Residential End Uses of Water study found single-family homes used an average of 276 gallons of water per day, with almost exactly half of that water used outside the home.

Though this consumption largely spent watering lawns and gardens, particularly in hot climates with little rainfall, the increased prevalence of home swimming pools also contributes to high rates of average outdoor water use.

Before 1960, homes with swimming pools were extremely rare. The study found that only 3% of homes built before 1950 had swimming pools, while 12-15% percent built after 1959 have them. Pools understandably take a lot of water to clean, fill and maintain.

Knowing more about how and where your home uses water will not only give you a better understanding about your monthly water bill, it can also help you to prioritize what energy saving updates will give you the highest return on investment.

To find an expert who can help you update your appliances or plumbing, visit Home Builders Association of Greater Chattanooga at HBAOC.net.

Chattanooga State receives $200K for workforce training

Chattanooga State Community College recently received a $200,000 Appalachian Regional Commission grant to purchase equipment for a new workforce training site in Rhea County.

The equipment will be installed in mobile labs built adjacent to the Nokian Tyres plant, enabling the Tennessee College of Applied Technology to offer industrial electricity and industrial maintenance technical diploma programs to an estimated 40 residents of Rhea and Bledsoe counties each year in response to local workforce needs.

Enrollment in these two programs will be available beginning in January.

“Industry in Dayton needs industrial maintenance and electricity techs, and this new equipment will allow Chattanooga State to train technicians there in the city,” says Dr. Jim Barroto, TCAT executive vice president.

The project will establish a career pipeline to support local manufacturing industries and will increase post-secondary students’ access to advanced training and completion of industry-recognized certifications, Barroto adds.

The ARC funds will leverage more than $467,000 from other sources, bringing the project total to more than $667,000.

For more information, contact Jerry Hendrix at 423 365-5010 or jerry.hendrix@ chattanoogastate.edu.

Source: Chattanooga State Community College
It’s ‘hard to imagine’ a fall without football in Knoxville

By Tom Wood

We all remember those glory days of sitting in Neyland Stadium, peering down at the field and listening to the broadcast on radio headphones. The thrills and chills that ran up the spine just before kickoff, as the late, great announcer John Ward uttered his signature catchphrase: “It’s football time in Tennessee!”

But what if it isn’t?

That’s the big question for Knoxvilleians and Vols fans across the state as they come to grips with the very real possibility that the University of Tennessee’s 2020 football season might be delayed or canceled altogether because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“It’s an issue that hits home both emotionally and economically. “It’s hard for me to even imagine no football,” says Helen O’Connor Morton, one of the leaders of the Cumberland Avenue Merchants Association. She, her husband and son own University Liquors.

“It’s just not a happy place to go, thinking that it’s not going to happen. Honestly, it would be devastating to the economy for fall football not to happen in some fashion.”

“I almost don’t even want to think about what the psyche of the school is going to be like if they have to cancel football,” says Alan Carmichael, chief operating officer and president of Moxley Carmichael, a public relations firm.

“Peoples’ lives are so intertwined with the Volunteers and it is a big topic of conversation. People go to the games, they watch them on TV, they talk about it all week long.”

Imagine games being played at an empty Neyland Stadium, or at least a socially distanced gathering of fans wearing Big Orange masks. No Pride of Southland Band playing “Rocky Top,” live at least.

Outside the stadium, it’s pretty much the same scenario. Imagine the Strip with no traffic, few vendors selling Vols T-shirts and memorabilia. Limited tailgating, if any. No Vol Navy. No Vol Walk. No buzz.

“We have been looking at this, and I really don’t see how they can start college football as scheduled, that’s been our take basically for a couple of months,” says Chuck Cavalaris, a former Knoxville sports writer and now a commentator for the Sports Source on WATE-TV.

“Right now, will people accept the fact that maybe no fans in the stands or is it 20%? Certainly, the whole tailgating aspect is on hold,” adds Cavalaris, also a Knoxville Realtor. “So I think you’re looking at a delay until mid-September or later – and keep your fingers crossed.

