



THE BLUE PAGES TENNESSEE SECRETARY OF STATE Tre Hargett

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From the Secretary's Desk

SUMMER READING: GREAT FOR THE YOUNG AND THE NOT-SO-YOUNG

As if the unseasonably warm weather hadn't tipped us off already, summer officially begins this month. It's a time for barbecues, baseball games, trips to the pool and all sorts of other fun activities.

It's also a great time to read. That's why I'm glad that public libraries across our state offer summer reading programs to their patrons.

For young children, reading during the summer months is an important part of the learning process. Studies have shown that elementary school students

who don't read during the summer fall behind – often significantly behind – their peers who do read.

Summer reading programs vary from county to county, but they're geared toward making reading fun as well as educational. Many programs offer games, prizes, guest readers and other special activities that make reading seem less like a chore.

The importance of that can't be overstated. Reading is a skill people need throughout their lives, so helping children develop a love of reading early in life will benefit them when they reach adulthood and beyond.

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Summer reading programs aren't just for kids. Many libraries offer summer reading programs geared toward teens and adults as well.

The intense popularity of books like the "Twilight" and "The Hunger Games" series shows that teenagers are still interested in reading. And for adults, reading at the local library is a free form of entertainment sheltered from the hot summer sun. Particularly in this economy, free entertainment is at a premium.

Adult programs sometimes include age-appropriate prize giveaways like Kindles, Nook Tablets or gift cards for local bookstores.

I'm proud to say that the Tennessee State Library and Archives offers promotional support and training for summer reading programs across the state. Each year, our staff provides manuals with tips for running successful reading programs as well as promotional items such as posters, bookmarks, pencils and participation certificates.

We also host annual workshops that give Tennessee librarians a forum to come together

and discuss what works and what doesn't work in summer reading programs.

Last year, about 110,000 people statewide participated in summer reading programs – including nearly 90,000 children. While the numbers of participants are smaller, the programs geared toward teens and adults have been growing in popularity over the last few years, too.

I encourage all Tennesseans – the young and the not-so-young – to check into the summer reading programs available at their local libraries.

As the saying goes, there's no such thing as a free lunch. But there most certainly is such a thing as a free book. Actually, lots of free books. So don't miss out on the fun this summer.

As always, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve as your Secretary of State. Please contact my office with any questions or comments you may have.

“IS THIS WHERE I GET MY BUSINESS LICENSE?”

This is the question most frequently heard by the customer service staff at the Department of State's Business Services Division. The answer, in short, is “no.”

Business Services is the agency designated by state law as the place where certain types of businesses file the documents that establish their existence. If you want to form a corporation, you file its charter with Business Services. To start a limited liability company, draw up articles of organization and file them with the division.

Your business “license” is something altogether different. Not all types of businesses file documents with the Secretary of State (for example, sole

proprietorships), but most businesses need a business license issued by local government for business tax purposes.

If you are starting a new business, you should check with the clerk of the county where the business will be operating. The county clerk's office should be able to help you with your local business tax license, along with any other local business requirements. To find your county's clerk, go to: <http://www.tn.gov/revenue/vehicle/countyclerks.shtml>.

Some businesses are working in regulated industries and may be required by state law to have professional licenses. Accountants, barbers

and funeral directors are among several types of professionals who must be licensed by their respective regulatory boards in order to operate. Most regulatory boards are part of the Tennessee Department of Commerce & Insurance. You can find information about that department's boards and commissions at: <http://www.tn.gov/commerce/boards/>.

Filing your business' formation documents with the Business Services Division might be one of several steps you must take to get up and running. We proudly join our colleagues throughout state and local government to make the process as easy as possible. If you have questions about the types of filings handled by the Business Services Division, please call (615) 741-2286 or visit: http://www.tn.gov/sos/bus_svc/index.htm. 

TENNESSEE BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT PROMOTES THE MUSIC INDUSTRY

With Music City and Elvis' hometown within its borders, Tennessee is well known for its music - whether your tastes tend toward country, pop, blues or classics. That's why the theme of this month's Tennessee Business Spotlight is "Tennessee Sounds Good to Me."

*"THE MUSIC INDUSTRY IN TENNESSEE IS BOOMING AND IT RICHLY DESERVES THE RECOGNITION IT HAS RECEIVED,"
SECRETARY HARGETT SAID.*

Tennessee Business Spotlight is a feature on the Secretary of State's web site that showcases some of the state's businesses that create jobs, produce quality products and give back to their local communities. People visiting the Tennessee Business Spotlight web page can learn about the selected companies' goods and services, operations, employment figures, photos and links to web and social media sites that provide more information.

