



(L to R): Stephanie Slack-Allen, DNP, APRN, PMHNP-BC; Chris Blount, PA-C; Elly Riley, DO; Lori Holladay, NP; Jill Bennett, NP; Katharine Bullock, FNP; and Emily Ezell, DO.



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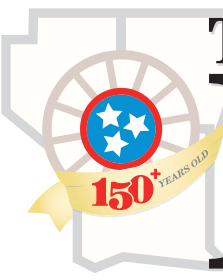
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Kee Warns Virtual School Could Impact County Schools' Sales Tax Funding

BY LYNDSLEY SUMMERS

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HUNTINGDON (February 18) — Dr. Jonathan Kee, director of schools for the Huntingdon Special School District (HSSD), has raised concerns about a possible reduction in local sales tax revenue that could significantly impact schools in Carroll County. Speaking during the district's February 18 school board meeting, Kee outlined an issue tied to the way sales tax dollars are allocated following the launch of a statewide virtual school operated by South Carroll (Clarksburg) Special School District.

The virtual school accepts students

See KEE on Page 3



Dr. Jonathan Kee addresses the Huntingdon Special School District Board of Education. Photo by Lyndsey Summers/The Banner

Huntingdon School Board Approves Calendar Changes

BY LYNDSLEY SUMMERS

lsummers@mckenziebanner.com

HUNTINGDON (February 18) — The Huntingdon Special School District Board of Education met Wednesday afternoon to finalize amendments to the 2025-26 school year calendar after the ten-day break caused by Winter Storm Fern.

The Huntingdon Special School District began the school year with 13 stockpile days. Two were used in the fall semester for staff development days, leaving 11 days available at the time of the winter storm. Because students were out for

10 days, Director of Schools Dr. Jonathan Kee recommended for the board to amend the HSSD calendar to remove spring semester staff development days — February 2 and April 6 — and make them into regular instruction days. This way, HSSD will keep one available stockpile day in case of an emergency.

Kee assured the board that, if another storm were to occur in March, the district could still retroactively apply for the state waiver to get its ten stockpile days back. Right

See CALENDAR on Page 3

BETHEL UNIVERSITY



(L to R) Sheila Horne, C. Scott Shepherd and Garrett Burns.

Three Announced in Key Leadership Positions

McKENZIE (February 16) — Bethel University announces three strategic leadership appointments that will further strengthen the University's mission and distinctive extracurricular experiences. These appointments reflect Bethel's con-

tinued commitment to Christ-centered leadership and institutional excellence.

Garrett Burns Named Chaplain & Director of Strategic Initiatives

Garrett Burns has been appointed Chaplain & Director of Strategic

Initiatives, expanding his current service to the University into a dual-role leadership position reporting directly to the President.

In this expanded role, Burns will

See BETHEL on Page 3

McKENZIE School Board To Address Inclement Weather Days

The McKenzie Special School District (MSSD) Board of Education meets Tuesday, March 3, at 5:30 p.m. in the MSSD board room.

The following items are on the MSSD school board's March agenda:

Consider for approval amendments to MSSD 25-26 School Calendar (inclement-weather related).

Consider for approval 2027-2028 District Calendar.

Consider for approval MHS DECA members (who qualify) to attend DECA International.

Ballots Set for County, School Board Races

BY LYNDSLEY SUMMERS

lsummers@mckenziebanner.com

CARROLL COUNTY (February 19) — Petitions are in, and ballots are locked for the May 5 primary and August 6 general county and school board elections. The deadline for any interested candidates — party-affiliated or independent — running for county or school board seats was February 19 at noon.

Certified write-ins for any county or school board seat may be submitted to the Carroll County Election Commission for a short period of time.

The City of Clarksburg municipal election is also August 6, 2026. Interested

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Khristi Dawn Cunningham

Suspect in Deputy Bonham's Murder Waives 14-Day Preliminary Hearing

BY BRITTANY MARTIN

brittany@mckenziebanner.com

WEAKLEY COUNTY (February 20) — A preliminary hearing that was originally scheduled for Friday, February 20, 2026 in the first degree murder of a Weakley County Sheriff's Deputy has been waived and postponed until a later date.

The suspect, Khristi Dawn Cunningham, 44, from Stark County, Ohio, has waived the 14-day

requirement for her preliminary hearing. The preliminary hearing has not been dismissed but will be reset at a later date.

According to court documents, the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation has been subpoenaed as a witness.

The case remains in the preliminary stage, and a hearing will still be

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Huntingdon Beer Board, Town Council to Meet February 24

The Huntingdon Town Council and Beer Board meets Tuesday, February 24, at 5:15 p.m. at Huntingdon City Hall.

The Huntingdon Beer Board will consider an application filed by CashSaver, located at 20150 Main Street East in Huntingdon, for a permit to sell beer at retail for off-premise consumption.

The following items are on the Huntingdon Town Council’s February 24 agenda:

1. Public Hearing relating to the proposed amendment to the Zoning Map to rezone a portion of property located on R.B. Wilson Drive and Chickasaw Drive identified as Carroll County Tax Map 63, Parcel 49.03.
2. Ordinance No. 654, an ordinance amending

the Official Zoning Map of Huntingdon, Tennessee, a portion of property (Tax Map 63, Parcel 49.03 and adjacent right-of-way) located on R.B. Wilson Drive and Chickasaw Drive, which is owned by Ensley Dirtwork & Investment Properties LLC and Beaver Creek Management Group LLC, from H-M (Hospital-Medical) to R-1 (Low-Density Residential), second and final reading.

3. Ordinance No. 655, an ordinance amending the Official Zoning Map of Huntingdon,

Tennessee, by rezoning a property (Tax Map 63, Parcel 23.00 and a portion of Crossroads Church right-of-way located directly between the two sections of property being annexed) located at the Northeast

corner of Northwood Drive and Crossroads Church Road from R-1 (Low-Density Residential) to R-2 (Medium-Density Residential). The property is owned by Ashlee Young and it is proposed for development by Jason Kirby and Collin Miller. The property comprises approximately 66.8 acres, first reading.

4. Consider the appointment of the executive director of The Dixie Carter Performing Arts Center.
5. Consider the request for the use of Edwards Park and Veterans Park on Saturday, June 6, 2026 for softball tournament fundraiser for Jacob Warbritton.
6. Consider moving Tuesday, March 24, 2026 regular monthly meeting to Tuesday, March 17, 2026.

Man Charged with Corpse Abuse, Evidence Tampering, Animal Cruelty

BY BRITTANY MARTIN
brittany@mckenziebanner.com

MARTIN, Tenn. (February 19) — A man faces multiple charges after he allegedly failed to report a dead body, moved the body of the deceased and attempted to clean the scene at a Martin residence.

Investigators claim Elisha Stewart, 24, discovered the body of Mr. Alexander Warren on or around February 13 and failed to notify authorities.

Stewart has been charged with Abuse of Corpse, Fabricating/Tampering with Evidence, Failure To Report Discovery of Dead Body, and Aggravated Cruelty To Animals.

According to the affidavit,



Elisha Stewart, 24

On February 19, 2026 at approximately 1046 hours, the Weakley County Sheriff’s Office responded to Troy Road in Martin, Tenn. in reference to a possible dead body on the property.

Through investigation, it was determined the victim, Mr. Alexander Warren,

had been deceased for sometime in an upstairs bedroom.

It was discovered that the defendant found the victim deceased on or around February 13, 2026 and failed to notify the Sheriff or his office. Also, it was determined that the defendant did move the body from within the residence to the backyard. Then, it was discovered that the defendant attempted to clean the upstairs floor to get rid of any evidence of a dead body.

The defendant did unlawfully and with no justifiable purpose kill a small dog that belonged to the victim.

This incident did occur in Weakley County, Tenn.

A court hearing will be held for Stewart on March 4.

Black Bear Spotted in Piney Campground Area

BY SHANNON MCFARLIN
Forever Communications

LAND BETWEEN THE LAKES (February 20) — The Piney Campground area in the Land Between the Lakes had a visit from a black bear and LBL officials said this morning that’s not as uncommon as you might think. “While we think a couple pass through each year, we don’t always get a glimpse of them. A hunter’s trail cam caught this guy wan-



dering near Piney Campground and the Fort Henry Trail System” in Stewart County. “Please be aware

of wildlife when hiking or recreating on the southern end”, they said. *LBL photo.*

McKenzie to Purchase EV Dump Trucks, Chargers

BY LYNDSY SUMMERS
lsummers@mckenziebanner.com

McKENZIE (February 12) — The City of McKenzie is going electric. City Mayor Ryan Griffin announced during McKenzie’s February city council meeting that the city will soon receive \$543,255 from an Electric Vehicle (EV) grant. With this money, the city will purchase four all-electric trucks.

These trucks will replace Public Works Di-

rector Johnny Mercer’s dump truck, along with trucks used by the Water Department and Parks Department.

McKenzie’s current dump trucks cost the city roughly \$700 per month to operate (\$8,400 per year). The EV trucks will cost \$2 per day to operate (\$730 per year).

The city will also purchase three EV chargers. Two of the chargers will be installed for city departments’ use only. One EV

charger will be installed downtown for public use. Currently, the lone EV charger in McKenzie is at Peppers Ford.

Mayor Griffin hopes the public charger will encourage customers to shop at downtown businesses while charging their cars.

The project costs \$724,340 total. The city will need to pay \$181,000. Mayor Griffin said he will bring forward proposals to handle these expenses in the coming months.

Community Prayer Service To Tackle Life’s Seasons

BY LYNDSY SUMMERS
lsummers@mckenziebanner.com

McKENZIE — Scheduled for March 1, McKenzie’s second Community Prayer Service will emphasize God’s love through all seasons of life — seasons of joy, seasons of waiting and seasons of struggle.

Event organizer Carlton Townes said he built this event around God’s faith

and trustful encouragement throughout every season someone may encounter.

This Community Prayer Service features a panel of guests who will speak about their testimonies, sharing stories about the seasons they’ve endured and the ways God helped them through their struggles.

As with the Community Prayer Service held in October 2025 at McKen-

zie’s downtown Veteran’s Park, this service will feature speakers from several local churches and faith-based organizations. Jacob Ervin will lead praise and worship.

The Community Prayer Service begins at 4:30 p.m. Sunday, March 1 at the McKenzie Park Theatre. Guests of all ages, hometowns and seasons are invited to attend.

Sellers is New Manager of Save-A-Lot

McKENZIE — E.W. James welcomes Jason Sellers back to McKenzie, Tenn., as the store manager of Save-A-Lot, Highland Drive, McKenzie.

Jason’s career with the E.W. James company, owner of E.W. James Supermarket and Save-A-Lot in McKenzie, began as a senior in high school, when he started working as a cashier and in carry-out. Over the past 36 years, he has built a deep knowledge of the company, working in nearly every E.W. James store at some point during his career.

Jason holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business from Bethel University and brings decades of experience, leadership, and dedication to his role. He and his wife, LeAnn, have been residents of McKenzie since 1998.

Jason’s goal for the Save-A-Lot store is simple and meaningful. He wants to make a great store even



Jason Sellers

better. He takes pride in his work, values a customer-first mindset, and is known for never meeting a stranger. Jason is excited

to reconnect with familiar faces and looks forward to serving the McKenzie community he proudly calls home.



Featured in the video is Townes Boyd of Paris, Tenn., a sophomore at Bethel University in McKenzie, Tenn., and a member of the university’s Renaissance program.

Northwest Tennessee Tourism Releases New ‘Small Towns, Big Experiences’ Destination Video

NORTHWEST TENNESSEE — Northwest Tennessee Tourism Association (NWTTA) has released a brand-new destination video celebrating the region’s signature theme, “Small Towns, Big Experiences.” A year in the making, the new video invites travelers to take a fresh look at Northwest Tennessee through a fast-paced, story-driven tour of standout attractions, eats, and outdoor adventure.

This regional video project was produced through a collaboration with Adelsberger Marketing (Jackson, Tenn.) and Crove Media (Paris, Tenn.), combining strategic destination marketing with cinematic storytelling and local creative talent.



- The video features six locations across Northwest Tennessee:**
- **Discovery Park of America** — Union City, Tenn.
 - **Crown Winery** — Humboldt, Tenn.
 - **Southland Safari Cabin Rentals & Guided Tours** — Yuma, Tenn.
 - **Reelfoot Lake & Southshore Resort** — Samburg, Tenn.
 - **The Grind Mac & Cheese Burger Bar** — Martin, Tenn.
 - **Eiffel Tower Splash Park** — Paris, Tenn.

The main character is Townes Boyd of Paris, Tenn., a sophomore at Bethel University in McKenzie, Tenn., and a member of the university’s Renaissance program. The video follows Boyd through a snapshot of the region’s offerings showcasing how Northwest Tennessee pairs memorable, high-quality experiences with the welcoming, authentic charm of small-town communities.

“This video marks an exciting step forward for Northwest Tennessee,” said Kasey Muench, Executive Director of the Northwest Tennessee Tourism Association. “Our goal is to grab attention in key drive markets and

spark that moment of ‘Wait... that’s in Northwest Tennessee?’ Whether you’re coming for family fun, wildlife, a weekend getaway, or a great meal, we want visitors to see just how much our corner of the state has to offer, and then come experience it for themselves.”

A Launchpad for What’s Next

NWTTA emphasized that this video is part of a bigger, ongoing effort to promote all nine counties of Northwest Tennessee.

“Any single video can only capture a snapshot of a region this diverse,” Muench added. “This project is a starting point, and we’re excited about what comes next.” NWTTA looks forward to developing additional content and future video projects that continue to showcase more communities, more stories, and more experiences across Northwest Tennessee as we advance our mission to promote the entire region.

Plan Your Trip with The 2026 NWTN Visitors Guide

To help travelers plan their next getaway, NWTTA also announced the 2026 NWTN Visitors Guide is now available both online and in print. The guide can be viewed online at www.nwntourism.com, and visitors may also request a physical guide to be mailed directly to them.

Save the Date: Cornerstone Tourism Awards

NWTTA is also preparing for its 2nd Annual Cornerstone Tourism Awards, celebrating tourism excellence across Northwest Tennessee. The event will take place Thursday, April 23, 2026, at Discovery Park of America in Union City, Tennessee. Sponsorship and table opportunities are currently available for businesses and community partners who want to support the event and gain regional visibility. More information is available at www.nwntourism.com/cornerstone-awards/.

