



PROGRESS EDITION

— 2026 —



Photo credit:
David Cate
Volume Interactive

COMMUNITY IMPACT

BRICKYARD VILLAGE RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION BEGINS

Brickyard Village reached a major milestone in 2026 when construction started on the first phase of residential development of 32 single-family homes. The 50-acre master-planned community will also include townhomes, apartments, retail space and an amenities center. It is supported by a public-private partnership with the City of Kingsport that enables investments in infrastructure and public amenities, including a new park and pedestrian bridge connection to downtown.



HOTEL CONSTRUCTION COMING TO HISTORIC WAREHOUSE SITE

The Kingsport Economic Development Board, Kingsport Board of Mayor and Aldermen and Sullivan County Commission approved financing in late 2025 for a boutique hotel at the historic Dobyys-Taylor Warehouse downtown property, and construction will begin in 2026.

The \$10 million adaptive reuse project will transform a long-vacant industrial site into a mixed-use hospitality destination with approximately 60 hotel rooms, full-service restaurant, flexible event space and parking for guests and the public. It was formerly known as the Kingsport Hosiery Mill, which began operations in 1917. The hotel is expected to open in spring 2027.



kingsporeconomicdev.org

KATS EXPANDS SERVICE WITH NEW ROUTE

Kingsport Area Transit Service (KATS) added a fifth bus route in 2025 to provide passengers with more efficient travel throughout the Model City.

Every weekday, Route 5 goes by Maple Oak Apartments, Kiwanis Towers, Fort Henry Mall/Library, Walmart on Fort Henry Drive, the Social Security office, Kingsport Aquatic Center and V.O. Dobbins Sr. Complex. KATS offered free bus fares for all five routes during the first week of the new service to celebrate and also redesigned the four existing routes to make them more efficient for passengers.

KATS has launched a program called "KATS Connect" on-demand service. Described as a mix between traditional fixed route bus service and an Uber-type ride-sharing service, on-demand public transit allows travelers to request a shared shuttle via an app.

kingsporttransit.org



IMAX THEATER OPENING IN 2026

The IMAX theater addition at the Fort Henry Mall is on track to open in mid-summer 2026. The first and only IMAX auditorium in the Tri-Cities region, the project represents a significant capital investment and is designed to enhance the Fort Henry Mall's role as a regional entertainment destination.

Construction began on the 7,000-square-foot addition in 2025 to expand the existing cinema footprint and introduce large-format projection, premium sound and enhanced seating to the region. In conjunction with the expansion, NCG is renovating the existing theater with luxury recliner seating upgrades, expanded concessions and a full-service bar.

CITY RENEWS PARTNERSHIP WITH THE RETAIL COACH

The City of Kingsport renewed its contract with The Retail Coach for an additional year in 2026 to continue proactive retail recruitment, market analysis and retailer engagement. Ongoing services include retail market analysis, retail void and site identification studies, targeted brand outreach and retailer-specific feasibility packages. The partnership will help attract new retail businesses and support growth at key commercial sites across Kingsport.

NEW PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN TO BE ADOPTED IN 2026

The City of Kingsport must complete a new Parks and Recreation Master Plan in 2026 to remain eligible for state grant funding through the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC).

The process began in summer 2025 with internal planning, stakeholder meetings, public survey for broad input, focus groups and community meetings. A draft plan will be presented to the community and refined before consideration for final adoption by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen in May 2026.

The master plan also guides decisions about the future of parks, programs and facilities to provide the greatest community benefit and align with evolving needs. The previous master plan, completed in 2021 at a cost of over \$120,000, was developed by outside consultants. The new plan is being done in-house to reduce costs and maintain control of the process.

kingsportparksandrecreation.org

KINGSPORT DENTAL CLINIC PLANS FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The Kingsport Dental Clinic of the Appalachian Highlands, which opened to students in September 2024, is undergoing a master planning process for future development in phase two.