And hope something improves to where in October or November we can still have a season and get back as close to normal as we can.”

Known vs. great unknown

Some major conferences have already announced plans to begin a reduced schedule (12 to 9 games) in late September. SEC presidents and chancellors were to meet virtually Thursday to discuss how rising COVID-19 numbers could alter or cancel the coming season.

Trending trouble

In public service ads, UT athletics director Phillip Fulmer has been urging Vols fans to mask up if they want to have a football season. In mid-June the former head football coach tweeted: “As long as the curve and the trends continue to move in the right direction, I’m confident we will be playing football in Neyland Stadium this fall.”

Unfortunately, that has not been the case in Tennessee. There has been an upward trend of positive COVID-19 cases across the state since Memorial Day.

Autumn in Knoxville can mean 100,000 or more rolling into town on seven weekends to spend millions of dollars and cheer on the Vols.

There is reason for optimism, as most professional sports have returned to the field, albeit in shortened seasons. But a number of positive tests canceled major league baseball games earlier this week, causing the sports world to worry anew.

Several scenarios that the SEC is said to be considering would be a conference-only schedule of eight games, with possibly a ninth game that would allow teams to play one contest against another power-conference foe.

Some have suggested delaying the upcoming season until spring. Simply canceling the season would be a worst-case scenario.
‘UT’s got a plan’

Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs discussed the possibilities on a conference call with Fulmer, Knoxville city Mayor Indya Kincannon and other school and government officials.

“A lot of it is up to the SEC, how they have to go about that,” he acknowledges. “Of course, it will be different in every state that they’re in because different states have different instructions and different mandates.

“And a lot of it, frankly, I think is what plays out over the next month or so as far as the pandemic and the numbers that we’re seeing,” says Jacobs, who wrestled professionally as “Kane” before being elected county mayor.

“And UT’s got a plan. They have different scenarios and things that would help them cope with this. And I think no matter what, football will be a little different this year. They need to expect

Kincannon says health concerns must be the first consideration for athletes, fans and support staff.

“I am a huge supporter of UT football and have been a season ticket holder for years,” the first-term mayor says. “Our city is full of energy and pride every fall as the Vols take the field.

“Football is also a huge economic driver in this region, but the well-being and safety of students and fans must be paramount, I like so many others, will be disappointed if this year’s football season is canceled, but I am also aware that tough decisions often need to be made in the name of public health.”

Economic explanations

Bill Fox, director of UT’s Center for Economic Research, consults with Gov. Bill Lee and his administration on knowledgeable about the economic impacts of COVID-19.

Fox says several industries across the country will take a hit if there’s no football, especially the hotel and food service sector if opposing teams’ fans are no longer allowed to travel.

“Football has been an important source of economic activity for Knoxville,” Fox explains. “There are large numbers of people who not only come to the games, but they come to Knoxville from broad areas. They stay in the hotels, they eat in the restaurants, they buy paraphernalia and all that sort of thing.

“And so it’s important to the university from a revenue perspective but it’s important to the community. And the community outside the university impacted by football is the same industry that’s been very hard hit in recent months; it’s leisure and hospitality.”

“If football does not come back fully — and it’s hard to imagine it will be fully back with 90,000 or 100,000 people at every game — this will be felt by the hotels in downtown Knoxville … and the county. It will be felt in the restaurants and the bars and other entertainment.

“And it will be felt by souvenir vendors and so it’s important.”

Fox also points out that the school’s athletic department would also suffer if the football season is shortened or canceled. In the June meeting of the board of trustees, the proposed athletic department budget was reduced $10.1 million for the current fiscal year from $138.5 million in 2019-20 to $128.2 million in 2020-21.

“If the athletic department is mostly fiscally separate, it would matter a lot from a revenue perspective,” Fox says. “It’s conceivable, though I think not likely, that no football games will be played — in which case you could lose all the revenue.

