

The Bulletin



Tailgate party returns

For a couple hours earlier this month, the supportive maintenance building was lively with chatter as coworkers spanning multiple communities and offices came together for KCDC’s Tailgate Party just in time for football season.

The party, which occurred noon-2 p.m. Sept 5, made a return after a one-year hiatus and was headed up by the Human Resources department. Coworkers were treated to hamburgers and hot dogs, cornhole, music and various door prizes.

“Events like this that allow coworkers to connect outside of daily tasks help build stronger relationships, trust and team spirit,” Kim Wilson, KCDC HR business partner, said. “Leadership is committed to creating a fun and engaging workplace by offering regular social activities that bring employees together and build a positive culture.”

Of the 148 KCDC employees, at least 82 RSVP’d for the event.

Lanita Puckett, KCDC Small Properties Collective property manager, said planning for the event began about three months before.



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“The purpose of this employee appreciation tailgate is to remind the employees that you are appreciated,” Lanita said. “We know that everyone’s doing hard work, we know that it’s not always easy, so this is just a small way for us to say, ‘Thank you for all the work that you’ve done.’”

Coworkers were encouraged to represent their favorite teams, one of which was KCDC Admissions Specialist Brandy Tolliver, who joined KCDC 10 months ago and experienced the tailgate party for the first time. Brandy wore a University of Tennessee checkerboard sweater.

“I thought it was fun,” she said. “I liked the cornhole and then just mingling with your coworkers that you don’t normally get to see on a daily basis.”

Kristi Dunlap, KCDC quality assurance administrator, echoed Brandy’s sentiments. This year’s event marked the second KCDC tailgate party Kristi’s attended. While not the biggest sports fan, Kristi got into watching Tennessee football last year because her oldest son Asher was in Pride of the Southland.

“I love the camaraderie that I see among people as football fans,” Kristi said. “I like seeing people excited and stuff like that even if I don’t want to be in the middle of the excitement.”

Kristi said she’ll still trash talk anyone who talks poorly of Tennessee.

The tailgate party is one of three employee appreciation events typically held.

“We’ve already planned two events this year, and we’re excited to announce that a special holiday event will be our third celebration of the year,” Kim said. “These activities are just one of the many ways we show appreciation for our employees and create opportunities to connect outside of day-to-day work.”

VIDEO: Click [here](#) to see a video of the event.

PHOTOS: Click [here](#) to see a photo gallery of the event.



Leadership is committed to creating a fun and engaging workplace by offering regular social activities that bring employees together and build a positive culture.

- Kim Wilson

Supporting Shoes for School

KCDC representatives took time out of their day recently to hand out socks to families during Knoxville Area Urban League’s 23rd annual Shoes for School. This year’s event was held Aug. 2 at Covenant Health Park.

Thanks to the generosity of KCDC staff, event volunteer Lanita Puckett said 1,019 pairs of socks were collected. Only one sock was left afterward, which Lanita said is now being held onto as a souvenir.

“I am thankful for the KCDC staff and their support because they showed up and showed out with their donations,” Lanita said.

Numerous supporters helped make the distribution possible in just about every KCDC department. Lanita especially wanted to recognize Stephanie Dunn, Kimberly Trame and the Small Properties Collective team for donating the most socks.

“Grae Potter was and is always a huge help during the event and not to mention the kids young and old just love him,” Lanita said. “I was also able to enlist some help from some new high school graduates, my daughter Amala, her friend Amyrical, and my beloved Artis.

“Without their help there was sure to be chaos, so I am thankful they were willing to allow me to boss them around for a few hours,” she added, laughing.

