

Downtown hotel discussed

BY LACY GARRISON
Reporter for the Southern Standard
(McMinnville, Tennessee)

During Monday's Tourism Development Board meeting, members revisited the revitalization of historic sites into a potential hotel to attract visitors.

"Before we go over the budget, can I bring up another project and just ask what the status is, Project Blue I suppose?" asked board member John Partin, seemingly creating another project code name on the spot.

The other board members laughed while exchanging amused glances before moving on to discuss Project Blue, which is likely a reference to the Blue Building.

Back in March, the TDB discussed the potential development of the Blue Building as a hotel with its 4 acres for tourism. However, during the following meeting in April, the project was declared "DOA" with members agreeing to "move forward to pursue other options."

Partin said to the board, "The hotel idea seems to be lacking and I don't see any reason in the world

that we would move on to Raymond or anyone else who has expressed any interest at this point because it doesn't seem logical to me."

Board member Michael Griffith explained that in terms of money, the county and city wouldn't lose or gain anything directly versus a condominium approach, which leads people to go through lenders.

When speaking on the condition of Project Blue, board members expressed concerns in the decline of its physical infrastructure.

Responded Griffith, "My biggest concern is the roof is going to be an issue that is going to force the city to do something with it as some point."

Other members suggested finding someplace in downtown McMinnville for a hotel site.

"The only thing that makes sense is for a hotel to be downtown and we need something downtown," said board member Christy Ross. "I know



PARTIN

condos would be nice over there, but if we're the Tourism Board, I want to see a hotel down here somewhere."

Partin responded, "I just fundamentally disagree with that. I think downtown will never be a viable spot for a hotel."

Katie Kemezis sided with Ross, explaining that she believes downtown McMinnville definitely has potential. It just might not be the right moment.

"I think there is a place downtown for a hotel, but it requires a lot of growth," explained Kemezis. "To have 25 members flying out for a conference ... like if you had a regional conference in the Blue Building, wouldn't you then want your conference-goers to come downtown and walk around at night, have a meal ... so I think there is potential here."

The TDB meets regularly on the second Monday of each month at 4:30 p.m. at the Chamber.

Teenagers smoking less, drinking less milk, too

NEW YORK (AP) — Fewer U.S. teens are smoking, having sex, and doing drugs these days. Oh, and they're drinking less milk, too.

Less than one-third of high school students drink a glass of milk a day, according to a large government survey released Thursday. About two decades ago, it was nearly half.

Last year's survey asked about 100 questions on a wide range of health topics, including smoking, drugs and diet. Researchers compared the results to similar questionnaires going back more than 25 years.

One trend that stood out was the drop in drinking milk, which started falling for all Americans after World War II. In recent decades, teens have shifted from milk to soda, then to Gatorade and other sports drinks and recently to energy drinks like Monster and Red Bull.

Kids have shifted from a dairy product rich in calcium and vitamin D to beverages laden with

sugar and caffeine, which is likely contributing to the nation's obesity problem, said Barry Popkin, a University of North Carolina researcher who studies how diets change.

"This is not a healthy trend for our long-term health," he said.

The survey by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is conducted every two years. About 15,000 students at 144 high schools were surveyed last year. The surveys are anonymous and voluntary, and there's no check of medical records or other documents to verify answers.

Some of the findings: — Not as many teen are having sex, although there wasn't much change from the 2015 survey results. Last year, about 40 percent said they'd ever had sex, down from 48 percent a decade ago.

— There was no sub-

stantial recent change for cigarette smoking, either. About 9 percent are current smokers, down from more than 27 percent when the survey started in 1991. Ditto alcohol, with 30 percent saying they currently use alcohol, down from 51 percent in 1991.

— Marijuana use seems to be hovering, with about 36 percent of students saying they had ever tried it. But overall, illegal drug use seems to be falling, including for synthetic marijuana, ecstasy, heroin, inhalants, and LSD and other hallucinogenic drugs. For the first time, the survey asked if they had ever abused prescription opioid medications. About 14 percent did.

— Another first-time question: Have you had a concussion from a sport or physical activity at least once in the previous year? Nationally, 15 percent said they had.

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PUBLISHER'S PICS

Standard publisher Pat Zechman has been in the newspaper business for 50 years, the last 26 years as publisher/general manager of the **Southern Standard**. Zechman wants to give back to the community and the **Standard** alike and it has led her to creating the Publisher's Pics feature. This week features June, 1996. Look for more Publisher's Pics on the **Southern Standard** Facebook page.

Southern Standard, Sunday, June 9, 1996

Oleksik signs pro baseball contract

Reports to Arizona Diamondbacks' rookie camp today

JAMES CLARK
Sports Editor

Get drafted Tuesday, sign on Wednesday, and then it's off to Phoenix today.

That's been the recent chain of events for McMinnville's George Oleksik, who was picked in the 10th round of Tuesday's Major League Baseball draft by the Arizona Diamondbacks.

The Diamondbacks won't begin Major League play until 1998, but already have an existing minor league system. Oleksik heads to the Diamondbacks' rookie camp in Phoenix today where he'll spend a three-week stint. Then it's off to Alberta, Canada, where he'll be assigned to Arizona's Class A team.

"I'm happy that the team I went to doesn't have a lot of people cluttered up in its system," said Oleksik, who played

'I'm happy that the team I went to doesn't have a lot of people cluttered up in its system. If I play well, I should be able to move right up.'
George Oleksik, 10th round draft pick

first team. In the supplemental draft, the Diamondbacks get to select from a handful of Major League players who weren't protected by their current team. Those players usually include aging veterans and over-priced underachievers.

Oleksik was selected by the Florida Marlins in the 32nd round of last year's draft, but instead of signing a pro contract, he opted instead to return to MTSU for his senior season. The decision paid off with a 22-round leap in this year's draft.

"I was a little surprised because I was thinking I'd go lower," said Oleksik. "I could tell I got better as the season went on, so I think it was a good decision for me to go back my senior year."

With six saves this year.

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Irving College coach Lisa Mason shouts instruction to her team out in the field during the Lady Tigers' matchup with Center town.

Women County Furniture third baseman Jonathan Myers has the ball slip out of his glove as he goes to apply the tag to Bank of McMinnville's Josh Webb during a third pitch.

Fabric designs in stripes and checks set off by white collars are always popular for the younger set as shown by Ashley Young, upper photo at left, with Shelby Martala and Molly Willmore, left photo, accompanied by Laura Kate Haley.