Media Resources

For your convenience, NWTTA has provided the following resources:

Video (YouTube): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g4ygXwq51TE>

Trip-planning tools + 2026 Visitors Guide: <https://nwntourism.com/visitors-guide/>

About Northwest Tennessee Tourism Association (NWTTA)

The Northwest Tennessee Tourism Association promotes the nine-county region of Benton, Carroll, Crockett, Dyer, Gibson, Henry, Lake, Obion, and Weakley counties by highlighting attractions, events, and experiences that make the area a destination for visitors. Through collaborative marketing, events, and advocacy, NWTN Tourism supports local businesses and drives economic growth across the region.

Kee

...From Front Page

from across Tennessee, and Kee expressed that its statewide enrollment has created unintended consequences for how local sales tax funds are distributed. Under current funding mechanisms, Carroll County sales tax dollars could be redirected to support students who live outside the county, including those in East and Middle Tennessee, rather than those attending in-person

schools within Carroll County. “The main issue is whether it’s appropriate for Carroll County sales tax dollars to educate students who do not live here, whose parents do not work here, and who do not spend their money here,” Kee said. If legislative action is not taken, Kee warned HSSD could see a minimum reduction of \$125,000 in sales tax revenue next year. He noted that this amount is equivalent to at least two certified teaching positions, a loss he said would be significant for the district.

Kee said district leaders have been in ongoing discussions with Senator John Stevens and Representative Brock Martin to seek a legislative solution that would protect local funding. He expressed encouragement over lawmakers’ willingness to listen and engage in dialogue. Kee said he hopes the issue will be resolved during the current legislative session this spring to prevent financial strain on Carroll County schools and ensure local tax dollars remain focused on educating local students.

Calendar

...From Front Page

now, he said, the district needs to exhaust all available stockpile days before applying for the waiver. The board approved Kee’s request to make February 2 and April 6 regular instruction days for HSSD students. Kee also informed the board of a sizable surplus list, containing items such as CD players purchased in 2005, belonging to the district. The board voted to declare all items on the list as surplus, therefore

Ballots

...From Front Page

candidates must submit completed petitions by March 10 at noon to qualify for the Clarksburg municipal race. Carroll County Election Commission Deputy Administrator Jennifer Hilliard provided the following list of qualified candidates for the May 5 primary and August 6 general election on February 19 at 3:40 p.m.: **Circuit Court Clerk (four-year term):** Incumbent Sarah Bradberry (R) **County Mayor (four-year term):** Incumbent Joseph G. Butler (R) **Property Assessor (four-year term):** John Austin (R) **County Clerk (four-year term):** Incumbent Darlene Kirk (I) **Trustee (four-year term):** Incumbent Paula Bolen (I) **Register of Deeds (four-year term):** Incumbent Natalie McCullough Porter (D) Chad Barnhart (R) **County Sheriff (four-year term):** Joel Pate (R) Tim Pratt (R) Eric Sawyers (R) Michael A. Smith (I) Ryan White (I) **Road Supervisor (four-year term):** The county has reduced the number of road supervisors from two to one, effective September 1, 2026. Incumbent Ronnie Wade (I) Otis Nesbitt (I) William Jason Longmire (I) **Republican State Executive Committee Man:** Incumbent Ryan Ellegood (R) **Republican State Executive Committee Woman:** Incumbent Tess Robbins (R) **Democratic State Executive Committee Man:** James Benau (D) The following county commission seats have four-year terms. **District 1 (Atwood, Cedar Grove, Lavinia) - 3 seats:** Incumbent Darrell Ridgely (R) Incumbent Jimmy Halford (I) Incumbent Randy Long (I) **District 2 (McLemoresville, Trezevant) - 2 seats:** Incumbent Daniel Lee

Willman (R) Incumbent Lana Y. Suite (I) **District 3 (Bruceton, Buena Vista, Sp. Grove, Vale) - 2 seats:** Brandy Boyd (R) Will McMackin (I) Amon Miller (I) Dwayne Torsen (I) **District 4 (Cannon, Hollow Rock, Macedonia) - 2 seats:** Incumbent Morris Rogers (R) **District 5 (Civic Center) - 3 seats:** Incumbent Cyril Ostiguy (R) Incumbent Barry Mac Murphy (I) Jimmy Crossett (R) Paul D. Hugueley (I) Rakaya Humphreys (I) Anna Wheat (I) Curt Taylor (I) **District 6 (Clarksburg, Concord, New Liberty, Westport) - 2 seats:** Incumbent Jimmy D. McClure (I) Incumbent Philip E. Moore (I) Madison Boyd Endres (R) Kurt Hunley (I) **District 7 (Huntingdon Police Station) - 2 seats:** Incumbent Lori Dillahunt (R) Incumbent Walter Smothers (I) Jimmie Sue Staten (D) Lynn Grice (I) **District 8 (McKenzie Senior Citizens Center) - 2 seats:** Incumbent Jay Phipps (R) Incumbent Willie Huffman (I) **District 9 (McKenzie Church of Christ, City Hall) - 3 seats:** Incumbent Jason R. Martin (I) Incumbent Spiridon L. Roditis (I) Ricky Price (I) **Carroll County School Board - three seats (four-year terms)** **District 1 (Lavinia, Cedar Grove, Atwood, McLemoresville, Trezevant, McKenzie Senior Citizens Center):** Incumbent Mike Foster (I) **District 2 (Bruceton, Recycling Center, Hollow Rock, McKenzie Church of Christ, McKenzie City Hall):** Incumbent Deborah Broadbent (I) **District 3 (Civic Center, Clarksburg, Concord, Westport, Huntingdon Police Station):** Incumbent Charlotte Tucker (I) **Hollow Rock-Bruceton Special School District School Board - four seats** **One District 16 Hollow Rock City seat (2-year unexpired):** Incumbent Johnathan

Tedford (I) **One District 16 Bruce-ton City seat (four-year term):** Incumbent Brandy Boyd (R) **One District 16 at-large seat (four-year term):** Incumbent April Hampton (I) Eric Daniel Gonzalez (R) **One District 15 Buena Vista seat (four-year term):** Incumbent Michael Graves (I) **Huntingdon Special School District School Board - two at-large seats (six-year term):** Incumbent Morgan Butler (I) Incumbent Shawna Smith (I) **McKenzie Special School District School Board - four at-large seats (four-year term):** Candidates must live in Carroll County. Incumbent Spiridon L. Roditis (I) Brian Keith Stafford (I) Brian Winston (I) Renee Hobson (I) Matthew Lane (I) **South Carroll Special School District School Board - two at-large seats (four-year term):** Keith E. Hollowell (R) Sam Melton (I) Brian Crum (I) **West Carroll Special School District School Board - three seats (four-year term).** **One Old County seat:** Linda Black (I) **One Old Atwood seat:** No candidates. **One Old Trezevant seat (2-year unexpired):** Incumbent Kelly M. Weaver (I) Paul Mueller (I) The City of Clarksburg will hold an election for mayor and two alderman positions on August 6. **City of Clarksburg Mayor:** Incumbent Howell W. Todd - filed 2/13 Jeff Reed - has yet to file **Two City of Clarksburg alderman positions:** Incumbent Barbara A. McClure - filed 2/18 Incumbent Judy Grant Smith - filed 2/18 Other offices on the August 6 primary midterm election ballot are David Kustoff’s U.S. Congressional District 8 seat, Bill Hagerly’s U.S. Senate seat, Bill Lee’s Tennessee Governor seat, Tandy Darby’s Tennessee House of Representatives District 76 seat and Brock Martin’s Tennessee House of Representatives District 79 seat. Brock Martin (R) has filed a petition to for re-election to his House of Representatives District 79 seat.

Murder

...From Front Page

held to determine whether there is sufficient evidence to move the case forward. A new court date has not been announced yet.

Case History

During the cold early morning hours of January 30, 2026, Weakley County Sheriff’s Deputy Derrick Bonham was shot and killed while responding to the scene of a 911 call at the Days Inn in Martin, Tenn. At the request of 27th Judicial District Attorney General Colin Johnson, Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI) special agents began investigating the on-duty homicide of the Weakley County deputy and announced the arrest of Khristi Dawn Cunningham (DOB: 12/14/81).

The arrest warrant stated, “The undersigned affiant, after being duly sworn according to the law, states that Khristi Dawn Cunningham whose name is otherwise unknown to the affiant, committed the offense of T.C.A. 39-13-202 in the above [Weakley] county on or about January 30, 2026.

“Further, affiant makes oath that the essential facts constituting said offense, the sources of affiant’s information, and the reasons why his/her information is believable concerning said facts are as follows:

“On 01/30/2026 at approximately 0252 hours, Khristi Dawn Cunningham utilized the Weakley 9-1-1 Call System to call in a “shots fired” call at the Days Inn (800 University St, Martin, TN) while firing a shot from a pistol at or near the Days Inn parking lot. Shortly thereafter, Cunningham drove to the parking lot of Pocket’s convenience store (821 University St.) and positioned herself in a location to observe Martin Police Department officers’ arriv-



Weakley County Sheriff's Deputy Derrick Bonham

al at the Days Inn. During this time, Cunningham continued calling 9-1-1 and hanging up. Law enforcement personnel were able to utilize the GPS location of Cunningham’s cell phone, which placed her cell phone at or near Pocket’s convenience store. Subsequently, Weakley County Sheriff’s Deputy Derrick Bonham arrived at Pocket’s and parked beside Cunningham’s vehicle. When Deputy Bonham made contact with Cunningham, she was on a call with 9-1-1. When the call ended, Deputy Bonham asked Cunningham to exit her vehicle. According to Deputy Bonham’s body-worn camera, Cunningham exited her vehicle, produced a pistol, and immediately shot Deputy Bonham. Cunningham shot Deputy Bonham three more times while Deputy Bonham was incapacitated on the ground. Cunningham then fired two more shots in the direction of Martin Police Department officers who were in the parking lot of the Days Inn. Deputy Bonham died as a result of Cunningham premeditatedly and intentionally shooting him. This incident did occur in Weakley County, Tennessee.”

Derrick, age 37, is survived by his wife, Nicole Bonham of Greenfield, and three children, Harper, Hayden, and Hudson. He also leaves behind his mother, Bertha Bonham; father, John Bonham; brother, John Boy

(Cynthia) Bonham; nephew and niece, Daniel and Frankie; in-laws, Troy and BeLynda Jones; uncle, Jerry Armes; and grandmother-in-law, June Neblett. Bonham’s funeral was on Monday, February 2, 2026, at 2 p.m. at the Greenfield School Gymnasium. Burial was in Highland Cemetery in Greenfield.

Suspect's History

Khristi Dawn Cunningham is from Stark County, Ohio and worked for the Ohio Corrections Department, according to Northwest Ohio news media. According to News5 of Cleveland, she worked as a manager at Indian River Juvenile Correctional Facility and as a corrections officer for the State of Ohio. Indian River Juvenile Correctional Facility is in Massillon. A neighbor told News5 she saw law enforcement outside Cunningham’s Canal Fulton home on Saturday (after the shooting) but there hasn’t been anyone at Cunningham’s home for a couple of weeks.

News5 reported that according to records from the State of Ohio State Personnel Board of Review, Cunningham filed a complaint alleging a violation of the state’s whistleblower protection. In the 2021 filing, it identified Cunningham as an operations manager for the Ohio Department of Youth Services.

The Board dismissed Cunningham’s appeal. A spokesperson for the Ohio Department of Corrections said Cunningham worked as a corrections officer at Richland Correctional Institution from December 2023 until she resigned in September 2025, according to News5. According to the Canton Repository, Cunningham and her husband were described as Akron residents when they were featured in a 2011 ABC News story about having Black and White twins.

Bethel

...From Front Page

continue to provide pastoral leadership to the campus community, along with Dr. Anne Hames, Dean of Chapel, while also serving as a strategic partner to the President on mission-critical initiatives. The position is designed to advance both the spiritual life and the University’s long-term strategic priorities.

Burns has faithfully served Bethel since 2017 and brings more than a decade of full-time ministerial experience. He holds a Master of Divinity from Memphis Theological Seminary and is an ordained minister in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

In addition to his campus leadership, Burns serves as a lieutenant in the United States Navy Reserve, providing chaplain support to Marine Corps units across the country. His assignments have included service with Marine Forces Reserve and battalion-level units, delivering spiritual care and leadership support in demanding operational environments. In 2025, he was named Distinguished Chaplain of the Year by the Military Chaplains Association.

“Garrett leads with humility and steady conviction,” said Dr. Perry Moulds, University President. “Expanding his role strengthens both the spiritual life of our campus and the strategic direction of our institution.”

Sheila Horne Appointed Director of University Admissions

Sheila Horne has been appointed as Bethel University’s Director of University Admissions, where she will lead recruitment, admissions operations, and campus visit experiences for first-year, transfer, dual-enrollment, and international students.

Horne brings more than 27 years of experience in higher education admissions and non-profit development, with a strong

record of recruiting and enrolling students across traditional, transfer, adult, graduate, and online populations. Most recently, she served as Associate Director of Transfer Admission at La Salle University, where she led recruitment initiatives, strengthened community college partnerships, and consistently met or exceeded admissions targets.

Her background also includes serving as Director of Adult, Graduate, and Online Admission at Belhaven University, where she led recruitment planning and staff development and supported cross-functional collaboration to enhance student engagement and outreach.

Horne earned a Master of Christian Ministry Leadership from Belhaven University and holds a Bachelor’s degree in Business Administration–Management from the University of Mississippi. She is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Strategic Leadership with a focus on Christian Ministry, further strengthening her commitment to mission-driven leadership in higher education.

“Sheila is a seasoned admissions leader who understands both strategy and the human side of recruitment,” said Lougan Bishop, Vice President for Enrollment & Advancement. “She knows how to connect with students, develop strong outreach efforts, and build teams that execute well. I’m grateful she’s joining us in this role.”

Dr. C. Scott Shepherd Named Interim Executive Director of the Renaissance Performing Arts Experience

Dr. C. Scott Shepherd has been appointed Interim Executive Director of the Renaissance Performing Arts Experience, stepping into the role after previously serving as Associate Director of the Renaissance Program.