The clinic has served as a satellite campus for the University of Tennessee Health Science Center where students from UT, East Tennessee State University and Northeast State Community College train in a dental clinic setting.

The UT Health Science Center launched the planning process, and officials have reviewed initial floor plans. The goal is to complete the master plan in early 2026 and establish a timeline for buildout and student schedule. Ultimately, officials want the facility to accommodate 50 students who would spend their fourth year on predoctoral program training and treating patients in the Model City.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

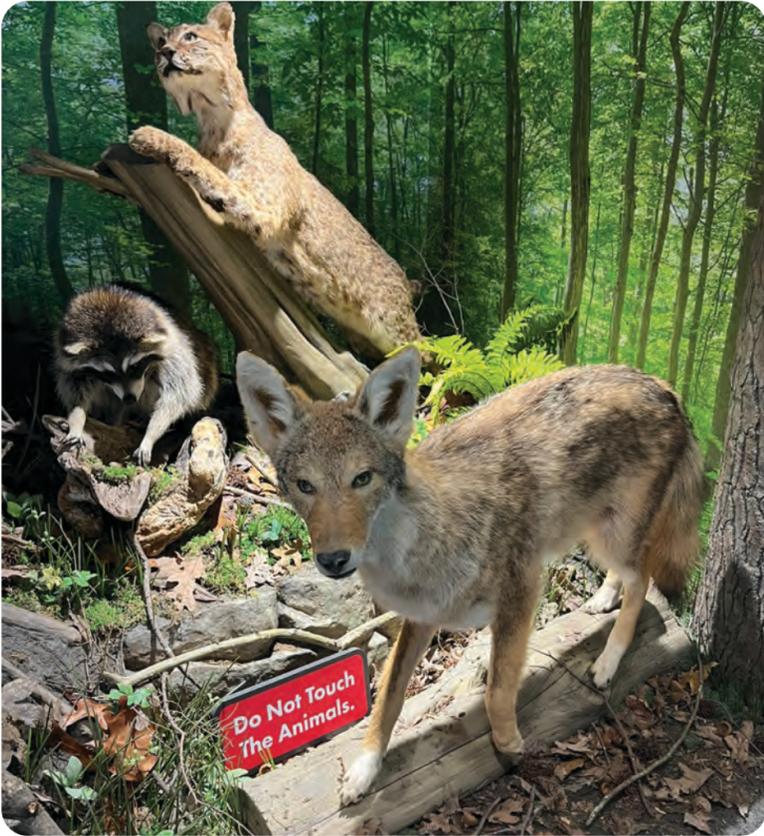
BAYS MOUNTAIN PARK PREPARES NEW FEATURES; EARNS GRANTS FOR FLOATING BRIDGE AND ROOF REPAIR

NEW EXHIBITS

An interactive exhibit now open in the Nature Center features a large lake diorama with mammals, reptiles, birds and aquatic life native to the region, along with information panels and interactive sensory stations to foster appreciation and stewardship.



Park staff developed the concept and design for the \$53,000 project, and construction started in 2025. The diorama features black bear, turkey, chipmunk, beaver, blue heron, coyote, raccoon, bobcat, woodpecker and otter.



Bays Mountain Park & Planetarium is in the final stages of installation for "Discover Astronomy in our Appalachian Highlands Home," an exhibit designed to connect the region's sense of place with the larger story of the universe. Laid out in a visitor flow that begins with constellations and cultural connections to the night sky, the exhibit transitions into core astronomy concepts and what can be observed overhead at Bays Mountain. The exhibit space is expected to open in spring 2026.



ROOF REPAIRS

Repairs have begun on the Nature Center roof following damage from a tree that fell during Hurricane Helene in 2024. Bays Mountain Park, with help from city staff, was awarded a \$150,000 grant from Tennessee State Museum and received funds from the City of Kingsport. The \$223,000 project will include removing the skylight along the ramp area, making improvements to exposed fascia, beams and decking, and replacing shingles. Construction is expected to take 90 days with new entrance patterns into the building during the work.

