



Today: Mostly cloudy; breezy this afternoon.

High: 80

Low: 59

Details: B2

50 cents
★★★★★

May 7, 2008

Wednesday
NEWS SENTINEL
Knoxville
KnoxNews.com

RECYCLING REACTOR WASTE

TVA looking to Clinch River Breeder site for test facility. **C1**



MOTHER'S DAY

Recipes for serving mom breakfast in bed. **E1**

ELECTION 2008

Obama pads lead with North Carolina victory

Clinton, in must-win situation, apparent winner in Indiana

BY DAVID ESPO AND LIZ SIDOTI
Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Barack Obama swept to victory in the North Carolina primary Tuesday night and declared that he was closing in on the Democratic presidential nomination. Hillary Rodham Clinton

clung to a narrow Indiana lead, struggling to halt her rival's march into history.

"Tonight we stand less than 200 delegates away from securing the Democratic nomination for president of the United States," Obama told a raucous rally in Raleigh, N.C. — and left no doubt that he intended to claim the prize.

Clinton and Obama both said the former first lady would win Indiana. Yet thousands of votes were

yet to be counted, principally in Lake County, not far from Obama's home city of Chicago.

She told cheering supporters in Indianapolis, "Thanks to you, it's full speed on to the White House," signaling her determination to fight on in a campaign already waged across more than 15 months and nearly all 50 states.

Returns from 99 percent of

See **PRIMARY** on **A6**

PRIMARY SCHEDULE

May 13: West Virginia, 28 delegates

May 20: Oregon, 52 delegates; Kentucky, 51 delegates

June 1: Puerto Rico, 55 delegates

June 3: Montana, 16 delegates; South Dakota, 15 delegates

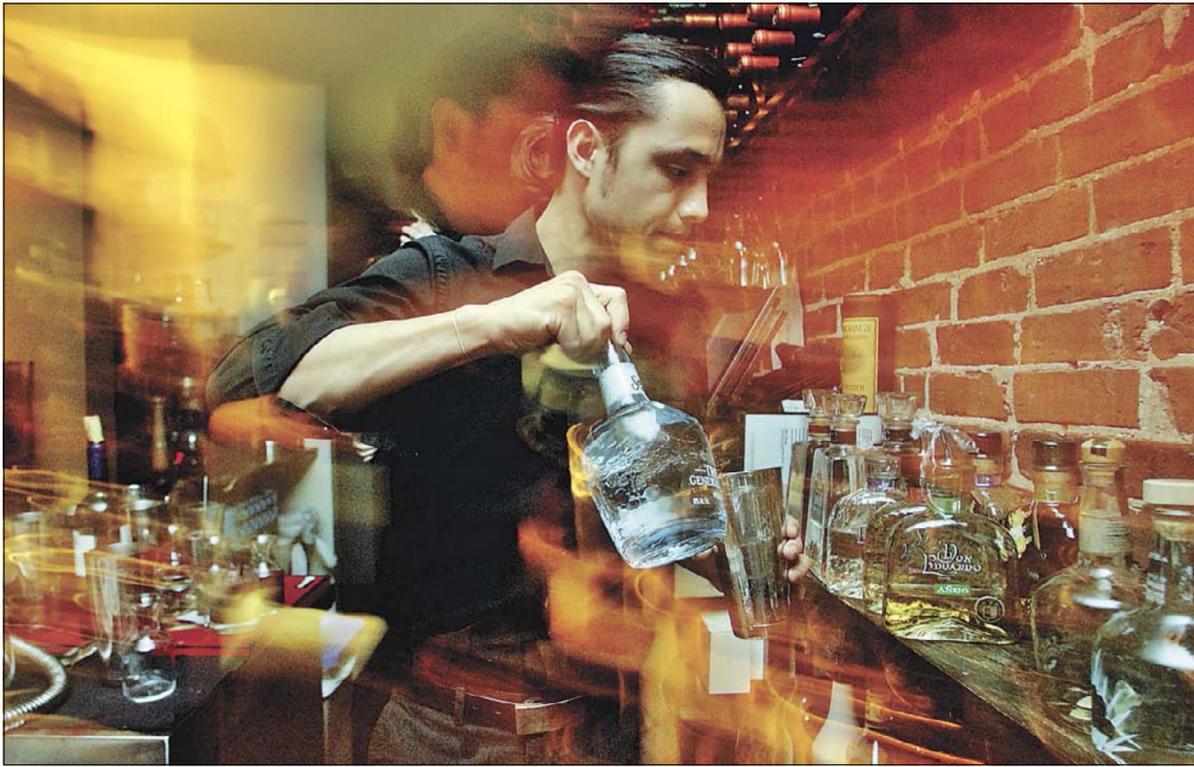
ON KNOXNEWS.COM

■ Updated election results



GERRY BROOME/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Barack Obama, Democratic presidential hopeful, and his wife, Michelle, react to the crowd in Raleigh, N.C., after he won the North Carolina primary Tuesday.



