

# Clay brings home 4th



Student Erica Clay brought home fourth place during the 5th District competition of the American Legion's Oratorical Contest in Murfreesboro. She advanced through two prior levels of competition with second- and first-place finishes, respectively. The Oratorical Contest is designed to develop deeper knowledge and appreciation for the U.S. Constitution among high school students. Clay attends Covenant Academy.

# Decorative poles

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According to the bill, it will "maximize investment in wireless connectivity across the state by creating a uniform and predictable framework that limits local obstacles to deployment of small, wireless facilities and to encourage, where feasible, shared use of public infrastructure and colocation in matter that is the most technology neutral and nondiscriminatory."

Newman said those "local obstacles" are municipalities that don't want the devices in certain areas, so the bill takes away their right to say "no" or "not on that pole." "They don't want to share the expense so the state is

attempting to allow them to piggyback off our infrastructure without allowing us the right to refuse," he said. "We can't even charge them upkeep, which other utilities have to pay."

The bill does allow municipalities to charge a maximum of \$35 per authority-owned utility pole annually, which Newman says is extremely minimal compared to the thousands spent buying and placing decorative poles to beautify downtown. Newman says it would be a shame to have the poles visually blighted by the devices. It also does not allow cities and counties to assess maintenance and upkeep of the devices.

and counties millions of dollars over time in lost cost recovery and lost revenues caused by inadequate fees," said Newman. "It is believed this legislation is being pushed by AT&T. I plan on bringing this issue up during our next meeting to get a resolution passed opposing the bill. I don't want to impede communications progress but it needs to be fair and we need to be part of the conversation."

Tennessee is consistently ranked as one of the least connected, least competitive broadband markets in the country, which many blame in large part to AT&T's powerful lobbying ability to prevent competition. "This would cost cities

# Can you see me now?

BY LISA HOBBS  
Reporter for the Southern Standard  
(McMinnville, Tennessee)

Warren County Jail inmates will soon be asking: Can you see me now?

A grant has been awarded to purchase closed-circuit video equipment that will allow for court appearances via video camera while the inmate remains in jail.

"We got the grant," said Melanie Stinson. "I didn't think we would, but almost everything we asked for was approved."

Inmates must use the video technology for their arraignment, if it is available. Inmates used to be able to demand to be arraigned in person in front of a judge, but that requirement has been relaxed for arraignment only.

Arraignment is a legal proceeding where the suspect is formally informed of the charges against them and a plea



Inmates will soon have to stay at Warren County Jail and not have the option to travel to the courthouse when arraignment is conducted by closed-circuit TV. The procedure is for arraignment only.

is entered.

The \$36,494 grant was awarded through the Administrative Office of the Courts. Because it is a reimbursable grant, it will provide funding after expenses have been incurred.

Stinson, administrative assistant to Judge Bart Stanley, applied for and received funds for the video arraignment system, five tasers, and five Motorola radios to allow communication between the courthouse and 911. Not awarded was a request for video cameras outside the courthouse.

Warren County commissioners approved a measure last year that would provide a 10 percent match of the grant total, if awarded.

The county Financial Management Committee approved a measure to contract with Ben Lomand for Video Arraignment System's internet connections. There are three separate contracts – one each for

Circuit Court, General Sessions Court, and the Warren County Sheriff's Department. Each is a 36-month contract at a monthly rate of \$76. Additionally, each contract includes the purchase of a router at a one-time cost of \$134.

Stinson hopes the video arraignment system is up and running this month.

"We have to install the system, work the kinks out and go through a training period," she said. "I hope to have it up and running by the end of March, but I honestly don't know. I've never been through this process before so I don't know exactly how long it will take."

Stinson also submitted a grant for Van Buren County's new justice center. Awarded was \$10,166 to purchase a standing metal detector, six tasers, and four handheld metal scanners. Construction, said Stinson, is almost complete on that building.

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