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The Legislature wrapped up the thirteenth week of session today. We expect perhaps two more weeks. On Monday, the House passed the Flow Motion, which eliminates notice requirements and signals the end of session.

As we enter the final weeks of session, lawmakers spend more and more of their time in their respective Senate and House Chambers. In a moment of brevity in the Senate Chamber today, Senator Janice Bowling (R-Tullahoma) said, "If we start prosecuting 'stupid' we won't have enough law enforcement officers to go around." Meanwhile, in the House Chamber, members remembered and honored WWII with a presentation that included a WWII glider pilot and some folks in excellent WWII era costumes, as seen in our photo of the week.

New TennCare Director

Governor Bill Haslam announced this week that Dr. Wendy Long has been named Director of TennCare and Deputy Commissioner of Health Care Finance and Administration (HCFA). Dr. Long will replace Darin Gordon, who is leaving at the end of June after serving in the role for ten years. Long has served as Chief Medical Officer for TennCare from 2004-12, and as Deputy Director and Chief of Staff of HCFA since 2013, overseeing contracts with TennCare's network of managed care companies.

Appropriations Process

Last week the Governor's amendment to the appropriations bill was presented to both the Senate and House Finance Committees. This week the committees started hearings on the 235 budget amendments filed by Legislators.

End of Session

House Majority Leader Gerald McCormick (R-Chattanooga) announced today that lawmakers will be working (negotiating between House, Senate and Governor) on the budget over the weekend with the hopes of passage on the Floor Wednesday or Thursday of next week, and adjournment expected April 19, 2016.

Insure TN Rally

Insure TN proponents rallied inside Legislative Plaza on Tuesday. Participants placed shoes at the entrance of Speaker Harwell's office asking her to 'walk in the shoes of the uninsured'. The shoes

blocked the entrance to the Speaker's office for over two hours before State Troopers removed them.

TN State Museum

Officials broke ground this week on the new Tennessee State Museum. The museum will move from its current location in the basement of TPAC to a much larger space located across from Bicentennial Mall. Those present at the ground-breaking include: Governor Bill Haslam, Speaker Ron Ramsey, Speaker Beth Harwell, Nashville Mayor Megan Barry, and historian and author Jon Meacham, who said that amid the political turmoil of our day we must be humble enough to learn lessons from our history. He said, "We must not flinch from the more troubling chapters of our past. For one mark of a civilized society — one mark of a mature human being — is how well we can learn from our mistakes."

Ward Crutchfield

Former Senate Majority Leader Ward Crutchfield passed away on Sunday in a Chattanooga hospital. He was 87. Senator Crutchfield served in the General Assembly for 31 years before he was convicted of bribery in 2005. He was a passionate advocate for the University of Tennessee, Chattanooga, securing funding for a UTC library and university building. He was also known for knowing very little about the bills he presented to committee, saying, "Anybody can pass a bill up here, but it takes real skill to pass a bill you haven't read."

Of Interest:

Tennessee got a mention in *The New York Times* today (available [here](#)), which included a focus on the "Bible bill." The bill passed the Senate this week and is headed to the Governor. Also of note, the Attorney General ruled that all fantasy sports are gambling if money changes hands.

The filing deadline for primary and independent candidates who intend to run on the November ballot must be filed by today. We will have a complete list of who's retiring, or not running for office in next week's newsletter.

Photo of the Week:

Here we have Deputy Speaker Steve McDaniel (R-Parkers Crossroads) and some folks in excellent WWII era costumes at the Capitol on Wednesday morning.

