

Health.....A2	Sports.....B1,3
Accent.....A3	Community Calendar....B2
Court Report.....A4	Obituaries.....B4,5
Service Directory.....A5	Faith.....B5
	Classifieds.....B6

Your bank at your fingertips.  
Get safe, secure technology anytime.



**THE TOMAHAWK**  
**READERS' CHOICE AWARDS 2019**  
**Vote for YOUR Favorite!**  
**Ballot on Page A6**  
**Hurry! Voting ends Friday, February 8 at 4 PM.**

# THE TOMAHAWK

www.thetomahawk.com

Wednesday, January 9, 2019 75 cents Vol. 145 No. 2 Mountain City, Tennessee 37683

**COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

## Credit card policy strengthened amid account concerns

By Bethany Anderson  
Freelance Writer

During the last Johnson County Commission meeting of 2018, a rather important issue was brought forth by Johnson County Purchasing Agent, Dustin Shearin, regarding the current state of the various credit cards and accounts used by

the Commission. According to Shearin, there are currently four to five credit cards and store cards issued. "There may be more cards out there as well, but there's just no way even to tell," Johnson County Purchasing Agent, Dustin Shearin admitted during his informative speech to the County Commissioners. He also made it

known that it was "impossible to know" just who had been issued cards in the past and who now may have access to them without further research into the matter, therefore making the issue very difficult to remedy fully. With the full attention of the Commissioners and other County Staff present, Shearin also spoke to the

issue of not being able to manage accounts effectively without the original account holder's permission and that since those people are no longer employees, this was at times very difficult or even impossible. He also stated that the current policies and procedures in place to prevent these types of issues were not enough  
See **Credit Card** Page A6

## Suspects arraigned

Two persons wanted for aggravated kidnapping in Johnson County apprehended.

By Tamas Mondovics  
Editor

The search for the two suspects Willie Davis, Jr., 41, and Jennifer Jenkins, 42, of Sullivan County, involved with last month's armed robbery in Johnson County ended last week following a pursuit assisted by deputies from Sullivan County.



Davis

The news of an armed robbery on Cold Springs Road residence just north of Mountain City, TN on the morning of Friday, December 28, 2018, alarmed the community and prompted a search led by local law enforcement.



Jenkins

Deputies from Sullivan County Sheriff's Office and officers and investigators with the Johnson County Sheriff's Office apprehended the two suspects, on the evening, January 1, 2019.

The couple's vehicle was first spotted on Walnut Hill Road in Bristol at the end of the day of the robbery. A pursuit was initiated; however, both of the suspects got out of the vehicle and took off on foot.

The Johnson County Sheriff's Office reported that thanks to a tip  
See **Kidnapping** Page A6

## Unemployment rates drop in every Tennessee County

By Jill Penley  
Freelance Writer

Each of Tennessee's 95 counties experienced lower unemployment in November 2018 according to the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD). Ninety-one counties, including Johnson County, had an unemployment rate of five percent or lower during the month and only four counties had a rate higher than five percent.

"It's very encouraging to have so many counties with unemployment rates below five percent during November," said TDLWD Commissioner Burns Phillips. "That means more Tennesseans were working and taking home a paycheck as we headed into the holiday season."

Williamson County had the state's lowest unemployment rate at 2.5 percent, which was 0.2 of a percentage point lower than the previous month. Both Davidson and Rutherford counties had a rate of 2.6 percent in November, a drop of 0.3 percent for each county. Johnson County showed

See **Unemployment** Page A6

Continued from thetomahawk.com

## Bishop arrested

Johnson County Schools transportation supervisor indicted on theft charge.

By Tamas Mondovics  
Editor

A joint investigation by Special Agents with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation and the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury has led to the indictment of the Johnson County Board of Education Transportation Supervisor Barry Lawrence Bishop, 57, had been charged with theft over \$10,000.

The news of Bishop's arrest, which was reported by The Tomahawk's home page and Facebook and included several adjustments as the story developed prompted a sizable response from county residents expressing their dismay over the incident and its reflection on Johnson County Schools as well as its director, Mischelle Simcox.

According to TBI, in May 2018, at the request of 1st District Attorney General Ken Baldwin, Special Agents began investigating allegations of theft involving Bishop. During the investigation, TBI

See **Theft** Page A4



Bishop

## Taking the first steps



County Mayor Mike Taylor leads a group of nearly 40 residents on a hike to celebrate the new year at Doe Mountain Recreation Area. After the hike, which covered a little over 2 miles of scenic mountain terrain, the group was treated to hot chocolate, coffee, and cider. Several door prizes, including Johnson County Farmers Market and local merchant gift cards, were also awarded. Photo by Dennis Shekina

## New Year's Day Hike sees large crowd at Doe Mountain

By Jill Penley  
Freelance Writer

County Mayor Mike Taylor led a group of nearly 40 residents on a hike to celebrate the new year at Doe Mountain Recreation Area. The group, consisting of men and women of all ages, embarked from the adventure center being led by Mayor Taylor and Doe Mountain Recreation Authority

Executive Director Tate Davis under partly cloudy skies and unusually warm temperatures at nearly 60 degrees. "Great way to start the New Year," remarked Taylor. "I couldn't think of a better place to enjoy the great outdoors." Upon return, the group was treated to hot chocolate, coffee, and cider. Several door prizes, including Johnson County Farmers Market and local merchant gift cards, were  
See **Hike** Page A6

## Open House tour kicks off at Harbin Hill Farms

By Bethany Anderson  
Freelance Writer

In the winter of 2017, based on the availability of fresh produce from his hoop houses, local farmer Richard Calkins, owner and operator of Harbin Hill Farms was instrumental in establishing a Winter Farmers Market held indoors at the Johnson County Welcome Center in Mountain City.

The Farms is now offering an open house farm tour focusing on daily operations as well as four-season

farming. By using double row covers within the Hoop Houses, Calkins was able to keep his crops alive despite a rather harsh winter and even through two bouts of minus 0-degree temperatures.

"It's amazing what you can grow through the winter these days, with a simple structure and some six-mil plastic," Calkins said.

This past year, and despite the twelve inches of snow that fell at Harbin Hill Farms in December, Calkins' crops including lettuces, spinach, and other greens, along with carrots, onions, broccoli, and turnips are still happily growing inside his three hoop houses. The outside gardens are also still in full pro-



Calkins



The Hoop Houses at Harbin Hill Farms allow for "4 Season" growing. Submitted photo.

duction, with the snow providing some insulation against the cold temperatures.

The benefits to area residents are obvious as Calkins can continue supplying his customers with fresh produce each week. He is also encouraging other farmers in the

county to consider the use of hoop houses to join him at the market because hoop houses can benefit from "cost sharing" arrangements through the local office of the Natural Resources Conservation

See **Harbin Hill** Page A3



We help you hear what you've been missing.

**Watauga Hearing** In Affiliation With **EAR, NOSE & THROAT ASSOCIATES**

2340 Knob Creek Rd., Johnson City, TN

423-928-1901 423-929-9101