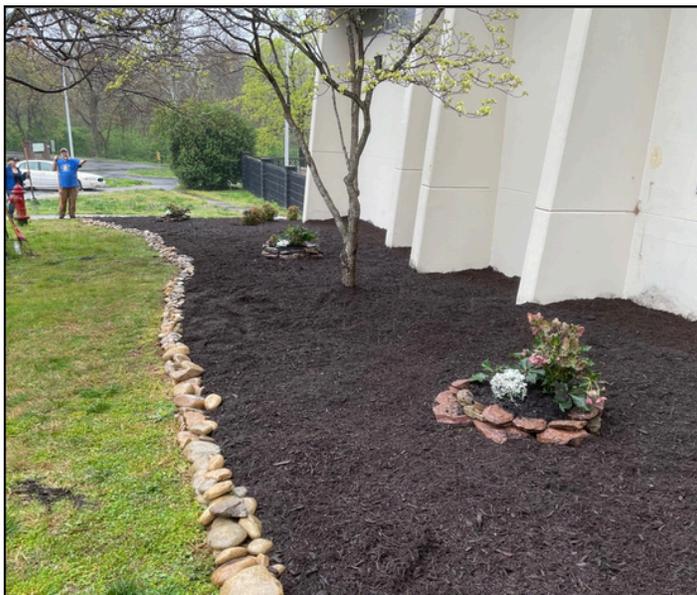
This year’s event marked the second of three years Lanita’s participated.

“I do this because I was taught, ‘If you are a Blessing then you should be a Blessing’,” she said. “I strive to be a blessing in my service to others any way I can.”

Event volunteer Grae Potter participated for the third consecutive year.

“I have worked with the Knoxville Area Urban league for years and instantly felt connected to the mission of Shoes for Schools,” Grae said. “This event is about community support and partnering with other service organizations. But the most important aspect of what we do is provide for the needs of Knoxville’s children. They are our future, and they will always be worth the investment.”

VIDEO: Click [here](#) to see a video of the event.



Photos courtesy of Fellowship North Knoxville.

Local church landscapes Northgate

Thanks to Fellowship North Knoxville, Northgate Terrace has improved landscaping in the front as part of the church’s “Outside the Box” (OTB) ministry.

Through OTB, members go into the community every fifth Sunday and focus on a specific project. Brent Taylor, part of Northgate’s advocacy team for the church, believes the initiative is a chance to “move the worship of God from inside the box of our sanctuary and into the lives of those in our community.”

“We have a couple of life groups who have ‘adopted’ Northgate Terrace as their service projects,” he said. “This latest effort is born out of a vision by a couple of ladies in those life groups for restoring the beauty of the landscaping that had previously graced Northgate Terrace.”

The project began in March and finished in August. Weeds were cleared, a plastic weed barrier and mulch were laid, and river rock

was added. Trash was collected and removed. Small trees and shrubs were removed or pruned. Paving stones were placed along a resident-made path near the front entrance.

“The effort on the southside beds began in March although we have worked there in various areas for several years,” Brent said. “We typically seek input from Danielle McLaughlin, (Northgate property manager) and Grae Potter, (The Manor Supportive Services Coordinator) on the work that’s needed.”

Brent thanked L&M Landscaping for discounting materials and accommodating delivery requests. What would have cost \$500-\$600 turned into \$100.

While the work is rewarding, getting a chance to interact with residents is just as important.

“We always have several that express their appreciation; after all, it’s home for them,” Brent said. “We always take time to engage them in conversation, pray for and with them when appropriate and follow up. Some beautiful friendships have developed over the years we’ve been there. Everyone’s life has a story and I’ve heard some amazing ones. It’s special because of the personal interaction that’s far more than just doing a good deed.”

Fellowship North has partnered with Northgate for several years. The church holds services every third and fifth Sunday in Northgate’s social hall, and a Bible study the first and third Thursday. In addition, it hosts The Manor at Northgate Terrace’s largest annual fundraiser, A Winter’s Hearth, and helps meet basic resident needs like clothing, food and furniture whenever possible.

“Fellowship North is a wonderful community partner with The Manor and Northgate Terrace,” Grae Potter, The Manor Supportive Services Coordinator, said. “I have worked with them over the past few months as we re-envisioned the front landscaping for our building. It is such a rewarding experience to see a project through to completion and I am grateful for the time, funds and talents the church and its members brought to this project.”



KCDC Spotlight

The Spotlight aims to recognize the amazing things KCDC employees are doing to help make the community and workplace better. Email jnash@kcdc.org if you think there's someone we should highlight.

Terry McKee Procurement Director



For more than three decades Terry McKee has carved out a career in procurement, but it's not something he planned to do after college.

The Blount County native initially wanted to be a teacher and even earned one of his two bachelor's degrees from Alderson Broaddus

University in education, with the other being political science. He wanted to teach a passion of his – U.S. history.

