

# THE BLUE PAGES...



Tre Hargett, Secretary of State

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“The Mission of the *Office of the Secretary of State* is to exceed the expectations of our customers, the taxpayers, by operating at the highest levels of accuracy, cost-effectiveness, and accountability in a customer-centered environment.”

## From the Desk of the Secretary...

### *Doing More With Less*

As I reflect on the first half of my four-year term as Secretary of State, I would like to share with you some of our department’s successes. Like most state agencies, we have been asked to do more with less, but our employees have risen to the challenge and are continually striving to do their best for our customers, the taxpayers.

### *Technological Improvements*

Many of the improvements made in the department have been technology based. We launched a new web site in March 2009. Last year, the site received more than 2.5 million hits. The site is designed to serve the public with pages for each

of our divisions, as well as sections for news and answers to frequently-asked questions. We have continued to make updates to the site to ensure that visitors have constant access to the information they need in a usable format.

In our Business Services Division, technology has removed the hassle of annual filings for our customers. Through the Tennessee Business Entity & Annual Report system (TN BEAR), which was launched in September 2009, many documents can now be filed online. Not only does the system make preparing filings easier for our customers, but it also allows our employees to process documents more quickly. Prior to its implementation, our personnel

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printed out and entered each web-filed document into our system as it was submitted. More recently, we have implemented an online system to process applications for the workers' compensation exemption registry.

I hope that many of you have now had the opportunity to use our election night reporting system provided by our Division of Elections. This tool provides public access to the latest election results as soon as they are reported. The division also offers more voter precinct information online, as well as comprehensive online training for local election commissioners and administrators.

In our Charitable Solicitations Division, technology has allowed for a transition to a nearly paperless office. We have implemented a new database that allows all information to be stored electronically. This system allows organizations to file online and the division to respond to applications and complaints with greater speed. Citizens are also able to check a charitable organization's status online before making decisions about whether to contribute time and money to that group.

The Administrative Procedures Division (APD) has become a model of how much more can be done with fewer people, thanks to technology. With three fewer judges, APD has increased its caseload by 35 percent while raising its case closure rate from 91 percent in 2008 to 97 percent in 2010. Video conferencing has cut down on the amount of travel time necessary for our judges, but when they are on the road, remote access to the case management system allows them to continue to perform essential functions away from the office.

The Tennessee State Library & Archives (TSLA) now offers more information than ever online. The Tennessee General Assembly has continued to fund the Tennessee Electronic Library (TEL) portal, which allows Tennesseans to search more than 40

databases for articles, videos, podcasts and eBooks free of charge any time. Over the past two years, Tennesseans have conducted more than 63 million database searches through TEL. Additionally, TSLA has built a database of historical images that are now available online. New digital audio options also have been added for the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. The Legislative Recording Program administered by TSLA has recently transitioned to an entirely digital format, leaving the old cassette-based model behind. TSLA is working toward offering a digital database of Civil War sites and resources using the latest GIS technology.

Of course, no technological improvement would be possible without a strong support staff and our Information Systems and Publications divisions have worked tirelessly to help us get all of these new systems in place.

#### *Transparency*

As Secretary of State, I have tried to ensure that Tennesseans can hold their government - and particularly our department - accountable by implementing processes that are transparent, open to the public and designed to instill faith in government.

These goals are particularly applicable to the Division of Elections. Since I took office, we have removed thousands of deceased individuals and ineligible felons from the voter rolls. We have also discovered and assisted in the prosecution of individuals involved in voter fraud and election officials who misappropriated taxpayer dollars. Meeting notices and meeting minutes for the State Election Commission are now posted online. Additionally, the Division of Elections successfully implemented the MOVE Act, a new program passed with broad bipartisan support by the General Assembly that ensures military and overseas voters

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## NEW STATE ARCHITECT CHOSEN

*“I WELCOME THIS OPPORTUNITY AND LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION COMMUNITY ACROSS THE STATE,” OGLESBY SAID.*



*ROBERT E. OGLESBY  
STATE ARCHITECT*

The State Building Commission’s Executive Subcommittee recently selected Robert E. Oglesby to serve as Tennessee’s State Architect. The executive subcommittee members conducted interviews beginning in early December for seven candidates who were selected from the original field of 64 applicants.

