

The Mountain Press

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Monday

INSIDE

Chain may locate in Wears Valley

By **DEREK HODGES**
Staff Writer

SEVIERVILLE — The next step in the continuing growth of Wears Valley may just bring the area its first chain store that doesn't sell gasoline.

The county's Planning Commission will consider a site plan for a new Dollar General Store when it meets at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday in the courthouse.

The proposal calls for locating the shop on Wears Valley Road directly across from the intersection with Ogles View Road.

Under the submitted plan, the business would be served by a county water line and would connect to an existing sewer service. The property was apparently part of the Eugene Hedrick estate.

During that meeting, the group is also set to elect officers for the coming year. Those positions include chairman, vice chairman and secretary.

Also on the agenda for the session is:

■ Election of officers

■ Rezoning Requests

■ From Donna Huff for property at 103 Misty Breeze Lane

from R-1 (rural residential) to C-2 (general commercial) with no proposed use

■ Thomas & Angela Vermette/Jaqueline & Alan Wilcox, 800 block of Douglas Dam Road, R-1 to C-2 with no proposed use

■ L.C. Rhea, 2704 Wears Valley Road, from R-1 to C-2 for an arts and crafts gallery

■ Alex Davis, 2656 Douglas Dam Road, from R-1 to C-2 for a construction office and storage space

■ Doug Smith, property on Gibson Circle, from R-1 to R-2 (high-density residential) for a

residential development

■ Concept Plat Reviews

■ Starlight Ridge, an 8-lot subdivision of 4.27 acres off Chapman Highway

■ Jerry Wyatt property, a 5-lot subdivision of 8.57 acres off South Rogers Road

■ Minor Plat Review

■ Frank Larocco

■ Final Plat Reviews

■ Timber Cove, a 26-lot development on 32.51 acres off Wears Valley Road

■ Gold Leaf Phase III, an 11-lot

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▲ One month after ike

Recovery, ruin visible through Texas

NATION, PAGE A10



▲ Not so conservative

Alaska governor has mixed record as fiscal conservative leader

POLITICS, PAGE A11

Business

Can you survive bankruptcy?

Mountain Press offers columnist who offers tips to get through crisis

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Weather

Today

Partly sunny

High: 83°



Tonight

Clear skies

Low: 56°



DETAILS, PAGE A6

Obituaries

Larry Ramsey, 59
Chucky L. Lane, 40
Georgia Cole, 82
Gary Whitsett, 60
William Hooks

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Corrections

The Mountain Press is committed to accuracy. Please report factual errors by calling 428-0748 Ext. 214.



Star gazer



Staff

Smoky Mountain Astronomical Society member Kenny Pridgen looks through a telescope owned by the group during a recent "star party" in Cades Cove.

Local club offers glimpses light-years away

By **DEREK HODGES**
Staff Writer

CADES COVE — When the crowds of visitors pass through this tiny area of the national park each year, they get a glimpse 100-150 years in the past. When the Smoky Mountain Astronomical Society comes, they look back 25

million years.

The regular tourist shouldn't feel bad about missing the history the star gazers see; for one thing, they don't have the equipment to take a gander at light birthed about the same time man likely first made his mark on the earth. Further,

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Star gazers

The Smoky Mountain Astronomical Society offers its next star party Oct. 25 at Unicoi Crest on the Cherokee Skyway. The group meets on the second Friday of most months at Pellissippi State Technical Community College in Knoxville. For more information, visit www.smokymtnastro.org.

'Burg publishes building guidelines

By **COBEY HITCHCOCK**
Sports Writer

GATLINBURG — The city of Gatlinburg has released a new Architectural Guidelines brochure and report, giving construction project designers the opportunity to study principles of responsible building design within the city.

The brochure, available at City Hall, is a condensed version of the 30-page Architectural Guidelines for the Commercial Corridor guide book developed by a design team from Clemson University, which is available online at www.ci.gatlinburg.tn.us/planning/planning.htm.

"This is something to give an idea of all the different principles of design," said City Planner David Ball. "And the (city's) marketing group actually formalized and put the finishing touches on the brochure."

The brochure contains a review of city permit processes, illustrations of acceptable versus unacceptable project completions, building height and placement issues among other information.

The design team from Clemson University completed the "design matrix" earlier this year, and the commission endorsed the team's findings in April.

See **GUIDELINES**, Page A5

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

Vicki Kay has become local maverick helping local seniors

By **JAMIA BLAZER**
Managing Editor

If there is one thing Vicki Kay is passionate about, it's helping senior citizens and as the director of Girling Healthcare, she has a bird's-eye-view of what those needs are.

Kay moved to Sevier County in 1996 from Virginia where she grew up as a coal miner's daughter. Today, she and husband Rick own the NAPA Auto Parts stores in Sevierville and Gatlinburg.

"Sevier County is a wonderful place to live and work," she says.

When deciding what career path she would pursue, Kay says earning her RN was an easy choice.

"My mother and sister are nurses and my grandmother received home health and I thought it was

the neatest thing. I worked in a hospital for three years and have worked in the home care industry since 1994."

But work and being a business owner isn't the only thing that fills her time. Kay serves on the board of the Sevier County Health Improvement Council, the Geriatric Screen Team and Elderwatch of Sevier County. She has been with Girling for 2 1/2 years.

"I love my patients. You feel like you're a guest in their home. They are so thankful for anything we do for them. Geriatrics is my calling. It's rewarding when you can help keep someone in the own home," she said.

Kay's participation in local senior help agencies keeps her

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Curl Habraken/The Mountain Press

Vicki Kay keeps a watchful eye on Sevier County's senior population when she and husband Rick aren't busy cheering for their favorite NASCAR driver.