In his role as Associate Director, Shepherd provided leadership that contributed to program visibility and recruitment. His familiarity

with the program’s artistic standards and operational structure ensures continuity and steady leadership during this transition.

Shepherd brings more than two decades of experience in performing arts administration and leadership across higher education, nonprofit, church, and community settings. He has overseen large-scale concerts, conferences, statewide choral initiatives, and complex artistic productions, managing organizations of hundreds of members. His background includes executive leadership roles within the Southern Baptist Church Music Conference, the Tennessee Baptist Church Music Conference, and extensive work as a conductor, clinician, consultant, and educator throughout the region.

He holds a Doctor of Worship Studies from the Robert E. Webber Institute for Worship Studies, a Master of Divinity from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and a Bachelor of Music Education from Shorter University.

“Scott understands the heart of Renaissance and the excellence it requires,” said Dr. Joe Hames, Interim Provost. “His leadership provides continuity and confidence as the program continues to thrive.”

With these appointments, Bethel University continues to build leadership strength across spiritual life, admissions, and extracurricular experiences. Each of these leaders brings experience and dedication that will help the University confidently move into its next season of growth and impact.

About Bethel University

Bethel University, located in McKenzie, Tenn., is a Christian institution committed to academic excellence and personal growth. Offering a diverse range of undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs, Bethel equips students to lead with purpose and impact in their communities and beyond.

HUNKER DOWN WITH KES

Be Careful Whose Snake You Are Picking Up

I am not a member of an organized religious organization. I am a Southern Baptist. I'm not sure exactly what that means. When I was very young, feeling my way through the pitfalls of life, I was pretty sure chicken and sweet potato casseroles were involved.

Brother L. H. Hatcher was as serious as a heart attack every time he stepped in that pulpit. Some Sunday mornings he just cleared off a spot and went to shelling down the corn. He preached with a zeal that couldn't be faked, manipulated, spindled, or mutilated. He chased those poor, wayward Israelites from one side of that podium to the other.

And somewhere along the way he'd have me repenting for things I didn't know I had transgressed... usually way before he finally got around to those thieves on the cross.

I tried to be the best young Christian I could be. And I wasn't all that unclear on some of those ideas and parables Bro. Hatcher loved into us from the Gospels of Luke and John. But, let me tell you, it was like some demon was working against me when it got down to comprehending all the rules and regulations set forth in most of Leviticus and ALL of Deuteronomy. Some of it seemed more than a normal young person could survive.

I wanted to go to the picture show. I wanted to play baseball on Tuesday and Saturday nights. I didn't mind if Jane Hill called me on occasion. I wasn't sure if Bro. Hatcher, and God, were not teaming up to intrude on my fundamental rights to be a budding teenager.

It seems like there were a lot of "thou shalt not" sprinkled around in some of those Commandments.

It could get so legalistic at times a body could come to believe that part of this Southern Baptist commitment walk entailed long stints on the other side of the distant mountains chained to an aging, balding Tibetan Monk

I snuck up the street to the Methodist Church. Judy Creel's father was the pastor. She had walking around sense. I wanted to see if it was handed down in the family by her dad. Dr. Creel wore a robe and had his hair cut shorter, but he sounded an awful lot like Bro. Hatcher.

I couldn't tell one bit of difference between the two churches. Judy and a couple of her friends invited me down to the fellowship hall after the service. I'd never seen so much fried chicken and sweet potato casserole....

The Shiloh Presbyterian Church was way out of town. Maybe I lived too close to "Church Street" to get a clear picture of the situation. The sheer number of churches in that one small area may be overcoming all other forces.

I spent three nights of a two-week revival at the Shiloh gathering searching to see if there was any kind of different "guiding light" shining on me that Southern Baptist were missing. Of course, you can see the problem right off. And I don't think any church denomination on earth had the least bit to do with it.

I was looking for God, or the church, or a good friend to give me the inside scoop on what "I wanted the Bible" to tell me. Maybe I should have spent a moment listening to what God possibly had in store for me! It sure is easy for us mortals to get that backwards sometimes.

I figured I could stubborn along until God fi-

nally came around to seeing it my way. You need to study some Old Testament Israelite history and see how that worked out for them.

This is not about being disobedient or some kind of wild child. I was neither. I knew my parents, Bro. Hatcher, and an entire church body loved me. But I could be my own worst enemy at times, and downright selfish, and prideful, when the moment called for it....

Except for the snakes. We were at a Primitive Baptist Church in the Appalachian Mountains in East Tennessee when I was in college. I found out quickly they are no kin to Southern Baptist when they brought out the rattlesnakes. Those things were hissing, twirling, craning their necks...and what I took to be a deacon was handing them out to be passed down the rows!

I never even stuck my hand up. When the lady next to me turned and extended our snake, I said as humbly as I knew how, "Ma'am, there is not a greedy bone in my body. You just give my snake to your sister-in-law sitting behind us."

I met Reverend Dave Fernandez not long after I moved to Port St. Joe. As is his wont, we almost immediately got around to Heavenly matters. I might have mentioned God didn't always follow right in line with me. Bro. Dave rather quickly pointed out that if I thought the line formed around me, I was in for a miserable life...and a worse eternity. And he wasn't a Methodist, Presbyterian, OR Southern Baptist....

Respectfully,
Kes
kesley45@aol.com



Ricky Price, president of McKenzie Rotary Club, Dr. Carolyn Thompson, and Dr. Nicole Schlechter. The two medical doctors spoke about the maternal health care crisis in Tennessee.

Tennessee Has A Maternal Health Care Crisis

BY JOEL WASHBURN

washburn@mckenziebanner.com

The speakers, Dr. Nicole Schlechter, MD, PhD FACOG, and Dr. Carolyn Thompson, MD, FACOG, were the featured speakers for the Tuesday, February 17, meeting of the McKenzie Rotary Club. Both work as physicians in obstetrics and described the crisis in obstetric healthcare and the shortage of practitioners in Tennessee.

The local area is considered a 'desert' for obstetric services due to the decline in birthing centers. Many rural areas lack birthing centers or hospitals. There are no birthing centers in Carroll or Henry counties. The nearest centers are in Martin, Union City and Jackson.

Dr. Thompson, a Collier-ville native with deep family roots in West Tennessee, delivered a presentation on Tennessee's severe maternal and infant mortality crisis. One of her ancestors attended Bethel College. She noted the state has the highest maternal mortality rate in the country at 42 deaths per 100,000 live births, which is comparable to developing nations like Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, and Honduras (47 per 100,000), and significantly worse than its peers. The speaker highlights that over 90% of these deaths are preventable. The leading causes include mental health conditions and substance use disorders, cardiovascular issues, preeclampsia, infections, hemorrhage, and embolism. A significant portion of the

presentation focused on systemic barriers to care. These include a lack of adequate prenatal care for nearly 20% of women, and maternity care "deserts" in 35 of Tennessee's 95 counties, which lack hospitals with obstetric services. This forces over a quarter of women to travel more than 30 minutes for care. The financial unsustainability of obstetrics is leading to the closure of rural hospital labor and delivery units, with 10 rural hospitals at critical risk of closure. Tennessee also ranks near the bottom for access to mental healthcare, the leading driver of maternal deaths.

The discussion also addresses the impact of Tennessee's restrictive abortion law, the Human Life Protection Act, which went into effect in August 2022. The doctors do not participate or advocate for elective abortion. Only in the case of necessity to save lives are any such procedures considered for their medical practice.

The Tennessee law creates a near-total ban on abortions, with no exceptions for rape, incest, lethal fetal anomalies, or a mother's mental health, despite suicide being a significant cause of maternal mortality. While an exception for ectopic pregnancies has been added, the law creates a climate in which physicians must make some difficult decisions to save the life of the mother and/or baby. This leads to delayed treatment for emergencies, difficulty obtaining necessary med-

ications like methotrexate and misoprostol, and challenges in treating pregnant patients with cancer. These restrictions are contributing to a decline in OB/GYN providers, who are retiring or leaving the state, and making it difficult to recruit new medical professionals.

Infant mortality is also a major concern, with Tennessee ranking 38th in the nation at a rate of 6.5 deaths per 1,000 births. The leading causes are birth defects, preterm birth, low birth weight, and Sudden Unexplained Infant Death (SIDS).

To address these crises, state-level initiatives include mandating that hospitals provide discharge information on warning signs (House Bill 572), expanding infectious disease screening (Senate Bill 1283), and considering TennCare coverage for doula services. The speakers advocate for further solutions, including expanding Medicaid, creating exceptions in the abortion law for medical necessity, implementing paid family leave, and improving overall access to care, particularly for mental health and chronic diseases. The growing role of midwives, both certified and lay, is also noted as a way to expand care, though physician supervision is recommended for potential complications. The speakers urge the audience to engage with legislators and support healthcare initiatives to prevent further tragic and avoidable deaths of mothers and infants.

THE WIT AND WISDOM OF DAVID JOHNSON

How To Make a Difference in the Life of a Child

Why is it that some people can overcome childhood trauma and become active, thriving adults and others are crushed by it and never recover? That question has plagued me through the years, and I wished I could figure it out.

Now, though, research has finally given us some answers. We've figured out that the following elements were present in the childhoods of those who became resilient:

- Other people helped their mother and father take care of them and made them feel loved.
- Someone in the family enjoyed playing with them when they were an infant.
- There were relatives who made them feel better if they were sad or worried.
- They felt like their parents' friends or their neighbors liked them.
- Teachers, coaches, youth leaders, or ministers were there to help.
- Someone in the family cared about how they were doing in school.

- When they felt really bad, they could almost always find a trusted person to talk to.

- People told them they were capable and could get things done.

Here's what most people don't understand: there are so many children living lives of quiet desperation in homes that are filled with chaos and neglect. These are children we see going in and out of school every day, attending our church every week, coming home with our (grand)children to spend the night or to play, playing in the band, playing sports or perhaps even at our family reunions.

The thing is you can never tell which kid is struggling simply by looking at them. They're as good as we adults at hiding the truth and pretending everything's all right.

Because they're good at pretending, here's what we need to do—we need to go out of our way and speak a kind, encouraging, word to every child we have any contact with:

- It can be as simple as stopping them, and if they're small, squatting down until we're eye level with them, and saying, "I just want you to know that I believe in you, and I'm praying for you."

- Tell kids they're special AND ONE OF A KIND.

- Let them know you're there for them if they ever need to talk or a place to stay.

- Pat them on the back and tell them something specific that you like about them (their smile, their attitude, their eyes, their hair, their spirit).

- Ask them how they're doing in school, and no matter the answer, tell them not to give up, to keep on trying, to do the best they can.

It only takes a moment to be the kind of candle that lights the candle in the life of a child. But it might be the kind of moment that's life-changing for that child.

** Taken from The Wit and Wisdom of David Johnson, Volume III: A Harrowing Halloween Tale*

?

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Obituaries

SARA AGNES ENGLAND 1925 – 2026

GLEASON — Services for Mrs. Sara Agnes England, 101, of Gleason, were Monday, February 23, 2026, at 1 p.m. at Williams Funeral Home of Gleason. Burial was in Mt. Olivet Cemetery in McKenzie.

She was born January 12, 1925, and died February 20, 2026.

Mrs. England is survived by three daughters and a stepdaughter: Melinda (Tony) Woodrough of Martin, Angie (Jeff) Hazlewood of Gleason, Brenda (David) Black of Gleason, and Carolyn Hughes of Arlington, Tenn. She is also survived by twelve (grand/step) grandchildren, eighteen (grand/step) great-grandchildren, and twelve (grand/step) great-great-grandchildren.

Mrs. England was preceded in death by her husband, Ernest England; parents, Granville and Geneva Segraves; and two brothers, Lester and Er-

nest Segraves. Williams Funeral Home, Gleason.

IVOGENE PINSON 1932 – 2026

HUNTINGDON — Mrs. Ivogene Pinson, 93, of Huntingdon, died Saturday, February 21, 2026, at Lifecare Center of Bruceton.

Funeral services were Monday, February 23, 2026, in the Chapel of Chase Funeral Home. Burial was in Jamison Cemetery.

Mrs. Pinson was born March 23, 1932, in Westport, Tenn., to the late Thomas Bufford Horn and Susie Butler Horn. She was preceded in death by a son, Terry Dale Pinson; three brothers, Dwight Horn, Dwayne Horn, and Cedric Horn; and a sister, Inez Pickler.

She is survived by her husband of 74 years, Maurice Pinson; a daughter, Lana Richardson of Cedar Grove; a son, Lance Pinson of Murray, Ky.; a sister, Sara Carl of Jackson; a grandson; and a great-grandchild.

Chase Funeral Home, Huntingdon.



Chocolate Cherry Bars

1 3/4 cup all purpose flour
1 cup sugar
1/4 cup baking cocoa
1 cup butter or margarine
1 egg, lightly beaten
1 teaspoon almond extract
1 can (21oz.) cherry pie filling
2 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips
1 cup chopped almonds
Combine flour, sugar and cocoa. Cut in butter until crumbly. Add egg and almond extract until blended; set aside 1 cup for topping. Press remaining crumb mixture into a greased 13x9 baking pan. Carefully top with pie filling. Combine chocolate chips, almonds and reserved crumb mixture; sprinkle over pie filling. Bake at 350 de-

Banana Cake

1 box Duncan Hines French vanilla cake mix
3 eggs
1 1/2 cup milk
1/3 cup oil
1 box banana instant pudding mix
1 teaspoon banana extract
2 or 3 fresh bananas (sliced and placed on baked layers)
Mix according to directions and bake at 325 degrees for 30 minutes. Remove from oven and cool.
Icing: 8 oz. cream cheese, softened
1/2 cup butter
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 box confectioners sugar
1/2 cup chopped pecans
Mix all ingredients. Ice cooled cake.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

COMMUNITY PRAYER SERVICE

The second Community Prayer Service is Sunday afternoon, March 1, 4:30 p.m. in the Park Theatre in downtown McKenzie. The previous community prayer service was in the downtown Veterans Memorial Park.

ALL PROPERTY TAXES ARE DUE FEBRUARY 28

All municipal and county property taxes are due and payable on February 28.

