



# THE BLUE PAGES

## TENNESSEE SECRETARY OF STATE

### Tre Hargett

Our mission is to exceed the expectations of our customers, the taxpayers, by operating at the highest levels of accuracy, cost-effectiveness, and accountability in a customer-centered environment.

### ELECTION SEASON OFFERS TENNESSEANS A CHANCE TO MAKE THEIR VOICES HEARD

*From the Secretary's Desk*

Mark your calendar, early voting for Tennessee's presidential primary will be held this month -

February 15 through February 28 – in advance of the March 6 election day, also known as Super Tuesday.

Our objective at the Department of State is to run elections with fairness and honesty to meet the highest standards of integrity. Exercising one's right to vote is one of the most important expressions of a free society. I am grateful to have the privilege of living in a country and serving in a state where so many others cherish this right as much as I do.

This primary will be interesting for several reasons. While in the fast-paced world of presidential primary politics, little seems certain, there remains a distinct possibility that Tennessee will be a closely-contested battleground state next month.

With the primary calendar set, it appears voters participating in the Republican primary will have a real choice with four candidates still in the running.

Furthermore, Tennessee is one of the more populous states to hold its primary on Super Tuesday and no candidate holds a "home state" advantage here. That means we could see candidates spending

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more of their time and resources here than in elections past.

Lastly, this year's primary will also be our first statewide election held with our new photo ID law. With some exceptions, this law requires voters to show valid photo identification in order to cast ballots. In fact, the Division of Elections has been busy educating the public about the new law. The division conducted a statewide simultaneous 95-county voter outreach, distributed more than one million pieces of literature and promoted the law through groups such as the AARP. The law has been referenced in more than 500 separate media stories.

Our Division of Elections is committed to making sure Tennesseans know about the law and have proper identification when they arrive at the polls. I encourage anyone with questions about the law to call our toll free number, 1-877-850-4959, or visit [www.GoVoteTN.com](http://www.GoVoteTN.com).

The photo ID law was in effect for a city election held Tuesday in Waynesboro – as expected, the election was conducted without any issues.

In spite of a process that may seem drawn-out, our election system has served a purpose and remains the envy of the world. During the next month we can expect to be inundated with phone calls, emails, radio and television ads and more media coverage. I hope you will choose to be a well-informed voter as you prepare to vote in your respective primary, and I encourage you to consider all of the candidates and to vote for the one whose vision for our country is most aligned with yours.

As always, I thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Secretary of State. If my office can be of any assistance to you, please don't hesitate to contact us.




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## IMPACT OF THE UNIFORM COMMERCIAL CODE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM ON STATE'S ECONOMY

What do business owners who borrow money all have in common? Each of them must sign a Uniform Commercial Code financing statement, known as a UCC1, which authorizes a lender to place a lien against the collateral used to obtain the loan. For example, a business owner may pledge inventory or accounts receivable to a lender as collateral for a loan. In Tennessee, lenders file the financing statement in the Office of the Secretary of State's Business Services Division in order to note their liens against collateral.

Last year, lenders filed UCC1 statements with the Office of the Secretary of State representing

a total loan volume in excess of \$6 billion. The business owners, in turn, used the money they borrowed to pay their employees, purchase equipment, goods and services and make other expenditures. The spending that results from having a system that allows lenders to quickly and efficiently perfect their liens on collateral has a significant positive impact on Tennessee's economy.

Processing UCC1 statements is one of the critical ways in which the Office of the Secretary of State helps cultivate a business environment in the state that ensures the free flow of commerce. 

## SECRETARY HARGETT ANNOUNCES TENNESSEE BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT PROGRAM

From mom-and-pop stores on Main Street to global conglomerates, Tennessee businesses are the lifeblood of our local economy. To pay tribute to them and help promote their products and services, the Secretary of State's office has

highlight selected companies, with summaries of what they do, photos, contact information and links to their Internet and social media sites.

To view Tennessee Business Spotlight, go to [www.spotlight.tnsos.net](http://www.spotlight.tnsos.net).



launched a new section on its web site dedicated to our state's businesses. The new feature, which debuted this month, is called Tennessee Business Spotlight.

"The Volunteer State hosts a rich blend of businesses and our goal is to raise awareness about companies that contribute to their local communities and employ Tennesseans," Secretary Hargett said. "I believe that many Tennesseans will be surprised and proud of the great work and innovative products Tennessee companies provide to the nation and the world."

Companies doing business in Tennessee are generally required to register with the Secretary of State's office. Each year, the office processes more than 730,000 transactions involving those businesses. Tennessee Business Spotlight will

In recognition of "National Chocolate Month" as well as Valentine's Day, February's theme is "Tennessee's Sweets & Treats," showcasing the state's confectioners and candy producers.