"I am fascinated by our founding because it was a miracle that we became a nation, and the presidency, I love studying and reading about the presidents and their office and what they accomplished or didn't accomplish," Terry said. "Not to mention some of their personal background."

Terry spent most of his early years in Springfield, Ohio – moving there at the age of 5 – and it wasn't until he sought his master's degree in public administration at the University of Tennessee that he came home. Following his graduation, Terry said he "desperately" needed a job. He saw an opening in the newspaper for a Knox County government purchasing agent, and without really any understanding of procurement decided to apply in 1988. Thirty-eight years later, he said he loves what he does – most days.

"It's a fascinating job, no two days are the same," Terry said. "It's frustrating sometimes, but – as some colleagues say – you're buying everything from apples to zoo supplies is the saying some of them have, and it's true, I never know what we'll be buying."

After nine years with Knox County and seven with Knox County Schools, Terry joined KCDC on Aug. 15, 2005, as procurement director. He said the move in several ways has been the best part of his professional career.

"Part of it has been the caliber of people I've worked with in a professional level, with KCDC, and then part of it is there's no elected officials," Terry said, laughing. "It's very different where there's a city council, county commission."

A few years into his role with KCDC, Terry was also head of what's now the IT department following the retirement and recommendation of his predecessor. He stayed in that role for

Part of it stems from my mother that always said, 'Whatever you do, do it to the best of your ability.'

- Terry McKee



about 12 years until around 2023.

"I was asked if I would be upset, hurt, whatever, if we separated the two, and I said, 'No, how soon can you do it'," Terry said, laughing. "I was in my 50s, almost 60 when we hired Joe (LaCroix, KCDC IT director), so I was like, 'I'm old.' ... KCDC deserved more full time. Technology has grown and grown; it did not deserve a manager. It needed a director who knew tech and not just overseeing the budget and timecards."

Terry said the role was a great experience.

In addition to his work with KCDC, Terry has served as a senior consultant with the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing (NIGP) for 30 years. The group helps cities, counties, airports and housing authorities – any type of governmental body that has procurement.

"When they started that I was by some miracle added to the group and I was the youngest of the original group and now I'm the last of the original group," he said. "I will do one or two a year, take vacation time, and go do them. It's been a wonderful learning experience seeing how other places are organized around the nation. I've done assignments in 20 states plus a province in Canada, some housing authorities but mainly cities and counties."

Terry has a long-standing commitment to the public procurement profession. In addition to his consulting with NIGP, he is active in the East Tennessee Purchasing Association and serves as co-chair of the legislative committee for the Tennessee Association of Public Purchasing. He also contributes at the national level as an NIGP instructor and is a member of the NIGP Finance Council.

"Part of it stems from my mother that always said, 'Whatever you do, do it to the best of your ability'," Terry said.

Recognized for his work

On July 30, Terry was the recipient of NIGP's 2025 Integrity Award during the NIGP Forum 2025 in Denver. This marks the fourth time Terry has been recognized by NIGP. He earned the Distinguished Service Award in 2022, the Procurement Manager of the Year Award in 2017 and the Spirit Award in 2013.

Terry called the recent nomination "a shock and humbling."

“I know the person that nominated me, and I tried to talk Stacy Gregg (University of South Carolina procurement director) out of it, but you can tell my persuasive skills aren’t that great because here I am,” Terry said. “It was very humbling that peers think that much of you that they would nominate you.

“... It’s become a bit retrospective in that, wow, maybe I did have an impact on the profession in people because she nominated me and I was selected and nobody booed from the 3,000 or so people in attendance,” he added, laughing.

Accepting his interests

For about a decade Terry said he’s embraced his “nerdiness,” in part because of his age and not caring what others think.

“I march to the beat of a different piccolo player, as I like to say,” Terry said.

He’s filled with political trivia, he appreciates books on things like the history of companies who built Hoover Dam or about Grundy County’s creation, and he loves catching up on technological advancements like the rise of AI just because he wants to expand his knowledge.

“If I’m traveling ... and if we’re zipping down the interstate, ‘There’s a billboard for the biggest ball of wax, (we’re going there),’” Terry said. “One time, true story, in North Dakota my wife and I were zipping around and headed to Theodore Roosevelt National Park ... and saw a sign, ‘Minuteman Missile Museum next exit,’ (we went there). Other people might spend hours at a ball game or at a bar. Take me to the biggest ball of wax and I’m a happy camper.”