CARL PERKINS CENTER PORK TENDERLOIN LUNCH

The Carroll County Carl Perkins Center is hosting a pork tenderloin lunch on Monday, March 9, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the center on Stone Ridge Cove, Huntingdon. Phone 731-986-5920 for more information.

SCHOOL SPRING BREAKS

Carroll County Schools Spring Breaks March 23-27
Bethel University Spring Break March 9-12.

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

Daylight Saving Time begins March 8.

CAPITOL TALK WITH SENATOR JOHN STEVENS

Capitol Talk with State Senator John Stevens is Friday, March 13, 8 a.m. at the Carroll County Civic Center. The event is free to attend. For more information, contact Carroll County Chamber of Commerce

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THE BREAKFAST CLUB AT HOMETOWN HEALTH CLINIC

Everyone is invited to The Breakfast Club every Monday from 9-10:30 a.m. for coffee, snacks, mingling and a light activity. Take the chance to connect and socialize before getting interactive with games, light exercise and fun! Bring a friend and come make new ones at Hometown Health Clinic - Pediatrics/Specialty Entrance. We can't wait to see you there!

CARROLL HUMANE SOCIETY EVENTS, NEWS

Cat Vouchers
Cat spay/neuter vouchers are always available for \$60. To purchase by phone for use at Paris Vet Clinic, call 731-514-0878 and leave a message. These are available to anyone regardless of residency. We now offer cat vouchers to Carroll County residents for \$60 at the Huntingdon Animal Clinic. These must be purchased in person at the shelter with cash or card, and proof of residency is required. However, Carroll Co. residents can still use Paris Vet Clinic if preferred.

MCKENZIE TOPS MEETS WEEKLY

Win over weight with support and encouragement by meeting with the McKenzie Chapter of TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) each Monday at 3 p.m. in the McKenzie Church of Christ gymnasium. The first meeting is free. For more information, call 731-352-7309. If no answer, leave a message.

CARROLL COMMISSION MEETS MONTHLY

Carroll County Commission meets the second Monday of each month, 7 p.m.,

in the Conference Room of the Carroll County Office Complex, High Street, Huntingdon. No meetings in February and July.

ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES

Huntingdon Location — Adult Education Building, 14155 Paris Street. Office hours are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Classes are offered for one-on-one instruction on Mondays, 1-4 p.m. and Thursdays, 9 a.m.-NOON. For more information, phone 731-364-5481.

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the **West Carroll 3-2-1 Update** February 2026

January was a month brought West Carroll's best qualities into focus. From students showing gratitude to our community to young leaders stepping into civic life, our schools continue to be a place where great things happen every day.

3-Highlights from Across the District

- **Pizza with the Principal at WCES:** West Carroll Elementary celebrated students who earned zero Dojos down throughout the entire fall semester. Dr. Jessica Williams honored these students with a "Pizza with the Principal" lunch, made possible through a generous pizza donation from Valero in Trezevant.
- **West Carroll Leadership Students Attend Capitol Talk Series:** Carroll County Youth Leadership students attended the Carroll County Chamber of Commerce's Capitol Talk Series featuring Representative Brock Martin. Students had the chance to engage with elected officials and hear about legislative priorities.
- **Excellence at State BETA Convention:** West Carroll Beta students, Anastin McAlpin and William McAlpin, visited the Carroll County Electric Department to deliver care packages to thank the team for their work restoring power during recent outages. We are proud of our students for taking time to recognize the people who serve our community.

2 Quotes from Our Leaders
"Earning zero dojo-downs not an easy accomplishment: it required excellent behavior every day. Their excellent behavior and positive attitudes make our school a great place to be."
— **Dr. Jessica Williams**, WCES Principal
"We are proud of our students for noticing community helpers and for taking time to show gratitude in a meaningful way."
— **Jennifer Kemp**, WCES Beta Sponsor

1 Challenge for Our Community
Read with us! March 2-6 is Read Across America Week. This month, read a book with your child at the dinner table, when waiting in the car, or before bed. Nothing reinforces a love for learning than seeing the adults in our lives read or having them read to us.

Ideas & thoughts are welcome at **preston.caldwell@wcssd.org**. Join us for our next board meeting on March 5th.

Preston Caldwell
wcssd.com/321

Download Our West Carroll App

A3150/8-1

NOTICE OF SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

WHEREAS, on August 1, 2024, CACHENGO, INC., by a Deed of Trust of record in Trust Deed Book 743, at Page 894, in the Register's Office of Carroll County, Tennessee, conveyed the following described property in trust to secure the payment of a Promissory Note in the original principal amount of Three Million Forty Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$3,040,000.00), payable to TERRIL SCOTT PROPERTIES, LLC; and

WHEREAS, the undersigned was appointed Substitute Trustee by TERRIL SCOTT PROPERTIES, LLC, the legal owner and holder of the said Note, by appointment executed on January 12, 2026, and recorded in Trust Deed Book 764, at Page 343, in the Register's Office of Carroll County, Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, default has been made in the payment of said indebtedness and other provisions of the Deed of Trust have been violated, and TERRIL SCOTT PROPERTIES, LLC, the lawful owner and holder of the said indebtedness, has declared the entire amount due and payable as provided by the Deed of Trust in accordance with the terms thereof, and instructed the undersigned to foreclose.

NOW, THEREFORE, the public is hereby notified that the undersigned Substitute Trustee will sell the hereinafter described real estate at public auction, to the highest and best bidder, for cash in hand paid in certified funds paid at the conclusion of the sale, or upon a credit bid from a bank or other lending entity pre-approved by the Substitute Trustee. The auction shall occur at the East door of the Courthouse at Huntingdon, Carroll County, Tennessee, on Tuesday, March 17, 2026, at 10:00 a.m., said property to be sold in bar of the equity of redemption and subject to the lien of all special assessments against it.

Lying, and being situate in the 12th Civil District of Carroll County, Tennessee, bounded and described as follows; to-wit:

Tract No. 1: Map 094, Parcel 011.00
BEGINNING on a stake in a branch on Clyde Johnson's south lien and runs thence with the meanders of the branch in a general westerly direction; South 48-1/2 deg. West 16 poles; North 76-1/2 deg. West 17 poles, South 15-1/2 deg. West 20 poles; North 85 deg. West 41 poles; North 22 poles; North 75 deg. West 12 poles; West 20 poles; North 17 deg. West 24 poles; south 75 deg. West 8 poles to a stake in the public road on Clyde Johnson's West boundary line and continuing with the meanders of said branch; South 54 deg. West 8 poles; South 60 deg. West 8 poles; South 85 deg. West 10 poles; North 35 deg. West 11 poles; North 5 deg. West 13 poles; North 61 deg. West 26 poles; North 12 deg. West 21 poles; North 52 deg. West 15 poles; North 4 deg. West 10 poles; North 31 deg. West 30 poles; North 47-1/2 deg. East 21 poles to a stake in the branch; thence South 65 deg. East 52-1/2 poles to a stake on Hood's line; thence North 5 deg East 39 poles; thence North 87 deg. West 50 poles to a stake in the branch on Kirk's line; thence with the meanders of the branch southwesterly to a stake on Kirk's line Conyer's corner; thence South 3 deg. West 81 poles to a stake in a branch; thence southwesterly with the meanders of said branch crossing the public road and passing Willow Springs to a stake in the branch of Clyde Johnson's south line; thence North 78 deg. West 67 poles to a stake; thence South 10 deg. West 145-1/2 poles to a stake, Clyde Johnson's southwest corner; thence South 80 deg. East crossing the drainage canal 142 poles to a stake; thence North 10 deg. East 298 poles to a stake; thence North 50 deg. West 41 poles to a stake; thence North 10 deg. East 72 poles to a stake; thence North 80 deg. West 41 poles to the point of beginning, containing 425 acres more or less. (Description taken from prior deed of record)

Tract No. 2: Map 094, Parcel 011.00
BEGINNING at a stake of F. E. Johnson's east line run South 144 poles to a stake on Clyde Johnson's line; thence North 49 deg. East 41.5 poles; thence southerly with the meanders of a branch or ditch to a stake on Clyde Johnson's line; thence North 74 deg. East 76 poles to a stake on Carter line; thence North 6 deg. East with Carter's and Hampton line 140 poles to a stake in branch, the old bed of Beaver Creek; thence with the meanders of said old creek bed to a stake in the old creek bed, North 74-1/2 deg. West 6 poles to a stake; thence South 86 deg. West 21 poles to the point of beginning, containing 123 acres more or less. (Description taken from prior deed of record)

Tract No. 3: Map 094, Parcel 011.00
Bonded on the North by Hawkins, on the South by Johnson, on the East by Kirk, on the West by Hilliard. Our title appears of record in Deed Book No. 84 page 439, Register's Office of Carroll County, Tennessee, said tract of land being further described as follows, to-wit: Calls in survey of Wm. Hampton's land in 12th Civil District of Carroll County, Lot No. 2 of 210 acre tract of land sold by order of County Court, Carroll County, Tennessee, on the 10th day of December 1887, as land belonging to the Estate of Allen Johnson, deceased, and bounded as follows: Beginning on a stake in the middle of Beaver Creek in the East boundary line of J. M. Dalton's and McLellan lands across said creek with Ironwood tree pointers; thence in said creek bed in a southeast direction to the mouth of a slough to the 2nd slough below the Dalton old mill site; thence up said branch with its meanders to a willow the northeast corner of Tract No. 1 138 poles to a stake, maple, and sweetgum pointers, the northwest corner of Lot 1; thence North with the East line of Dalton and McLellan land 136 poles to the beginning, containing 149 acres be the same, more or less. (Description taken from prior deed of record)

Tract No. 4: Map 094, Parcel 012.00
BEGINNING at a stake, the northeast corner of the Ben Wilkes land; runs thence South 88-1/2 degrees West 88 rods to a stake in the branch, the same being the southeast corner of the land heretofore sold by Mr. Clyde Johnson to Ilie Williams and wife, Dessa Williams; thence in a northeastern direction with the meanderings of a branch, a distance of approximately 104 rods to a stake in the south line of the George Stacey land; thence with Stacey's south line, North 86-1/2 degrees East 58-1/2 rods to a stake, Stacey's southeast corner; thence North 3-1/2 degrees West with Stacey 85-1/2 rods to a stake in the drainage boundary line; thence with the drainage boundary line, North 44 degrees East 41 rods to a stake; South 38 degrees East 29 rods to a stake; South 8 degrees East 57 rods to a stake; South 18 degrees East 67 rods to a stake; thence leaving said drainage boundary line, about South 4-1/2 degrees East 216 rods to a stake, an outer corner of Wilkes; thence North 86-1/2 degrees West 71 rods to a stake; thence North 3-1/2 degrees East 140-1/4 rods to the point of beginning.

THERE IS INCLUDED IN THE ABOVE BUT TO BE EXCLUDED THEREFROM A CERTAIN TRACT HERETOFORE CONVEYED TO Darrell Williams and wife, as recorded in Deed Book 184, page 398, ROCC, as follows: Beginning at a point being the Northwest corner of the tract conveyed on the South margin of Clyde Johnson Road and at the common corner of the lands of Martinex and Wilkes and this tract; thence generally South with Martinex and Wilkes line approximately 1050 feet

to the Southwest corner of the property conveyed and a common division line with Martinex and Wilkes; thence generally East approximately 1000 feet with the common Martinez and Wilkes line to a point on the Glenn Johnson West line and representing a three way corner of Martinez and Wilkes land, Glen Johnson land and the described tract and being the Southeast corner of the described tract; thence generally North with the common Glenn Johnson line approximately 800 feet to the South margin of Clyde Johnson Road being the Northeast corner of the described tract; thence generally Northwest with the south margin of the Clyde Johnson Road about 900 feet to the point of beginning. (Description taken from prior deed of record)

It being the same tracts of property as that described in a Warranty Deed from Terril Scott Properties, LLC, a Georgia limited liability company, to Cachengo, Inc., a Tennessee corporation, dated July 31, 2024, and of record in Warranty Deed Book 416, page 177, in the Register's Office of Carroll County, Tennessee.

RESERVATION OF EASEMENT: Map 094, Parcel 011.00
Grantors reserve for themselves and their successors and assigns a perpetual 60-foot wide easement for the purpose of ingress and egress over and across the above-described tract to access Grantor's adjacent property described in Deed Book 263, Page 534, and being more particularly described, along the center of said easement as follows:

BEGINNING at a point in the center of Beaver Creek Lane where said point intersects the south line of the above described tract, and being North 84 deg. 28 min. 33 sec. West 86.20 feet from a 1/2 inch iron pin at the northeast corner of the Crossno tract, as recorded in DB 299, PG 457; thence along the meanders of the center of the herein described 60-foot wide easement, the following calls: along a curve to the right, having a radius of 601.88 feet, an arc length of 201.96 feet, said curve being situated along a chord bearing of North 22 deg. 26 min. 23 sec. East, and a chord distance of 201.02 feet to a point of tangency; along a tangent, North 32 min. 03 min. 10 sec. East 57.06 feet to a point of curvature; along a curve to the right, having a radius of 82.00 feet, an arc length of 107.12 feet, said curve being situated along a chord bearing of North 69 deg. 28 min. 42 sec. East and a chord distance of 99.67 feet to a point of tangency; along a tangent, South 73 deg. 05 min. 46 sec. East 146.20 feet to a point of curvature; along a curve to the left, having a radius of 155.11 feet, an arc length of 122.09 feet, said curve being situated along a chord bearing of North 84 deg. 21 min. 12 sec. East, and a chord distance of 118.97 feet to a point of tangency; along a tangent, North 61 deg. 48 min. 10 sec. East 130.74 feet to a point of curvature; along a curve to the left, having a radius of 167.41 feet, an arc length of 200.69 feet, said curve being situated along a chord bearing of North 27 deg. 27 min. 38 sec. East, and a chord distance of 188.89 feet to a point of tangency; along a tangent, North 06 deg. 52 min. 54 sec. West 156.85 feet to a point of curvature; along a curve to the right, having a radius of 277.45 feet, an arc length of 454.06 feet, said curve being situated along a chord bearing of North 40 deg. 00 min. 06 sec. East, and a chord distance of 405.06 feet to a point of tangency; along tangent, North 86 deg. 53 min. 05 sec. East 60.85 feet to a point of curvature; along a curve to the left having a radius of 267.43 feet, an arc length of 326.05 feet, said curve being situated along a chord bearing of North 51 deg. 57 min. 27 sec. East, and a chord distance of 306.23 feet to a point of tangency; along a tangent, North 17 deg. 01 min. 49 sec. East 55.82 feet to a point of curvature; along a curve to the right having a radius of 254.66 feet, an arc length of 108.07 feet, said curve being situated along a chord bearing of North 29 deg. 11 min. 16 sec. East, and a chord distance of 107.26 feet to a point tangency; along a tangent, North 41 deg. 20 min. 42 sec. East 67.91 feet to a point in the south line of the Replogle tract, as recorded in DB 263, PG 534, said point being North 83 deg. 32 min. 52 sec. West 1024.42 feet from a 1/2 inch iron pin at the northeast corner of the above described tract and being the point of termination. Survey and legal description by William P. I. Smith, R.L.S., Tennessee Registration No. 2093, dated March 8, 2002. (Description taken from prior deed of record)

It being the same property as that described in a Quitclaim Deed from Terril Scott Properties, LLC, Georgia limited liability company, to Cachengo, Inc., a Tennessee corporation dated August 30, 2024, and of record in Warranty Deed Book 416, page 635, Register's Office of Carroll County, Tennessee.