Businesses represented in this month's Tennessee Business Spotlight are:

- **Armstrong Pie Company** of Linden
- **Aunt Mahalia's Candies** of Gatlinburg
- **Dinstuhl's Fine Candy Company, Inc.** of Memphis
- **Nashville Toffee Company** of Nashville
- **South's Finest Chocolate Factory** of Knoxville

To nominate a business for Tennessee Business Spotlight, please visit [www.spotlight.tnsos.net](http://www.spotlight.tnsos.net) and click on the "Suggest a Business" link or call 615-532-5605. 

## TENNESSEE STATE LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES TO HOST WORKSHOP ON DNA TESTING

If you are interested in learning more about how DNA testing helps trace our ancestors or determining the ethnic origins of your family, the Tennessee State Library and Archives (TSLA) might have just the workshop to fit your needs.

For the second year in a row, TSLA is set to host a free workshop focusing on DNA testing for genealogical research. The workshop will take place in the auditorium of the State Library and Archives building, located at 403 Seventh Ave. North in downtown Nashville, directly west of the State Capitol. The workshop will be Feb. 18 from 9 a.m. until 10:30 a.m.

This session is recommended for those who attended last year's session or who fully understand the basics of DNA testing.

J. Mark Lowe will be the guest speaker again this year, assisted by John F. Baker, Jr.

Lowe is a distinguished professional researcher. He is an instructor at the Institute of Genealogical & Historical Research at Samford and Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy. He is a native of Robertson County and a volunteer for its archives. Recently, Lowe was a featured researcher on an episode of the popular network genealogy program "Who Do You Think You Are?" featuring singer Lionel Richie.

Baker is the local author of *The Washingtons of Wessynton*. Wessynton was a very early and very large plantation in Robertson County, near Springfield. He gives speeches around the country and has helped numerous individuals discover their lineage. Among his discoveries were his grandmother's paternal grandparents, Emanuel and Henny Washington, who had been enslaved on Wessynton Plantation.



*DNA (SHORT FOR DEOXYRIBONUCLEIC ACID) SPELLS OUT THE GENETIC CODES OF MILLIONS OF SPECIES, USING JUST FOUR MOLECULES: ADENINE (A), GUANINE (G), THYMINE (T), AND CYTOSINE (C).*

"Individuals interested in genealogy make up a large portion of the State Library and Archives' customer base," Secretary Hargett said. "This workshop will offer advanced training in the use of DNA to enhance genealogical research."

"Research at TSLA is all about documentary evidence," State Librarian and Archivist Chuck Sherrill said. "DNA testing provides a new opportunity to use scientific evidence in conjunction with documentary evidence. Many of our users who have been working on tracking down family lines for years have begun to do DNA testing as a way of verifying their findings or of trying to make connections to other groups who share their surname."

This is a free workshop, but reservations are required. To make reservations, please e-mail [workshop.tsla@tn.gov](mailto:workshop.tsla@tn.gov) or call 615-741-2764. Seating is limited. Limited parking is available in front, beside and behind the building. 🌟

## MEET BENJAMIN BRADY

Nearly three years ago, an Ethiopian man named Matiwas made one of the toughest decisions a father could make. However, it was made easier by a couple from Tennessee with a lot of love in their hearts.

Matiwas' wife, Abaynesh, had died within hours of giving birth to their son in a grass hut. Matiwas, with help from Abaynesh's parents did their best to raise the boy, but realized after

our deal, maybe we were supposed to raise boys," said Todd Brady, works in church and alumni relations with the president of Union University.

In 2010, the Bradys officially adopted the boy, whom they named Benjamin.

The Bradys traveled to Ethiopia with Amy's parents. There, they met a group of other families - three or four other couples - and everyone went together to receive their children.



*THE BRADY FAMILY. PHOTO PROVIDED BY: SARA DARLING. DARLING BY DESIGN PHOTOGRAPHY.*

five months that they needed to give him up for adoption because they couldn't properly provide for him.

Enter Amy and Todd Brady of Jackson, who were starting their paperwork to adopt a baby boy around the time Abaynesh was giving birth.

"We had our third son while thinking about adoption and we both decided that maybe this is

While Todd admitted to wondering whether he could love an adopted child as much as his natural born sons, those questions melted away the first time he saw Benjamin.

"I looked at him and thought, 'he's mine, he's my kid,'" Todd said.

Near the end of the Bradys' time in Ethiopia, they had the chance



to meet Benjamin’s father, whom the adoption agency had brought in from his home town to Addis Ababa, an eight-hour journey.

“Here’s a man who didn’t want to do this, but had to in order for his child to survive,” Todd said. “We let his father know that Benjamin was going to have three other brothers. We told him that we promise to provide for and parent Benjamin, we promise to love him and we promise that he will be able to have that which (Matiwos) had always longed for – an education.

“Ben will grow up knowing his father’s story,” Todd added. “We have a picture of Ben’s dad hanging in our family room.”

Benjamin was welcomed home by his new brothers, Jack (now 8), William (now 6), and Isaac (now 4). The boys were already familiar with Benjamin from three photographs the family had received.