Nashville to get \$4M for foreclosures

NASHVILLE (AP) — Nashville is getting \$4 million from the federal government to clean up and resell foreclosed homes. The city has about 3,000 houses in foreclosure and some of them are in disrepair and can be neighborhood eyesores. The hardest hit area is south of downtown in Antioch. Mike Clinard, Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency

assistant director of community development, said their plan is to secure those properties and resell them to stabilize the neighborhoods. The housing agency will administer the funds and will make an inventory of foreclosed homes. The money will be available by early next year. Clinard said while \$4 million is a good start, it won't be enough for all the homes in Nashville.

KAY

◀ From Page A1

in tune with the needs of the elderly. She was excited to announce that RAM will plan a stop in Pigeon Forge in March of 2009. "The Remote Area Medical volunteers are incredible. For people who are uninsured they will receive medical and dental services and the team will work in conjunction with Mountain Hope Good Shepherd Clinic and Covenant Health," Kay explained saying she's concerned for those individuals who seem to

fall between the cracks unnoticed. "I wish we had more mental health resources," she says. "It's usually a tragic situation before you can get someone help. We need more services for those people. Regardless of someone's income, the problem is growing and having only TennCare doesn't help. Transportation is another limitation in Sevier County that limits elderly patients. We have ETHRA, but their limited in their abilities. Some patients need ambulatory transport and insurance doesn't always cover that." And what does Kay do

for entertainment when she has a free afternoon? "My husband and I are big fans of NASCAR driver Kasey Kahne. In our free time we're enthusiastic campers that love to head to Bristol." She is also kept busy in her role as aunt to five nephews and a niece. Kay says her husband is her biggest form of support. "My husband is supportive and silent in the background," she explained. "He lives by a simple motto always saying 'If I have a dollar, everyone has a dollar.'" jbrazier@themountainpress.com

STARS

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most of them come during the day to get a look at terrestrial history, little aware of the amazing display of galactic antiquity that plays itself out here each night. Of course, the lights society members recently pointed out to a host of star-crossed visitors on a recent weekend are visible outside the park. It just happens the bowl created by the mountains surrounding Cades Cove and the absence of development inside the park make for perfect conditions to view the wonders of the universe. This is the fourth year the society has hosted one of its "star parties" in the cove. Over that time, hundreds of folks have braved the cool autumn air and the occasional bear encounter — this year's group got a glimpse of ursa major in the parking lot, before the sun even set — to see real history blazing through the eyepieces of high-tech telescopes. "These parties give us a chance to share our love of astronomy with folks who might not otherwise get a good look at the night sky," society Vice President Michael McCulloch says. "We try to teach them about what

they're looking at and how they can get involved in this hobby." To help do that, club members bring out their own personal telescopes and a few owned by the society itself to several such star parties each year. They have one more scheduled this year, on Oct. 25 at Unicoi Crest on the Cherokee Skyway. The group picks dark locations like Cades Cove and nights when the moon won't be providing too much light for the events. Park spokesman Bob Miller says the event is a good fit for the cove. "Most people who live in town rarely if ever get a really good chance to look at the stars where it's truly dark," Miller says. "We offer a dark place to view from and this has proved to be a terrific event. Further, Miller says the annual party is a good use of park resources like the time a ranger takes to help lead the event. "This provides a great

opportunity that few people ever get and they have the equipment and expertise that we could never provide, so it's a good situation for everyone," Miller says. The event also provides an opportunity for the society, a collection of astronomy enthusiasts who gather monthly to share their passion, to recruit new members and adherents to the study of the stars. "Most of us got into this hobby when we were young and we love to have the chance to share it with other people," McCulloch says. "It's a rather mind-expanding hobby when you know you're looking at light that's 40 million to 60 million years old or older." For those who do decide to get into stargazing, McCulloch advises them not to rush out and buy their own equipment. "We recommend they come out to one of our events to get a feel for

GUIDELINES

◀ From Page A1

The proposal for the new design matrix was born from a Partnership Plus community wide visioning conference, consisting of representatives from the city, Gatlinburg Gateway Foundation, Gatlinburg Chamber of Commerce and the National Park Service. Citizen input was sought, and the job of developing the design matrix was farmed out to the team from Clemson. "Basically, this all really started with the Gateway Foundation and Partnership Plus," said Ball. "This brochure is just to try to give (developers) visual examples of what we would like to see used as far as exterior materials. It's trying to give guiding principles to those who are looking to develop." Although the new guidelines are encouraged, they are not enforced by the city as of yet. "At this point, they are just guidelines," said Ball. "We have not adopted these as formal policies

at this time. However, (the design matrix) has been endorsed by city commission, the chamber of commerce and the environmental design and review board, and I think as a community as a whole. Although it's not mandatory requirements, it is important that we try to emphasize that these are guidelines that have been endorsed by the community. "We're excited about it, and we think it can be a tool for development in our community. We've already had some success with this, and some people have already embraced this. We hope this will be a positive thing for our community." The purpose of the new guidelines are to establish "principles of development of the built environment of the City in order to promote unique experiences for Gatlinburg's visitors, reflect the mountain village aesthetic and complement Great Smoky Mountain National Park," according to a recent city press release. chitchcock@themountainpress.com

VALLEY

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development on 50.39 acres off Spurling Road ■ Mountain High (Mountainscapes), a 31-lot development on 42.12 acres off Thomas Cross Road **Site Plan Review** ■ Northstone, six residential duplexes and a caretaker unit on 4.01 acres off Hickory Lane. The Board of Zoning Appeals will meet at 4 p.m. in the courthouse, with that group also slated to elect officers. The agenda also includes setback variance requests for the Newman property at the corner of Tinker Hollow and Reagan Hollow roads; Wonderland Woods III on Shell Nutt Way; and Sherwood Forest on Rush Branch Road. dhodges@themountainpress.com

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