

# NEWS in a NUTSHELL

THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF MARYVILLE



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May 2022

## Nick Galloway - Up for Life's Challenges

Nick Galloway, Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Operator, began working for his family's commercial nursery business, Cedar Row Nursery in Knoxville, at the age of six. He started out doing small chores for his father. As he grew and learned the business, his responsibilities also grew. By the time he graduated from high school, between working on the family farm in Philadelphia, TN and working at the nursery in West Knoxville, he had come to love the business and especially the opportunity to be outside. For 32 years life was good, work was great. Then in Nick's 38th year, everything changed.

The Cedar Row Nursery was on leased land. The owner suddenly decided to sell the land to a developer who wanted to build apartment buildings where Nick's family was growing and selling 90% of their nursery inventory. Soon after that devastating news was delivered, Nick's father was diagnosed with cancer. In just three months, Nick lost his job and then he lost his dad.

Nick and his wife, Kelli, have two teenagers, both attending Farragut High School. When half of their income suddenly disappeared, they had some decisions to make and not a lot of time to make them. Nick took a job as a plumber with The Plumbing Company. After a year of working in the plumbing field, Nick was having problems with his hands. After a day of working with wrenches and other hand tools he found his hands sore and cramping up in the evenings. It got to a point where it was clear that working with small tools all day wasn't going to be possible. He and his wife were back to square one trying to decide what the future of Nick's career looked like.

Being a teacher in Knox County Schools, Kelli encouraged Nick to consider going back to school to complete a degree he had started years ago. They were aware of the program Governor Haslam implemented to make Tennessee more marketable to large industries, the Tennessee Reconnect Grant. Tennessee Reconnect is a last-dollar grant that pays the remaining balance of tuition and mandatory fees after other state and federal financial aid has been applied. Specifically, it assists eligible adults over the age of 24, who want to pursue an associate degree, technical degree, or technical diploma at a Tennessee community college or technical college. The program was created to help more adults return to higher education to gain new skills, advance in the workplace, and fulfill lifelong dreams of completing a degree.

With a little research, Nick discovered that Pellissippi State was offering a new Associate of Applied Sciences degree in Water Quality



Nick and his wife Kelli and their kids

Technology. To Nick, the program piqued his interest because it requires math, chemistry, and biology skills and the job provides the opportunity to be outside occasionally too. In terms of job security, the need for clean water will never end. And in the next 10 years, 20

– 30% of wastewater treatment plant operators in the U.S. will be eligible to retire. Additionally, because he had previously completed all his General Education credits at Pellissippi, it would only take him about 2.5 years to complete his degree. This was a game-changer. Nick signed up for classes to begin in the fall, but when he met with an advisor, he was told classes would begin in two weeks. At this point, Nick was getting used to major changes coming fast, so he made the decision to get started right away and he never looked back.

Nick became Pellissippi State's first Water Quality Technology student to be hired full time when he was hired at the City of Maryville in March of 2020 - while he was still in school. He decided to take a job in the field because he knew that he had to work for a plant that was a Grade III or higher (Maryville's WWTP is a Grade IV) for at least a year before he could take the Grade III Certification Exam, which is only offered in May and November. That first semester after he was hired, he had a jam-packed schedule. Thirteen credit hours at school, a wife, two teenagers, helping his mom on the family farm occasionally, and a full-time job on third shift, yet he maintained a 3.15 GPA through it all. To say he was determined is an understatement.

In some ways, working at the WWTP while he was taking classes helped to solidify his learning. He would often study a subject in his textbooks and then come to work and encounter the very same scenarios he'd just learned about in class. This made his study time come to life when he could experience it first-hand. The extremely difficult Grade III Certification Exam for wastewater treatment is four hours long and has 130 questions. Of the 41 wastewater plant operators who attempted to take the test when Nick took it in May of 2021, only six passed, Nick, being one of those six.

Nick graduated in December of 2021. He's become an outspoken supporter of the Tennessee Reconnect program as well as the Water Quality Technology program at Pellissippi. When his family business ended, the closing of that door could have been disastrous for Nick and



David, David & Nick's Dad, Doug, and Nick

Continued - see Nick on page 2

# Applause Please



New Employee  
**Mark Allgood**  
 W&S  
 Sr. Wastewater Treatment  
 Plant Operator



New Employee  
**Niki Freshour**  
 Finance  
 Deputy Director  
 of Finance



New Employee  
**Jordin Hall**  
 W&S  
 Wastewater Treatment  
 Plant Technician