Terry recently finished a book called, “Sisters in Resistance: How a German Spy, a Banker’s Wife, and Mussolini’s Daughter Outwitted the Nazis,” by Tilar J. Mazzeo.

“The kind of things I read my wife says you get them on the discount at the Friends of the Library book sale because nobody else would buy them,” Terry said. “I’m also cheap. I say frugal, my wife says cheap, we’ve been happily married 40 years.”



Traveling a hobby

Terry has traveled to every state, but it’s not something he initially set out to do.

“My family did not travel so when I got out of college, I had some money and then between jobs, consulting, conferences and vacations all a sudden I’m like, ‘Wow, I’ve been to 30-something states. We’re going to do them all.’ I have to get all of something.”

His favorite visits have been Colorado, Utah, New Mexico and Arizona.

Terry’s attention has now shifted to visiting every national park. Right now, he’s visited 40 of the 63. In August he and his wife traveled to Crater Lake National Park in Oregon and Lassen Volcanic National Park in California. Although admitting every park is special in its own way, Terry said his favorite stop was Capitol Reef National Park in Utah.

“It has very rock formations, very limited number of visitors because everybody goes to Zion (National Park) and Arches (National Park), and it’s just very interesting,” Terry said. “I love the red rocks of Zion and Arches, but Capitol Reef has red rocks and yellow rocks and white rocks and had snow when I hiked at the top.”



Health & Wellness

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), breast cancer is the second most common cancer for American women. Each year in the U.S., about 270,000 women are diagnosed. Most breast cancers are found in women at least 50 years old, but that doesn't mean it can't affect those younger. Visit [here](#) for more information.

Symptoms

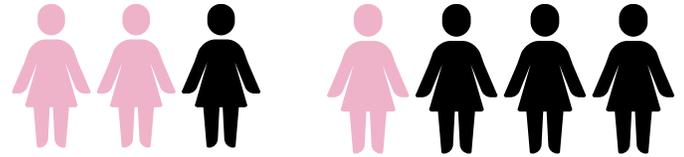
- New lump in the breast or underarm (armpit).
- Thickening or swelling of part of the breast.
- Irritation or dimpling of breast skin.
- Redness or flaky skin in the nipple area or the breast.
- Pulling in of the nipple or pain in the nipple area.
- Nipple discharge other than breast milk, including blood.
- Any change in the size or shape of the breast.
- Pain in any area of the breast.

Risk Factors

- **Increase physical activity:** Lack of regular exercise raises breast cancer risk.
- **Maintain a healthy weight after menopause:** Being overweight or obese post-menopause increases risk.
- **Limit hormone use:**
 - Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) with both estrogen and progesterone, especially when used for more than 5 years, increases risk.
 - Certain oral contraceptives (birth control pills) may also raise risk.
- **Consider reproductive choices:**
 - Having a first pregnancy after age 30,
 - Not breastfeeding,
 - Never having a full-term pregnancy — all can increase risk.
- **Limit alcohol intake:** The more alcohol a woman drinks, the higher her breast cancer risk.
- **Avoid smoking:** Smoking may contribute to increased risk.
- **Reduce exposure to harmful chemicals:** Carcinogenic chemicals may elevate breast cancer risk.
- **Minimize night shift work:** Disruption in hormone levels due to night shifts may be linked to increased risk.



By the Numbers

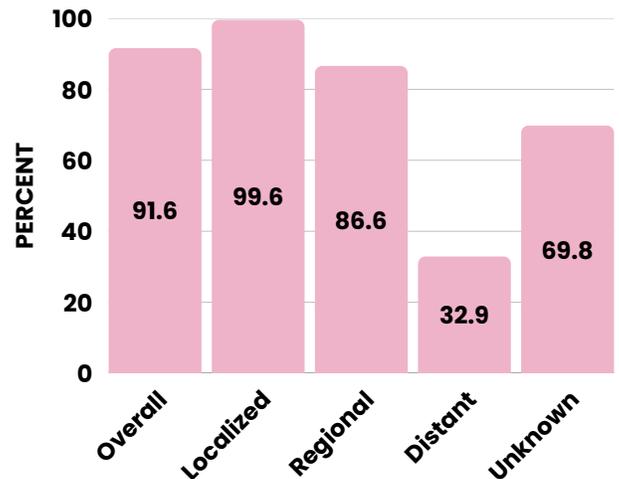


female breast cancer patients diagnosed at localized stage

female breast cancer patients diagnosed at regional stage

* CDC data taken from 2018-22. Localized stage means the cancer hasn't spread outside the breast. Regional stage means it's spread to nearby lymph nodes, tissues or organs.