The companies highlighted in June are:

- Ryman Auditorium in Nashville
- Gruhn Guitars in Nashville
- Lunsford's Musical Instruments, Inc. in Knoxville
- Great American Country TV/Scripps Networks Interactive in Knoxville
- Sun Studio in Memphis
- Stax Museum of American Soul Music in Memphis

"The music industry in Tennessee is booming and it richly deserves the recognition it has received," Secretary Hargett said. "I'm proud to highlight a few music-related businesses in our great state that are providing jobs for Tennesseans and spreading the music tradition of Tennessee to the rest of the nation and world."

To visit Tennessee Business Spotlight, go to www.spotlight.tnsos.net.



To nominate a company to be recognized in Tennessee Business Spotlight, please visit the web page and click the "Submit a Business" link or call (615) 532-5605. 

LOCAL LIBRARIANS COMPLETE SPECIALIZED TRAINING

Thirteen distinguished library directors in Tennessee graduated from the Public Library Management Institute recently, increasing their knowledge and understanding of the unique role libraries fulfill in their communities.

“I commend our directors and library branch managers on this great accomplishment,” Secretary Hargett said. “Our public libraries are more than places to check out books. Libraries also provide valuable services such as job training and Internet access. Tennesseans are fortunate to have library directors willing to demonstrate the additional commitment needed for our libraries to reach even greater heights.”

The Public Library Management Institute, started in 1995, is a three-year program for library directors who do not have master’s degrees. Each year, participants gather at Fall Creek Falls State Park for a week of intense training sessions and networking with fellow library directors in similar situations. Participants are from small towns all over the state.

“Over the years of the program, library directors develop skills in public speaking, personnel management, using technology effectively and managing change, among other things,” State Librarian and Archivist Chuck Sherrill said. “All of these skills are essential for guiding public libraries through their transition into the digital era.”

“This management course gives library directors the tools they need to help transform their libraries into community hubs,” said Wendy Cornelisen, who coordinated the most recent training program for the Tennessee State Library and Archives.

Including the 13 most recent graduates, the program has graduated 157 people since its founding.

“I COMMEND OUR DIRECTORS AND LIBRARY BRANCH MANAGERS ON THIS GREAT ACCOMPLISHMENT,” SECRETARY HARGETT SAID.

The recent graduates are:

- Michele Barnes - Obion County Public Library director
- Cynthia Carmack - Millard Oakley Public Library director
- Angie Georgeff - Unicoi County Public Library director
- Kathy Hendrixson - Justin Potter Library director
- Marsha Jernigan Hutcherson - Irving Meek Jr. Memorial Library director
- Linda Rice - Crockett Memorial Library director
- Megan Lee - Fred A. Vaught Memorial Library director
- Don Miller - Greeneville-Greene County Public Library director
- Pamela Wiggins - Watertown-Wilson County Public Library branch manager
- Mark Tidwell - Jellico Public Library director
- Renae Powell - Lobelville Library manager
- Laura Winfrey - Somerville-Fayette County Library director
- Janet Walker - South Cheatham Public Library director 

MEET ZEKE MITCHELL

For Austin and Leslie Mitchell of Nashville, adopting their son Zeke from Ethiopia was a bittersweet experience.

Bitter, because they understood the sadness Zeke's natural family felt upon being separated from him. And sweet, because the Mitchells love Zeke as much as they do their biological children, Cal and Liv.

After months of waiting, the family adopted Zeke four and a half years ago.

"It's such a surreal moment," Leslie said. "You've waited for such a long

time for this moment and it's a very surreal thing for someone to be holding your son in their arms."

Before the adoption, Leslie wondered if she would feel the same way toward Zeke that parents feel about their biological children. Her first meeting with Zeke cleared up any doubt about that.

"I gave up trying to understand how that was going to work and I trusted that God was going to flip that switch," Leslie said. "It's an inexplicable

gift, but it just happened and he was my son - and that was that."

The Mitchells stayed in Ethiopia for a week during the adoption process. During that time, they were able to meet Zeke's aunt, Meseret.

"We got to show her pictures of our family and she

showed us pictures of hers," Leslie said. "And we were able to talk about Zeke's birth mother Tigist, which was another inexplicable moment. All that (Zeke) is losing and the grief and the sense of sadness that

you share with (the

birth family). No one comes to adoption without a story that requires a lot lost. Redemption and rejoicing yes, but there is a lot of grieving and mourning to be done.

"Part of me wanted to go into a corner and weep with Meseret about this and part of me wanted to just tell her how much we were going to love (Zeke) and be good parents to him. It's a lot of extreme emotions."