“I welcome this opportunity and look forward to working with the design and construction community across the state,” Oglesby said.

“I am pleased with the openness of the process used to select the State Architect,” said Secretary Hargett, who is a subcommittee member. “I am confident that Mr. Oglesby will serve Tennessee well while overseeing the building and land projects that supply vital jobs for the state.”

A licensed Tennessee architect for more than 25 years, Oglesby has served as president and principal-level designer for EOA Architects in Nashville and, more recently, as the executive vice president of Wiser Company in Murfreesboro. He received his Bachelor of Architecture from the University of Tennessee, where he also studied post-graduate business administration courses.

“We had an outstanding group of applicants from

more than 12 states and we have chosen a great architect and a great Tennessean,” said Treasurer David H. Lillard Jr., who is also a subcommittee member.

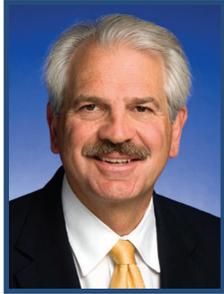
“I look forward to working with Mr. Oglesby to ensure the state’s investments in land and capital projects are done in the best interest of Tennessee,” added Comptroller Justin P. Wilson, another subcommittee member.

Finance and Administration Commissioner Mark Emkes, who is also a subcommittee member said, “We had many outstanding candidates for this important role in state government, but with a very thorough selection process we were able to find the right person. This is a demanding role, but one that we clearly believe Mr. Oglesby is very well prepared to succeed in.”

“I want to congratulate Mr. Oglesby and welcome him as the new State Architect,” said Lt. Governor Ron Ramsey, a member of the State Building Commission. “He will be an invaluable asset as we work to increase efficiency and save taxpayer dollars on Tennessee’s building and land projects.”

The State Architect serves as the curator of the State Capitol and grounds, oversees the state’s building and land development projects and develops design standards for agencies. Alan Robertson has served as acting State Architect since last June to allow time for a thorough selection process.

## CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE STOVALL PULLING DOUBLE DUTY AS A SPEAKER



CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE  
JUDGE TOM STOVALL

Friday, Feb. 25 will be a busy day for the Chief Administrative Judge Tom Stovall, the director of the Department of State's Administrative Procedures Division. On that day, he will be speaking at both the Partners in Policymaking 17th Annual Reunion Conference and at the Tennessee Lawyers' Association for Women (TLAW) "Elected and Appointed Positions" program.

Judge Stovall and Judge Lynn England, also from the Administrative Procedures Division, will lecture on "Communication, Mediation and If All Else Fails, the Due Process Process" from 1 p.m. until 2:30 p.m. for Partners in Policymaking. Since 1993, the Partners in Policymaking program has helped train people with disabilities and their

caretakers in how to interact with government agencies and provided advocacy training.

Judge Stovall will then go to the TLAW event, held at the Nashville School of Law, where he will speak on roles for lawyers in various governmental positions. Judge Stovall's presentation will run from 4 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. and will cover the roles of administrative law judges. Other speakers at the event will include Mark Goins, coordinator of elections for the Department of State, Tennessee Supreme Court Justice Sharon Lee and U.S. District Judge Aleta Trauger.

"I am very pleased to have the opportunity to address these two important organizations and to discuss the role of the Administrative Procedures Division in both the legal community and state government," said Judge Stovall.

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## EARLY VOTING FOR SPECIAL ELECTIONS BEGINS FEB. 16 IN SUMNER, ROBERTSON AND SHELBY COUNTIES

Special elections to fill the seats of Senate District 18 and House District 98 will be held on March 8, with early voting from Feb. 16 to March 3. The seats became vacant in November when Senator Diane Black was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and Representative Ulysses Jones passed away.

