

# NEWS in a NUTSHELL

THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF MARYVILLE



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## The Many Layers of Debbie Caughron

The third in a series of stories featuring COM Directors by Mary Bristol



Debbie shows off her catch of the day!

**United Airlines** is no stranger to poor decisions these days, but apparently that is nothing new. Some forty years ago, they crushed the dreams of a young girl whose sights were set on the friendly skies; explaining that she was “too short to be a stewardess,” and additionally, she required eye glasses. While that rejection was painful at the time, it turned out to be a huge win for the citizens and employees of Maryville, because for the last thirty-nine years Debbie Caughron has served at her post in the Finance Department with a true servant’s heart.

Debbie earned her first paycheck when she was just twelve years old. Back then she spent her summers selling

concessions at the “Maryvilla” Swimming Pool on East Broadway. After High School she stepped into the roll of bookkeeper for her father’s heat and air business while attending business college. On June 1, 1978 she joined the City of Maryville as an accounting technician in the Finance department. In 1991 she was named the City Recorder and promoted to Assistant Director of Finance. Twenty-eight years later she was again promoted, this time to Director of Financial Services in 2006. One of Debbie’s proudest accomplishments was becoming a CMFO (Certified Municipal Financial Officer) following two years of classes in 2010. On the first day of July, 2017, almost exactly thirty-nine years after her employment began, Debbie will embark on a new career; Bass Fisherwoman, Trail Hiker, Professional Nana, and Chief Recipe Tester. Retirement, for her, will not involve a lot of deep-sitting on the couch!

In case you haven’t had the absolute pleasure of meeting Debbie in the last thirty-nine years, she gives new meaning to the analogy of an onion; she has many layers! She is a wife of forty-five years to her husband Phil, a mother and grandmother, she is an avid reader who rises at 5 a.m. six days a week to get in a chapter and thirty minutes on the elliptical. She’s a prayer

warrior, a math lover, a collector of recipes, and the organist at Hillcrest Baptist church for the last fifty years. Debbie is also a fierce competitor despite the fact that she avoids the spotlight like the plague. It is that competitive heart that turned her into an enthusiastic bass fisherwoman. She decided on a whim, one day twenty or so years ago, to join her husband on the lake for a little line casting. That very day, she reeled in her first catch and the fish wasn’t the only

**“Okay, let’s think about this!”**

~Debbie Caughron

one who was hooked. It was literally, “love at first bite”. Since then, she and Phil have been fishing together two to four times a month, and their friendly competition rages on. Debbie admits she catches fewer fish than Phil does, but she claims, like all good fisherman do, that her catches are bigger than his. When asked what she would do if she were to win the lottery, without hesitation she answered, “I’d buy Phil a new Ranger Bass Boat and a new truck to pull it with!”

Like most people approaching the

**Continued, see Debbie on page 3.**



Debbie hard at work at her computer(?) in the late 70’s early 80’s.

### Inside the Nut

Getting to Know Debbie

People are the Key... Life event news

UT Football Honors Kenny Moats

John Sevier Pool Dedication

May is Motorcycle Safety Month

COM Healthiest TN Workplace

# People are the Key

## May Birthdays



- 4 Christine Tillman, IT
- 5 Baron Swafford, Electric
- 6 Darin Carver, MPD
- 7 Tony Bailey, Electric  
Dan Cantwell, E&PW
- 11 Keith Church, IT  
Doug Strickland, E&PW
- 14 Jason Roberson, Electric  
Dennis Effler, E&PW
- 15 Mike Large, Electric
- 19 Ernie Mertins, IT  
Randy Teffeteller, Electric
- 21 Charlie Mims, Fin. Serv.
- 23 Jane Groff, Admin
- 28 Missi Fields, Fin. Serv.  
Mark Hasty, MFD  
Keith Brewer, E&PW  
Steve Davis, MFD  
Stephanie Perkins, MPD
- 29 Brad Hurst, E&PW
- 30 Sharon Moore, MPD  
Steve Dotson, MPD
- 31 Tony Clark, MFD