FOX DEN PLAYGROUND

Bays Mountain Park has officially opened Fox Den Playground, which features multiple climbing structures and slides, such as Timber Tower, Log Jam, Songbird, Log Pile and Log Steppers. David and Brenda Fox, two longtime supporters of Bays Mountain Park, championed the playground, which cost \$940,000 with the majority of funding coming from private donations.



FLOATING BRIDGE GRANT

Bays Mountain Park has received a \$100,000 grant from the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development for a new floating bridge along the western end of Lakeside Trail. The current bridge has served as the main path along the reservoir for more than 20 years but has sustained significant wear and tear due to weather and fallen trees. The proposal calls for the construction of a new bridge adjacent to the existing one and once complete, the old bridge will be removed.

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

MODEL CITY 101 TO RETURN IN FALL 2026

The City of Kingsport will again offer its adult education program, Model City 101, in fall 2026. Entering its third year, the free eight-week course educates residents on the government’s role within the community with presentations and discussions with the City Manager, Parks & Recreation, Fire Department, Police Department, Economic Development & Planning, Water Services, Leisure Services, Public Works and Transit Service, along with hands-on activities and tours.

Application details will be released in July on the city website.



kingsporttn.gov

‘I LOVE THIS PLACE’ SPOTLIGHTS KINGSFORT

“I Love This Place,” a series featured on the This is Kingsport website and social media channels, highlights the positives of living and working in Kingsport through photos, videos and blog posts. The series has featured business owners, community volunteers and residents with heartfelt stories of why they love Kingsport. Whether Kingsport has been your home for 50 or 5 years, there are a lot of reasons to love this place!

thisiskingsport.com



SCAN THE QR CODE TO VISIT THE WEBSITE!

CHRISTMAS IN KINGSFORT DELIVERS

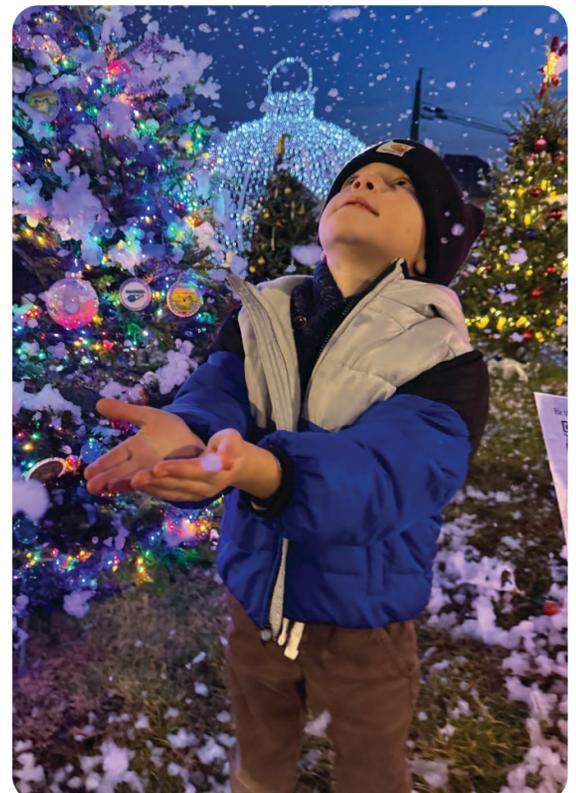
In what has become a popular downtown tradition, Christmas in Kingsport continues to thrive.

Trees in the Park returned as festive and picturesque as ever in 2025 with 100 Christmas trees – decorated by local businesses, individuals and city departments – on display in Glen Bruce Park and Centennial Park.

Kingsport Carousel hosted special events, choral performances were held in Glen Bruce Park, and the Kingsport Firefighter Associations’ vintage firetruck, “Red Annie,” made appearances, along with Buddy the Elf, The Grinch and Santa Claus. Other highlights included the Christmas parade, Symphony of the Mountains Brass Quartet in Centennial Park and the Live Nativity performance around Church Circle.