In January, Antonio "2 Shay" Parkinson won the Democratic primary for House District 98, located in Shelby County, with 56 percent of the votes. No Republicans qualified for the primary.



Kerry Roberts won the Republican primary for Senate District 18, located in Robertson and Sumner Counties, with 38 percent of the votes. He will face Ken Wilber, the only candidate from the Democratic primary.

Contact your county's election commission headquarters for voting times and locations if you live in either of these districts. Contact information for county election commissions is available at: [http://tnsos.org/elections/election\\_commissions.php](http://tnsos.org/elections/election_commissions.php).

## TENNESSEE STATE LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES FEATURED ON NATIONAL TELEVISION

*“IT IS VITAL THAT THE HISTORY OF OUR AFRICAN-AMERICAN LEGISLATORS BE PRESERVED AND WE ARE PLEASED THAT NBC HAS TAKEN AN INTEREST IN THE TSLA,” SECRETARY HARGETT SAID. “THIS SHOW GIVES THOSE ACROSS THE COUNTRY A LESSON IN TENNESSEE HISTORY AND THE STATE’S VAST ARCHIVES.”*

A researcher from the Tennessee State Library and Archives (TSLA) recently helped well-known actress and singer Vanessa Williams discover



VANESSA WILLIAMS

PHOTO CREDIT: CHRIS BERKLEY/NBC

Williams, who currently stars on “Desperate Housewives,” is the great granddaughter of William Feilds, who was one of 14 African Americans elected to the Tennessee General Assembly during Reconstruction. Representing northwest Shelby County from 1885 to 1886, he advocated for fair labor laws and advanced education opportunities. Feilds went on to serve his community nobly as a notary public, justice of the peace, census taker and county magistrate until his death in 1898.

her roots on a program televised on NBC. TSLA researcher Kathy Lauder guided Williams through the history of her West Tennessee ancestors in the Feb. 4 season opener of the popular genealogy tracking show

“Who Do You Think You Are?”

Lauder’s reputation caught NBC’s attention last summer, when the show’s producers first inquired about her findings on Feilds (also spelled “Fields” in some records). A camera crew arrived to film at the TSLA and State Capitol in October, taking great care to maintain historical accuracy and use information only from primary sources.

TSLA provided antique photographs, records of General Assembly proceedings, Feilds’ certificate of election and several hand-written copies of bills that he introduced. Tennessee’s historical records also include a statue just outside of the House of Representatives chamber that commemorates the first black legislators, which includes Feilds’ name on the plaque.

“It is vital that the history of our African-American legislators be preserved and we are pleased that NBC has taken an interest in the TSLA,” Secretary Hargett said. “This show gives those across the country a lesson in Tennessee history and the state’s vast archives.”

To read more about Feilds or the other 19th Century African-American legislators, visit the TSLA section of the Department of State web pages at: <http://www.state.tn.us/tsla/exhibits/blackhistory/index.htm>

Footage from the show can be viewed at <http://www.nbc.com/who-do-you-think-you-are/>.

## VETERANS SUPPORT ORGANIZATION AGREES TO FOLLOW LEGAL FUNDRAISING PRACTICES

*“VETERANS ARE A SPECIAL AND HONORED GROUP OF TENNESSEANS, MAKING THIS CHARITY’S VIOLATIONS ALL THE MORE DEVASTATING,” SAID SECRETARY HARGETT.*

In a judge-approved agreement with the Tennessee Department of State’s Division of Charitable Solicitations and Gaming, the Veterans Support Organization (VSO) agreed not to use deceptive materials, promise non-existent services, imply that its staff members are veterans if they are not or engage in other misleading acts. The group has also agreed to pay a \$20,000 civil penalty for violating the Tennessee Charitable Solicitations Act.

“Veterans are a special and honored group of Tennesseans, making this charity’s violations all the more devastating,” said Secretary Hargett. “There are several organizations that provide valuable aid to veterans and it is very important that generous citizens in this state give to such organizations.”

