

# LOCAL

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Tindell said

### TALKING WITH THE GUV:

Candidates for public office were among different groups of Democrats and others who met privately with Gov. Phil Bredesen Tuesday night and Wednesday morning while he was in town for the selection of a new University of Tennessee president.

"It was a nice visit. We shot the bull and drank coffee," said Wade Till, past chairman of the Knox County Democratic Party, who attended a morning coffee at Calhoun's on the River. "He said he liked being over here and said, 'If it wasn't for you folks, I wouldn't be governor.'"

Till identified candidates attending as Michael Carroll, candidate for the 18th District House seat; Chris Oldham, candidate for the 14th District House seat; Cindy McGill, candidate for the 6th District Senate seat; and Indya Kincannon, candidate for the nonpartisan 2nd District School Board seat.

County Clerk Mike Padgett was in a small group which had dinner with Bredesen and deputy governor Dave Cooley at Calhoun's on Tuesday.

He said roads and TennCare were discussed but it was mostly an informal get-together.

Bredesen had breakfast with a group of ministers Wednesday morning.

"He was staying in touch with his constituents. We don't generally get to visit with a governor like this," Padgett said.

Associate Editor Georgiana Vines' column appears Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays. She may be reached at 865-342-6343 or vines@knews.com.

## 250 trees planted along creek as part of class service project

BY JULIE HOWLE  
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Baker Creek stretches four feet wide as it reaches South-Doyle Middle School's campus, and until Monday, its banks could have been drifting farther apart each day.

But with the help of about 120 seventh-graders, the erosion of the banks will decrease and the diversity of the aquatic life will increase. The students planted approximately 250 native trees on the banks of the creek.

"It was just fun," said Louise Peery, 13, a student who participated in the service project. "We're planting trees and helping the environment."

The students did the service project as a part of the "Adopt-A-Watershed" program, which is a partnership between their science classes, taught by seventh-grade science teacher Dave Gorman, and AmeriCorps.

The program's service project allows students to get hands-on with what they learn in the classroom.

"When you get dirt on your hands ... and feel the dirt and smell the mulch, there's such a quality in that to help these kids understand," Gorman said. "It gives them a way to make a difference and a way to feel important."

The students have been studying Baker Creek and the role of creeks in their community since the start of the



JEFF ADKINS/NEWS SENTINEL

Louise Peery, 13, right, and Thomas McNair, 13, take turns watering trees the class planted along Baker Creek.

year. Jesse Yonkovich, a member of the AmeriCorps Water Team and a volunteer who helps lead the two classes involved with the "Adopt-A-Watershed" at South-Doyle, said that the project is beneficial for the students and the environment.

"I feel that education and awareness are probably the best ways to help environmental conservation," Yonkovich said.

See TRESS on B7

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the Athens-Regional Medical Center after the 8 a.m. fire, and the younger brother was trans-

asleep on a couch, and the 5-year-old woke her," McMinn Fire Department Assistant Chief Tim

Die Nolle was duly extinguished in flames.

Ambulance personnel trans-

propane lighter near the fire's origin in the bedroom.

## HARASSED

from B1

who had celebrated her sixth birthday four days previously, died before rescue workers arrived.

Dalton filed the request for a restraining order against Turpin on April 14 in Knox County Circuit Court.

The next day, court records show, Turpin was arrested on a charge of reckless endangerment.

The arrest warrant states Turpin on April 8 made an obscene gesture at an ambulance crew traveling on Schaffer Road before pulling out in front of the emergency vehicle, "nearly causing a collision."

The black 1998 Dodge Durango driven by Turpin stayed in front of the ambulance as it turned onto Lovell Road in

West Knox County.

Then Turpin "locked up the breaks, again nearly causing a collision," records state.

Turpin exited the Durango and approached the ambulance "in a hostile manner, cursing and verbally abusing" the Rural/Metro employees, the warrant states.

"You killed my daughter and granddaughter," the man yelled at the ambulance crew, according to records. "I'm going to run every one of you ... off the road until I find the ... and ... that killed them."

