

## KHGG-AM 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Issues 2015

State Land Commissioner John Thurston spoke with Karen and Bill Pharis by phone on Wednesday, April first at 7:40am regarding the upcoming land auction to be held in Sebastian, Crawford, Logan and Scott counties to raise tax revenues. The properties are being sold due to delinquent taxes. The commissioner discussed the pros and cons of buying land at auction and explained how listeners could access the list of properties for sale on the internet. In years past a catalog was printed, but now everything is on line. The auction helps the state recuperate lost tax dollars through the land sales.

The Director of the River Valley Christian Life Corp, Valier Fitch spoke with Karen Pharis on Tuesday, April 7<sup>th</sup> at 8:10am regarding the group's upcoming Job Fair to be held at the Fort Smith Adult Education Center. The organization helps men and women with education and life skills, and the Saturday event is geared to help them seek employment. The event will feature mock job interviews, resume building in which each participant will leave with a flash drive with their resume, and a dress for success consultation. Although many of the individuals the River Valley Christian Life Corp helps have been referred to them by United Way agencies such as the Salvation Army or Community Services Clearinghouse, Valerie's interview was geared toward listeners who might need help seeking a job or updating their resume. KHGG-AM aired twenty :30 psa's about the Job Fair between March 30<sup>th</sup> and April 10<sup>th</sup>

Third District Congressman Bruce Westerman spoke with Bill Pharis on Tuesday, April 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:20am. The freshman Congressman discussed the results of his recent trip to Arkansas and concerns from his constituents regarding job creation and roads. He talked about the need to get I-49 opened on the east end of Fort Smith, and his suggestions to Congress on how to achieve funding for this and other highway projects across the United States. The Congressman also talked about the wildfires in California and how the way in which Arkansas forestry upkeep guidelines have been instrumental in preventing such type disasters.

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Jennifer Oberste with the City of Fort Smith Parks Department talked about the "Tales from the Crypt" event with Bill Pharis Thursday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:40am. The event is scheduled for Saturday and Sunday April 25<sup>th</sup> and 26 and will feature the lives of ten historically important individuals interred at Oak Cemetery. The University of Arkansas at Fort Smith Historical Interpretation Class did the research behind each person and will portray them during the weekend event. Funds raised will be used by the parks department for monument restoration at the cemetery. KHGG-AM also aired 25 :30 psa's between April 13<sup>th</sup> and April 24<sup>th</sup> promoting the walking tour of the Oak Cemetery's "Tales from the Crypt."

A member of the city of Fort Smith "trails committee" spoke with Bill Pharis on Wednesday May 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:40 about the May 12<sup>th</sup> election asking voters to designate a portion of a sales tax continuance toward the construction of trails in the city of Fort Smith. Drew Linder said he became involved after he realized how few walking/running/biking trails were available in the city. He said such facilities help attract business and industry as a quality of life asset. An opponent of earmarking funds from the tax extension, Jerry Fleming spoke with Bill Pharis two days later on Friday the 8<sup>th</sup> at 7:40. He said such earmarks already exist and have been shaved off for other city projects; that if the city did as the finances already dictate, the trails could be built with funds already provided. Although the tax extension passed by voters, they did not approve the earmarking of additional funds for the construction of new trails within the city.

Chester Mayor Tina Shores spoke with Karen Pharis at 8:10am on Monday, April 27<sup>th</sup> about the city's "Funky Junk Festival" scheduled for June 6<sup>th</sup>. The event will be held at the city's Farmer's Market pavilion. Mayor Shores said the city is looking for vendors to participate and rent a booth for \$20 and is encouraging families, churches and civic groups to join in the event. Money raised will be used to upgrade the pavilion.

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The City of Fort Smith is trying to move ahead with quality of life issues despite tax revenues being down. On May 12<sup>th</sup>, the city will hold a city vote to either continue or discontinue at ten year one-cent tax to be used for city street upkeep and expansion. On Wednesday, May 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:40am, Drew Linder with the Trails and Greenway committee, a citizen driven group, talked with Bill Pharis regarding the upcoming vote. Linder's group wants a portion of the tax, if voted to be continued, to be earmarked for new bike and walkway trails to be constructed in the city. He pointed out that new businesses want to see what type of residents live in the city's they might move to, and those with activities for persons wanting to be physically fit tend to be better employees. The next day, Fort Smith mayor Sandy Sanders visited with Bill Pharis during Arklahoma Today at 7:40am and he reminded the city of the various projects over the years which have been accomplished through the implementation of the one-cent street tax and encouraged city residents to vote on Tuesday, May 12. On Friday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, Jerry Fleming spoke with Bill Pharis at 7:40am. He made points as to why voters should indeed vote for the continuation of the Fort Smith penny street tax, but vote against using any of the tax funds for trail construction. His argument was that there already are provisions in the street fund for such construction.

