

September 27, 2011 - The "Loop"

Oh how the years go by; it does not seem that two years ago I set out to spend the day in all 22 schools in our 40th district. Spending time observing and listening to teachers and discussing issues with the principals all provided me with beneficial knowledge. Now, I am proud to say I understand a day in the life of the classroom. In order to expand on my knowledge, I will be visiting all 12 of our elementary schools in the upcoming weeks.

Governor Haslam and our state Education Commissioner Kevin Huffman teamed up with educators across the country to meet with U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, this week. They sought an exemption from performance standards under the No Child Left Behind Legislation. Tennessee is the first state in the nation to ask for a waiver arguing the standards are unrealistic and do not adequately measure student achievement. Currently, near half of our schools in Tennessee fall short of meeting the standards under NCLB. Hence after ten years of NCLB there needs to be some major tweaking. Amen! Education decisions are better made at the state and local levels. I applaud our Governor for working to narrow the role of federal government in our schools.

Attending the Governors Conference on Economic and Community Development this past week; we learned about cutting edge practices for creating jobs in rural communities and companies that have chosen to locate in rural areas. The continuation of a low tax base and regulations is vital to drawing business in our state. The job market is extremely competitive however; Tennessee has something amazing to offer. Tennessee's location is ideal for business's to reach 2/3rd of this country in a days drive. With unemployment levels around 10 percent, we need these businesses to set up shop. Tennessee's unemployment rate for August was 9.7 down from 9.8 in July. The rate decreased in 57 counties. Still there were 28 counties that increased in unemployment and 10 counties remained the same.

We must stay the course for creating jobs! Striving for high performance from our schools, remaining a pro business atmosphere for job growth and last but not least prayer are what it will take to get us through these trying times. Times are tough all over but prayer will take us through. It will make us stronger and better.

Hats off to the Smith County Soil Conservation for fulfilling a request to fortify a constituent's property along the Cumberland River. Viewing the slide presentation at last weeks annual dinner allowed me to see the finished product. Job well done!!

Many events in the district involved singing the National Anthem this past week. Senior Sarah Dillard joined me belting it out at the Gordonsville High School Homecoming game in Smith County. There were many other events where this glorious song was sung including the 2011 Homecoming parade in Gordonsville. I participated in the second annual Leaders of Tennessee Skeet Shoot Competition. In addition showed my appreciation to the fine men and women of the Macon County Police and Fire Department by attending the meet and greet. I even climbed the 75 foot extension ladder! This week I also participated in the 50th Anniversary of The Palace Care and Rehab Center presenting a proclamation. Sunday evening I presented a Tennessee flag that had been flown over the Capitol to Brady Evans of DeKalb County as he was awarded his Eagle Scout Achievement. Even though I had a busy weekend I still found sometime in the daylight to mow the grass!!! It certainly was a packed week. But again it is a pleasure to work for and serve the great folks of the fortieth.

Blessings!
Terri Lynn