

# Conference to confront opioid crisis

**DUANE SHERRILL**  
News/Sports Smithville Review  
Smithville, Tennessee

Affecting everyone from middle school children to grandparents, the opioid crisis has extended throughout the community. "It's no respecter of persons," said DeKalb Drug Coalition Coordinator Lisa Cripps, pointing to the upcoming opioid addiction and prescribing conference slated for March 20 at the DeKalb Community Complex. "It affects every family, every household in some way, from middle school

children to grandparents. It touches everybody." Cripps is urging concerned citizens to attend the conference which begins with a meal at 5:30 with the conference going from 6 to 8:30 p.m. Dr. Mitchell Mutter is keynote speaker. "We are in epidemic status here," Cripps revealed. "We need to increase people's knowledge of how deep the problem runs." Cripps said the issue of opioid



MUTTER

addiction comes from several areas. The addiction, she said, often starts from prescribed pain medication given by doctors following surgery or traumatic injury. The person; however, can easily become addicted to the medication, requiring more and more to continue the same effect. "You have over-prescribing and also drugs being sold on the street," she said, noting the more common forms of opioids in-

clude oxycodone, hydrocodone, and morphine. Along with the addiction issue, Cripps said a deadly cousin of the opioid crisis is the rise in the use of fentanyl which is sometimes added to street drugs by dealers. "It's 50 times more powerful," she revealed, noting just three grains of fentanyl can be fatal. "It's a killer." During the conference, which will cost \$15 for the public and \$50 for health professionals who will be getting professional credit for attendance, there will be talk

about naloxone, a drug that can be given to an opioid overdose victim that will reverse the effects. "It's saving lives and many emergency responders and police officers are starting to carry it," she said. At the end of the night, Cripps hopes that people who attend the event will walk away armed with more knowledge about the issue. "We want to get involved in changing the culture of the community," she declared, urging the public to attend.

# Two trapped



Duane Sherrill photo

Rescue crews work to free driver Timothy Landis from the wreckage of his vehicle. He and passenger Carlee Landis were injured when his Chevy Silverado ran off the road, struck a culvert and overturned in a front yard near Billings Road. He was taken to St. Thomas DeKalb for treatment while she refused transport. They were both cited for not wearing their seatbelts.

# Mayor stresses safety

**DUANE SHERRILL**  
News/Sports Smithville Review  
Smithville, Tennessee

Alexandria Mayor Bennett Armstrong does not plan to seek reelection but he hopes to leave office knowing the town's citizens are a little safer than when he first took office. "I'd like to go out of office knowing there is at least a date when things are going to be done," the mayor said of his hopes that something can be done along Highway 53 to make the area safer. His concern was raised again after a crash in Alexandria a couple of weeks ago that left two injured. A wreck a couple of years back, he noted, resulted in a fatality.

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**Alexandria Mayor Bennett Armstrong**

Continued on 5A

# Melton takes reins of Community Complex

**DUANE SHERRILL**  
News/Sports Smithville Review  
Smithville, Tennessee

His first job was as a clerk at a video store in a strip mall. He now heads the DeKalb Community Complex, located, as fate would have it, in the same building where the video store used to be located. "We want to try to bring new things," said newly named director Josh Melton, the accomplished theatrical producer and actor appointed to the position recently by a unanimous vote by the county commission. "We want to include as many people in the community as we can and try to have something for everybody." Melton emerged as the county's hire from a field of 12 hopefuls. He took over as director last Monday and immediately began expanding the center's horizons. "The first thing I did was book a free Zumba class for April 2,"

