



ALZHEIMER'S DRUG

# Does it help?

New drug approved despite questions about effectiveness. **A8**



POLITICS

# Schumer says Dems' resolve will be tested.

# Johnson City Press

TRI-CITIES, TENNESSEE | johnsoncitypress.com

TUESDAY, JUNE 8, 2021 | \$1.00

# Going somewhere?

## More flights at airport give area travelers options

By Marina Waters  
KINGSPORT TIMES NEWS

BLOUNTVILLE — Tri-Cities Airport is ready to send travelers to destinations that were removed from the airport's schedule over the past year.

"We are starting to see a proverbial light at the end of the tunnel as people are getting vaccinated and getting more comfortable with filling up the aircraft again," Kristi Haulsee, Tri-Cities Airport director of marketing and air service development, said Monday.

American Airlines recently added back its second flight to Dallas, and Delta has added its mid-morning flight to Atlanta back to the schedule.

Haulsee said during a typical year before the pandemic, the airport would offer 12 average daily flights. The airport is currently at 11 daily flights compared to last June, when about four daily flights departed.

"It's up to the airlines when they add a flight," Haulsee said. "We lost Dallas completely for three weeks last June. Before the end of the month they brought it back to one a day. Last week, they started the second flight back up."

Right now, there is a federal mask mandate, which Haulsee said is set to last until mid-September. Currently vaccinations aren't required for travel within the United States, but Haulsee said those looking to travel need to do their research and see what is required on the other end of their flight.

"There may be some quarantining areas," Haulsee said. "You may have to have a negative COVID-19 test 24 hours before departure. It just depends on where you're going."

Sarah Dixon readied to board an Atlanta-bound plane on Monday along with her grandfather, Sam Moser. The vaccine has eased her fears about traveling during the pandemic.

"It seemed kind of reckless to just fly



MARINA WATERS/KINGSPORT TIMES NEWS

Travelers check in to board their at Tri-Cities Airport on Monday. The airport is now offering 11 flights per day.

before," Dixon said. "This is my first time flying (since the pandemic). But I'm not worried. I'm vaccinated."

Haulsee said the airport started seeing an increase in travel around March. Business and some international travel have increased, she said, but mostly, leisure travel has been at the top of the list in the Tri-Cities.

"Even here in our area, we have seen more people coming in because they are going to places they can disperse a little bit more," Haulsee said. "Folks are headed to beaches, the mountains. Those are the two big spots where they can be outdoors and away from people. We thought that would slow down but it hasn't yet."

For those looking to travel, Haulsee suggested bringing a face covering and adding your airline's app to your smartphone to stay more hands-off.

"They generally now will have you scan your own ticket so you don't have



Sarah Dixon, Wallace Dixon and Sam Moser watch as a flight comes in.

to touch anything and going through security, it's the same thing," Haulsee said. "The less they have to touch things, the safer it is for everybody."



CONTRIBUTED/ETSU

A student administers a shot during an ETSU Health vaccine clinic.

# ETSU Health taking vaccines to area venues

Contributed to the Press

ETSU Health will continue to offer opportunities for members of the community who are 18 and older to receive the free, one-dose Janssen COVID-19 vaccine at various locations throughout the Appalachian Highlands.

"This summer, we will be utilizing some non-traditional settings to reach as many people as we can with the vaccine."

**DONNA NOLAND,**  
ETSU Health

COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic manager

"This summer, we will be utilizing some non-traditional settings to reach as many people as we can with the vaccine," said Donna Noland, manager of the ETSU Health COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic. "While we have had a good response to our vaccine clinics on the campus of East Tennessee State University and will continue to offer those to the public, we realize that there are some excellent opportunities to expand our efforts and bring the vaccine to places where people are gathering this summer."

See **VACCINES**, Page A2

# Election Commission formulating plans to move to new offices

By Robert Houk  
PRESS SENIOR REPORTER  
rhouk@johnsoncitypress.com

With a busy election year looming in 2022, election officials say moving day can't come soon enough for the Washington County Election Commission.

Election commissioners met Monday to discuss plans to move their offices from their current quarters on the third floor of the Washington County Courthouse to the George P. Jaynes Justice Center.

Election officials said the start of the next election cycle will begin on Dec. 20 when candidates are allowed to start picking up qualifying petitions for the May 3 primaries for county offices.

Dana Jones, Washington County's administrator of elections, said she would like to see election staffers moved into their new home by the end of September, but has been informed by County Mayor Joe Grandy that such a timetable might not be realistic.

See **MOVE**, Page A2

# If they played Freedom Hall, she saw them

## Long-time employee Bobbie Shirley retiring as director of Civic Center

By David Floyd  
PRESS STAFF WRITER  
dfloyd@johnsoncitypress.com

Bobbie Shirley has been an employee at the Freedom Hall Civic Center almost as long as the venue has been open.

Initially starting as a clerk at the swimming pool in July 1975, Shirley worked at the center for more than 45 years before retiring this year as the venue's director, a position she stepped into last year after former director Lisa Chamness retired. Before that, she filled multiple roles at Freedom Hall, which first opened its doors in 1974.



CONTRIBUTED

Bobbie Shirley, who was an employee during the first show at Freedom Hall Civic Center featuring Bob Hope in 1974, poses for a photo with Alice Cooper.

The Johnson City Commission issued a proclamation in her honor at a meeting in May.

"Freedom Hall will not be the same without you," Commissioner Jenny Brock told Shirley at the time. "I've always known ... that if you wanted any information about Freedom Hall, or the history of Freedom Hall, you

were the person who has it all."

When she first took a job at the center, Shirley had just graduated from high school and was looking for extra money. Before that, Shirley had volunteered at Freedom Hall as an usher for the first event at the civic center, a per-

See **DIRECTOR**, Page A2



CONTACT US

To suggest a story, call 722-1330  
To buy a classified ad, call 722-0509  
For display advertising, call 929-3111  
To subscribe, call 722-0510

WEATHER A3

High Low  
**84 65**  
Showers likely today, tonight

DEATHS A6

Sharon Tolliver Copley  
Perry Dalmond Counts  
Richard Alan "Rick" Kelly  
Garland Reeves Life

ONLINE

Follow the Johnson City Press for breaking news, sports and information at johnsoncitypress.com, on Facebook at facebook.com/JohnsonCityPress and on Twitter at @jcpress.

INSIDE

Appy League B1  
Classified ads B5  
Comics B8  
Editorial A4  
ETSU hoops B1  
Fun & Games B7  
Local A3, A5  
Lottery A2  
NASCAR B1  
On the Air B2  
Stocks A5  
TV listing A7

Nobody delivers like we do.  
Lisa Wells  
ETSU graduate. Proud mom. Happy "camper". Accountant.  
Because of our people, we deliver more than the news to our readers. It's just another way that we're committed to our community.  
Johnson City Press  
www.johnsoncitypress.com