



County Executive's Newsletter to the Commission

www.roanegov.org

December 2013 –

Issue #40

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The Courthouse will be closed
Tuesday, December 24th & Wednesday, December 25th
In observance of the Christmas Holiday

You are never too old to set a
new goal or to dream a new
dream. ~C.S. Lewis

ROANE COUNTY SUPPORTS OUR COUNTY'S VETERANS

By Ron Woody, County Executive

Our past veterans, current service men and women, along with many civilian support personnel helped us obtain and now maintain our freedom. Roane County Government has taken a more active role in supporting our veterans. Previously, the county provided a very limited veterans' service officer support system with county personnel assigned to assist veterans.

In October the County Commission adopted Resolution# 10-13-07 allocating office space on the third floor of the courthouse for a Veterans' Services Office (VSO). In November, the Commission adopted Resolution# 11-13-02 establishing a VS Department. During December or January, the county shall hire a part-time officer.

The county had been working with the Tennessee Department of Veterans Affairs for a number of months before fully rolling out a plan to support our veterans. The county shall hire a part-time officer who shall work approximately 1000 hours per year and become certified by the state as a Veteran Service Officer.



Often times, the government fails to do great things for our citizens, but Roane County has stepped up to help our great men and women by establishing a certified Veterans Service Office. We would like to say a big "Thank You" to our veterans and a special thanks to our Commission for supporting this service. For more information about the VSO, please see the county website, www.roanegov.org, under County Executive, DMA, Veterans' Service Office.

Thank you, Veterans!

AMERICA RECYCLES DAY

Keep Roane Litter Free and Roane County Recycling hosted an America Recycles Day event at the Roane County Recycling Center on Friday, November 15, 2013.

Prior to the event, Roane Litter Education Director, Stacey McElhaney distributed brochures and e-mails inviting folks to the event and asking them to take the "I recycle..." pledge.

Solid Waste Manager, Ralph Stewart partnered with Keep Roane Litter Free by participating in the planning and hosting the event at the Roane Recycling Center.

The event was successful in providing information to Roane County residents about recycling and litter awareness. Roane County residents had an opportunity to speak with Ralph Stewart to ask questions, express concerns and view the recyclable materials storage, sorting and baling processes. Residents were given information about specific materials that are recycled at the Roane County Recycling Center. More information is available by visiting the Roane County Recycling Center or by calling 865-590-7779.

A big thank you goes out to Kroger, Liberty Tire, and the Harriman Lions Club for providing volunteers and information for the event.

We look forward to planning and expanding for an even bigger event next year!

State Commissioner visits Rockwood

Many-Bear Grinder, the Tennessee State Commissioner of Veterans' Affairs, recently spoke at the Rockwood Business and Professional Women's (RBPW) meeting at Victorian Square in Rockwood. Roane County was glad to report our support to increasing our services to Roane County veterans. Thank you RBPW for hosting Commissioner Grinder. Special guests were Senator Yager, Representative Kent Calfee, County Executive Ron Woody and Rockwood Mayor James Watts.

Congratulations to the following employees for their recent certification achievements:

Ralph Stewart	Solid Waste Authority of the Ninth Area	Certified Recycling Systems Technical Associate
Jerry Bare	State Board of Equalization	Assessment Level 1
Barry Cofer	State Board of Equalization	Assessment Level 1
Nick Williams	State Board of Equalization	Assessment Level 1

Congratulations to these employees. Thank you for your hard work and dedication to making Roane County the best it can be.

Economic Outlook

Recently, Director of Accounts & Budgets, Kaley Walker, and Executive Ron Woody attended a presentation (state economic update) from Matt Murray, Ph.D., the state's economist for Economic Outlook. Dr. Murray indicated that the fundamentals are in place for economic growth; however, what could paralyze economic growth is the federal government gridlock and the policy action, or lack thereof, in Washington. Inflation-adjusted Gross Domestic Product (GDP) continues to grow which is a good sign. Continued growth is anticipated; however, the growth is slow. GDP represents the economic output. Growth is the expansion of the economy with more jobs. Retraction of GDP would be the reduction of output. The U.S. output (GDP) has been negative in recent years due to the recession.

Tennessee building permits are up from previous quarters. Loan foreclosures are down which is another good sign. Light vehicle sales are not at peak prior to the recession, but are growing. Inflation is moderate which is not considered a problem. Jobs are growing slowly as unemployment rates remain elevated.

As bad as individuals, businesses and the government suffered in Roane County, we did not see the down turn in the economy as was experienced in other parts of the nation and even the state. Roane County did not have the national downturn due to impacts of Department of Energy facilities and federal stimulus for these facilities, TVA work on the ash spill cleanup efforts, TVA purchase of properties around the Kingston Steam Plant, along with the local government spending \$43 million of the TVA ash payments. Roane County's recover will probably be slower than the nation as we did not have the retraction in the economy as the nation experienced.