“In between, of course, is the situation in which the games are played with zero or very small crowds. And so, if this middle situation takes place, then the university probably still gets a lot of revenue from the televisionside of this and the advertising side of it and so forth. But it loses ticket sales, parking sales and so forth, as well as concessions at the games. And so, significant revenue, are the consequences.”

Adds Doug Lawyer, vice president of economic development for the Knoxville Chamber of Commerce: “The economic impact of football — and UT athletics in general — is just a big chunk of our economy.

“If UT football wins a big game on a Saturday, Mondays are always just better in Knoxville. There’s a higher energy in the town, people spend more money. It’s a proven fact that when the team wins, after the game people go out and celebrate, and if they lose they just get in their cars and go home. So there’s a definite psychological impact on, one, having football and, two, having a team that wins.”

‘Holding our breath’

Several Knoxville business leaders say that while the spring-summer impacts of COVID-19 have been rough, it would be nothing compared to a fall without football. “Devastating” is an often-invoked word.

“Like everybody downtown, right now we’re just kind of holding our breath and hoping that some kind of miracle will come along and save the season,” says Rick Dover, owner of the Hyatt Place Downtown, a 10-story hotel with a rooftop replaced the historic Farragut Hotel where the SEC was founded Dec. 12, 1932. “I know nobody wants to see the season scrapped, including us.

“I can’t tell you the exact amount of business on the books, but it’s in the millions. We have seen a pickup as of late in the hotel business, particularly on weekends and especially with leisure travelers. And we’re very grateful for that. But, man, in our part of the world, the world spins around Tennessee football — and basketball, as well.

“We’re just kind of holding our breath like everybody else, hoping that at some point things start returning to normal. Sooner rather than later. But it’s a tremendous amount of business because of our relationship with the University of Tennessee.”

Chris Ford and George Ewart are competitors when it comes to serving Knoxville’s best barbecue, but they’re on the same side when contemplating fall without football.

“First off, I’m not a doom-and-gloom guy,” says Ford, owner of Sweet P’s
The emotional impact

The emotional impact of football going to be sad when you think about it. If you take the majority of that business and all the events that happen around it, you’re going to be sad when you think about it. And to cut that out is going to be really hard.

“Probably 60 or 65% of our year has been from the middle of August to the middle of December,” she explains. “So we’re not exactly as bad as a tourist area, but most businesses have to be able to survive on eight months of business. And if you take the majority of that business away from those eight months, then it’s going to be sad when you think about it. You’re taking that 65% probably down to 35%.”

The emotional impact

Tennessee football fans are some of the most fervent in the nation, on Cloud Nine when the Vols win and in the dumps over a loss. As such, the emotional toll on Knoxville could be as devastating – there’s that word, again – as the economic impact.

“I almost don’t even want to think about what the psyche of the school is going to be like if they have to cancel football,” Carmichael says with a laugh. “Because we’re a college town and because the football team is so important, it does have a psychological impact on the community.”

“That’s Knoxville’s team over there, and when they win everybody’s happy and all week long, everything is rosy. They see it as kind of a validation of life within the community when the football team does well.”

Ewart says the term “college town” doesn’t fit Knoxville like it does Starkville, Mississippi, home to Mississippi State, and Oxford, home to Ole Miss.

“We’re a thriving metropolis here. We’ve got the third-largest city in the state. But there is a definite feel in the air when Tennessee loses or wins,” Ewart says. “You can definitely tell what kind of mood everybody is in that week. And you’re right. It’s always good when they win because not only is everybody happy but they want to spend more money, too.”

County Mayor Jacobs adds: “When Tennessee sports do well, it seems like our whole area is kind of more optimistic and people are really just in a better mood than when we lose.”

“When the basketball team was ranked No. 1 a couple of years ago, there was a tangible feeling that something big was going on in Knox County. Think it’s the same with football. When the football team does really well, it seems like everybody’s more buoyant and everybody’s in general happier and more optimistic.”