SAUL YOUNG/NEWS SENTINEL

Michael Watson, a bartender at La Costa on Market Square, prepares drinks Tuesday night. Knox County Commissioner R. Larry Smith wants the commission to consider a resolution that would place a vote concerning liquor by the drink and package sales on a general election ballot.

Uncorking a conundrum

Commissioner supports liquor sales in unincorporated areas of Knox, but questions linger

BY ANSLEY HAMAN
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When patronizing businesses in Knox County's unincorporated areas, customers might be able to order a daiquiri with dinner or drive by a neighborhood wine shop as a result of Commissioner R. Larry Smith's move for liquor sales in the county.

Smith wants the commission to consider a resolution that would place a vote concerning

liquor by the drink and package sales on an upcoming general election ballot. He said his move is a strike against further city annexation, which often occurs when restaurant owners seek to become part of the city so that they can qualify for a liquor license.

"If we had this in place, we (county residents) wouldn't have to worry about being annexed," Smith said. "It's a twofold thing we're doing — keeping annexations away and keeping dollars in the county coffers."

Commissioners will decide in a meeting today whether to add such a resolution, which would be drafted by Law Director John Owings, to May's agenda. Several local

restaurateurs and an anti-annexation group fully support the measure.

But a lawyer for the Tennessee Alcoholic Beverage Commission doesn't know if it's feasible under state law to expand liquor licensing to Knox County's unincorporated areas.

Dinner and drinks

Owners of several local restaurants say they would applaud the expansion of liquor by the drink.

See **LIQUOR** on **A7**

Budget fix puts school initiatives in jeopardy

Ragsdale may have to hold back on \$2 million allocated for projects

BY LOLA ALAPO
alapol@knoxnews.com

A major Knox County mayoral initiative for the architectural design of several new elementary schools may be scuttled in an effort to balance the county's budget for the next fiscal year.

County Mayor Mike Ragsdale said Tuesday that he may hold back the roughly \$2 million he allocated for those projects should state education funding fall through.

"We're trying to save every penny we can and use it toward next year," Ragsdale told Knox County school board members and county commissioners at the Andrew Johnson Building downtown.

Ragsdale and the two elected bodies met to discuss the Knox County school system's operating and capital plan requests. The school system is asking for a \$33 million increase to its current \$357.4 million budget.

The economic downturn and a deficit in the state's budget likely means tight finances for the county and the school system. Gov. Phil Bredesen has said \$550 million must be cut from the \$28 billion state budget, an action that will include layoffs and puts prekindergarten programs, Basic Education Program, or BEP, funding and higher-education funding at risk.

This means an additional \$9 million in state education funding expected by Knox County may be nixed.

Last year, Ragsdale's budget proposal included \$2.16 million for projects such as architectural drawings and design for elementary schools including Carter, New Hopewell, Adrian Burnett and a new Southwest Knox County elementary school, and libraries in Mascot and Norwood.

On Monday, Bob Thomas, Knox County schools assistant superintendent for administrative services, noted that the current school budget "is one of the best I can remember" because of an influx of money from Bredesen's revised

ON KNOX NEWS.COM

■ **School Matters:** Comment in an online community about Knoxville-area schools.

See **BUDGET** on **A7**

105TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Area lawmaker admits to smoking in legislative office

BY TOM HUMPHREY
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NASHVILLE — State Rep. Joe McCord acknowledged Tuesday that he and others have been illegally smoking in his legislative office suite, as reported by a TV station. But he questioned the tactics used by a reporter in discover-

ing a dozen bottles of legal liquor.

In a report aired Monday night, WSMV-TV said the Maryville Republican had a "room set up for smoking" in the War Memorial Building suite he shares with state Rep. Parkey Strader, R-Knoxville, who has been absent recently while undergoing

treatment for cancer.

In an interview Tuesday, McCord said people have smoked in his office, including him, but that the practice will cease. He declined to elaborate on what the TV report characterized as "a room to skirt the smoking law and not get caught."

The room had ashtrays, an air purification system and a "sandbag" arranged to seal the space below a door and prevent smoke from entering a hallway, the report said.

A state law enacted in 2006 banned smoking in state government buildings, and McCord was among law-

makers voting for that measure. He voted against a broader statewide ban, enacted in 2007, on all indoor smoking.

"People have smoked in my office, and they are subject to whatever pun-

See **SMOKING** on **A7**



McCord

Inside: Business **C1** | Classified **F1** | Comics **E4** | Crossword **E5** | Dear Abby **E3** | Editorial **B4** | Food **E1** | Local **B1** | Movies **E6** | Obituaries **B6** | Sports **D1** | TV **E3**

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