“It was like Christmas morning,” Todd said of their first meeting. “The boys gave Benjamin a tour of the house and asked to hold him. We talked about Ben so much before he came home and prayed for him every night with the boys that there was really no transition with the children; Benjamin was already very close to the boys’

hearts. They acted as if Ben had always been in our family.”

The Bradys are now in the process of adopting from Ethiopia again.

“There’s probably not been anything that has more positively influenced our family,” Todd said. “Adoption has really caused our understanding of the Gospel to come alive – in how we do home and how we do family. I’m realizing that adoption is grace, it is the Gospel.”

Documents needed for international adoptions in Tennessee require an apostille or authentication by the Tennessee Secretary of State’s office, which provides assurance to the adopted children’s countries of origin that the paperwork is genuine. For more information on document authentication, call (615) 741-0536 or go to [http://www.tn.gov/sos/bus\\_svc/apostilles.htm](http://www.tn.gov/sos/bus_svc/apostilles.htm).

“The role our office plays in the adoption process is a small but important one,” Secretary Hargett said. “Because of the profound effect adoptions have on these families’ lives, it’s a good example of government providing a valuable service as opposed to just creating more bureaucracy.” 

## INTERNATIONAL ADOPTIONS

Some people may have the impression that the only thing state employees do is push paper around. This story is an example of how state employees positively impact Tennessean’s lives and the lives of children worldwide. International adoptions require an apostille or authentication, depending on the nation of origin, by the secretary of state in the state where the documents were signed. This certification of the signatures’ validity on the documents is much like the notary publics would be on the local level. Apostilles/authentications are processed in the Secretary of State Division of Business Services. Over 12,100 apostilles and authentications were processed last year.

Documents may be submitted by mail or in person.

For more information, contact: Division of Business Services, 312 Rosa L. Parks Avenue, Snodgrass Tower, 6th Floor, Nashville, TN 37243, 615.741.0536, [business.services@tn.gov](mailto:business.services@tn.gov), or visit [http://www.tn.gov/sos/bus\\_svc/apostilles.htm](http://www.tn.gov/sos/bus_svc/apostilles.htm)

## A LITTLE BIT OF HOME

The Office of the Secretary of State is more than a workplace – it’s also a large family. And recently members of that family banded together to help one of their own, Fred Agee, an Administrative Procedures Division employee who is currently serving with his National Guard unit in Kuwait.

When the call went out to donate care packages to Agee, a 1st lieutenant in the Tennessee National Guard’s 230th Engineer Battalion, employees of the office responded generously.

In total, they donated 188 pounds worth of soap, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, baby wipes, shaving cream, beef jerky, pretzels, sunflower seeds, peanuts, protein bars, hard candy, gum, mints, mouthwash, toothpaste, toothbrushes, games, drink mixes, cotton balls, notepads, pens clothes, American flags, books and movies for use by 1st Lt. Agee and other members of his unit.

In addition, many employees contributed cards and letters of support.

Those items were sent to Kuwait along with a banner signed by office employees.

“I am very proud of my colleagues for the love and generosity they showed Fred and the members of the Tennessee National Guard’s 230th Engineer Battalion,” Secretary Hargett said. “It is reassuring to know that the employees in our office have a heart for

those who protect our freedom and our lives. I’m also so proud of Fred for his service to our country. He’s a great representative for our office.”

1st Lt. Agee expressed his thanks in an e-mail to the office staff.

“In my 32 years, I have never been more surprised to receive 23 care packages...” he said. “I’m humbled and feel very blessed by the generosity [my fellow employees] have shown to those of us who are currently serving our country overseas in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

“When you’re deployed with the military, receiving mail and packages from friends and



FRED (LEFT) WITH HHC 230TH ENGINEER BATTALION COMPANY COMMANDER CPT. BRYON GRIMCO OF MARTIN.

family back home is a real morale boost. The care packages have been opened and soldiers from the 230th Engineer Battalion are finding the supplies that they need. Every item in the care packages can be used over here.” 🇺🇸

# OFFICE CLOSED FOR PRESIDENTS' DAY HOLIDAY

The Office of the Secretary of State will be closed Monday, February 20 for the holiday now known as Presidents' Day. If you have business with the office of any of its divisions, please plan accordingly. 

## RULE MAKING HEARINGS AND LISTS OF RULES

Rule making hearings are open to the public. The web link below will provide information about the location and times of the hearings. Information about the rules going into effect includes changes or additions to rules.

To view the rule-making meeting notices online, go to: <http://tnsos.org/rules/RulemakingHearings.php?>

To view the rules scheduled to go into effect, go to: <http://tnsos.org/rules/PendingRules.php?>

If you have suggestions on how the online posting of the state's rules could be more "user-friendly," please contact Cody York at 615-741-2650 or email him at: [Cody.York@tn.gov](mailto:Cody.York@tn.gov). 

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