The judge-approved agreement resulted from an investigation into the Rhode Island-based company. The investigation led to the assessment

of \$50,000 in civil penalties in July, due to a finding that the organization committed 10 violations of Tennessee’s Charitable Solicitations Act, including claims that the group assisted veterans in finding housing, jobs, transportation and other services that were not actually offered in Tennessee.

Todd Kelley, director of the Division of Charitable Solicitations and Gaming, said that “this case is a great example of why it is important for donors to do their own research about a charity to which they plan to give so that they can learn about the organization’s mission and program service accomplishments prior to making a donation.”

Anyone who suspects a charitable organization of engaging in fraudulent or misleading activities is encouraged to contact the Division of Charitable Solicitations and Gaming at (615) 741-2555.

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## RULE MAKING HEARINGS AND LISTS OF RULES

Rule making hearings are open to the public. The web link below will provide information about the location and times of the hearings. Information about the rules going into effect includes changes or additions to rules.

To view the rule-making meeting notices online, go to: <http://tnsos.org/rules/RulemakingHearings.php>

To view the rules scheduled to go into effect, go to: <http://tnsos.org/rules/PendingRules.php>

If you have suggestions on how the online posting of the state’s rules could be more “user-friendly,” please contact Richard Arnold at 615-741-2650 or email him at: [Richard.Arnold@tn.gov](mailto:Richard.Arnold@tn.gov)

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get their ballots quickly enough to be returned in time to be counted.

Our Publications Division has the responsibility for publishing public chapters and administrative rules online. In the past, this process could take weeks, but thanks to new processes and an online database, acts and rules are now typically available within two to five days of their filing with our office. Citizens can be assured that the information available via our web site is accurate and up to date.

#### *Fiscal Responsibility*

In the Department of State, we constantly strive to ensure that the money entrusted to us by the taxpayers of Tennessee is used in an efficient manner. In our Business Services Division, we implemented a program that allows us to process the same volume of work with fewer employees at an annual savings of \$250,000.

The Tennessee State Library and Archives has been particularly successful in seeking out additional sources of funding in the form of grants and donations. TSLA has secured \$1.5 million with the help of the Department of Economic and Community Development and the United States Department of Agriculture to establish computing centers in rural libraries. The newly-formed Friends of TSLA group has raised nearly \$80,000 to support TSLA's work and to plan for construction of a new

TSLA facility when previously-reverted state funds become available.

As we have planned for the future, our divisions have been developing new strategies with measurable goals to ensure that the department continues to increase its productivity in the months and years ahead.

Last month, we rolled out a mission statement for the department, which you can see at the top of the front page. We take customer service seriously and have challenged employees at every level of our organization to emphasize the goals contained in the mission statement in their interactions with other government agencies, each other and, most importantly, our customers.

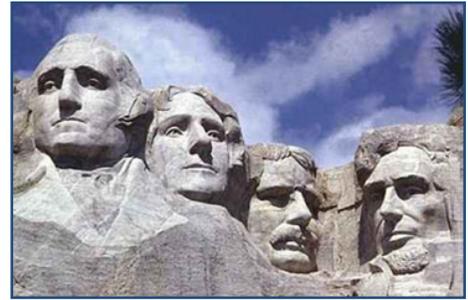
While we have worked hard to ensure that the needs of our customers are being met, we have not overlooked our own employees - thanks to the work of our Division of Human Resources and Organizational Development. The division coordinated our first annual employee picnic in September 2010 and we look forward to similar events in the future.

Thank you for the privilege of serving as your Secretary of State. As you can see, we have been busy and we have no intention of slowing down our efforts to serve the citizens of Tennessee. We will continue to work to ensure the best is yet to come.



## DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICES CLOSED FOR PRESIDENT'S DAY

The Department of State's offices, including the Tennessee State Library and Archives, will be closed on Monday, Feb. 21 in honor of President's Day. This closure is consistent with the practices of other state and federal offices. If you need to conduct business with the Department of State, please plan accordingly.



*MOUNT. RUSHMORE NATIONAL PARK*

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