5-year relative survival



* CDC data based on cancer diagnoses from 2015-21 and follow-up of patients through Dec. 31, 2021.

Pickleball league starting soon

Are you interested in learning pickleball and having fun with your coworkers? Sign up today to enjoy some low-impact competition each Thursday! Games will be rain or shine and will typically occur Thursdays at the supportive maintenance building — 302 E. Anderson Ave. Interested in learning more?

Contact

- Eugene Littlejohn — elittlejohn@kcdc.org or 865-740-3378
- Joy Patrick — jpatrick@kcdc.org or 865-816-4026

Catching a game with coworkers

KCDC has tickets for baseball, soccer and/or hockey available for employee use. Interested employees should contact Joy Patrick at jpatrick@kcdc.org for more information or to reserve a game.



New Hires

The following were recently hired through Sept. 3 at Knoxville's Community Development Corporation:



Christopher Atkins
 Hired: 7/7/25
 Title: Maintenance Tech. II
 Place: Small Property Group



Phil Kupris
 Hired: 7/23/25
 Title: Maintenance Tech. II
 Place: Isabella Towers



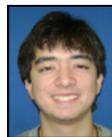
James Kern
 Hired: 7/7/25
 Title: Maintenance Tech. II
 Place: Northgate Terrace



Annie Sellers
 Hired: 7/28/25
 Title: Leasing & Occupancy Specialist
 Place: Lonsdale Homes



Tee Dixon
 Hired: 7/7/25
 Title: Maintenance Tech. I
 Place: Isabella Towers



Kenai Huynh
 Hired: 8/20/25
 Title: IT Intern
 Place: Main Office



Ternesha Gordon-Harrison
 Hired: 7/7/25
 Title: Assistant Property Manager
 Place: First Creek at Austin



Karina Fox
 Hired: 9/2/25
 Title: Leasing & Occupancy Specialist
 Place: Western Heights



Jesse Thompson
 Hired: 7/7/25
 Title: Maintenance Tech. II
 Place: Western Heights



Jesse Johnson
 Hired: 9/3/25
 Title: Maintenance Tech. I
 Place: Western Heights



Announcements

Got an announcement you'd like to put in The Bulletin? Email the information to jnash@kcdc.org. The deadline for content will typically fall on the last Monday or Tuesday of the month before publication.

- **First Creek Phase III Ribbon Cutting** – A ribbon-cutting ceremony for First Creek at Austin Phase III will occur on site at 10:30 a.m. Sept. 30.
- **Northgate Terrace Fall Festival** – From 4-6 p.m. Oct. 14, The Manor at Northgate Terrace will host its annual Fall Block Party with this year's theme of "Life is a Circus." This fun and informative event serves as a fundraiser for The Manor and is open to all Northgate Terrace residents, but that doesn't mean you can't attend! At \$10 for guests, you'll get award-winning pulled pork barbecue from The BBQ Doctor, along with two sides, dessert and a drink. Stop by for the food, live music by The Mt. LeConte Jug Band, plus clowns, face painting, games and everyone's favorite – ice cream floats! We hope you'll join us for an afternoon of food, fun and community.
- **Liberty Living** – We have a newsletter specifically for Liberty Place. If you would like to be put on the email list, please email jnash@kcdc.org. Liberty Living aims to highlight the happenings around the community, the needs of residents, and just provide a way for us to show our appreciation for those who have an interest in supporting Liberty Place.



Newsletter Dates

The Bulletin is scheduled to be released every two months. Here are the remaining newsletters for 2025:

- November-December



Newsletter Ideas

Got something you think could be in The Bulletin? Email information to jnash@kcdc.org. The deadline for content will typically fall on the last Monday or Tuesday of the month before publication.

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