The street address of the above-described property is believed to be 735 Beaver Canal Lane, Huntingdon, Tennessee 38344, but such address is not part of the legal description of the property sold herein and in the event of any discrepancy, the legal description herein shall control.

SALE IS SUBJECT TO TENANT(S) RIGHTS IN POSSESSION, IF ANY.

This sale is subject to all matters shown on any applicable recorded plat; any unpaid taxes; any restrictive covenants, easements, or setback lines that may be applicable; any statutory rights of redemption of any governmental agency, state or federal; any prior liens or encumbrances as well as any priority created by a fixture filing; and to any matter that an accurate survey of the premises might disclose. Other interested parties: Source Code, LLC.

This property is subject to the following: Tract 1 of Map 094, Parcel 011.00, is subject to a transmission line easement to Southwest Tennessee Electric recorded in Deed Book 115, at Page 162, in the Register's Office of Carroll County, Tennessee.

This property is subject to the following: Included in this conveyance is a Reservation of Easement for a perpetual 60-foot wide easement for the purpose of ingress and egress over and across the subject property (Map 094, Parcel 011.00) described in Deed Book 416, at Page 635, in the Register's Office of Carroll County, Tennessee.

Title to said property is believed to be good, but the undersigned will sell as Substitute Trustee only and will assign to the purchaser all covenants of warranty contained in said Deed of Trust.

The sale held pursuant to this Notice may be rescinded at the Successor Trustee's option at any time. Said sale may be adjourned to another time or may be postponed to another date by public announcement at the appointed time of sale without readvertisement.

This office is a debt collector. This is an attempt to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose.

This Notice of Sale has been posted by ForeclosureTennessee.com and can be viewed online at ForeclosureTennessee.com.

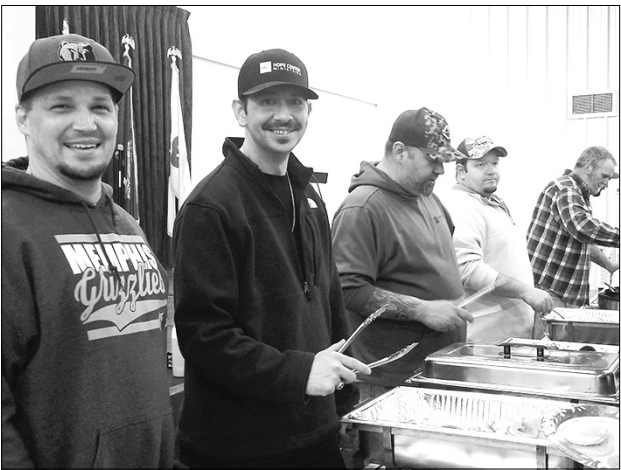
WITNESS my signature, this the 17th day of February, 2026.

KIZER, BONDS, HUGHES & BOWEN, LLC
BY: STEPHEN L. HUGHES, Substitute Trustee
P. O. Box 320, Milan, TN 38358 (731) 238-3199

ABLE Farms Pancake Breakfast Raises \$18,000

BY SHANNON MCFARLIN
Forever Communications

PARIS (February 7) — The commercial building at the Henry County Fairgrounds was bustling with activity all morning Saturday with a huge crowd gathered for the 3rd annual ABLE Farms Pancake Breakfast. Kyle Stephens of ABLE Farms said 600 folks were served and they raised over \$18,000. “We are deeply grateful for every person brought our way today! Whether you are a volunteer, parent, partner, and supporter who helps set the sails with us, your prayers, faithfulness, generosity, and presence matter more than you know.” A small army of volunteers were busy all morning, cooking and serving the



breakfast of pancakes, eggs, sausages, juice, coffee. ‘Wil-lie’ the horse also was on hand to receive love from the visitors.

ABLE Farms is a still-under-construction therapeutic riding experience for kids and adults in Henry

County and is located at 1100 Sulphur Well Academy Road. It’s the successor to the former Hoof Beats of Hope. The program slogan, “ABLE Stables, Where Hoof Beats of Hope are Heard!” says it all.

Gasoline Prices Increase During the Week

TENNESSEE (February 23) — Average gasoline prices in Tennessee increased 3.0 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$2.52/g today, according to GasBuddy's survey of 3,821 stations in Tennessee. Prices in Tennessee are 1 cent per gallon higher than a month ago and stand 17.0 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has increased 6.2 cents compared to a week ago and stands at \$3.686 per gallon.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Tennessee was priced at \$2.18/g yesterday while the most expensive was \$3.39/g, a difference of \$1.21/g. The lowest price in the state yesterday was \$2.18/g while the highest was \$3.39/g, a difference of \$1.21/g.

The national average price of gasoline has risen 1.2 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$2.88/g today. The national average is up 2.8 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 19.5 cents per gallon lower than a year ago, ac-

cording to GasBuddy data compiled from more than 11 million weekly price reports covering over 150,000 gas stations across the country.

Historical gasoline prices in Tennessee and the national average going back five years:

February 23, 2025: \$2.69/g (U.S. Average: \$3.08/g)

February 23, 2024: \$2.93/g (U.S. Average: \$3.27/g)

February 23, 2023: \$3.03/g (U.S. Average: \$3.35/g)

February 23, 2022: \$3.28/g (U.S. Average: \$3.55/g)

February 23, 2021: \$2.40/g (U.S. Average: \$2.65/g)

“Average gasoline prices continue to drift higher as crude oil trades near its highest level since last summer, driven by mounting geopolitical risk premiums tied to escalating tensions between the United States and Iran,” said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy. “While there has been no direct disruption to energy infrastructure, markets are increasingly pricing in the possibility of a broader exchange that could threaten supply flows. Beyond geo-

politics, we’re also seeing localized supply constraints, including refinery outages and disruptions along the Olympic Pipeline, which have amplified price pressures in the Pacific Northwest. These developments are unlikely to be isolated, as planned refinery maintenance is set to intensify in the weeks ahead. As seasonal supply tightens, the national average is increasingly likely to retest the \$3-per-gallon threshold.”

GasBuddy*, a PDI Technologies company, is North America's trusted fuel savings platform, helping consumers fuel up for less for over 25 years. With over 100 million app downloads, GasBuddy delivers real-time prices at 150,000+ stations and tangible savings through Pay with GasBuddy+. It is the most authoritative source of station-level fuel pricing data, updating averages 288 times daily from the broadest mix of inputs — spotter reports, direct station integrations, and transactional data.

SOURCE GasBuddy

Carroll County Sheriff’s Reports

Attempted Theft — On February 13, Deputy Bo Ezell responded to Palmer Shelter Road in Huntingdon regarding an attempted theft of a dump trailer.

Upon arrival, Deputy Ezell made contact with the property owner and observed deep ruts in the yard consistent with a vehicle attempting to hook up to and remove the dump trailer parked on the property but was unsuccessful.

The incident remains under investigation.

Driving on Suspended License — On February 13, Deputy Bo Ezell initiated a traffic stop on a blue Chevrolet bearing a Tennessee tag for a registration violation. The driver was identified as Johnny Lee Brogdon Jr., 45, of Ripley. A driver's license check revealed his license was suspended out of Milan City Court for failure to pay

fines and costs, with a suspension date of October 29, 2025, to indefinite reinstatement. Brogdon was placed under arrest and transported to the Carroll County Jail, where he was charged with driving while license suspended.

Drug Charges — On February 13, Deputy Steven D. Scott observed a white vehicle traveling on Highway 22 South driven by an individual known to have a suspended license. A traffic stop was conducted. While speaking with the driver, Deputy Scott detected the odor of alcohol and marijuana coming from the vehicle. A passenger, identified as Stephen Gray Jaco, 32, of Mayfield, Ky., presented a bag containing approximately 31 grams of marijuana and stated it belonged to him. A search of the vehicle was conducted, during which a digital scale was located

among Jaco's property. Based on the quantity of marijuana and the presence of the scale, Jaco was arrested and charged with possession of Schedule VI with intent. This incident occurred in Carroll County.

Driving on Suspended License — On February 16, Deputy Bo Ezell initiated a traffic stop on a silver Chevrolet bearing Tennessee tag for a light law violation. The driver was identified as Christopher Lee Mancell, 37, of Huntingdon. A driver's license check revealed his license was suspended out of Huntingdon City Court for failure to appear for trial/court from May 29, 2022, to indefinite reinstatement. Mancell was cited for driving while license suspended and is to be booked in by February 26. This incident occurred in Carroll County.

Property Transfers

Bettie J. Horton to Bettie Jane Horton, AKA Bettie J., in District 4.

Justin Barnhart to Tyler and Marisa Neely in District 4.

Jonathan Murray Haltom and others to Calvin Elder. No District listed.

Matthew P. and Jessica Marie Fern to Kasie and Antonio Williams Trentham. No District listed.

Jeffrey P. Sr. and Melissa L. McDonald to Tiffany Ann Peterson in District 11.

Jennifer Lynn Gurley and others to Tyler Lee Hammett in District 14.

Holly Carolyn Spencer to Brenda Joyce Spencer in

District 16.

Jennifer Lynn Gurley and others to Jennifer Lynn Gurley in District 14.

Jennifer Lynn Gurley and others to Jennifer Gurley in District 14.

Jennifer Lynn Gurley and others to Jennifer Gurley in District 14.

Brenda Joyce Spencer to Robert L. Williams in District 16.

Brenda Joyce Spencer to Jamie H. and Robert L. Williams in District 16.

Jennifer Lynn Gurley and others to Tyler Lee Hammett in District 14.

Brenda Joyce Spencer to Jamie H. and Robert L. Wil-

liams in District 16.

Robert L. Williams to Jamie H. Williams in District 16.

Devante Johnson to Canaan and Bobbie Sims. No District listed.

Patriot Plots, LLC to Randall Scott and Joy Rimmer and others in District 2.

Lois J. Bateman to Destiny Clare Stout and others in District 19.

Jason Kernodle and others to Bonnie and David N. Beecham in District 4.

Lisa Marie Joyner to Nastashia R. Joyner. No District listed.

Tiffany A. Peterson to Noah Michael Lowrance in District 4.

Lais Lopes Tempobono, 35, of McKenzie.

James Anthony Cain, 67, of Bruceton, to Cyndee Diane Chappell Webb, 64, of Bruceton.

Thank you for your continued support of this newspaper.

Carroll County General Sessions Report

HUNTINGDON (February 18) — The following cases were heard in Carroll County General Sessions Criminal Court on February 18, 2026.

The following cases were bound over to a grand jury: Marcus Ray Bell, Gravettes Crossing Road W, Rutherford, bound over, Casual Exchange - Adult/Minor - Schedule II; bound over, Meth - Mfg., Deliver, Sell, Poss. With Intent; bound over, Driving While License Revoked; bound over, Evading Arrest.

Marcus Ray Bell, Gravettes Crossing Road W, Rutherford, bound over, Driving While License Revoked; bound over, Possession of Unlawful Drug Paraphernalia Uses & Activities.

Lathan Rantrell Gilbreath, Cotham Drive, Huntingdon, bound over, Possession of Unlawful Drug Paraphernalia Uses & Activities; bound over, Aggravated Child Abuse/Neglect/Endangerment; bound over, Possess Firearm Intent to Go Armed - Dangerous Felony; bound over, Schedule I Drugs: Mfg., Deliver, Sell, Poss.; bound over, Schedule VI Drugs: Mfg, Deliver, Sell, Poss.

Raymond T. Hands, Walnut Lane, McKenzie, bound over, Escape; bound over, Simple Possession/Casual Exchange.

Alice Cherie Hill, St. Paul Church Road, Huntingdon, bound over, DUI: First Offense; bound over, HOV; bound over, Vehicle Registration - Improper Use; bound over, Improper Lane Change.

Kyle D. McKennie, Hillview Apartments Drive,

McKenzie, bound over, Simple Possession/Casual Exchange; bound over, Possession of Unlawful Drug Paraphernalia Uses & Activities; bound over, Employ Firearm Intent to Go Armed - Dangerous Felony; bound over, Schedule VI Drugs: Mfg., Deliver, Sell, Poss.

The following cases resulted in a guilty plea or finding:

Syndesky T. Bowers, Tracewood Cove, Jackson, guilty, Speeding; dismissed, Registration Expired; dismissed, Driving While License Revoked.

Jeffrey Hampton, Florida Court, McKenzie, guilty, Meth - Possession or Casual Exchange, \$750 fine, 11/29, supervised probation for balance, time-served credit 13 days; dismissed, Casual Exchange - Adult/Minor - Schedule VI.

Rockel Humphrey, Hwy 104, Cedar Grove, guilty, Probation Violation - Not Booked, supervised probation for 13 months, no fine, 90 days.

Briana Pugh, Thompson Road, Huntingdon, guilty, Theft of Merchandise - Shoplifting, no fine, 11/29, no contact with Walmart, supervised probation for minimum 90 days then unsupervised probation for balance if conditions met, report to jail March 6 at 6 p.m.