## Accolades and Applause



**Mike Swift**  
Director of Financial  
Services (new hire)



**Stephanie Perkins**  
Administrative Assistant,  
Police (promotion)



**Pam Moretz**  
Administrative Assistant  
Fire Dept (transfer)



**Chris Morgan**  
Police Officer  
(new hire)



**Doug Chapman**  
EPW Utility Construction  
Worker III (promotion)

## May Anniversaries

- Joe Tipton, Water & Sewer 29
- Baron Swafford, Electric 29
- Steve Davis, MFD 25
- Jewell White, MPD 24
- Randy Thompson, MFD 21
- Josh Daniels, Electric 19
- Ryan Rogers, MPD 19
- Rod Fernandez, MPD 17
- Michael Braden, MPD 16
- Jay Parrott, E&PW 12
- Derrick McMurray, MPD 9
- Ernie Mertins, IT 9
- Rick Zesut, MPD 5
- Steve Wickert, MPD 4
- Nathaniel Robinson, MPD 3
- Allison Derthick, MPD 2
- Travis Hill, MPD 2

## The Vols Honor Officer Kenny Moats



More than 150 members of local law enforcement teams took in practice at Haslam Field on Thursday, April 13th as the Vols hosted Law Enforcement Day.

Head coach Butch Jones presented a personalized jersey to officers from the Maryville Police Department as a salute to fallen officer Kenny Moats.



Captain Sharon Moore of the MPD briefly addressed the team before accepting the jersey from linebacker Cortez McDowell.

## Don't Forget Mother's Day

May 14th - Remember Your Momma!!



**Debbie** - Continued from Page 1

unknown of retirement, Debbie has some fears, but she also has a list of things she looks forward to while she enjoys her newfound freedom. Traveling to Atlanta to spend time with her two grandchildren tops the list. She plans to oversee some home renovations that are overdue and she intends to organize her collection of recipes and cook books, and then use them to return some favors. No doubt she will also spend some time in her "war room" where she sits quietly immersed in thanksgiving and praying for blessings for those around her. Among those who will be on her lengthy prayer list will be those who she leaves behind when she vacates her office. If her co-workers were to take a survey asking how big the hole in their hearts will be when she retires,

it would come back with 99.999% of the results being: a gaping hole or larger. To quote an unnamed employee in the Finance Department, "Our

department respects Debbie not only as our boss, but as a person. She genuinely wants to do the right thing for everyone involved. She's our mentor and she's our friend!"

I asked Debbie where she would live if she could choose any place in the world. Not one second passed between the question and her answer, "at my address, here in Maryville." She has been heard more than once claiming that one of her greatest honors to this point in her life has been to serve the public through her job here at the City, "It's been such an honor to serve the people. I love working here at the City of Maryville, it's just a wonderful place to work." She went on to say that her job has been very rewarding, she's been given tremendous opportunities, and she has been surrounded by only the most professional co-workers all these years.

If Debbie were given the opportunity to go back in time to any year in her past,

she would go to 1981; the year her son was born. She would re-visit those years and this time around she would savor every little thing. If it were possible, she would also request that those years be slowed down a bit. Her time in the hot seat of motherhood was over too soon and a part of her heart went out the door with her son when he left to make his own way in the world. Since then he and his wife have given her and Phil two grandchildren Knox, five and Audrey, two.

Road trips to Atlanta to see their son's family on a regular basis are at the very top of the Caughron to-do list. Close enough to a do-over!

Another thing that Debbie wants to spend some time doing in the coming months is hiking, she and Phil have all the gear they need to hit the trails

in the Smokies. Their ultimate goal is to

hike Mt. LeConte, but they will start out on less strenuous trails. They hope to take in all the beauty of East Tennessee while hiking themselves into shape.

It is obvious that Debbie is a planner and has spent some time thinking through her fast approaching retirement. Her mantra, "Now, let's think about this," is the first step in her course of action in all things. She has a plan, and

a back up plan, because remaining active is important to her.

Staying true to her servant's heart, just in case she doesn't have enough activities on her list, she will be hunting volunteer opportunities too! Debbie began serving others when she started playing the organ at her church at the tender age of thirteen and she has been upping the ante ever since.

We wish Debbie well in her retirement. She has earned this new chapter in her life, and we are excited and happy for her and her family. But selfishly, we're just plain sad to see her go.



Debbie receives her CMFO Certification.



