



The Neighborly Notice – Vol. 17, No. 5 – Tuesday, February 6, 2024

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Published by the City of Knoxville's Office of Neighborhood Empowerment, we report news important to Knoxville's residential neighborhoods. Include your neighborhood-related event or meeting in this space. Call 865-215-3232. News deadline: 12 noon on Fridays.

Like us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/KnoxvilleNeighborhoods>

1. February 11 Is 211 Day

This Sunday, February 11, is 211 Day. Do you know what East Tennessee 211 is and when to call?

If you and your family are in need of assistance like food pantries, low-cost healthcare, or the location of nearest warming centers, then 211 is your go-to line. In a nutshell, 211 provides referrals for area social services.

The City of Knoxville's Center for Service Innovation provides customer service representatives to answer calls for the 211 line and refer neighbors to social services. 211 is a partnership with CAC's Office on Aging, United Way of Greater Knoxville and the United Way of East Tennessee Highlands.

If you need assistance in the East Tennessee area, visit [211's website](#).

Happy 211 Day!

2. Keep Knoxville Beautiful's Orchid Awards Are Tomorrow

Wednesday, Feb. 7, [Keep Knoxville Beautiful](#) (KKB) will hold their 45th annual Orchid Awards from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Mill & Mine, 227 W Depot Ave.

Since 1979, KKB has presented the Orchids Beautification Awards to Knoxville and Knox County buildings, public art, and outdoor spaces that beautify and elevate our community. You can view the full list of nominees and purchase tickets to the event by visiting KKB's [website](#).

Several City projects and collaborations are nominated for awards, including the Community Refrigerator at [Sam Duff Park](#) and the Holston-Chilhowee [Dog Park](#) that opened in June 2023. Follow KKB on Facebook or check their website Friday to learn who wins!

3. League of Women Voters Host Candidate Forums

The [League of Women Voters of Knoxville Knox County](#) (LWVKKC) will host two candidate forums coming up this week and next.

- Thursday, Feb. 8, from 6:30-7:30 p.m., at Messiah Lutheran Church, 6900 Kingston Pike - **Knox County Law Director**
- Tuesday, Feb. 13, from 6:30-8 p.m., at Messiah Lutheran Church, 6900 Kingston Pike - **Knox County Commission Districts 4, 5, 9**

Everyone is welcome!

Elections will be held in Knox County this year for Knox County Commission, Board of Education, Knox County Law Director and Property Assessor. Voters will be able to hear the candidates respond to questions about important issues for Knoxville and Knox County. The Primary Election will be on March 5. Also on the ballot will be the Presidential Preference Primary, in other words you get to vote for the President in the primary.

The LWVKKC is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that encourages informed and active participation in government and works to increase understanding of major public policy issues.

For more information, please contact Kathryn King at 865-621-9179.

4. Trees Knoxville to Hold Creekbank Repair Workshop

[Trees Knoxville](#) will be holding a Creekbank Repair Workshop on Saturday, Feb. 24, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The cost of the event is \$30. You can register [here](#). **Registration deadline is Monday, Feb. 12.**

Participants will learn how to protect and improve their land and the natural environment by stabilizing creekbanks that have been damaged by excessive erosion.

Experts from the University of Tennessee, North Carolina State University, Knox County Stormwater, WaterWays and other local partners will provide practical, cost-effective solutions using natural materials and native plants to create healthy, stable creekbanks through small-scale repairs. Attendees will participate in hands-on installation of stabilization practices.

The field portion of this workshop will be on a small tributary to Plumb Creek. Field techniques taught will include those best suited for hand tools. The classroom portion will be located at Rothchilds. In the event of severe weather, the workshop may be postponed or cancelled.

These projects are funded through a Shade Your Stream grant from the Tennessee River Basin Network's Shade Your Stream, made possible by the Tennessee Valley Authority.

For questions, please contact Andrea Ludwig at aludwig@utk.edu.

5. Gas Leaks: Recognize, React, and KUB Responds

Natural gas is a safe, clean, and affordable source of energy in our community, but like any fuel source, you have to use it carefully. The [Knoxville Utility Board \(KUB\)](#) conducts proactive safety surveys to monitor, operate, and maintain its natural gas distribution system. This information is used to make repairs and determine replacement programs. But natural gas leaks do happen, and they are most common on customer-owned fuel lines and appliances, so it is important that you're familiar with basic natural gas safety procedures.

Do you know how to recognize a gas leak? Consider the following:

- **Smell:** Before processing, natural gas has no odor or color. KUB adds a harmless chemical called mercaptan to help you detect even small amounts of escaped natural gas. The mercaptan gives natural gas a distinctive “rotten egg” smell. For safety, you and your family need to know how to recognize that odor and what to do if you smell it.
- **Sound:** You may hear a blowing or hissing sound near a leak.
- **Sight:** You may see bubbling in a wet or flooded area or flames if a leak ignites. Dead or discolored vegetation may also be a sign of a natural gas leak.