After his arrest a week later, Turpin was freed from jail when he posted a \$2,500 bond.

He also was ordered to stay away from the Rural/Metro ambulance crew while free on bond.

According to the request for a restraining order, Rural/Metro employees first noted problems with Turpin

on April 7.

"Mr. Turpin abruptly steered his vehicle in front of a Rural/Metro fire engine returning from a medical call on West Emory Road and immediately 'slammed on his brakes,'" notes the court record.

That forced the fire engine driver to swerve to avoid striking the Durango, and vehicles behind the fire truck had to do the same to miss the engine.

The driver of the fire engine noted an unusual window sticker on the Durango: a boy urinating on the Rural/Metro logo.

On April 10, the restraining order request notes, Turpin tried to run an ambulance off Pellissippi Parkway as it merged from Interstate 40.

The ambulance was carrying a patient to a hospital, records show, and Turpin pulled in front of the ambulance "and immediately

slammed on the brakes."

"If Mr. Turpin's actions are not restrained, he will end up hurting someone," states the restraining order.

Dalton said Friday no date has been set for a judge to hear the request for the restraining order, and none may be needed.

"We're very close, I believe, to reaching an agreed restraining order," he said.

Dalton said he is negotiating with Turpin's attorney, Robert Pryor Jr., on an agreement that will keep Turpin away from Rural/Metro properties and employees.

Pryor could not be reached Friday for comment.

Turpin did not return calls made to the telephone number he provided court officials upon his release from jail.

Don Jacobs may be reached at 865-342-6345.

## GRAY

from B1

officers with her twin sister's name.

"When officers attempted to get (Bridget Gray) out of the vehicle, she kicked, swung her arms and broke away from the officers," court records state.

She fled in the car, ran a stop

sign and attempted to outrun police, records show.

"(Gray) was traveling at a high rate of speed on the wrong side of the road, almost hitting another officer head-on," court records state. "The defendant's actions put officers in imminent fear of serious bodily injury."

She pleaded guilty to all charges and was sentenced to nine months in jail, according

to court records.

She was out of jail less than a month when she was arrested on a charge of driving without a license in February 2003.

Court records show the charge was dismissed.

Knoxville police said they believe Gray was also a suspect in the shooting of a man at a Knox County motel.

Martha Dooley, Knox County Sheriff's Office spokes-

woman, did not return phone calls requesting information about the motel shooting.

Court records show Gray has also been arrested several times on drug charges.

Friday night Gray was being held at the Knox County Detention Facility in lieu of \$50,000 bond.

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## TREES

from B1

The students learned about watersheds, which are areas that drain to common waterways such as Baker Creek, and were involved with the planning, planting, mulching and watering for Monday's project, Yonkovich said.

"It connects the kids to their natural surroundings so they'll appreciate it a lot more," Yonkovich said.

Gorman said the students — along with volunteers from AmeriCorps, the city government and Knoxville's Water Quality Forum — planted flowering dogwood, green ash, tulip poplar, sycamore, redbud and other native trees.

Before planting the seedlings, students and other volunteers prepared the area by removing non-native, invasive plants like privet.

Gorman said as the seedlings grow, they will provide shade for the stream, which keeps the creek from getting too hot.

This allows a diversity of

aquatic life to flourish in the waterway.

The roots of the trees will also prevent erosion and be part of the desired vegetation on the riparian zone, or the area along the river.

Yonkovich said that because the trees are native, they have a greater chance for survival.

"We're really hoping for at least a 75 percent survival rate," Yonkovich said. "We did our best to mimic nature."

The project was a community effort, with volunteers helping and businesses donating snacks for the event.

The Tennessee Valley Authority donated the seedlings, and the bigger trees came from Stanley's Greenhouse.

Gorman said the program gives students a chance to be involved with the environment and create life.

"They understand that this is part of a bigger thing," Gorman said. "It will be something that people for years and years can see, and hopefully something these kids can come back and see."

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