Make sure to come back in 2026 for even more holiday magic!

christmasinkingsport.com



COMMUNITY CONNECTION

BLUECROSS HEALTHY PLACE AT RIVERWALK PARK SET TO OPEN

BlueCross Healthy Place at Riverwalk Park, located along the Holston River, is expected to open in spring 2026.

Features will include an inclusive play area, community pavilions, sports courts, splash pad, fitness area, recreational water access and restrooms.

The BlueCross Foundation provided \$6.5 million for the redevelopment of the 8.8-acre park, located near the intersection of Netherland Inn Road and Industry Drive, and an additional \$1.3 million for a maintenance fund, bringing the total investment to \$7.8 million. This is the second BlueCross Healthy Place in the city, following the BlueCross Healthy Place at the Kingsport Miracle League Complex, which opened in 2020.



KINGSPORT ARTS FESTIVAL TO RETURN FOR THIRD YEAR IN 2026

The downtown Kingsport ARTS Festival, launched in 2024 by Kingsport Cultural Arts, will return for a third year on April 18, 2026. Geared toward creation and public involvement, the one-day festival showcases the talents of local and regional artists and creatives, bringing hundreds of people of all ages to the 100 block of Shelby Street. The festival will include the popular iron pour, glassblowing, ceramics raku firing, tie-dye T-shirts, chalk art, miniature painting and large canvas finger painting.

artskingsport.org



COMMUNITY FRAMEWORK

KINGSPORT SENIOR CENTER OFFICE RENOVATIONS NEARLY COMPLETE

Office space renovations, part of Phase 1 at the Kingsport Senior Center, have nearly been completed. Phase 1 covers relocation of staff offices and member lounge with enhanced entry and reception area, a larger lounge and volunteer spaces. Future phases will focus on expanded parking and program areas.

seniors.kingsporttn.gov

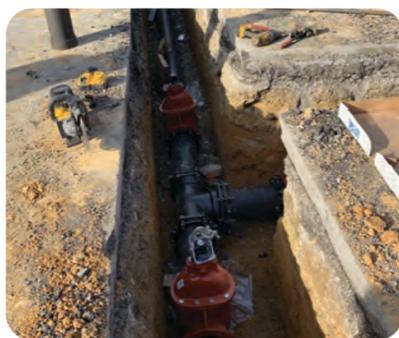


KINGSPORT UTILITIES OUTLINES STATUS OF KEY PROJECTS

Kingsport Utilities, which maintains the city's water, sewer and stormwater systems and infrastructure, has initiated, continued or completed multiple capital projects over the last year to help keep vital services working for residents and businesses of the Model City.

Key projects:

- Installed new \$2 million motor control center for wastewater treatment plant.
- Added \$3.4 million water and sewer line extension to Fieldcrest Acres development.
- Implemented Daupler Response Management System, which will improve after-hours response for waterline breaks, overflows and other emergency issues in water, wastewater and stormwater utilities.
- Replaced more than 70 sewer taps and laterals in Ridgefields community due to inflow and infiltration concerns.
- Allocated \$150,000 to replace water pump station in Huntington Hills neighborhood.
- Launched phase one of Reedy Creek trunk line replacement at estimated cost of \$6.6 million; project aims to increase capacity while reducing inflow and infiltration.
- Installed HVAC equipment and third pump at Colonial View neighborhood for reliability and redundancy.
- Performed \$8 million in improvements to water treatment plant's high service pump station.



JUSTICE CENTER EXPANSION STAYS ON TRACK FOR FINISH IN 2027

For the past 18 months, construction has continued on the Justice Center in downtown Kingsport to build a two-story, 17,626-square-foot addition to the existing building. Crews are focused now on window installation; interior mechanical, electrical and plumbing work; installation of new finishes; renovation of existing areas; brick work; and sheet rock.

The \$14.4 million expansion will bring all court functions under one roof and add two courtrooms, while providing additional space for the Kingsport Police Department. The project is expected to be completed in summer 2027.