Woody Speaks at Association of Government Accountants

The East Tennessee Chapter of the Association of Government Accountants held their annual fall seminar at the University of Tennessee Conference Center in Knoxville. Attendees from the University of Tennessee, TVA, county and city governments and the private sector studied various aspects of governmental accounting. County Executive Woody spoke to the Association on Advancing Government Accountability. The PowerPoint presentation can be viewed on the county website, www.roanegov.org, under County Executive, Published Articles/Speeches.



Veterans Day Programs

On November 11th, Veterans Day, various programs were held across the county honoring our veterans. Each year at the Roane County Courthouse, Cherokee Middle School hosts a veterans program. The Roane County Honor Guard, Boy Scout Troop 101, Roane County High School band, along with students from Cherokee Middle School honored our veterans. Thank you to Cherokee Middle School and Mrs. Jena James, CMS history teacher, for their leadership. Thank you to all the other county schools for their Veterans Day programs.

Thank You Stacey McElhane

Roane County Park Assistant Director, Stacey McElhane, received a special thank you from Michael Dunn Center recently. Michael Dunn Center extended thanks to Stacey for her help in making their annual picnic a success. The picnic was attended by over 400 people and used the entire park. Thank you, Stacey, for being an asset to Roane County.

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EMPLOYEE CONSIDERATION

There will be changes in health insurance premiums for the County beginning January 1, 2014. Due to these changes, the payroll deduction per payday for employee and family coverage will be as follows:

	Employee Only	Family	Employee +Child(ren)	Employee +Spouse
Blue-Partnership PPO	\$ 15.29	\$ 259.91	\$ 84.09	\$ 175.82
CIGNA- Partnership PPO	\$ 15.79	\$ 264.91	\$ 89.09	\$ 180.82
Blue-Standard PPO	\$ 15.91	\$ 266.16	\$ 84.09	\$ 182.07
CIGNA- Standard PPO	\$ 16.41	\$ 271.16	\$ 89.09	\$ 187.07
Blue- PPO Limited	\$ 9.79	\$ 166.44	\$ 53.85	\$ 112.59
CIGNA- PPO Limited	\$ 10.29	\$ 171.44	\$ 58.85	\$ 117.59

You can check the change in your rate by looking at the right-hand side of your pay tub under deductions to see your current rate. These new rates will be deducted beginning January 10, 2014 payroll.

Did you know about . . . The First Christmas in Rockwood?

By Robert Bailey, Roane County Historian

Captain William McElwee, a noted historian wrote an article about the first Christmas in Rockwood. Rockwood was created as a company town by the Roane Iron Company in 1868. The first furnace was put into place in the summer of 1868 and was put into operation in December of that year. It was the first furnace south of the Ohio River to make iron using coal.

As Christmas was approaching it was decided that there must be a celebration for both the Holiday and the success of the furnace. The only place large enough where people could assemble was the sawmill. It was here where the first sermon was preached and the first Sunday School was organized. Laurel and ivy vines were used to create a cave to represent the cave where the Baby Jesus was born. [It should be noted that some believe that Jesus was born in a cave and this is what Captain McElwee believed]. Sawed logs and wood planks were laid out as the table for the meal. A large meal with a large roasted turkey and some chickens with other sides were made by Mrs. White of the hotel. When all was ready Rev. Mr. Chasteen spoke on the subject of excuses for many who were invited but didn't show up. One excuse was that that the one man had "married a wife could not come" and "she had not been axed and he could not go without her."

When supper was over Captain James Harris, the man in charge of the coal mines announced that there had not been a marriage in Rockwood and "that the year must not go out without giving the women a chance." Because it was leap year women could propose marriage.

Four young eligible men stepped forward and sat on the "I am willing bench" who were willing to get married. Two men, Tobe Brown and Alex Gossett were the final choices. No women stepped forward to accept the proposal and it was decided that the women draw straws. The "winner" was Margaret White, the daughter of the boarding house owner. Margaret then chose Alex Gossett. Bill White, her father, objected and as the Courthouse was closed, it was decided to have a vote about delaying the marriage until a license could be procured. As Bill White owned the boarding house and said that he would break up the boarding house, every boarder who feared losing his boarding house voted for postponement. Eventually Alex Gossett and Margaret White got married and had eight children.

If you have an item of interest related to our county, please submit to Melanie or me. Deadline for submission is the 20TH of the month.
Ron

THREE STAR PROGRAM

Joyce Nall, Administrative Assistant to County Executive and County Grant Administrator, recently attended the Three Star Regional Workshop. The Three Star Program is an initiative of the State Economic and Community Development Department to assist local communities to accomplish their goals. Governor Haslam has, through this program, identified five key areas of focus. Those areas are: (1) Jobs and Economic Development; (2) Fiscal Strength and Efficient Government; (3) Public Safety; (4) Education and Workforce Development; and (5) Health and Welfare.

An added benefit of becoming a Three Star Government, in addition to improving the well-being of the county, is receiving a 4% discount on the amount the county is expected to pay as match money on FastTrack Grants and CDBG Grants.