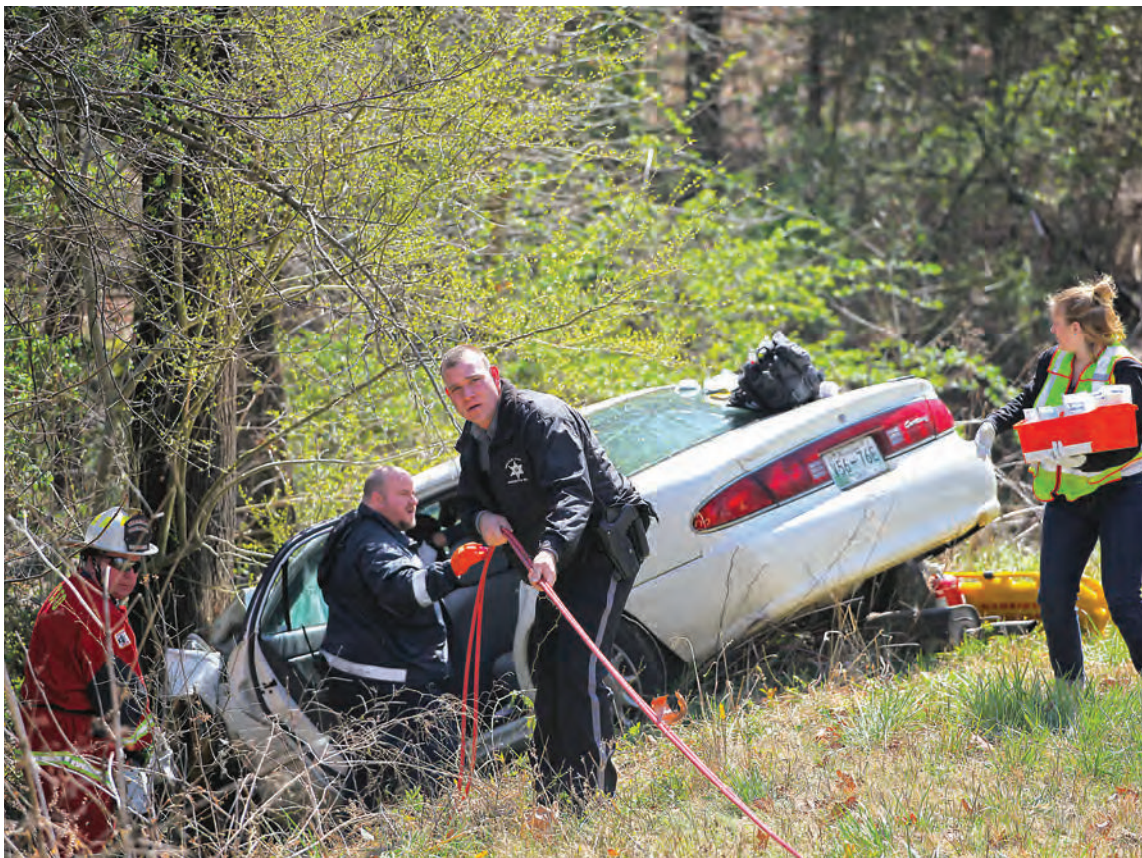


MELTON

he revealed, noting he wants to offer regular Zumba as well as yoga and spin classes at the facility. "We have a nice fitness center and numerous things for exercise." The facility's fitness center costs \$20 a month to join or you may pay \$3 per visit for the room that contains numerous cardio-fitness machines as well as weights. Melton added that he also wants to look into setting up a three-on-three basketball league for the basketball gym portion of the building. Melton plans to use his expertise in the theatrical community to bring in acts and plays that the community will enjoy. "We have wonderful facilities for theatrical groups, concerts and art exhibitions," he said, pointing to the large multiple purpose room that is available to rent for \$300, making it an affordable option for bands, plays and gatherings.

Continued on 5A

# Keltonburg crash



Duane Sherrill photo

Matthew Wright of Lebanon was airlifted to Vanderbilt Hospital Monday morning after he ran off Antioch Road at Keltonburg and slammed into a tree. Investigators say he failed to negotiate a curve on the winding road. He was extricated from the wreckage and taken to a waiting helicopter.



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