Natural gas leaks are dangerous. If you think you smell natural gas or suspect a leak:

- Leave the area or building immediately.
- Go to an area where you no longer smell the gas.
- Call KUB at 865-524-2911 as soon as you leave the area.
- Notify KUB or 911 of damages to utilities, including natural gas pipelines.
- Don’t do anything that could create a spark.
- Don’t operate equipment, tools, or vehicles.
- Don’t smoke or have any open flames.
- Don’t reenter the area until KUB investigates and tells you it is safe.

If someone reports a natural gas leak, KUB immediately sends a trained technician to perform a free leak inspection.

6. The American Pawpaw Tree Benefits

The pawpaw tree, *Asimina triloba*, is part of the Annonaceae, or olive family, and produces the largest fruit native to Appalachia. Pawpaws are deciduous understory trees, and when fully mature range from 15-30 feet. This makes it great for smaller areas.

The pawpaw fruit looks like a green potato, but inside the yellow-orange flesh tastes like banana and mango, and is the consistency of pudding. The fruit ripens at the end of August and through September in our area.

The pollen on one pawpaw plant cannot be used to pollinate a flower in the same genetic family. And because pawpaws in nature usually grow in clusters of the same family (patches are usually families connected underground), the flowers in many pawpaw patches cannot pollinate each other.

But don’t worry, the pawpaw gave its flowers a strong smell, which helps to attract pollinators. This odor is perfect for attracting blowflies. These flies travel through the forest looking for a pawpaw flower, pollinating different pawpaw families along the way.

There are plenty of pawpaws in the Knoxville, so keep your eyes peeled and try one if you haven’t before. Or consider planting one of these native trees on your property.

7. Happy Chinese New Year

The Chinese New Year is one of the most important holidays in Chinese culture. It is a festival that celebrates the beginning of the new year based on the traditional “lunisolar” Chinese calendar which marks the end of winter and the beginnings of spring. This year, it starts Saturday, Feb. 10, and ends Saturday, Feb. 24, which is from the first new moon to the next full moon or 15 days.

Here are some of the events for Chinese New Year happening around Knoxville:

- Chinese New Year Event: Saturday, Feb. 10, from 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. at the Sacred Owl and Salt Room, 215 Center Park Dr. Suite 100
- Year of the Dragon: A Lunar New Year Celebration: Saturday, Feb. 10, from 2:30-3:30 p.m. at the Karns Branch Library, 7516 Oak Ridge Hwy.
- East Tennessee Chinese New Year Festival: Sunday, Feb. 25 at the Alumni Memorial Building, 1408 Middle Dr.

This year marks the “Year of the Dragon.” There are 12 animals in the Chinese Zodiac, and each has its own year. The dragon symbolizes strength, luck, and prosperity. Folklore says it is important for people to focus on empathy, generosity, and selflessness, just as the dragon would.

You can also visit the [Knoxville Chinese Culture website](#) for more information about local events.

Have a prosperous Chinese New Year.

8. Black History Month: A Poem By Nikki Giovanni

Poet [Nikki Giovanni](#) was born in Knoxville in 1943. Although she grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio, she would return to Knoxville each summer to visit her grandparents. Giovanni graduated with honors in history from Fisk University. Since 1987, she has been a faculty member at Virginia Tech, where she is a University Distinguished Professor.

Here is one of her poems:

“BLK History Month”

If Black History Month is not
viable then wind does not
carry the seeds and drop them
on fertile ground
rain does not
dampen the land
and encourage the seeds
to root

sun does not
warm the earth
and kiss the seedlings
and tell them plain:
You're As Good As Anybody Else
You've Got A Place Here, Too

Giovanni, Nikki (2010) *Quilting the Black-Eyed Pea: Poems and Not Quite Poems*
William Morrow, Reprint Edition

9. Knoxville Neighborhoods Calendar (click link for online calendar)

Call 865-215-3232 to include your neighborhood event or meeting in [this Google calendar](#).

Other Calendars

Additional online calendars that cover events outside the neighborhood realm include:

- [Arts & Culture Alliance](#) (There's More to Knoxville)
- [Arts & Fine Crafts Center Classes](#) (City of Knoxville)
- [City of Knoxville General Calendar](#)
- [Parks and Rec Community Programming](#)

The City of Knoxville requires a permit to operate a short-term rental property. Details and a list of short-term rental permits are located on the City's website [here](#).

About This Newsletter

*** This Advisory is produced on most Tuesdays of the year.*

*** Ideas and contributions are welcome. We reserve the right to edit submissions.*

*** Deadline for news & calendar items: 12 p.m. Fridays.*

*** May be copied and forwarded via neighborhood email lists and newsletters.*

*** See past issues at our website: <http://www.knoxvilletn.gov/neighborhoods>*

*** Don't have internet access? Call 865-215-4382 if you need a copy of a particular document.*