Caleb Riddle, Griggs Chapel Road, Cedar Grove, guilty, Driving While License Suspended, no fine, 30 days, unsupervised probation, time-served credit 10 days, concurrent with Carroll sessions 26-cr-140.

Michael Martin Williams, Republican Grove Road,

Trezevant, guilty, Unlawful Possession of Weapon, no fine, 11/29, supervised probation for minimum 90 days then unsupervised probation for balance if conditions met, forfeit interest in firearm.

James William Yon Jr, Park Cove, McKenzie, guilty, Evading Arrest, no fine, 11/29, supervised probation for minimum 90 days then unsupervised probation if conditions are met, cognitive behavioral training course; dismissed, Sexual Offender Registration Form Violation; dismissed, Sexual Offender Registration Form Violation.

The following cases were dismissed:

Jamie Lyn Barker, Hillview Apartment Drive, McKenzie, dismissed, Probation Violation - Booked; dismissed, Theft of Merchandise - Shoplifting.

chandise - Shoplifting.

Regina Bryant, Enon Church Road, McKenzie, dismissed, Theft of Merchandise - Shoplifting, based on co-defendant's plea and acceptance of responsibility for theft.

Tony White Jr., Renfroe Road, Huntingdon, dismissed, Probation Violation - Booked.

James William Yon Jr., Park Cove, McKenzie, dismissed, Sexual Offender Registration Form Contents Required; dismissed, Sexual Offender Registration Form Contents Required; dismissed, Sexual Offender Registration Form Contents Required; dismissed, Sexual Offender Registration Form Contents Required.

The following case was rescheduled:

Lamarcus Young.

PUBLIC NOTICE
CARROLL COUNTY ELECTION COMMISSION MEETING
March 3, 2026 at 4:30 p.m.
in the Election Office at
625 High St., Ste. 113, Huntingdon, TN 38344
The purpose of the meeting is to lock and seal ballot boxes for the May 5, 2026 Primary Election(s), approve candidate list, and other election preparation. For more information or if you'd like to address the CEC during the meeting, call 731-986-1968, Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-4 p.m. or Email: carroll.commission@tn.gov.

NOTICE OF SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE
WHEREAS, on May 30, 2025, CACHENGO, INC., by a Deed of Trust of record in Trust Deed Book 754, at Page 524, in the Register's Office of Carroll County, Tennessee, conveyed the following described property in trust to secure the payment of a Promissory Note in the original principal amount of Two Hundred Sixty-Nine Thousand Nine Hundred and 00/100 (\$269,900.00), payable to STEVEN MORTON AND WIFE, BRIANNA MORTON; and
WHEREAS, the undersigned was appointed Substitute Trustee by STEVEN MORTON AND WIFE, BRIANNA MORTON, the legal owners and holders of the said Note, by appointment executed on February 9, 2026, and recorded in Trust Deed Book 764, at Page 341, in the Register's Office of Carroll County, Tennessee; and
WHEREAS, default has been made in the payment of said indebtedness and other provisions of the Deed of Trust have been violated, and STEVEN MORTON AND WIFE, BRIANNA MORTON, the lawful owners and holders of the said indebtedness, have declared the entire amount due and payable as provided by the Deed of Trust in accordance with the terms thereof, and instructed the undersigned to foreclose.

NOW, THEREFORE, the public is hereby notified that the undersigned Substitute Trustee will sell the hereinafter described real estate at public auction, to the highest and best bidder, for cash in hand paid in certified funds paid at the conclusion of the sale, or upon a credit bid from a bank or other lending entity pre-approved by the Substitute Trustee. The auction shall occur at the East door of the Courthouse at Huntingdon, Carroll County, Tennessee, on Tuesday, March 10, 2026, at 3:45 p.m., said property to be sold in bar of the equity of redemption and subject to the lien of all special assessments against it.

Lying, and being situate in the City of McKenzie, 4th Civil District of Carroll County, Tennessee, bounded and described as follows; to-wit:

In the City of McKenzie and BEGINNING on the west margin of what was formerly a 16 foot alley on the south side of Lee Street, the same being the northeast corner of Lot No. 1 in the sale of the Neumie B. Moore lands and which said Lot No. 1 is what was heretofore known as he Wrinkle-Moore Store Building, and runs thence South with the east boundary of said Lot No 1 and the west margin of what was formerly a 16 foot alley, 100 feet to what was formerly an alley land which is now the north margin of Bruce Stree; thence East with Bruce Street 25 feet to the west margin of an alley; thence North with the west margin of said alley 100 feet to Lee Street; thence West with Lee Street 25 feet to the point of beginning, on which lot is situated a two story brick building. (Description taken from prior deed of record)

It being the same property as that described in a Warranty Deed from Steven Morton and wife, Brianna Morton, to Cachengo, Inc., a Tennessee corporation, dated May 30, 2025, and of record in Warranty Deed Book 420, page 911, Register's Office of Carroll County, Tennessee.

The street address of the above-described property is believed to be 56 Lee Ave., McKenzie, Tennessee 38201, but such address is not part of the legal description of the property sold herein and in the event of any discrepancy, the legal description herein shall control.

SALE IS SUBJECT TO TENANT(S) RIGHTS IN POSSESSION, IF ANY.

This sale is subject to all matters shown on any applicable recorded plat; any unpaid taxes; any restrictive covenants, easements, or setback lines that may be applicable; any statutory rights of redemption of any governmental agency, state or federal; any prior liens or encumbrances as well as any priority created by a fixture filing; and to any matter that an accurate survey of the premises might disclose. Other interested parties: Source Code, LLC.

Title to said property is believed to be good, but the undersigned will sell as Substitute Trustee only and will assign to the purchaser all covenants of warranty contained in said Deed of Trust.

The sale held pursuant to this Notice may be rescinded at the Successor Trustee's option at any time. Said sale may be adjourned to another time or may be postponed to another date by public announcement at the appointed time of sale without readvertisement.

This office is a debt collector. This is an attempt to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose.

This Notice of Sale has been posted by ForeclosureTennessee.com and can be viewed online at ForeclosureTennessee.com.

WITNESS my signature, this the 17th day of February, 2026.
KIZER, BONDS, HUGHES & BOWEN, LLC
BY: STEPHEN L. HUGHES, Substitute Trustee
P. O. Box 320, Milan, TN 38358 (731) 238-3199

NOTICE OF SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

WHEREAS, on March 21, 2022, CACHENGO, INC., by a Deed of Trust of record in Trust Deed Book 716, at Page 1089, in the Register's Office of Carroll County, Tennessee, conveyed the following described property in trust to secure the payment of a Promissory Note in the original principal amount of Eight Hundred Fifty Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$850,000.00), payable to THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF MCKENZIE, TENNESSEE; and

WHEREAS, the undersigned was appointed Substitute Trustee by THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF MCKENZIE, TENNESSEE, which appointment will be recorded in the Register's Office of Carroll County, Tennessee prior to the deed evidencing this sale; and

WHEREAS, default has been made in the payment of said indebtedness and other provisions of the Deed of Trust have been violated, and THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF MCKENZIE, TENNESSEE, the lawful owner and holder of the said indebtedness, has declared the entire amount due and payable as provided by the Deed of Trust in accordance with the terms thereof, and instructed the undersigned to foreclose.

NOW, THEREFORE, the public is hereby notified that the undersigned Substitute Trustee will sell the hereinafter described real estate at public auction, to the highest and best bidder, for cash in hand paid in certified funds paid at the conclusion of the sale, or upon a credit bid from a bank or other lending entity pre-approved by the Substitute Trustee. The auction shall occur at the East door of the Courthouse at Huntingdon, Carroll County, Tennessee, on Tuesday, March 10, 2026, at 3:30 p.m., said property to be sold in bar of the equity of redemption and subject to the lien of all special assessments against it.

Lying, and being situate in the City of McKenzie, 4th Civil District of Carroll County, Tennessee, bounded and described as follows; to-wit:

BEING the following described real estate, situated in the FOURTH CIVIL DISTRICT of Carroll County, Tennessee, being a portion of that property, which was conveyed to Baptist Memorial Health Services, Inc. by deed of record in Deed Book 385, Page 334, in the Register's Office of Carroll County, Tennessee, and being more particularly described as follows:

COMMENCING at a 1/2-inch rebar found at the southwest corner of Spivey, Deed Book 395, Page 347, and in the east right-of-way of Hospital Drive, 20 feet from the centerline; thence with the east right-of-way of Hospital Drive as follows:

Along a curve turning to the right 140.72 feet, having a radius of 2451.40 feet, and being subtended by a chord bearing and distance of South 29 Degrees 29 Minutes 24 Seconds East, 140.70 feet to a 5/8-inch rebar found;

South 27 Degrees 50 Minutes 44 Seconds East, 79.61 feet to a mag nail found;

Along a curve turning to the right 145.69 feet, having a radius of 1065.90, and being subtended by a chord bearing and distance of South 23 Degrees 55 Minutes 48 Seconds East, 145.57 feet to a 5/8-inch rebar found;

Along a curve turning to the right 10.00 feet, having a radius of 24,024.50, and being subtended by a chord bearing and distance of South 23 Degrees 29 Minutes 23 Seconds East, 10.00 feet to a 5/8-inch rebar with stainless steel L.L. Smith cap set, being the POINT OF BEGINNING; thence with a severance line as follows:

North 66 degrees 51 minutes 08 seconds East, 282.99 feet to a 5/8-inch rebar with stainless steel L.L. Smith cap set;
North 23 degrees 08 minutes 38 seconds West, 42.92 feet to a 5/8-inch rebar with stainless steel L.L. Smith cap set;
South 80 degrees 45 minutes 47 seconds East, 37.78 feet;
South 68 degrees 55 minutes 42 seconds East, 41.28 feet;
South 38 degrees 56 minutes 02 seconds East, 5.28 feet;
South 55 degrees 55 minutes 45 seconds East, 35.10 feet;
South 45 degrees 44 minutes 49 seconds East, 6.71 feet;
North 65 degrees 37 minutes 21 seconds East, 42.95 feet to a 5/8-inch rebar found at a common corner with McKenzie Propco, LLC, Deed Book 398, Page 1; thence with McKenzie Propco, LLC North 65 degrees 37 minutes 21 seconds East, 282.92 feet to a 1/2-inch rebar found in the west line of Doster, Deed Book 350, Page 456; thence with Doster South 02 degrees 55 minutes 34 seconds West, 172.44 feet to a 5/8-inch rebar found; thence with a severance line as follows:
North 87 degrees 07 minutes 04 seconds West, passing a 5/8-inch rebar with stainless steel L.L. Smith cap set at 27.21 feet, and continuing 20.00 feet, for a total distance of 47.21 feet to a 5/8-inch rebar with stainless steel L.L. Smith cap set;
South 02 degrees 55 minutes 34 seconds West, 163.13 feet;
South 41 degrees 22 minutes 08 seconds West, 83.44 feet;
South 32 degrees 53 minutes 15 seconds West, 106.88 feet;
South 66 degrees 20 minutes 13 seconds West, 47.29 feet;
North 88 degrees 39 minutes 47 seconds West, 86.37 feet;
South 66 degrees 20 minutes 13 seconds West, 208.20 feet to the east right-of-way of Hospital Drive; thence with Hospital Drive as follows:
North 24 degrees 15 minutes 39 seconds West, 49.10 feet to a 5/8-inch rebar found;

Along a curve turning to the right 333.66 feet, having a radius of 24024.49 feet, being subtended by a chord bearing and distance of North 23 degrees 53 minutes 59 seconds West, 333.66 feet to the Point of Beginning, and containing 4.88 acres, more or less, as surveyed by William P.I. Smith, Tennessee Registered Land Surveyor Number 2093, of L.L. Smith & Associates, 302 North Caldwell Street, Paris, TN 38242, on December 10, 2021. Bearings are based upon Tennessee State Plane Coordinate System, NAD 83. (Description taken from prior deed of record)

It being the same property as that described in a Quitclaim Deed from The Industrial Development Corporation of the City of McKenzie, Tennessee, to Cachengo, Inc., dated March 21, 2022, and of record in Warranty Deed Book 403, page 516, in the Register's Office of Carroll County, Tennessee.

Map 011, Parcel 040.00

The street address of the above-described property is believed to be Hospital Drive, McKenzie, Tennessee 38201, but such address is not part of the legal description of the property sold herein and in the event of any discrepancy, the legal description herein shall control.

SALE IS SUBJECT TO TENANT(S) RIGHTS IN POSSESSION, IF ANY.

This sale is subject to all matters shown on any applicable recorded plat; any unpaid taxes; any restrictive covenants, easements, or setback lines that may be applicable; any statutory rights of redemption of any governmental agency, state or federal; any prior liens or encumbrances as well as any priority created by a fixture filing; and to any matter that an accurate survey of the premises might disclose. Other interested parties: Source Code, LLC.

This property is subject to the restrictions, covenants, and setback lines for The Industrial Development Corporation of the City of McKenzie, Tennessee as recorded in Warranty Deed Book 401, at Page 122, in the Register's Office of Carroll County, Tennessee.

This property is subject to the Conditional Gift Agreement between Baptist Memorial Health Care Corporation and The Industrial Development Corporation of the City of McKenzie, Tennessee, as contained in the Quitclaim Deed of record in Deed Book 401, at Page 122, in the Register's Office of Carroll County, Tennessee.

Title to said property is believed to be good, but the undersigned will sell as Substitute Trustee only and will assign to the purchaser all covenants of warranty contained in said Deed of Trust.

The sale held pursuant to this Notice may be rescinded at the Successor Trustee's option at any time. Said sale may be adjourned to another time or may be postponed to another date by public announcement at the appointed time of sale without readvertisement.

This office is a debt collector. This is an attempt to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose.

This Notice of Sale has been posted by ForeclosureTennessee.com and can be viewed online at ForeclosureTennessee.com.

WITNESS my signature, this the 17th day of February, 2026.
KIZER, BONDS, HUGHES & BOWEN, LLC
BY: STEPHEN L. HUGHES, Substitute Trustee
P. O. Box 320, Milan, TN 38358 (731) 238-3199

McKenzie Police Reports

Driving on Suspended — Witt Wallace Mitchum, Main Street, McKenzie, was charged with Driving on a Suspended License on February 16.