PAVING COVERS 16 MILES OF CITY AND STATE ROADS IN 2025

The City of Kingsport kept street resurfacing at a high priority during 2025, paving approximately 8 miles of roadway in the Cooks Valley community from Harbor Chapel Road to Fort Patrick Henry Lake. In addition, contractors completed concrete repairs to Crescent Drive last fall and paved a small portion of Airport Parkway near Jericho Drive by the end of November.

The Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) paved Interstate 81 from Interstate 26 south to near Fall Branch and on the Hawkins County portion of State Route 1 (US 11W) from the bridges over the North Fork of the Holston River west to Church Hill.

In total, approximately \$5 million in street resurfacing work covered more than 16 miles of city and state roads in 2025. Since 2017, Kingsport has allocated and/or spent \$20.7 million on street resurfacing work, repaving more than 115 miles of roads.

During those same years, TDOT spent \$13.6 million on street resurfacing work in Kingsport, repaving 24 miles of roads.

pavekingsport.com

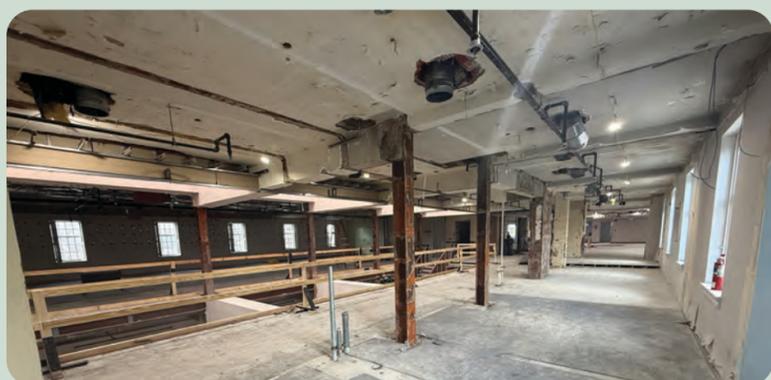


KINGSPORT PUBLIC LIBRARY RENOVATION REACHES MILESTONE

Demolition and environmental work have been completed at the Kingsport Public Library, clearing the way for the construction phase to begin with framing. The milestone in January 2026 marked a big step to deliver an updated, modernized library for the community in summer 2027.

Despite operating from a temporary location at the Fort Henry Mall for much of 2025, the library experienced strong usage and sustained engagement. Total circulation reached 214,193 items, including 99,366 physical materials and 114,827 digital checkouts.

The library welcomed 41,123 visitors, registered more than 900 new library cards and delivered 449 programs and outreach opportunities with a combined attendance of 14,737.



Library services and community engagement gained momentum as programs and outreach launched immediately upon opening at the mall, including the kickoff of Summer Reading and FunFest. These early initiatives drew significant community participation and underscored the library's continued role as a welcoming and active gathering place.

kingsportlibrary.org

COMMUNITY FRAMEWORK

ALLANDALE MANSION RECEIVES FRESH PAINT AND ROOF REPAIRS

The City of Kingsport has invested in painting the exterior and repairing the roof of Allandale Mansion to address degradation issues and ensure sustainability of the historic structure.

As part of site preparation, Taff & Frye handled lead paint removal, and Brown Brothers Painting completed exterior painting in July 2025, including the mansion, Brown House, Caretaker’s House and garage. The company used a high-hiding white primer, which can cover irregularities on surfaces, and Farrell-Calhoun paint with the shutters now in a complementary light gray.

The roof repairs, which include full replacement of rotted balustrades, will address leaking and damaged plaster inside the mansion. With the roof repairs nearing completion, both projects have greatly improved the appearance of the facilities. Upcoming projects at the Brown House will address floor joists and heating and cooling issues.

allandalemansion.com



NEW UTILITY BILLING SYSTEM TO LAUNCH IN APRIL 2026

Kingsport will launch a new utility billing system in April 2026 with faster service, clearer bills and more payment options to replace the city’s current aging platform.