New Employee  
**Brandon Young**  
 EPW  
 Grounds Maintenance  
 Worker



New Employee  
**Chris Worley**  
 EPW  
 Grounds Maintenance  
 Worker



Promotion  
**Derik Hilbert**  
 EPW  
 Traffic Signal Technician III



Promotion  
**Kyle Newman**  
 EPW  
 Traffic Signal Technician II



Promotion  
**Mike McGuire**  
 EPW  
 Traffic Signal Technician II



Promotion  
**Shane Myers**  
 W&S  
 Utility Construction  
 Worker II



Retiring May 6  
**Mike Swift**  
 Finance  
 Five Years of Service

## MPD Celebrates 2022 Law Enforcement Training Academy Grads

Congratulations to Officers Mariah Lopez-Allard and Joshua Ludtke who graduated from the Regional Law Enforcement Training Academy on April 8, 2022. During their 12 weeks at the police academy, they were instructed and tested on numerous topics including Tennessee law, police tactics, criminal justice, DUI enforcement, emergency vehicle operation, firearms, mental health, and traffic accident reconstruction. They will now begin a 16 week Field Training Program where they are paired with Certified Field Training Officers who will train, test, and evaluate them daily at the conclusion of their shift. Below, left to right: Sgt. Travis Brown, Deputy Police Chief Greg Cooke, Officer Joshua Ludtke, Officer Mariah Lopez-Allard, Chief Tony Crisp, and Capt. Mark Taylor.



**Nick** - continued from page 1

his family, but through a lot of hard work and determination, as well as the financial support of the Tennessee Reconnect Grant it was a starting point rather than an end. Nick is especially grateful for the life lessons he's been able to teach his teenagers through his efforts over the last three years. They've seen firsthand how their dad was able to deal with the curveball life threw at him and how he ended up hitting it out of the park! He's hoping they'll remember that when and if they too must meet a challenge head-on down the road.

Nick has also made an impression on other members of his family with his success. His brother, David, has also taken notice. David who is two years younger than Nick also worked at the nursery and was affected by its closing. After trying a familiar career in landscape design and ground maintenance, he has decided to take advantage of the Tennessee Reconnect Grant. This spring he enrolled at Mississippi State in the Welding Technology A.A.S program. It is also a relatively new program having started in 2016. David is hoping to accomplish his degree quickly also as he has completed many of his general courses.

Next on Nick's to-do list is the Grade VI Certification Exam following four years of acceptable experience, including two years of direct responsible charge. Another challenge, but one that Nick is ready to take on!



# People are the Key

## Never a Dull Moment in the Electric Dept.



The Electric Department had some repair work to do after the Track Hoe in the photo caught a phone line resulting in an electric pole being snapped in half.

## City Employees' Excellence on Display

**From:** Christy Walsh  
**Date:** April 3, 2022 at 7:56:00 PM EDT  
**To:** mcclain@maryville.tn.gov  
**Subject:** March 27, Police Action, Shannondale Way

Mr. Greg McClain, City Manager, Maryville

On Sunday, March 27, our home in Shannondale was breached by a stolen car being pursued by Maryville Police Officers. You have all of the official details of the event.

We are writing to attest to the professional, competent, and caring manner in which we, "the victims", were treated by every Maryville official who assisted us in what could have been a traumatic experience.

The Maryville Police evacuated us from our home within 1-2 minutes of the crash. They escorted us to safety in a neighboring home, followed quickly by fire personnel checking on our well being. Throughout the evening, as police secured the scene and removed the driver of the car, there was a continuous stream of officials interviewing and checking on us including retrieving our dog who had been left in our home. They kept us informed, at no point did we feel in danger because of the competence and caring we experienced. Unfortunately, there were so many professional encounters that we cannot give you the names of all of those who helped us.

In the same vein, the next day, Monday, the Compliance personnel met us at our home and explained the reason we could not inhabit our home. On Wednesday, Debbie Yarnell, called to deliver the Compliance Report. She also offered to get the official Police Incident Report and delivered both documents to us.

We have lived in Maryville for 23 years and had multiple occasions to personally thank Maryville employees for excellent service. However, because of the nature of this event, we are writing to request that you share our gratitude with everyone at the scene.

Friends seem surprised that we are so calm, our peace is a direct result of the confidence we had in the responders at the scene and their obvious concern for us.

