

Addy Stanley is ready for Fourth of July activities in downtown McMinnville. The rising high school junior says she's looking forward to seeing fireworks on Independence Day.

Fourth of July events planned throughout county

BY EMMA HOLMES

Southern Standard intern (McMinnville, Tennessee)

In addition to the traditional bang of the Fourth of July, this year's downtown McMinnville celebration will make a huge splatter.

A 50-foot watermelon drop is

been added to Court Square festivities. It will take place at 9:50 a.m. when a firetruck will take at least five watermelons to the top of its ladder and let them drop.

"We're doing it just to watch them splatter," said Parks and Recreation employee Kyle Clyde. also been added.

"Groups will each be given a frozen T-shirt and they will have to do whatever it takes to unfreeze the T-shirt for someone to put it on," said Parks and Recreation employee Blaine Donoho.

In keeping with tradition, the Silver and Gold Band, the Stars

Yankee Doodle Children's Parade are among returning favorites in the lineup.

Kid's games will start at 7 a.m. and go to 10 a.m. These games will be mainly water focused. Pickleball is new to the area and there will be courts downtown to learn and enjoy the game.

CELEBRATING INDEPENDENCE

For a schedule of Fourth of July events, see **page 8A**

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Standard, WCPI political forums set for next week

HEAR FROM THE CANDIDATES

Cannonball!

MONDAY, JULY 9 43rd District State House 47th District State House School Board County Executive TUESDAY, JULY 10 4th District U.S. House Trustee Circuit Court Clerk Register of Deeds Sheriff

THURSDAY, JULY 12 All candidates for Warren County Commission What's been a lengthy county election season is entering the home stretch as early voting is set to begin in less than two weeks.

To help voters make an informed decision when electing Warren County leaders, the *Southern Standard* and WCPI public radio are holding three public forums next week. The start time is 6 p.m. each night.

On Monday, candidates for Warren County Executive have been invited to attend. Terry Bell, Jimmy Haley and Ray Hixson have all confirmed they will be in attendance. County executive candidates will be given three minutes for an introduction then asked general questions about county government.

Candidates for the Tennessee House of Representatives have confirmed they will be in attendance. Paul Sherrell, Jerry Lowery and Les Trotman are running for the 43rd District seat. Rush Bricken,

Ronnie Holden and Mike Winton are running for the 47th District seat.

In local School Board races, Andy Link is challenging James Jacobs in the 1st District. Sue Anderson and James Jacobs are fighting for an open seat in the 5th District.

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Jacob Dodd photo

Firecrackers, rockets and cannonballs. Logan King makes a splash at Gilley Pool with this diving board maneuver. The pool is open on the Fourth of July from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. to provide some relief from the heat. The temperature is expected to reach 93 on Wednesday, according to the AccuWeather forecast.

Rock Island State Park adds 46 acres

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

Rock Island State Park has expanded for the first time in almost 50 years with the purchase of two tracts of land that total 46 acres.

"This expansion is the first for Rock Island State Park," said park manager Damon Graham. "Its value is immeasurable due to the protection of park viewshed on the lake bluff, buffer zone for park trails, and nearby cabins, and habitat protection."

Rock Island became a Tennessee State Park in 1969. It was 883 acres.

The two tracts, 15 and for 31 acres, are located in v



Rock Island State Park is adding 46 acres to its 883 acres of scenic beauty.

Warren County just behind the park cabins overlooking Center Hill Lake. The land was placed for sale and was actively being marketed for building sites/ subdivisions. Graham says the purchase became a musthave by the State Lands and Acquisition Committee to protect the park.

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