



Johnson County has Voted and the Winners are!

See who was voted best in each category! Winners listed on pages A9, B9 and sponsor ads on A6, A8, B6, B8, B10

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SCHOOL BOARD

Johnson County Schools partners with nonprofit app

By Meg Dickens
STAFF WRITER

Johnson County is considered a poor area, with citizens falling below the poverty line.

"Students learn better and learn more when their basic needs are met."

FRC Director Edna Miller connects student families in need with what they need via the community.

Johnson County Schools has
See App Page A3

INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

County to receive \$1.2M in broadband funding



Lee

By Meg Dickens
STAFF WRITER

Johnson County is one of many rural areas without widespread high-speed internet availability. Locals report issues with downloads, streaming, and other related activities. Now the United States

government is taking steps to improve broadband in selected areas in 49 states. According to County Mayor Mike Taylor, Johnson County is on this list. The United States Government approved this area, part of Block Group 470190715001, for approximately \$1.2 million for expansions.

Reliable and efficient internet service has been more important than ever during the COVID-19 pandemic. Schools briefly went virtual and continue to do so when inclement weather strikes. Working from home has become more common, and public and personal meetings are migrating to

Zoom. General surges in online shopping, shipping, and similar orders have post offices around the world overwhelmed. As Women of MC President and Founder Olivia Stelter said when discussing her free wifi project, these days "internet access is a basic need."

See Broadband Page A10

Chili fuels Trade Fire Station fundraiser



Firefighters, family and friends gather for a photo at the Trade Volunteer Fire Station during a recent event in hopes of raising money for a new brush truck. According to Trade Volunteer Fire Chief Michael Reece, the "community got behind us and really helped out by donating." The station is planning on more fundraisers in the near future. Photo by Rick Wallace

Fires result in total losses

By Meg Dickens
STAFF WRITER

At 2:22 p.m on Wednesday, February 17, firefighters from several Zone 1 fire departments and members of the Johnson County Sheriff's Office responded to the scene of a flaming camper trailer at 211 Bertie Morefield Lane.

According to First District Fire Department Fire Chief Kevin Colson, it resembled a structure fire in Neva (891 Shingle Town Road) days later on Saturday, February 20. Both fires resulted in total losses.

The fire events appear to be electrical, but the structure fire itself is still under investigation. Officials suspect its cause was a heater left behind by squatters. Authorities were told the structure was unoccupied while en route to the scene.

See Fire Page A10

New Tenn. HB to raise public notices bid threshold for government projects

By Carol Daniels
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
TN PRESS

When Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee gave his third State of the State Address, he highlighted a number of spending items important to our readers.

With an increase of a whopping \$2.8 billion over the prior budget, the state's General Assembly in 2020 approved the largest budget in state history. Significant funds for infrastructure and rural investment are included, and over a billion dollars will be directed toward infrastructure and investments in

See Bid Threshold Page A10

County declares Danny Herman Day

By Meg Dickens
STAFF WRITER

Danny Herman and Danny Herman Trucking (DHT) are well-known in Johnson County. His Mountain City-based business created hundreds of jobs nationwide, and his charitable donations made a difference in a lot of organizations and lives. Now Johnson County has decided to name May 10, 2021, Danny Herman Day in honor of his impact on the community.

"Danny Herman always assisted Johnson County and the citizens of Johnson County with distinction," County Mayor Mike Taylor quoted the resolution. "Bringing great credit upon himself, his family, and his county."

Relatives gathered at the County Commission meeting to receive the honor in his stead. Several seemed to be tearing up, which seems natural considering his recent passing. This day honoring Herman will take place on what will be his first birthday since passing away in January.

Commissioner Jerry Grindstaff presented an award plaque to the group that will hang in the courthouse on display for his "seen and unseen" impact on the community. Locals credit him and his donations for businesses such as Northeast Correctional Complex, reopening the hospital, and the welcome center.



Members of the Herman family stand in front of the County Commission memorializing the late Danny Herman as his son, Joe, speaks on behalf of Danny. Photo by Meg Dickens

Simultaneously, he supported groups like the Johnson County Center for the Arts and the Chamber of Commerce throughout the county and while helping individuals in need.

Officials described Herman in both the resolution and the engraved plaque. There they mentioned his "extraordinary generosity" and

"ability to build a relationship with all who crossed his path." Others have plenty of stories showcasing these traits. Herman's son, Joe, spoke up after the presentation to share what he believed his father would say.

"I'd just like to say, if dad was here, I think I know what he'd say," said Joe Herman. "He'd say thank

you, first of all, for the recognition. He wasn't big on recognition, but he'd say thank you. Most importantly, he'd say that Johnson County was just as good to him or better. When we moved here 40 years ago, he always said he did it for three reasons. It was a good place to raise his family, a beautiful place to live, and good people."



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