Officer Kyle Beauchamp observed Mitchum was not wearing his seatbelt and initiated a traffic stop. The

license that Mitchum provided was suspended for failure to appear in Chester County General Sessions Court. He also had two prior suspensions in Collierville and Henderson County. Mitchum was cited into Carroll County General Sessions Court.

NOTICE OF MEETING
TOWN OF TREZEVANT BOARD OF MAYOR & ALDERMEN
The Town of Trezevant seeks citizen participation in reconstituting its seven (7) member Industrial Development Board (IDB) established pursuant to TCA 7-53-101 et seq. The IDB is elected by the Board of Mayor & Aldermen (Board) to serve without compensation for Staggered 2, 4, and 6 year terms. Applicants must be qualified to vote in any Trezevant municipal election and willing to complete a conflict of interest statement. The IDB and its meetings are subject to the Tennessee Open Meetings Act, so any applicant elected must be willing to participate in public meetings in connection with his/her service. Potential candidates for the IDB should be prepared for an interview by the Trezevant Board of Mayor and Alderman, as well as an orientation and training component to the election process. Interested parties may attend an informational meeting of the Board at the Trezevant Community Center on Thursday, March 12, 2026 at 6 p.m. to learn more.

IN THE CHANCERY COURT OF CARROLL COUNTY, TENNESSEE
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
PROBATE CASE NO: 2026PE15
ESTATE OF: CHARLES KEITH HAIR, LATE OF CARROLL COUNTY, TENNESSEE
Notice is hereby given that on the 12TH day of FEBRUARY, 2026 Letters Testamentary, of Administration, in respect to the Estate of CHARLES KEITH HAIR deceased, who died AUGUST 29TH, 2025, were issued to the undersigned by the Chancery Court Clerk & Master of Carroll County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured, against the Estate are required by law to file the same with the Clerk of the above named Court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2) otherwise their claims will be forever barred:
(1) (A) Four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting, as the case may be) of this notice if the creditor received an actual copy of this Notice to Creditors at least sixty (60) days before date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting); or
(B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the Notice to Creditors, if the creditor received a copy of the Notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting) as described in (1) (A); or
(2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.
All persons indebted to the above Estate must come forward and make proper settlement with the undersigned at once.
This 12TH day of FEBRUARY, 2026.
THIS NOTICE WILL RUN TWO CONSECUTIVE WEEKS.
FILE CLAIMS IN TRIPPLICATE WITH:
KENNETH TODD - CLERK & MASTER
99 Court Square, Suite 105, Huntingdon, TN 38344
DENNIS G. HAIR, Executor/Administrator
JAMES W. CLEMENTS III, Attorney
KENNETH TODD, Clerk & Master

Thank you for your continued support of this newspaper.

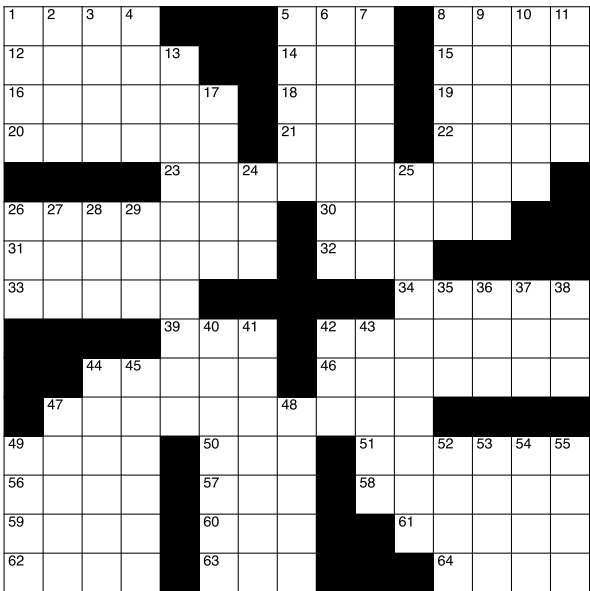
Color A Masterpiece



Weekly Crossword

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. What travelers must do
- 5. Calendar month
- 8. Hopefully quickly
- 12. Once more
- 14. Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!
- 15. "Cheers" actress Perlman
- 16. Astronomy unit
- 18. Savings vehicle
- 19. Get your ducks in this
- 20. Right away
- 21. Popular sports league
- 22. Containers
- 23. Entireties
- 26. One who wassails
- 30. Turned-up position
- 31. Extreme modesty
- 32. Writing utensil
- 33. Rewards (archaic)
- 34. Ancient capital
- 39. S. American wood sorrel
- 42. General discomfort
- 44. Philippine island
- 46. A witty saying
- 47. One who summarizes
- 49. Covered in
- 50. Mimic
- 51. Henry was a notable one
- 56. Daughter of Hera and Zeus
- 57. Retired NFLer Newton
- 58. Playground equipment
- 59. Concept
- 60. Satisfaction
- 61. Fishing net
- 62. Hammer end
- 63. A father's male child



64. Japanese drink

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Off-Broadway figure
- 2. Gelatinous substance
- 3. Concern
- 4. "Lick It Up" rockers
- 5. Serbian river
- 6. Part of a hat
- 7. Bowl-shaped drinking vessel
- 8. Semitic language
- 9. Utter a shrill cry
- 10. Long times
- 11. Animal parts
- 13. Causing annoyance
- 17. Amorous talker
- 24. Attempt
- 25. Harmonic effects
- 26. Cost per mile
- 27. They ____
- 28. Bitterly regret
- 29. Not even
- 35. A way to drop
- 36. Title of respect
- 37. World leader
- 38. Georgia rockers
- 40. National capital
- 41. Great Plains people
- 42. Duck-sized dinosaur genus
- 43. Architectural recesses
- 44. Member of U.S. Navy
- 45. Mountainous
- 47. Kite bird
- 48. Sweetheart (archaic)
- 49. Popular snack made of potato
- 52. 70s songsters The Bee ____
- 53. SE China port ____-men
- 54. Something to fill up
- 55. League of Legends character

Week 8

See solution in next week's edition.

Canned Goods Word Search

L T F T T F B H S E V H N S U U B K O V
O L A V F O Y N L E H L R Z O R T I N F N
R N A Y N O B Y A L E H E I M U T C A V P E
I R I N O I B G T Z L L P B U T C I P A P
E L E S K E E I O U I N F K G T Y E C Z
T L H H L R P R N A E R V T C B T U K U
C L C N Y S L R O R U K U N M O I T I G
R Z G Z O D K G O T D N T E N O T M N I
L R K N N I R S N C A B G S T O O S G Z
S I F G I M T A E P E T E Y V S B K V U
Y L D R E N I A T A U S I H R E A M O V
P L L C E E I G T E L R S O E P P I
C I M K C S V S L A N E I C I N H I F E U
C L C Z I I R S Y T E Z N O N K F I N G
B A A K U A T E S M R M N G P G A L E V
U E N V L E Z I S I P R R U O H Y L R E
H K V I R I N R F E L I R E U A N E G N
F Y V I B A N E L S R Y H Y F V I D U I
S I L Y C S H G Z U S P K D O A S D S R
K E A Y U B U V E P Y M S T O R A G E B

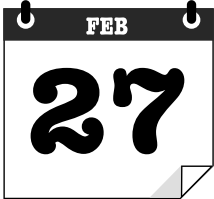
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Label

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Opener
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Pasteurize
Pickling

Preserve
Processing
Rehydrate
Rotation
Sealing
Shelf

Sterile
Stockpile
Storage
Syrup
Tin
Vacuum

THIS DAY IN HISTORY



1860: Abraham Lincoln delivers a speech at Cooper Union in New York that affects his presidential campaign.

1964: Italy asks for help keeping the Leaning Tower of Pisa from toppling.

1991: George H.W. Bush announces "Kuwait is liberated."

SUDOKU

WEEK 8

	4			2			
						6	
	7	2		9			8
						8	
	5	6			1		2
		8				3	7
1			8				
	8		2		3		7
		3		5			

Level: Advanced

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

See solution in next week's edition.



Solve the code to discover words related to canned food. Each number corresponds to a letter. (Hint: 5 = E)

A. 6 22 21 21 5 8

Clue: Sealed in metal

B. 1 5 22 16

Clue: Pairs well with carrots

C. 16 14 15 1

Clue: Liquid meal

D. 10 5 22 21 16

Clue: Legumes

Answers: A. canned B. peas C. soup D. beans

LETTER MIX-UP

How many words can you make by rearranging the letters in the phrase below? Use each letter only once.

REHYDRATE

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____
- 8. _____
- 9. _____
- 10. _____
- 11. _____
- 12. _____
- 13. _____
- 14. _____
- 15. _____
- 16. _____
- 17. _____
- 18. _____
- 19. _____
- 20. _____

Riddle Me This

What lets you walk through walls?

Answer: Doors

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to this week's theme.

ODGOS

Answer: Goods

GUESS WHO?

I am an actress born on February 25, 1976 in California. I attended Harvard University and wanted to become a lawyer. But I went into the arts and starred on a popular television series about the recreation department of a small town. My father was a legendary record producer.

Answer: Rashida Jones

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Week 7 Crossword Puzzle Solution

S	N	I	P		A	S	S	E	R	T		D	E	E	
W	I	D	E		G	A	U	C	H	E		E	R	A	
E	X	O	S	K	E	L	E	T	O	N		C	A	R	
P	I	L	E	I		P	R	O	M	S		U	S	E	
T	E	S	T	E	D					B	I	A	S	E	D
				A	V	A	R	I	C	I	O	U	S		
M	U	M	S		S	N	A	M	E		N	G	A	M	I
U	F	O		S	E	N	I	O	R	S		T	A	D	
D	A	N	A	E		I	N	R	O		F	E	D	S	
				I	R	R	E	S	O	L	U	T	E		
S	A	T	E	E	N				P	A	M	P	A	S	
E	G	O			N	A	D	E	R		B	A	R	C	A
E	A	R			A	M	E	N	A	B	I	L	I	T	Y
M	M	E			D	O	C	I	L	E		E	M	I	R
S	A	D			E	R	O	D	E	D		S	A	N	E

SUDOKU SOLUTION WEEK 7

9	5	7	8	2	6	3	1	4
2	3	1	4	9	5	8	7	6
6	8	4	3	7	1	9	2	5
8	9	2	5	3	7	4	6	1
5	7	3	6	1	4	2	9	8
4	1	6	2	8	9	5	3	7
1	2	9	7	4	8	6	5	3
3	6	8	1	5	2	7	4	9
7	4	5	9	6	3	1	8	2

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SAMPLE FEATURE ACTUAL SIZE

Jane Doe
Born: January 1, 2025
Parents: Dad and Mom Doe
Thankful For: Healthy Baby

The McKenzie Banner will publish a special edition featuring babies born January-December 2025. This is a very special keepsake to treasure!
Just Fill out the information below and **INCLUDE A PHOTO.**

EACH BABY PROFILE IS FREE.
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LIMIT 20 WORDS PER BABY PROFILE.
Please include his/her name, photo, birth date, parents' names, one thing you're thankful for and a phone number to contact you if we have questions (not published).
The profile is approximately 1 column x 3 inches tall and includes a photo.

BABY'S INFO:

BABY'S NAME: _____

BIRTH DATE (Month and Day): _____

PARENTS' NAMES: _____

I'M THANKFUL FOR: _____

PHONE (For contact/not published): _____

ONE CHILD PER PHOTO. E-mail info and photos to: BABY@mckenziebanner.com
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DEADLINE: WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2026

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL 731.352.3323

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Rep. Brock Martin (third from left) and Sen. Shane Reeves with members of the American Cancer Society and Alzheimer's Association. Submitted photo

Rep. Martin Joins American Cancer Society Push for Biomarker Testing Coverage

NASHVILLE — State Rep. Brock Martin (R-Huntingdon) and State Sen. Shane Reeves (R-Bedford, Cannon, Moore and Rutherford) joined the American Cancer Society to discuss legislation that would expand health insurance coverage for biomarker testing in Tennessee.

“When faced with a cancer diagnosis, Tennesseans should not be fighting insurers while fighting for their lives,” said Rep. Brock Martin. “Biomarker testing provides a clear path forward for care and leads to better health outcomes and significant cost savings by avoiding ineffective treatment. This legislation puts patients first by providing clarity rather than confusion and ensuring medical advancements do not outpace our health care system.”

Often used in cancer care to help physicians identify the most effective treatment for a patient, biomarker testing is also increasingly used to guide care for other serious conditions such as autoimmune and neurological diseases, cardiovascular disorders, arthritis and preeclampsia. Currently, insurance coverage for biomarker testing has not kept pace with medical advancements, often leaving patients with delayed care or significant out-of-pocket costs.

“Tennesseans battling cancer, Alzheimer’s, arthritis

or other life-altering conditions deserve access to the most precise tools medicine has to offer, without bureaucratic roadblocks from insurers standing in the way,” said Senator Reeves. “By requiring coverage for biomarker testing, this bill ensures our health care system keeps pace with scientific progress, delivering targeted treatments that improve outcomes, reduce unnecessary suffering and save costs in the long run.”

House Bill 0484/Senate Bill 0435 would require state-regulated health insurance plans to cover biomarker testing when ordered by a health care provider for diagnosis, treatment or ongoing monitoring of a patient’s disease or condition. The legislation does not include coverage for the cost of screenings, but does offer provisions to ensure testing is supported by medical and scientific evidence.

While comprehensive biomarker testing can carry a higher upfront cost, it leads to better outcomes and long-term savings by avoiding ineffective or unnecessary treatments. Patients who received comprehensive biomarker testing experienced an average savings of approximately \$8,500 per member per month in total cost of care, according to a CVS Health-sponsored study published in the Journal of Clinical

Oncology.

Concerns regarding increased insurance costs have also shown to be minimal. Expanding insurance coverage for biomarker testing is projected to increase premiums by only \$0.08 to \$0.51 per member per month, according to a 2022 analysis by Milliman. The same study found the average allowed cost per biomarker test ranges from \$78.71 for Medicaid to \$224.40 for large group self-insured plans, while patients without coverage can face hundreds or even thousands of dollars in out-of-pocket expenses.

