



From left, Andy Stites, Matt Davenport, Crystal Young and Ryan Morris.

## J&S Construction sponsors Cookeville Ninja Challenge

A ninja course and competition is coming to Cookeville.

J&S Construction has partnered with Hope Center Adoption & Family Services to bring the Ninja Nation Mobile Course to Cookeville for a day of competition and community fun. The 125-foot course features ninja warrior obstacles including the world famous warp wall.

Cookeville Ninja Challenge event will take place on Saturday, Nov. 5, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Hyder-Burks Pavilion. The course will be open to the public and host a team competition. This family friendly event will have vendors, food trucks, and more.

"Cookeville Ninja Challenge is going to be a fun time for

everyone," said Crystal Young, Executive Director of Hope Center. "All of the proceeds will go to helping women, children, and families in our community. We are honored that J&S Construction would partner with Hope Center to bring this to our community."

The mobile ninja unit consists of parkour obstacles, agility, and strength challenges for participants ages six and up. The course will be open for individuals during portions of the day, and a four-man team competition will be held. Teams will compete in a timed challenge. The team with the best overall course time will win the title "Cookeville Ninja Warrior" along with other prizes.

Tickets for the course and entry fees for the team competition will go to benefit Hope Center Adoption and Family Services. Hope Center is a non-profit adoption agency located in Cookeville that serves women and families through affordable adoption services. The organization has been serving in the community since 2018, and this event will help in raising funding to further their work with women, children, and families.

Vendors and food truck owners are encouraged to contact Hope Center to be a part of this one of a kind event at 931-252-7159. More information about the event will be posted on Hope Center's social media accounts @hopecenteradoptions.

## Parks offer professional development for teachers

Obed Wild and Scenic River will be recruiting teachers again this year to participate in the Teacher-Ranger-Teacher (TRT) program this summer. A similar program is being offered by the Manhattan Project National Historic Park.

The TRT program is a dynamic professional development opportunity for K-12 teachers to spend the summer acquiring new skills in experiential learning through a program provided by a partnership between the National Park Service (NPS) and the University of Colorado Denver. The participants spend between four and six weeks in an NPS unit developing a major educational project and participating in an online graduate course. The goal of the program is to train teachers in the resources and themes of the NPS so that they can return to their schools in the fall and incorporate

their new skills into their classroom activities. NPS aims to especially reach students from underserved schools by recruiting teachers from Title 1, urban or rural schools and from tribal schools to participate.

The projected dates of the assignment are June 6 through July 22, 2022. The selected TRT will receive a stipend of \$3,000 upon completion of program and graduate course requirements. The TRT will also receive three graduate credit hours of effort resulting from approximately 160 hours working on a major educational project, 45 hours of online coursework, discussion, course readings, and 25 hours of NPS operational experiences.

Obed Wild and Scenic River is looking for teachers with experience in lesson plan development and who can help create educational experiences in a variety of subject areas.

Some possible projects may include creating an astronomy program, creating virtual field trips, informational packets for teachers and online lesson plans and curriculum.

In addition to the major educational project and course work, the TRT will be trained in the field of interpretation. The TRT will have access to online courses about interpretation and have the opportunity to develop and present an interpretive program to visitors. The TRT will also learn the basic job duties of operating a visitor center, be involved in special events, and understand the concepts of managing an NPS site.

Housing will not be provided.

For an application or additional questions, contact Education Specialist Daniel Banks, daniel\_banks@nps.gov. All applications must be submitted by email and are due Friday, May 13, 2022.

## Smith takes part in Freed-Hardeman show

Hannah Smith, of Cookeville, was a part of the 45th annual Makin' Music production at Freed-Hardeman University, as the school's social clubs celebrated the 45th annual Makin' Music production, "No Turning Back," Saturday, April 9. It was the first show performed for a live audience in two years after COVID-19.

Xi Chi Delta's "The Spirit of the Samurai"

took home the sweepstakes trophy while Sigma Rho's "Rumble at the Raceway" was named runner-up and FHU Variants finished third with "The Sound of Sirens." FHU Variants, comprised of students not affiliated with a particular social club, also won the Spirit of Makin' Music Award.

"Makin' Music has been a student-run show from the beginning," Producer Tony

Allen said. "We have student staff and student directors; students are what make Makin' Music happen."

Suzanna Grady, Makin' Music student coordinator, announced that the show was being dedicated to Roy Sharp, retired administrator and faculty member. FHU President David R. Shannon offered a prayer for Sharp, who is currently facing health difficulties.

## Early voting turnout remains light

BY JIM HERRIN  
HERALD-CITIZEN

Putnam County election officials say fewer than 900 voters cast their ballots in the first week of early voting for the May 3 primary.

Voters are selecting nominees for almost all of the countywide offices, as well as county commission, school board, and judicial offices.

Administrator of Elections Michele Honcycutt said 895 early ballots have been cast

so far, including 141 voters who showed up on the first day of early voting last Wednesday, April 13; 205 who voted last Thursday, 141 on Friday, 40 on Saturday, 188 on Monday and 180 on Tuesday.

That's down significantly from the November 2020 presidential election when 19,495 people voted early in Putnam County, but it's comparable to the last Putnam County primary in May 2018 when 3,082 voted early, an average of about 220

per day.

Early voting continues through Thursday, April 28. Hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday; 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Thursday, and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday. All early voting takes place at the Putnam County Election Commission office at 705 County Services Drive.

For more information, call the election office at 931-526-2566 or visit putnamcountyn.tn.gov/election-commission.

## Sales tax collections up more than 18%

BY JIM HERRIN  
HERALD-CITIZEN

Putnam County Mayor Randy Porter issued another positive report on sales tax collections in the county Tuesday.

"April sales tax revenue numbers are in," he said in an email. "Collections were up 18.1% compared to the same month in 2021."

Porter said the numbers reflect tax that was collected in the month of February.

"The county saw the largest increase with 26.4%, but Baxter and Monterey were not far behind with 21.7% and 20.1% respectively," he said. "Algood had a 18.7% increase and Cookeville a 16.9% increase."

The most recent numbers show a continuing trend of economic prosperity. "With 10 months of the fiscal year in the book, countywide we are up 11.6% over last fiscal year," Porter said. "Last fiscal year was a record setting year and this fiscal year looks to be another one."

## Sparta man arrested for meth

By MEGAN REAGAN  
HERALD-CITIZEN

A Sparta man was arrested Friday after a traffic stop turned into a drug bust.

According to arrest warrants, 42-year-old Robert Skarzynski Jr. was stopped by Tennessee Highway Patrol for failing to drive within the lane.

Documents allege



Skarzynski

and methamphetamine use the night prior, and he failed to complete several field sobriety tests showing signs of impairment.

After being arrested for DUI, Skarzynski is alleged to have had 42 grams of methamphetamine on his person in three separate containers.

Skarzynski is being held in the Putnam County Jail on a \$52,000 bond after being charged with DUI and methamphetamine — manufacture, deliver, sell, or possess.



## COOKEVILLE CELEBRATES EARTH DAY 2022 - DOGWOOD PARK

FRIDAY, APRIL 22ND: 4PM - 7PM  
SATURDAY, APRIL 23RD: 12PM - 6PM

### FRIDAY MOVIE IN THE PARK



WALL-E  
BEGINS AFTER 7PM

### SATURDAY MUSIC IN THE PARK



HONEYBROOK  
4:30 PM

CLEARVIEW  
BLUEGRASS  
3:00 PM



CUMBERLAND  
KINNECTION  
1:00 PM

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