



## Where could Tennessee pitcher Kuhns be picked?

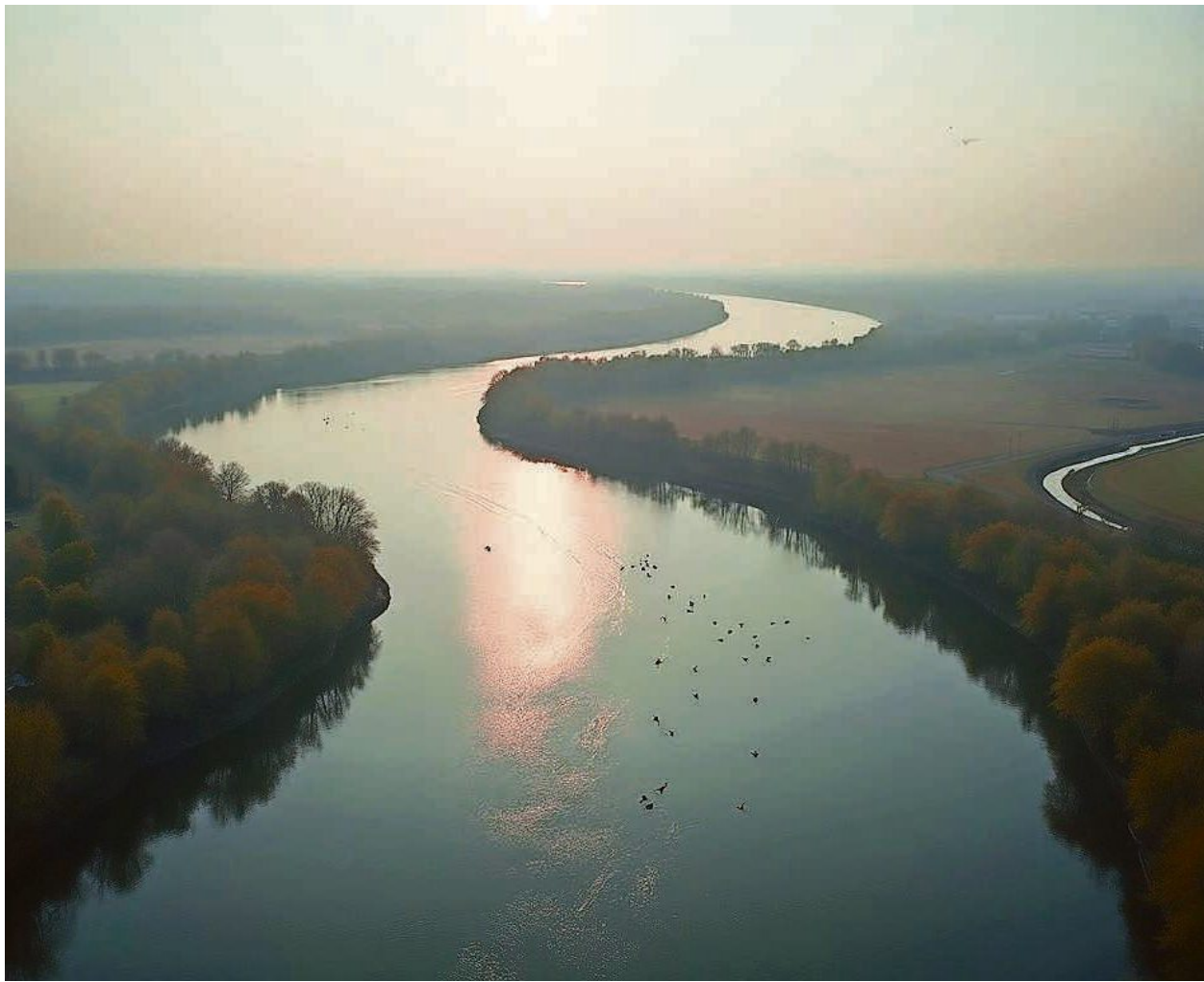
SPORTS, 1B

# The Daily Herald.

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### THINGS TO DO



At 284 miles long, the Duck is home to over 50 species of freshwater mussels and 151 species of fish. The Duck River also supports an estimated 150,000 kayakers, anglers and boaters and serves as a water source for nearly 250,000 residents in Middle Tennessee. PHOTO PROVIDED BY DUCK RIVER CONSERVANCY

## Duck River Expo, line dancing, classic cars, kickball top list

Jay Powell

Columbia Daily Herald  
USA TODAY NETWORK – TENNESSEE

The summer rolls on with a weekend of outdoor activities at Henry Horton State Park, line dancing at The Mulehouse, classic cars at the Columbia Co-op and an adults-only kickball tournament.

Let's take a closer look:

### 1. Duck River Outdoor Expo at Henry Horton

Celebrate Henry Horton State Park's biggest weekend of the year with three days of outdoor fun at the Duck River Outdoor Expo.