Residents will gain access to a new online portal and mobile tools to manage their accounts.

The city also will introduce Grace AI, a phone-based virtual assistant that provides quick answers about balances, due dates, water usage and service requests and can support secure over-the-phone payment processing. The new system will reduce wait times and improve customer support.

City staff members have been preparing through training and system testing to ensure a smooth transition. Additional updates and guidance will be shared as the launch date approaches at the end of April.

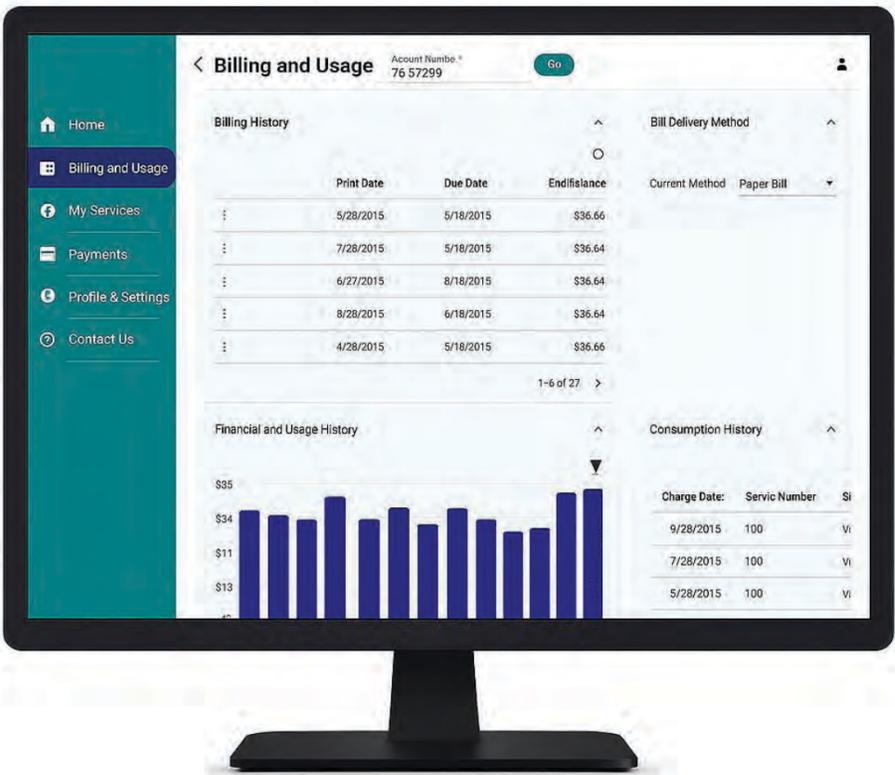
In the days leading up to the launch of the new utility billing system, residents will notice a brief transition period as the city prepares for the change. The current system will enter maintenance mode, and services, such as account changes and taking payments, will be temporarily unavailable after close of business on Thursday, April 23, through Monday, April 27, at 8 a.m. This ensures all customer data transfers properly between systems. The city will share updates on any temporary service changes on the city website and social media channels.

Customers will be able to use new payment methods such as Pay-By-Text; digital wallets such as Apple Pay, Google Pay, Venmo and PayPal; or elect cash payment methods at local retailers such as Walgreens, CVS and Dollar General.



AI CALL CENTER AGENT

GRACE



KINGSFORT CITY SCHOOLS

DOBYNS-BENNETT HIGH SCHOOL BAND CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

The Dobyns-Bennett High School Band will mark a century of musical excellence during the 2026-27 school year. The momentous occasion calls for a grand celebration, and the Kingsport community is invited to an alumni band football game set for Sept. 11, 2026, and the Centennial Gala to be held Sept. 26, 2026.

Over the last 100 years, the band has left an indelible mark on the community, state and beyond as it consistently strived for excellence and pushed the boundaries of musical performance and education. Students have poured their hearts and souls into their instruments and dedicated countless hours to perfecting their craft.