Sebastian County and the City of Fort Smith joined forces to construct a water park for area residents and tourists. The effort began over two years ago, and price increases for materials to build, and tax revenues down for both the city and county made the endeavor challenging. A number of public forums were held to get input from community members to find out what type facility residents wanted and what type special features would entice them to pay to visit. On Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:40am, Fort Smith assistant city administrator Jeff Dingman and Parrot Island Manager Bob Morton talked with Bill Pharis about the long-awaited facility getting ready to open on Memorial Day, May 25<sup>th</sup>. Jeff discussed the difficulties the city and county encountered, and Morton talked about the various features, and contest to name the various colored slides at the

park, as well as some of the special features and events that will be held throughout the summer.

Cisterna Park in downtown Fort Smith is one of the older parks in the downtown area and has had its share of wear and tear over the years. Overgrown magnolia trees have broken up the concrete and make it difficult to see the spherical fountain in the center. Darren McKinney with the Darby Legacy Foundation spoke with Karen Pharis on Monday, May 18<sup>th</sup> about the Darby initiative to raise funds to erect a statue of General William Darby on his Harley Davidson motorcycle. The World War II hero was born in Fort Smith. McKinney said the Legacy Foundation has gotten approval from the City of Fort Smith to place the statue at the Cisterna Plaza Park, named after our sister city in Cisterna, Italy; which General Darby liberated during the war. He said it was fitting that General Darby be protecting Garrison Ave. at one end, and the statue of U.S. Marshal Bass Reeves at the foot of the Garrison Ave. bridge. The Foundation plans to wind up fundraising by early Fall, and dedicate the statue during the Steel Horse Rally in April of 2016. The Fort Smith Radio Group aired 50 :30second ads promoting the sale of commemorative bricks to be placed at Cisterna Plaza to help pay for the construction of the statue.

The Fort Chaffee Redevelopment Authority is working to reuse land given to the City of Fort Smith from the US military (camp chaffee land) into residential, commercial, and business ventures, including the construction of a new osteopathic college of medicine being built by the Arkansas Colleges of Health Education. One of the areas director Ivy Owen wants to restore is the Chaffee historic district, which includes several barracks, garages, and the barber shop where Elvis Pressley got his GI Haircut. In order to raise funds to do the renovation work, Owen and Lorie Robertson talked with Karen Pharis about the upcoming Summer Block Party scheduled for Saturday, June 13<sup>th</sup>. The event will feature three bands, food trucks, games, and drinks, all of which will benefit the restoration of the Chaffee Historic District.

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The Metro Planning Commission is an offshoot of Western Arkansas Planning and Development District, and works to connect the two state area economically. One of the ways to do this is by traffic routes. Taking this a step further, the Metro planning commission is looking for ways to connect Fort Smith, Greenwood, Van Buren, and Poteau, OK through bike trails. Metro Director Dianne Morrison talked with Karen Pharis at 7:40am on June 23<sup>rd</sup> about a series of meetings scheduled in each of the cities to discuss proposed routes and the amount of traffic and distances. Dianne invited listeners to come to the afternoon and evening meetings, and mentioned her number in case people couldn't make the meetings but had ideas.

Project Compassion is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping those in nursing home who have no family or friends to look after their well-being and make sure they have the simple necessities of life. Often a nursing home will receive a new resident and all they have is the clothes on their back. Marion Conrad; executive director of Project Compassion asked KHGG-AM to do a live remote at their facility Thursday, June 25<sup>th</sup> from 11am until noon. The 25<sup>th</sup> marks six months until Christmas, a time when the organization tries to distribute goodies to every nursing home resident in the area. She spoke with Karen Pharis on Wednesday the 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:40am to promote Thursday's remote. She asked listeners to bring pajamas, house slippers, t-shirts, robes and underwear. KHGG-AM also aired 50 :30 psa's promoting the event.

The City of Greenwood is a small town, and the Chamber of Commerce there needs funds beyond its membership dues to do the things it needs to do to promote and attract new business to the city. Randy Davis spoke with Karen Pharis on Friday, June 26<sup>th</sup> at 7:40am about the upcoming "Freedomfest" fun run 5k scheduled for July 4<sup>th</sup>. Davis said this is the 36<sup>th</sup> year for the freedomfest run and that so far the number of runners had reached close to 500. The event is chip-timed for the serious runner. There will be cash prizes for the most patriotic

attire. A number of activities will be going on all day on the town square, and there will be a free fireworks display at night for all to attend.