Cavalaris says UT fans will have to find new outlets to replace their passion for football if the worst scenario lists. People will likely be spending more time on yardwork, out on the river, binge-watching TV or catching up on their reading lists.

“A lot of people have focused their entertainment not just around UT football, but on college football and professional football during the fall. And so, what do people do and how do they adjust sort of their general entertainment part and recreational part of their time without sports?” Cavalaris wonders.

“The emotional part of it for people who are really and personally involved in the sport, then it’s an even bigger issue to them. I think it’s true that … what do people talk about on Monday morning after Saturday’s football game? They’re talking about the game. Or Sunday’s game.

“It’s a big part of what the community focuses on. It’s a big part of what’s in the newspaper and what’s on the radio and television and so forth. So, no question – while the financial part is easily measurable, the other part matters a lot to people. So, yeah, it’ll be a rough fall if football is affected.”

Economics professor Fox says he enjoys going to UT games in the fall but like everyone else, he will find ways to adjust.

“I’m a tennis fan and the major tennis events have mostly been eliminated and so a little more reading and a little more work and a little bit more with Netflix is what’s been happening with me. Or Amazon Prime,” he notes.

“I think we’ve all adapted to that part as best we can, and now we’re trying to find other forms of entertainment, no question. I have a little boat, I’ve been out on it and trying to fill the time. But it requires a change in behavior for sure.”

Until something definitive is announced by the university and the SEC, we’ll put in a DVD of greatest Vol games and echo the immortal words of John Ward.

“It’s football time in Tennessee!” Or, at least, it was.

Chambliss Center for Children recently completed a new six-unit apartment building to be used for youth aging out of foster care.

The new building was purchased with funds from an anonymous donor, and construction was completed earlier this month.

Local nonprofit Homes and Havens furnished each apartment utilizing a trauma-informed design to create welcoming places of respite for teens entering Chambliss Center’s transitional living program.

“We’re honored to meet that need for some of the roughly 900 youth who turn 18 in foster care in Tennessee each year,” says Jon Berestecky, transitional living specialist at Chambliss Center.

“IT’s encouraging to know there are individuals in our community willing to step up and provide what’s needed for these young people.”

Chambliss Center for Children’s transitional living program is designed to assist youth who are aging out of the foster care system. In addition to housing, the program offers counseling and training in basic life skills, such as financial planning, budgeting, cooking, interviewing and job readiness.

The first four tenants of the new living spaces moved into their new apartments last week.

Source: Chambliss Center for Children
love has no religion

before anything else, we’re all human
rethink your bias at lovehasnolabels.com
The Planning Commission will hold a working meeting to review this month’s agenda items on Tuesday, August 18th at 12:00 pm at the Red Bank Community Center, 3650 Tom Weathers Drive, Red Bank, TN 37415. Both meetings are open to the public and all interested parties are encouraged to attend.

Tim Thombury
City Manager

July 31, 2020

Public Notice

The following vehicles will be sold at public auction on Aug. 17, 2020, at 9:00 a.m. at the Red Bank Community Center, 3650 Tom Weathers Drive, Red Bank, TN 37415. These vehicles will be sold at public auction on Aug. 17, 2020, at 9:00 a.m. at 5265 Dayton Blvd. from LA Residential/R-3 Residential (3090 Blvd. 1) (3). Discussion of changes to the Zoning Ordinance may also discuss other matters as properly presented.

The Planning Commission will hold a working meeting to review this month’s agenda items on Tuesday, August 18th at 12:00 pm at the Red Bank Community Center, 3650 Tom Weathers Drive, Red Bank, TN 37415. Both meetings are open to the public and all interested parties are encouraged to attend.

Tim Thombury
City Manager

July 31, 2020

Public Notice

The following vehicle a 1994 Dodge, VIN# 1B3HD17E8RM560651, is located at 5417 Mouse Week Rd., Cleveland, TN 37312. It is in the possession of David Benton, who is requesting title to said vehicle. All parties holding any legal interest in the vehicle must contact the person in possession by certified mail, return receipt requested within 10 business days of this ad.