Music is a transformative force that impacts people's lives. It has the power to evoke emotions, heal wounds and unite communities. Studies have shown that students who participate in music programs perform better academically, develop strong discipline and work ethic, and are more likely to succeed in college and beyond. Investing in the Dobyns-Bennett High School Band contributes to the success and personal growth of students, helping to shape the leaders of tomorrow.

“

Being in a band isn't just the academic study of music. It's an exercise in pursuing excellence on a diverse team whose members share common goals. It's an opportunity to share passion with others in an open and honest way. These are the skills that make good spouses, good employees and good people!

– Lafe Cook, Dobyns-Bennett High School Director of Bands

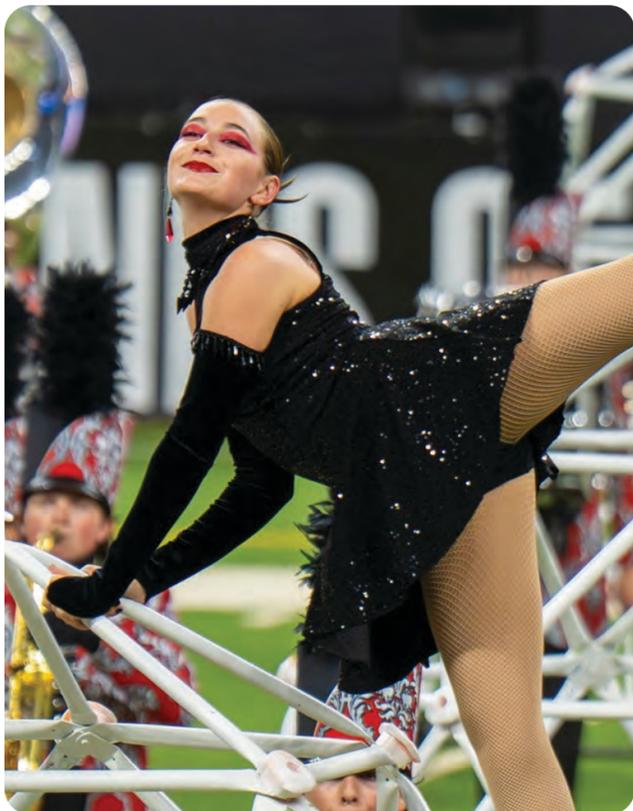
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BRIEF HISTORY

Professor S.T. “Fess” Witt came to Kingsport from Norton, Virginia, to organize Dobyns-Bennett's first school band in 1926. It comprised 45 students with 10 cornets, 12 clarinets, five trombones, two alto horns, six saxophones, three basses, two baritones, two drums, two fifes and one piccolo.

For many years the band had a tradition of parading through downtown Kingsport before football games to excite residents for the “big game.” During World War II, the band would gather to send off Kingsport service members as they departed. The band also would participate in a parade to honor the school's graduates every spring.



MODERN DAY

Today, the Dobyns-Bennett band program is composed of a football marching band and color guard, three concert bands, two competitive winter guards and a percussion ensemble. Everyone in the program participates in the football marching band, which performs a halftime show designed to entertain fans at both home and away games. The football marching band also participates in local and national parades.

The competitive marching band and color guard members are selected based on musical and marching abilities and the desire to achieve a high degree of artistic excellence. The show is performed in local, regional and national competitive venues.

The concert season begins following the conclusion of the marching season. Every student auditions and is placed in one of three concert bands – Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band or Concert Band.

All three concert bands perform local concerts that are free and open to the community. The Symphonic Band and Concert Band also perform at district concert festivals. The Wind Ensemble represents Dobyns-Bennett, Kingsport and the State of Tennessee at state, national and international concert festivals and conventions.

The Dobyns-Bennett band program is proud of its diversity and works diligently to meet the needs of all students based on their musical ability and dedication, not on their socioeconomic status.