AUSTIN AND LESLIE HOLDING ZEKE FOR THE FIRST TIME.

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. About 20,000 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, or visit http://www.tn.gov/sos/bus_svc/apostilles.htm



*LESLIE AND AUSTIN MITCHEL (BACK)
CHILDREN: CAL 9, LIV 7, AND ZEKE 4*

On the way back to the United States, the Mitchells had a layover in Washington, D.C., where Zeke was able to meet his uncle for the first time.

The Mitchells had very specific ideas about how they wanted to handle Zeke's arrival in Nashville. They didn't want a large gathering at the airport - just immediate family so the other Mitchell children, grandparents, aunts and uncles could meet Zeke first.

Arriving at home was a different story, though.

"We got to our house and our entire sidewalk all the way up to our door was lined with friends holding candles and singing 'Amazing Grace,'" Leslie said. "I'm holding my new son while he was sleeping, looking like a total angel, and walking down this aisle of people. It was cold and dark but the night was beautiful.

"My first thought was 'oh, I feel like a bride.'" But then I thought, 'no, this is what the father of

the bride feels like because nobody is looking at me, everyone is looking at him."

The Mitchells made an adoption video for Zeke with pictures and video of his family in Ethiopia, his homecoming and pictures they have of him growing up. Zeke was able to watch it recently.

"There's the moment in the video where he gets handed to us and he's sitting in my lap watching this video of him and I realize he's hunched over, head in his hands, weeping," Leslie said. "I started to weep. Even his 4-year-old heart knew that there was something really sad happening in this moment and even though he loves us and we love him and he even loves the case worker who handed him to us, he knew something sad had happened."

The Mitchells stay in touch with Zeke's biological family in Ethiopia through friends who travel over to the country once a year.

"We send letters and pictures and a picture book, anything we can to keep in contact with them," Leslie said. "We even have a picture of his aunt kissing a picture of Zeke. I don't know how we'll do it and what it will look like, but we have respect for his family in Ethiopia and we will travel there with our entire family one day."

International adoptions in Tennessee require an apostille or authentication by the Tennessee Secretary of State's office. For more information on document authentication, call (615) 741-0536 or go to http://www.tn.gov/sos/bus_svc/apostilles.htm.

"Providing apostilles and authentications is just one small part of what our office does, but it's a part that makes a large impact on the families in Tennessee," Secretary Hargett said. "I am proud to offer this service to the families going through the adoption process and am thankful for their compassion for children, both domestically and internationally." 🌟

A FAIR REWARD

For a lot of elementary school children in Wilson County, it seems like a fair trade: If they bury their noses in enough books during the early part of the summer, they get an opportunity to sink their teeth into corn dogs or other tasty treats at the Wilson County Fair toward the end of the summer.

For the 15th year, the fair and its sponsors are teaming with Wilson County public libraries on the “Read and Win” program, in which first- through sixth-graders can earn free fair admission and ride passes if they read at least 20 books as part of the libraries’ summer reading program.

The summer reading program lasts from the first week of June through the second week of July.

Wilson County is one of several counties around the state in which students can receive perks from their local fairs in exchange for meeting certain summer reading goals.

Alesia Burnley, director of the Lebanon-Wilson County Public Library, said the prospect of a free trip to the fair is a pretty powerful incentive.

“It’s a big draw,” Burnley said. “It gets them reading and excited.”

And meeting the 20-book quota isn’t as tough as one might think. “A lot of them will get excited and get it done in a week or two,” Burnley said.

Last year, 3,735 kids from pre-kindergarten to sixth grade participated in Wilson County’s summer reading program. Of that total, Burnley said about one-third received fair passes.

“There are many great programs taking place at our libraries across the state,” Secretary Hargett said. “I am so pleased to learn about creative ideas for encouraging kids to read and helping them to foster a love of books. The ‘Read and Win’ program could be copied in a lot of our library systems across the state, wherever fair organizers or other sponsors of children-friendly events are willing to partner with library officials.”



LEBANON-WILSON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY.

This year’s free day at the Wilson County Fair for “Read and Win” participants will be Aug. 23.

The fair is organized annually by Wilson County Promotions.

The Wilson County libraries’ summer reading program includes various activities and other prizes for students who meet certain reading goals.

Other counties in Tennessee with summer reading programs that offer free or reduced fair admission or other incentives include: Bedford, Cheatham, Henry and Knox.

For more information about the summer reading programs across the state, contact your local library. 

RULE-MAKING HEARINGS AND LISTS OF ADMINISTRATIVE 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.Ryan.York@tn.gov. 

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