The festivities will kick off Friday at the park, 3209 Nashville Highway, with live music and a nature market from 5-8 p.m., with the Mad Mallard Overnight Trail Run starting at 7 p.m.

Saturday's main events begin with the Run Duck Run 10 Duathlon from 7-10 a.m., as well as outdoor recreation/education booths, live music, food trucks and a

kids zone from 3-8 p.m.

Sunday will round out the Duck River Outdoor Expo with the Hammer Drop Mountain Bike Ride from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., as well as a public bike ride hosted by Murfreesboro Bike Club from 8-11 a.m.

For more information about the 2026 Duck River Outdoor Expo, including how to book lodging for the weekend, visit [www.TNStateParks.com](http://www.TNStateParks.com).

### 2. Country Dance Night at The Mulehouse

Get out and strut your stuff at the popular Country Dance Night, which returns this weekend to The Mulehouse, 812 S. High St.

Hosted by The Urban Cowboy Line Dancers, Country Dance Night will take place from 7-11 p.m. Friday. No experience is required to partake.

The evening will begin with beginner to intermediate dances at 7 p.m., with more advanced dancing kicking off at 9 p.m.

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## State Rep's law firm sues TN, claims discrimination

Evan Mealins

Nashville Tennessean  
USA TODAY NETWORK – TENNESSEE

A Republican state lawmaker's firm is arguing Tennessee's COVID-19-era mortgage assistance program discriminated against White homeowners and is seeking compensation.

The program, called the Tennessee Homeowner Assistance Fund, ended in 2025. The Tennessee Housing Development Agency prioritized giving funds to low-income and "socially disadvantaged individuals," which the agency defined in part as members of a minority race or ethnicity.

"THDA used the term 'socially disadvantaged individual' as a proxy for non-White homeowners, and it prioritized aid to those 'socially disadvantaged individuals' over White homeowners," the lawsuit says.

The suit comes from Franklin Republican Rep. Gino Bulso's law firm.

It was filed in U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee on July 1 by Paul Krog of the Bulso Firm and four attorneys from Lehotsky Cohn, a Washington, D.C. boutique law firm. The lawsuit is against THDA, its executive director Ralph Perrey and its board of directors.

The named plaintiff in the case is Norlin Jones, a White homeowner in Jackson who struggled to pay his mortgage after his hours were cut at a manufacturing plant during the pandemic, the lawsuit says. Jones never heard about the program because THDA marketed it primarily to members of groups that have been "subjected to racial or ethnic prejudice or cultural bias," the lawsuit states.

The suit is asking a judge to order the state to reopen the program and pay the White homeowners it says "would have qualified for funds under THDA's Tennessee Homeowner Assistance Fund program but did not meet THDA's definition of socially disadvantaged individual."

A judge will have to find the lawsuit meets several requirements before it can move forward as a class action suit.

A THDA spokesperson directed questions to the Tennessee Attorney General Jonathan Skrmetti's Office, which represents the state in lawsuits. But the lawsuit's objectives largely align with Skrmetti's, and the suit even quotes him in its opening paragraph.

Spokespeople for Skrmetti's office did not return a request for comment.

The Tennessee Housing Assistance Fund began in 2021 to distribute money given to states through the American Rescue Plan Act.

Tennessee received \$168 million in funds, and homeowners who applied were eligible for up to \$40,000 of relief.

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### EXCLUSIVE

## Fast degrees coming to UT to meet workforce demand

Keenan Thomas

Knoxville News Sentinel  
USA TODAY NETWORK – TENNESSEE

The University of Tennessee System will begin exploring and implementing three-year, 90-credit-hour degree programs across the system's five campuses, presenting an alternative route for students to earn a diploma in Tennessee.

The central idea is to provide every student attending a UT campus the option to earn a degree faster, finish college with 25% less debt and enter critical workforce areas quickly to meet state needs.

"These degrees will be focused, very aligned with high-demand fields," UT System President Randy Boyd told Knoxville News in an exclusive interview. "We're going to be focusing on those fields in which we have critical workforce shortages."

The degrees will be different from traditional 120-credit hour bachelor's degrees, including the name. UT's accrediting agency approved "reduced-hour bachelor's degrees" and "abridged bachelor's degrees" as potential names, and Boyd added "applied bachelor's degrees."

The curriculum will be tightly focused on the fields of study. Faculty members and campus provosts will

work together to develop the programs, and Boyd said it might come down to how many electives are or aren't offered.

It's part of the public system's mission to offer affordable options, as well as challenge longstanding academic traditions.

"I think if we were in any other industry as a business, even in government, people are constantly reinventing and innovating to provide better services and provide them in a more efficient and faster way," Boyd told Knoxville News. "In higher education, we haven't been

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