Mother Nature (Debbie front row) and her eight Finance Department dwarves.

*John Sevier Pool Grand Opening*  
The restoration work is complete!  
**Join us for a Dedication Ceremony  
and Ribbon Cutting**  
Friday, May 26, 2017  
Dedication Ceremony 11:15 a.m.  
Ribbon Cutting 12 noon - pool opens for the season  
**FREE Admission to the pool for the day!**  
*(on Friday, May 26 only)*  
1998 Sequoyah Ave. Maryville, TN 37804  
This project was funded in part by a grant from the Local Parks and Recreation Fund (LPRF) administered by the Recreation Educational Services Division, Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation as well as with local funding.

# People Are the Key



## Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month

May is designated Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month. The National Safety Council (NSC) offers six tips to help drivers and motorcyclists alike stay safe on the roads all year long.

1. Passenger car drivers must allow greater following distance behind a motorcycle.
2. Drivers also must show extra caution in intersections. Most crashes occur when a driver fails to see a motorcyclist and turns left in front of a motorcycle.
3. Drivers should never try to share a lane with a motorcycle. Always give a motorcycle the full lane width.
4. Motorcyclists should avoid riding in poor weather conditions if at all possible.
5. Motorcyclists should position their motorcycles to avoid a driver's blind spot.
6. All motorists must use turn signals for every turn or lane change.



Lt. Michael Braden (left) and Officer Justin Brown (right).

In 2015, there were 4,976 motorcyclists killed—an 8-percent increase from the 4,594 motorcyclists killed in 2014. An estimated 88,000 motorcyclists were injured during 2015.

Many crashes occur because motorcycles are hidden in a vehicle's blind spot. Drivers should always check mirrors and blind spots before entering or leaving a lane of traffic, NSC explained. It is important for both motorists and motorcyclists to be aware of one another," said David Teater, NSC senior director of Transportation Initiatives.

Before proceeding look for motorcycles and then look again.

## City of Maryville Named Healthiest Tennessee Workplace

Thanks to your efforts and healthy choices, the City of Maryville has been named one of the Healthiest Companies in America, for the first time, by our wellness provider - Interactive Health. Only 156 out of 3,000 companies they serve achieved this designation.

This designation would not be possible without your efforts. Kudos to you for making health and wellness a priority for you and your family!



The Health Nutz Committee, pictured left to right, front row: Keith Church, Amy Woody, Sharie Gaby, Teresa Brown, Jane Groff. Back row: Bill Walt, and David Graves. Not pictured: Dave Boring, Clay Cope, Jamie Dyer, and Rusty Thompson.

## Kind Words

### Maryville Resident Grateful for the Assist

Dan West, a long-time resident of Maryville called recently to make sure that the officer who stopped to help him with a flat tire on April 19th around 7 p.m. got a much deserved pat on the back. Mr. West didn't get the officer's name, so after a little investigative work Stephanie Perkins was able to identify the MPD officer who stopped to help as Reserve Officer Matt Thompson.

Mr. West was especially grateful because he was on Robert C. Jackson Drive, a busy enough street to make him question his safety there on the side of the road. As if a flat tire wasn't enough to ruin a good day, Mr. West's shoulder suddenly dislocated with an audible pop in the middle of the switch out too. Officer Thompson took over at that point and finished the tire change for him. Just another day on the force, protecting and serving the public! Mr. West appreciates your extra efforts and your kindness Officer Thompson!

## The Employee Portal is Up and Running



Remember to set up your account and familiarize yourself with the Portal as soon as possible. All employees should have logged in to their account by May 15, 2017. There are several step by step instructional videos on the website for you to refer to if you have any trouble. You may also call (865) 273-3550 for additional help if you need it. Paper pay statements will no

longer be issued after June 29th, so you will need to be comfortable retrieving your information before that date. Be sure to check out all the cool stuff you can get at your convenience on the portal while you're there too! [www.maryvillegov.com/employees](http://www.maryvillegov.com/employees)



**Your News...** *If you have news about your department, coworkers, or a personal life event that you would like to share in the Nutshell, please email Mary Bristol at [mdbristol@maryville-tn.gov](mailto:mdbristol@maryville-tn.gov).*