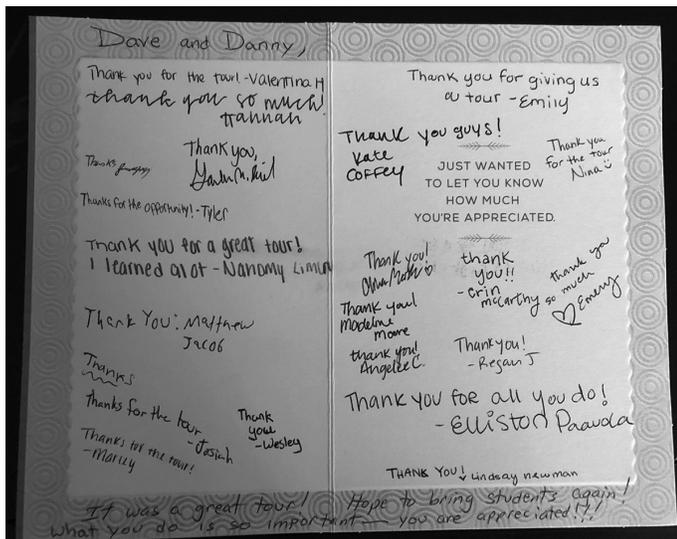
With gratitude,  
Christy and Tom Walsh

## Downtown Project Moving Forward

Jeremiah Morton, EPW, reluctantly takes a quick break from installing a new catch basin for a photo (after lots of begging from the photographer). EPW crews have been working to replace catch basins and ramps in the downtown area in preparation for the resurfacing of several streets.



## Thank You to the W&S Department



This thank you note was sent to the Wastewater Treatment Plant for the tour they gave in March for the Environmental Lab class at Pellissippi State .

## TCRS Meetings Next Month

Justin Ball with TCRS will be here on June 1st and 2nd . Several group meetings will be scheduled on both days. Please try to attend one of these meetings to learn more about our Pension plan. Individual appointments may be available upon request.

# People are the Key

## May Birthdays

- 4 Christine Tillman, IT
- 5 Baron Swafford, Electric
- 6 Darin Carver, MPD
- 7 Tony Bailey, Electric
- 9 Seth Hughes, MPD
- 11 Keith Church, IT  
Doug Strickland, EPW
- 13 Logan Turbyfill, Electric
- 15 Mike Large, Electric  
Heather Luecknehoff, EPW
- 16 Chris Meyers, MPD  
Austin Ray, EPW  
Justin Parks, MPD
- 19 Randy Teffeteller, Electric
- 21 Charles Mims, Finance
- 23 Jane Groff, Admin
- 25 Don Kitts, W&S
- 27 Thorn Cooper, Electric
- 28 Keith Brewer, Engineering  
Missi Fields, Finance  
Mark Hasty, MFD  
Stephanie Perkins, MPD
- 29 Jared Belcher, EPW  
Brad Hurst, EPW
- 30 Steven Dotson, MPD  
Sharon Moore, MPD
- 31 Tony Clark, MFD



## May Anniversaries

- Baron Swafford, Electric 34 years
- Joe Tipton, Water and Sewer 34 years
- Jewell White, MPD 29 years
- Randy Thompson, MFD 26 years
- Josh Daniels, Electric 24 years
- Ryan Rogers, MPD 24 years
- Rod Fernandez, MPD 22 years
- Michael Braden, MPD 21 years
- Derrick McMurray, MPD 14 years
- Steven Wickert, MPD 9 years
- Nathaniel Robinson, MPD 8 years
- Travis Hill, MPD 7 years
- Tyler Buckingham, MPD 3 years
- Kyle Riemer, MPD 3 years
- Lucas McCall, W&S 2 years
- Wyatt Snow, EPW 2 years
- Nicole Samu, Admin. 1 year
- Cory Tindell, EPW 1 year

## MissionSquare Group Meetings

Formerly ICMA-RC

Trey Sizemore with MissionSquare (ICMA) will be here May 10th, 11th, and 12th. There will be two group seminars held for you to learn more about the 457 and Individual Roth IRA plans, as well as investing during market volatility. This will be a great opportunity to also ask any questions you may have about these retirement options.



The Seminars will be held as follows:

- May 10th 10:00 – 10:45 Gary Hensley Room
- May 11th 7:30 – 8:15 Op. Center Auditorium

These retirement programs along with our TCRS Pension Plan provide the best opportunities for a healthy financial retirement. Please try to attend one of these seminars.

## Attention All Employees: Open Enrollment Dates Announced

- What:** Employee Benefits Enrollment
- Who:** All Full-Time Employees – even if waiving coverage
- When:** May 16 – May 20
- Where:** Online!



**How:** More information, the link to enroll and detailed instructions will be provided by email, to your Administrative Assistant, and on the employee portal.

**Don't Forget!** You must enroll by the deadline! The new enrollment goes into effect July 1.

**Need Assistance or Have Questions?** Please call Patty 273-3427 or Leslie 273-3426. We are here to help!

## 2022 Graduates

It's time to honor our graduates in the June Nutshell. Send your photo along with the following information by May 16th to [mdbristol@maryville-tn.gov](mailto:mdbristol@maryville-tn.gov)

- Graduate's name
- Your name, relationship with the graduate, and your department
- High School or College graduating from
- Future plans
- Scholarships or honors earned

