



Unicoi County Courthouse

County Spotlight: *Unicoi*

Population: 17,667
County Seat: *Erwin*

Did you know...?

Erwin was meant to be named Ervin after David J.N. Ervin who donated land for the county seat. However, an error by the post office that was never rectified recorded the name as Erwin.

The National Fish Hatchery in Erwin has been in operation for over one hundred years and has more than 40,000 visitors annually.

**For more information, visit:*

<http://www.erwintn.org/html/history.html>
<http://www.fws.gov/southeast/erwin/>

April Capstone Yields New CPAs

CTAS is proud to announce a new class of Certified Public Administrators (CPAs). The twenty-one county participants below gathered at Montgomery Bell State Park last month for Capstone, a three-day forum designed to provide an opportunity to demonstrate the administration, leadership, and management skills gained through the County Officials Certificate Training Program (COCTP). The attendees were required to complete sixty hours of COCTP training and pass an exit exam on the Tennessee County Government Handbook before being extended an invitation to the session.

The participants were praised for their efforts as they were awarded certificates by CTAS Executive Director Mike Garland. The Capstone class marked a special milestone for County Clerk Pam Ailor as she became the first official from Union County to complete COCTP. Currently only ten counties in the state do not have at least one CPA.

Front row (left to right): Nancy Evans (Crockett Co.); Brenda Lane (Hickman Co.); Andrea Totty (Hickman Co.); Misty Rosson (Hickman Co.); Patricia Primm (Hickman Co.); Robert Baggett (Franklin Co.); Beth Johnson (Roane Co.)

Middle row: Ronnie Price (McNairy Co.); Renee Whitaker (Hickman Co.); Freida Smith (Roane Co.); Bill Boner (Rutherford Co.); Emma Boynton (Bledsoe Co.); Brandy Hudson (Hickman Co.); Mike Nichols (Madison Co.); Beverly Templeton (White Co.)

Back row: Tracy Wright (Hickman Co.); Pam Ailor (Union Co.); Marci Floyd (Weakley Co.); D.W. Weaver (Marshall Co.); Gary Rhodes (Perry Co.); Heather Adams (Weakley Co.)



Reminder: COCTP Ethics Policy Changes Take Effect July 1

All County Officials Certificate Training Program (COCTP) participants should be aware that beginning July 1, 2009, the following changes in the recertification process will become effective:

- (1) For any county official who is recertifying in the COCTP, the two (2) hours of ethics training is no longer required. Officials must still take sixteen (16) hours of training each fiscal year.
- (2) For any county official who desires to become a certified public administrator in the COCTP, they will receive two (2) hours of ethics training at the Capstone session.

CTAS will continue to offer ethics training and encourages officials to attend the sessions, but it will no longer be a requirement. Also, ethics training for newly elected county officials will be offered at the County Officials Orientation Program (COOP) in 2010.

If you have any questions about this policy, please contact CTAS Training Manager Bob Schettler at (615) 253-6378.

2009 Public Chapter 14 Clarifies Vacancy Law

Last year, an amendment to the laws governing how vacancies are filled by the county legislative body resulted in some confusion as to whether a county commissioner was required to resign his or her seat on the county legislative body after being appointed by the county legislative body to serve on a board, committee or commission. This year, Public Chapter 14 clarifies that this was not the intention of the General Assembly. The law now expressly states that a county commissioner is required to resign from the county legislative body when appointed to fill a vacancy that is required under the Tennessee Constitution to be filled by the county legislative body. Whether county commissioners may serve on county boards, committees and commissions is governed by the law pertaining to the particular board, committee or commission in question, and not the vacancy law.

New Council Focuses on Renewable Energy

The Tennessee Renewable Energy and Economic Development Council (Council) is a newly formed statewide, non-profit organization chartered to promote the development of renewable energy and economic development opportunities for communities across the state. Council membership to the advisory board is open to and includes city and county mayors and service representatives from both the public and private sectors in Tennessee.

The Council will hold their first meeting on June 10, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. at Fall Creek Falls State Park in Pikeville. Biodiesel recycling, clean fuels coalition and net zero energy buildings are among the topics to be discussed at the meeting. County mayors interested in joining the Council or seeking more information on the upcoming meeting should contact Warren Nevad with the Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) at 865-974-9839 or warren.nevad@tennessee.edu.