July 31, 2020

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

Non-Resident Notice

State of Tennessee, County of Hamilton

Docket No. 2012152

DIVISION CAROLINA SOLORZANA HERNANDEZ VS. FABIAN HERNANDEZ SALAZAR It’s appearing from allegations in Plaintiff’s Bill, which is set out above and below this non-resident of the State of Tennessee, so that the ordinary process of law cannot be served upon FABIAN HERNANDEZ SALAZAR.

IT IS ORDERED that publication be made for four successive weeks in The Chattanooga Times Free Press, a newspaper published in Hamilton County, Tennessee, notifying said non-resident that the complaint has been filed to be taken as admitted by FABIAN HERNANDEZ SALAZAR and the case will be set for hearing ex parte without FABIAN HERNANDEZ SALAZAR presence. This 22nd day of July 2020.

Larry L. Henry
Circuit Court Clerk
J. Wheeler, O.C.

Attorney for Plaintiff:

JOHN RAYMOND MORGAN
July 31, 2020

Non-Resident Notice

State of Tennessee, County of Hamilton

Docket No. 2010104

DIVISION II

IN RE: H.L.F. VS. JONATHON FOSKEY It’s appearing from allegations in Plaintiff’s Bill, which is set out above and below this non-resident of the State of Tennessee, so that the ordinary process of law cannot be served upon JONATHON FOSKEY.

IT IS ORDERED that publication be made for four successive weeks in The Chattanooga Times Free Press, a newspaper published in Hamilton County, Tennessee, notifying said non-resident that the complaint has been filed to be taken as admitted by JONATHON FOSKEY and the case will be set for hearing ex parte without JONATHON FOSKEY presence. This 22nd day of July 2020.

Larry L. Henry
Circuit Court Clerk
J. Wheeler, O.C.

Attorney for Plaintiff:
Pandemic tougher on some

Exercise empathy when co-workers are struggling

“He’s just not paying attention in meetings!” “She’s just not the same person right now.” It’s like he doesn’t care anymore about his work!” “She missed her deadline.” These are all things people are saying about their colleagues right now. I get it. You’re frustrated at work. Not everyone is carrying their weight in the same reliable way as they were before March. But, this is the thing: There is more going on behind that work-from-home computer screen than you know.

The pandemic is not impacting everyone equally. It’s just not. And it is very likely that your co-workers will not feel comfortable to tell you just what’s going on in their personal lives. For example, you might have a co-worker who is trying to home-school their children while maintaining their job. Another could be in poor health themselves and might not be able to venture outside for the things they need. Some people are dealing with homebound aging parents. Other colleagues might have family members who are dealing with terminal illness while this is all going on. Some people have lost family members or friends and have been unable to grieve normal way. Single people have often been completely removed from other human beings for months, longing for real connection.

And, some people have someone in their house who has COVID-19. We tend to believe hard work is the answer to everything. If you want to make your way to the top, you’ve got to climb. The best person should win. It’s a little like Darwinism. But, really, we are facing a global pandemic. It’s worse than anything we’ve likely ever experienced in our lifetime, and on a massive, massive scale that is extending on for months.

People are struggling. They have good days and bad. And, they have some very bad days. It doesn’t make the person less worthy of the job they had in February. I get it, we have to make money in order for businesses to stay in business. This situation reminds me of growing up in Oklahoma where we had tornadoes, really big, destructive tornadoes. Sometimes, one would come through and tear up entire neighborhoods. People would be without homes, without water and without power for days. They only survived by pulling together. Together, they all made it out.

That’s what we have to do here. I know, it’s frustrating. It feels unfair when you have to do a little more work than normal. It’s upsetting when a co-worker is late on something they promised you. It’s annoying when someone takes a day off for their mental health out of the blue.

But, this is the reality we’re living in. To make it out, we need to do it together. And, we need to do it with empathy for one another.