The Three Star Program requires a number of individuals and organizations working together to accomplish goals in the areas of focus. Thanks to Alliance employee Teresa Jackson, who serves as Roane County’s Three Star Coordinator, Roane County excelled in its 2013 Performance Scorecard.

Let’s keep up the good work!!

Capital Budget Update

Both the Budget Committee and Property Committee recently reviewed the Roane County General Capital Project budgets. The county has fifteen (15) project accounts (subfunds). Below is an update of several subfunds. The balance of the subfunds will be reviewed in the January newsletter. Folks, our capital planning is working. Thank you to the Commissioners for your support of establishing capital plans and budgets (established in 2010).

Budgeted Projects (Appropriations)	Balance BAL	Other Facility Improvements OFI	Courthouse and Jail Maintenance CHJ
	Computers- open	Ag Ext. Building - Design Phase	CH Rekeying Project - complete
	Firing Range- open	Ambulance AC - open	*Jail Thermostat* - open
	Trustee Commission- monthly expense	Health Dept. Security - open	Jail Retina Scanner- open
		Paving @ Ambulance - open	Jail Cameras-under contract
		Health Dept. Roof- complete	Juvenile fire alarm system - open
	Vehicles VEH		C'house plumbing - open
			C'house Painting - open
	Sheriff Patrol - complete		Air Compressor/C'house front doors - open
	Jail Transport - complete		Land - open
	Animal - open		Cawood House - contract pending
	Maintenance - open		
	Juvenile - open		
	Codes - open		

* open

Christmas Parades:

- Kingston: Monday, December 2nd
- Harriman: Thursday, December 5th
- Oliver Springs: Saturday, December 7th
- Rockwood: Monday, December 9th
- Oak Ridge: Saturday, December 14th

Courthouse Christmas Luncheon

Friday, December 9th
 11:30 am – 1:30 pm

Third floor of the Courthouse

December Meetings and Events:

Meetings may be scheduled after this Newsletter is published so please check www.roanegov.org for more info

Date	Meeting/Event	Location	Time
9 th	County Commission	CH	7:00pm
4 th	School Liaison Committee	CH	5:30pm
5 th	Environmental Review Board	CH	6:00pm
6 th	CH Christmas Luncheon	CH	11:30am
10 th	Fire Board	CH	6:00pm
18 th	Board of Zoning Appeals	CH	6:00pm
18 th	Planning Commission	CH	7:00pm

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT AWARDED

The Department of Economic and Community Development recently announced Roane County's award of a \$487,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). The funds will be utilized to extend the sewer service along South Pine Ridge Road and Keylon Drive area in Midtown. Currently the residents in these neighborhoods suffer from a 93% rate of septic overflow and seepage. Many of the inhabitants of this neighborhood are elderly or disabled and cannot afford the recurring problem of having septic lines and tanks pumped and/or repaired.

The installation of additional sewer lines will provide a sanitary, permanent solution to a longstanding community problem. The connections to the residents will be paid through the grant funds for low to moderate income households.

This is the fourth project of the Roane County Public Utility Board (PUB) Waste Water Plant Capital Expansion. The first phase was to install the main sewer line from the Roane Medical Center connection along with Keylon Drive in Midtown. The second phase was expanding services in the subdivisions of Harbin Estates, Dodson, Post Oak

The third phase was to construct a maintenance and administrative building at the plant site. Upon completion of phase four, the PUB will consider a College Grove subdivision sewer installation.

2014 RETIREMENTS

Circuit Court Judge Russell E. Simmons, Jr. has announced his plans to retire in 2014. Simmons was elected as Circuit Court Judge in September 2009 and has served Loudon, Meigs, Morgan and Roane counties for 23 years.

Leslie Henderson, President/CEO of the Roane Alliance has announced her plans to retire at the end of March 2014. Mrs. Henderson will have served as the President/CEO of the Roane Alliance for 10 years at her retirement.

We say "Thank you" to these faithful public servants.

ROANE TREASURES 2013

The 7th annual Roane County Founders Day was celebrated on November 5th. The county honored six (6) of our Roane Treasures in a ceremony on Founders Day at the Courthouse.

Jack Bowman- Harriman
Mitchell Ollis- Oliver Springs

Thomas Pickel- Kingston
Leonard Morris- South of the River

Arvel McNelly- Rockwood
Ida Lou Nelson Schubert- Golden Treasure

Golden Treasures must be at least 90 years of age to qualify. The ceremony was attended by approximately 85 family and friends of the honorees. We would like to thank these great Roane Countians for their service to the county. Congratulations!

Never, never, never give up ~ Winston Churchill

Budget Reference Notebook (BRN)

The Accounting and Budget Department continues to compile information for the BRN. We would request our elected officers and department heads to consider submitting information for the BRN.

Our goal is to prepare a document that will assist our legislative body, the public, and our departments to more clearly understand the operations of our government operations.

Our website, www.roanegov.org, has a template on the County Executive's page. For more information, contact Kaley Walker, Director of Accounts and Budgets at kwalker@roanegov.org or 717-4118.