Upcoming Federal Stimulus Training

Recently the State Comptroller's Office, Division of County Audit mailed a copy of a letter detailing the accounting and reporting responsibilities counties will have to assume for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA/stimulus) grant funding. CTAS has received numerous phone calls regarding these new accounting and reporting requirements and has responded by organizing training classes state-wide. In these classes, county officials and their staff will learn:

- Internal control requirements of ARRA and how to achieve these requirements.
- What a written risk assessment is and how to prepare your county's risk assessment for ARRA funding.
- Assistance with identifying and correcting prior year, significant and material audit findings related to internal control deficiencies pertaining to receipting, disbursing and/or expenditure of funds in offices that will administer ARRA funding.
- Assistance with reducing or eliminating lack of segregation of duty findings in offices that will receive ARRA funding.
- Other relevant items dealing with ARRA accounting and reporting requirements that will assist counties in the ability to administer Recovery Acts funds in a transparent and efficient way.

County officials who will be administering ARRA funding should be sure to attend one of these training sessions or send members of their office staff, as failure to comply with guidelines for ARRA funding could result in penalties.

CTAS registration forms were sent to county mayors, sheriffs, finance directors and trustees. If you did not receive a form and could benefit from the stimulus training, please call the CTAS Training Staff at 615-532-3555.

Don't Forget! The federal minimum wage rate will increase to \$7.25 per hour on July 24, 2009.

Tennessee County Attorneys Association

The Tennessee County Attorneys Association (TCAA) held their annual spring conference on May 8-9, 2009, in Knoxville. Attorneys attending the seminar received 6.5 hours of continuing legal education in areas of interest to county government attorneys, including ethics, beer boards and the responsible vendor law, government corruption, ouster, legislative updates, and RLUIPA/Fair Housing Act issues. More than 40 attorneys were in attendance.

The TCAA represents all county attorneys and their deputies across the state of Tennessee. The purpose of the TCAA is education and training, as well as being a valuable networking opportunity for county attorneys. The TCAA conducts annual seminars and serves as a clearinghouse for information and exchange of ideas in order to promote the continued excellence of the organization and quality service to their governmental clients.

More information about the TCAA, including how attorneys can join the organization, can be found on their website:

www.tcaa.info.

Free Tobacco Quit Seminars

In light of the new tobacco policy on the local government health insurance plan, a series of tobacco quit seminars will be held across the state throughout the month of May and into June.

The free seminars are designed for insurance plan members and their spouses who want to stop smoking and avoid the new Tobacco Use Surcharge.

Each session lasts 90 minutes and offers an overview of the process, resources and tools to help you quit smoking.

Participants will discover many proven, effective ways to stop using tobacco in order to live a healthier and more productive life at work and at home.

For dates, locations and registration information, click [here](#).

Have comments or suggestions for this newsletter?
Contact Claire Marsalis at claire.marsalis@tennessee.edu.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 18-22	Trustees Spring Meeting, Chattanooga
May 21	Federal Stimulus Training, Jackson
May 26	Federal Stimulus Training, Johnson City
May 27	Federal Stimulus Training, Franklin
May 28	Federal Stimulus Training, Dunlap
May 29	Federal Stimulus Training, Oak Ridge
June 1-5	Registers Association Spring Conference, Hendersonville
June 2-3	TCSA Post Legislative Conference, Gatlinburg
June 3	Sheriff's Association Meeting, Nashville
June 9	TCHOA Region III Meeting, Franklin
June 10	TN Renewable Energy and Economic Development Council Meeting, Fall Creek Falls State Park

LITTER GRANT ACCOUNTING UPDATE

The Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) has informed us that the new reporting requirements for employees paid under the litter grant program will not be enforced until July 1, 2009. CTAS has been working with TDOT and will be sending something out within the next two weeks to help counties comply with these new requirements on budgeting and accounting for benefits for litter grant employees.

County Officials E-News is a monthly newsletter provided by the University of Tennessee County Technical Assistance Service in an effort to promote better county government through direct assistance to county officials and their associations.

226 Capitol Boulevard, Suite 400 ■ Nashville, TN 37219
Phone: (615) 532-3555 ■ Fax: (615) 532-3699
www.ctas.tennessee.edu