Angela Copeland, a career expert and founder of Copeland Coaching, can be reached at copelandcoaching.com.
A pair of Gentoo penguin chicks recently hatched in the Tennessee Aquarium’s Penguins’ Rock gallery. The eggs were laid in late April, and the chicks began to pip June 6, fully emerging from their shells June 7-8. Since then, the babies have grown from about 150 grams each to about three kilograms (a 2,000% increase) in just a month.

Based on weekly weigh-ins and checkups by veterinary and animal care specialists, the chicks’ weight gain is well above average, even for a species that can reach full adult size in just a few months.

Covered in a thick layer of soft, downy feathers and issuing a host of hisses, peeps, trumpets and other vocalizations, these baby birds represent a first for the aquarium: One of the chicks is the offspring of parents — Roxie and Beaker — that hatched and were raised here themselves.

“This is the first time our chicks have had chicks,” says Loribeth Lee, senior aviculturist.

With these recent additions, the aquarium has hatched 24 chicks since 2009. Over the years, the Tennessee Aquarium has sent some of the birds it hatched to other facilities to ensure the population of penguins in human care are healthy and genetically robust, Lee says.

For the Aquarium’s penguin team, the arrival of chicks is the culmination of months of increased workload and added responsibilities. The buildup begins in March, when husbandry staff clean hundreds of pounds of carefully chosen nesting rocks. After the birds begin constructing their nests, staff members must then build and place acrylic platforms and barriers to cordon off the nests from curious neighbors.

Within a few weeks, the eggs are laid and the chick watch begins in earnest.

None of the aquarium’s Macaroni penguins laid eggs this year. However, this year is the first time since 2016 that a breeding season has produced two Gentoo penguin chicks.

At about 30 days old, the chicks are about halfway to fledging, when they will leave the nest. Already more than half as tall as their parents, the chicks will begin to develop adult plumage in the coming weeks and could be ready for their first swim test in a backup area by mid-August.

By that point, they will be as tall, if not as heavy, as their parents, Lee says.

For now, the chicks’ genders are still a mystery and won’t be revealed until the results of an annual blood test are returned as part of a yearly colonywide checkup this fall.

Track the rapidly growing chicks and observe their interactions with their parents, other birds and animal care specialists at tnaqua.org/animals-exhibits/penguins-rock-cam.

Source: Tennessee Aquarium

Two new chicks join aquarium’s penguin colony

A Gentoo penguin chick receives a regular weigh-in at the Tennessee Aquarium. Even at 16 days old, the two chicks that hatched in the Aquarium’s Penguins’ Rock gallery are already much larger than when they emerged from their eggs.

Photos by Casey Phillips, Tennessee Aquarium

A Gentoo penguin chick receives a health and nutrition check up by veterinarian Dr. Chris Keller at the Tennessee Aquarium.

Just two days old, a Gentoo penguin chick receives a health and nutrition check up by veterinarian Dr. Chris Keller at the Tennessee Aquarium.

Senior animal care specialist Holly Gibson, left, and senior aviculturist Loribeth Lee, right, hold two Gentoo penguin chicks that hatched in the Penguins’ Rock gallery at the Tennessee Aquarium.

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Ford offers 3 of top 5 upcoming vehicles creating excitement

By Travis Langness | Edmunds

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way automakers debut their vehicles. Large auto shows have been canceled, and many planned vehicle debuts have been delayed. Still, despite the upheaval, vehicles are coming out. Edmunds’ experts have picked five of what they think will be the most exciting vehicles that’ll be arriving at dealerships in 2020 or early 2021.

### 2021 Kia K5

**On-sale date:** July 2020  
**Starting price:** $24,455 (including destination)

The K5 is Kia’s all-new replacement for its midsize sedan, the Optima. It competes against stalwarts such as the Honda Accord and the Toyota Camry but has a variety of changes to make it a more compelling choice than the Optima. The K5 will likely catch your attention with its sleek exterior styling and luxury-like interior design. Take it for a drive and you’ll find it’s also comfortable, quiet and packed with features.

The K5’s base trim levels aren’t as sporty as the exterior styling suggests, but the upcoming 290-horsepower GT version will be one of the most powerful models in its class.

### 2021 Ford Bronco, Bronco Sport

**Estimated sale date: Bronco Sport in late 2020 and Bronco in spring 2021**  
**Starting price:** $28,115 for Bronco Sport and $29,995 for Bronco

The Bronco nameplate is back after two-plus decades in retirement. The flagship Bronco, capitalizes on the Bronco name but is more city-friendly. Based on the Ford Escape crossover SUV, it has styling inspired by the bigger Bronco plus a few options to make it more capable off-road than other small crossovers such as the Honda CR-V.

### 2021 Ford F-150

**Estimated sale date:** Fall 2020  
**Estimated starting price:** $31,000

The Ford F-150 gets a complete redesign for 2021. Notably, Ford has added a hybrid model to the lineup. The hybrid powertrain will provide enhanced power and fuel economy, though Ford hasn’t said yet by how much. It also allows for some cool in-bed power ports that can be used for power tools or power-hungry tailgating accessories.

Inside, there’s a new folding gear shifter that can open up more center console space. You can also recline the front seats almost all the way backward, meaning you can lie nearly flat for a catnap on your lunch break.

We’re excited to see how this newest F-150 stacks up to the recently redesigned Chevrolet Silverado 1500 and Dodge Ram 1500.

### 2021 Ford Mustang Mach-E

**Estimated sale date: fall 2020**  
**Estimated starting price:** $40,000 before tax credits or incentives

While a few months ahead of the standard Bronco, capitalizes on the Bronco name but is more city-friendly. Based on the Ford Escape crossover SUV, it has styling inspired by the bigger Bronco plus a few options to make it more capable off-road than other small crossovers such as the Honda CR-V. Our interest more than most. Don’t let the Mustang name throw you off—the Mach-E is a four-door all-electric SUV with sleek styling and an interior that blends the latest tech with traditional design.

We expect that the Mach-E’s approachable price and suitable range will help bring electric-powered motoring to a larger group of drivers and that the Mach-E will emerge as a prime competitor to the Tesla Model Y.

At the base level, the Mach-E will come with a respectable estimated range of 230 miles. A larger battery with about 300 miles will also be available and, in mid-2021, we expect to see a high-performance GT version with 459 horsepower. Ford says the GT is good for a 0-60 mph time of 3.5 seconds, just like the Durango SRT Hellcat.

### 2021 Dodge Durango SRT Hellcat

**Estimated sale date:** early 2021  
**Estimated starting price:** $90,000  
**Estimated HP:** 710 hp  
**Estimated torque:** 645 lb-ft

Still, despite the upheaval, vehicles are arriving. Edmunds’ experts have picked five of what they think will be the most exciting vehicles that’ll be arriving at dealerships in 2020 or early 2021. Notably, Ford has added a hybrid model to the lineup. The hybrid powertrain will provide enhanced power and fuel economy, though Ford hasn’t said yet by how much. It also allows for some cool in-bed power ports that can be used for power tools or power-hungry tailgating accessories.

Inside, there’s a new folding gear shifter that can open up more center console space. You can also recline the front seats almost all the way backward, meaning you can lie nearly flat for a catnap on your lunch break.

We’re excited to see how this newest F-150 stacks up to the recently redesigned Chevrolet Silverado 1500 and Dodge Ram 1500.

The Durango SRT Hellcat will have a new 475-horsepower 6.2-liter supercharged V8 engine, plus all-wheel drive to go with it. The Durango’s current engine is a 3.6-liter V6, which produces 292 horsepower and 268 lb-ft of torque, making it the most powerful SUV you can buy.

The Durango SRT Hellcat will have excellent towing performance—up to 8,700 pounds when properly equipped—and can rip to 60 mph in around 3.5 seconds.