If passed, Tennessee would join states that have enacted similar legislation, including Kentucky, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Texas, Indiana and Florida.

The legislation is supported by the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, the Alzheimer’s Association, the Tennessee Medical Association, End Preeclampsia, Tennessee Men’s Health Network, Arthritis Foundation, ALS Association, Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson’s Research and Lupus and Allied Diseases Association and Tennessee Oncology.

House Bill 0484/Senate Bill 0435 is expected to be considered by the Insurance Subcommittee on February 5. If passed, the bill would take effect July 1.

Paris Man Held In Jail After Car, Foot Chase

BY SHANNON MCFARLIN
Forever Communications

PARIS (February 23) — A Paris man is being held in the Henry County Jail on \$150,000 bond after a chase late Saturday night on Hwy. 79N.

Moriel Harris was charged with felony evading arrest, reckless endangerment and various traffic offenses following the chase. He is set to appear in Henry County General Sessions Court Tuesday, February 24.

On Saturday, shortly before midnight deputies stopped a blue Lincoln sedan on Highway 79 N for various traffic violations. Upon the deputy approaching the vehicle, the driver sped away at a high rate of speed.

Deputies pursued the ve-



Moriel Harris

hicle towards Paris before the vehicle turned around and continued to flee outbound on Highway 79 N towards Stewart County. During the duration of the chase the driver was observed throwing items from the vehicle.

The vehicle continued

into Stewart County before driving off the side of the road with the driver fleeing from the vehicle on foot into a heavily wooded area. Cpl. Steve Dean and his K-9 Lincoln responded to the scene and after a brief successful track the driver was located hiding in the woods and taken into custody by deputies without incident.

The driver was identified as Moriel Harris of Paris. Harris was charged with Felony Evading Arrest, Reckless Endangerment, and various traffic offenses. Harris was given a \$150,000 bond and scheduled to appear in Henry County General Sessions Court on February 24, 2026.

The Henry County Sheriff’s Office was assisted by the Paris Police Department and the Stewart County Sheriff’s Office.



The rich music scene of Carroll County and West Tennessee was shared by (L to R) Carl Byars, Don Carnell, and Johnny McClure during the Huntingdon Historical Society's February session at Huntindon City Hall.

Local Music Legends Reflect on Carroll County's Rich Musical Heritage

BY JOEL WASHBURN
washburn@mckenziebanner.com

HUNTINGDON (February 17) — A recent interview at Huntingdon City Hall brought together local music veterans Carl Byars and Don Carnell, who shared captivating stories and insights into the vibrant musical history of Huntingdon and Carroll County. The discussion, moderated by Johnny McClure, delved into their early inspirations, unique performance venues, and the profound impact of regional music scenes.

Carl Byars, a member of The Cool Daddy Trio, recalled his formative years being shaped by icons like Elvis, Roy Rogers, and television programs such as American Bandstand, placing his musical awakening in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Don Carnell, from the Double Edge Band, humorously admitted that his initial motivation was "girls," which led him to local dances and performances by bands like Don McFall and Tommy Cisco at the Westport Community Center.

Both musicians detailed their journeys with instruments. Byars initially played guitar before switching to drums in high school due to demand, often keeping his drum set in his '59 Chevrolet for impromptu gigs. Carnell's drumming aspirations were cut short by his father's disapproval of the noise, leading him to an old Roy Rogers guitar and early lessons from his Aunt

Louise and later, local radio DJ Ed Cisco.

The conversation painted a vivid picture of a bustling local music scene. Byars and Carnell performed at numerous venues — from front porches, hay barns, hog sales, McKenzie's Bowling Alley, The Dixie, and larger venues, with audiences of a few to thousands.

A particularly unique venue mentioned was "The Underground," a space created by Byars and Dale Holmes in the basement of a commercial laundry in Huntingdon. "We needed a place to play because you couldn't play in clubs; we weren't old enough," Byars explained. This youth-friendly spot, complete with adult chaparrones, became a popular hub despite its "gritty charm," including a ceiling that was "falling in on us". Carnell also recounted playing in places as varied as the Mid-South Coliseum and a "hog chute", while Byars recalled a hay barn with minimal power and even Discovery Park, performing "where the big brontosaurus bones were".

The influence of nearby music powerhouses Nashville and Memphis was significant. Byars noted that discovering major music was recorded in these cities brought the sounds "closer to home", creating a "sweet spot" for local artists.

The interview also highlighted many local legends. Carl Mann, a talented singer and songwriter, was remembered for his incredible talent and struggles

with alcohol, which some believe hindered his national breakthrough. An anecdote recalled that his "Mona Lisa" release charted closely with Conway Twitty's version, potentially blunting its impact. Recent efforts to recognize Mann locally included a historical marker unveiled on near the log cabins at the intersection of High Street in Huntingdon.

Ed Cisco, a prominent radio DJ on WHDM, was celebrated for his call-in request show and his mentorship of young musicians. Carnell shared a memorable story about Cisco playing the controversial song "The Lord Knows I'm Drunk" against the program director's wishes, leading to Cisco's move to another station "out of necessity." Carnell also recounted his early touring days with Tommy Cisco, including a naive bus trip that involved driving in the emergency lanes in Atlanta and another incident in which the young musicians accidentally ended up in Gulfport instead of their intended destination.

Other notable figures discussed included Max Bybee, Lloyd Rainey, Paula Bridges, Mark Oakley, Ernie Smothers, and Gordon Stoker of the Jordanares, underscoring the deep connections between Carroll County and the broader music industry.

Reflecting on the current state of music, Byars observed a generational shift. "It doesn't seem to be a big thing," he said, attributing it to the "abundance of online stuff, YouTube". He noted that in the past, people had to attend live venues, whereas now, music is readily accessible on phones and televisions. Carnell added that karaoke and pre-recorded music can mask true talent, emphasizing that "you never know how somebody sounds until you go hear them live".

The interview concluded with a shared appreciation for the rich tapestry of local music history, with one story often triggering another, reinforcing the strong community memory and pride in Carroll County's musical legacy.



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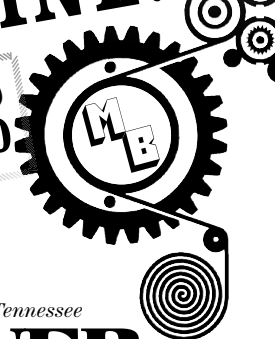
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THE BANNER McKenzie, Tennessee

DISTRICT 12-1A BOYS BASKETBALL SEMIFINALS

Rockets Fall to Houston County, Tigers to McEwen

BY BRAD SAM
brad@mckenziebanner.com

McEWEN (February 21) — McEwen High School hosted the District 12-1A Boys Basketball Tournament semifinals Saturday. First, the Clarksburg Rockets fell 76-46 to Houston County, then the Hollow Rock-Bruceton Central Tigers were defeated 64-29 by the host Warriors.

Houston County Fighting Irish 76, Clarksburg Rockets 46

The Irish jumped out to a 23-9 lead after the opening frame, led by Townes Epps with 13 points, including a three-pointer. Ryan Carter scored four points, and Jaxon Honeycutt and Hayden Burgess each hit a three. Weston Vestal had all nine Rocket points.

Houston County had a 21-12 advantage in the second quarter, led by Epps with ten points, including a three. Carter scored seven, and Knox Parker and Daniel Phillips each had a pair. Vestal scored five for Clarksburg, and Reagan Halter had four points with a three-pointer. Clay Glosson had a pair, and Trae Cobb hit a free throw. At the half, the Irish led 44-21.

The Rockets had a 16-15 edge in the third, led by Cobb with five points. Glosson scored four, and Halter hit a three. Vestal and Jake Miller each had a pair. Carter led the Irish with eight points. Epps scored seven with a three-pointer. Entering the final frame, Houston

County led 59-37.

The Irish closed the win with a 17-9 tilt in the fourth, led by Epps with six points. Carter scored five points, and Trace Mitchell, Brayden Self and Samuel Ferrell each had a pair. Vestal scored four for Clarksburg. Halter hit a three, and Cayden Hollowell had a pair.

Houston County's Townes Epps led all scorers with 36 points, including a trio of three-pointers. Ryan Carter scored 24 points.

Weston Vestal led the Rockets with 20 points. Reagan Halter scored ten with a trio of threes.

McEwen Warriors 64, Central Tigers 29

The Warriors stormed out to a 17-2 lead after the first frame, led by Case Greene with six points. Brennon Newsom and Ty Greene each hit a three-pointer, and Kainan Gill also scored three points. Elijah Villarruel had a pair. Nic King scored two for Central.

McEwen had a 19-9 advantage in the second quarter, led by C. Greene with eight points, including a three. Koby Hudson scored four, and Villarruel hit a three. T. Greene added a pair, and K. Gill and Truman Gill each hit a free throw. Tiger Junah Smith scored seven points with a three-pointer, and King added a pair. At the half, McEwen led 36-11.

The Warriors enjoyed a 19-7 tilt in the third, led



Rocket Weston Vestal pulls up for a long jumper. Vestal led Clarksburg with 20 points. Photo by Brad Sam/The Banner

by C. Greene with seven points, including a three. T. Greene scored five, and K. Gill had three points. Hudson and T. Gill each added a pair. Tiger Brody Huff hit a three, and Parker Finley also scored three points. Sal Sala hit a free throw. Heading into the final frame, McEwen led 55-18.

Central had an 11-9 edge in the fourth, led by Parker Boyd with six points on a pair of threes. Smith scored nine. Warrior Cayden Wallace scored five with a three-pointer, and Miner Reed and Ryan Gunn each had a pair.

McEwen's Case Greene led all scorers with 21 points, including a pair of threes.

Junah Smith led the Tigers with 12 points, including a three-pointer.



Above Left, Gleason's Brody Sanders looks to make a shot against a Dresden defender. Above Right, Gleason's Kade Sawyers drives toward the basket. Below Left, Drake Lehmkuhl drives to the basket. Below Right, Miami Woolridge moves in for an unguarded layup. Photos by Joel Washburn/The Banner



Bulldogs Defeat Dresden in District 14A Tourney

BETHEL UNIVERSITY (February 20) — Gleason Bulldogs struck early and often against the Dresden Lions in the District 14A tournament held at Bethel University on February 20. While Gleason, with its senior-heavy team, struck early, Dresden was not going away easily, leaving Gleason only a nine-point

advantage at the end of the contest. Gleason scored 18 in the first compared to Dresden's 4. Gleason scored 18, 11, 9, and 11 in the respective quarters. Dresden scored 4, 12, 17, and 7. For Gleason, Drake Lehmkuhl had 17 points, Kade Sawyers had 12, Miami Woolridge had 9, Bro-

dy Sanders had 4, Parker Morgan had 3, and Ashton Morgan and Tristan Dilday had 2. Dresden's scoring was led by Jacoby Sutton with 12, Landon Floyd and Cannon Floyd each with 8, Ayden Flora with 6, Landon Cantrell with 3, and Grey Forrester with 3.

McKenzie Swept on Senior Night

BY BRAD SAM
brad@mckenziebanner.com

McKENZIE (February 17) — McKenzie High School closed the regular season Tuesday with a pair of district basketball contests against McEwen. A back-and-forth battle saw the Lady Rebels lead going into the fourth, but the Warriorettes rallied for a 52-50 win. The Warriors pulled away gradually to top the Rebels, 73-58.

It was Senior Night at MHS, and seven senior players, managers and cheerleaders were honored on the court in a pregame ceremony. (See separate story.)

McEwen Warriorettes 52, McKenzie Lady Rebels 50

The Warriorettes had a 9-7 edge after the opening frame, led by Ava Lastovka with five points, including a three-pointer. Laila Downs-Darden scored four. Molly French hit a three for McKenzie, and Ava Hastings and Jaycee Stafford each had a pair.

McEwen added to their lead with an 18-15 advantage in the second quarter, led by Downs-Darden with 16 points, including a pair of threes. Lastovka added a pair. Stafford scored seven Lady Rebel points with a three. French had six on a pair of three-pointers, and Braylin Auvenshine had a pair. At the half, the Warriorettes led 27-22.

McKenzie took the lead with an 18-7 tilt in the third, led by Stafford with 15 points, including a pair of threes. Addyson Littleton also hit a three-pointer. Downs-Darden scored five for McEwen, and Lastovka added a pair. Entering the final frame, the Lady Rebels led 40-34.

The Warriorettes rallied 18-10 in the fourth to claim the



Left, Lady Rebel Jaycee Stafford fires a deep three. Stafford led McKenzie with 31 points. Right, Rebel senior Eli Vinson gets inside for two. Vinson scored eight points. Photo by Brad Sam/The Banner



win, led by Downs-Darden with 12 points. Aubrey Branch scored five points with a three, and Lastovka hit a free throw. Stafford led McKenzie with seven points, and French hit a three.

McEwen's Laila Downs-Darden led all scorers with 37 points, including a pair of threes. Ava Lastovka scored ten with a three.

Jaycee Stafford led the Lady Rebels with 31 points, including a trio of three-pointers. Molly French scored 12 points on four threes.

Warriors 73, Rebels 58

McEwen had a 14-13 edge after the first frame, led by Kainan Gill with six points. Ty Greene scored five with a three-pointer, and Truman Gill also hit a three. Avery Brown led McKenzie with seven points. Nolan Fawcett, Cole Brown and Eli Vinson each had a pair.

The Warriors had a 17-11 advantage in the second quarter, led by Koby Hudson with seven points. Case Greene scored four. Brennan Newsome hit a three-pointer, T. Greene added a pair, and K. Gill hit a free throw. Rebel Ka-

son Brown scored four points. Nolan Fawcett hit a three, and C. Brown and Cooper Davidson each had a pair. At the half, the Warriors led 31-24.

McEwen enjoyed a 26-18 tilt in the third, led by T. Greene with eight points, including a pair of threes. T. Gill scored six, and Elijah Villarruel had five points with a three. K. Gill scored four, and C. Greene had three points. Fawcett scored eight for McKenzie with a pair of three-pointers. A. Brown and K. Brown each scored four, and Vinson added a pair. Heading into the final frame, the Warriors led 57-42.

The fourth was a 16-16 wash. C. Brown led the Rebels with eight points, including a three. Vinson scored four, and K. Brown and Davidson each added a pair. K. Gill led McEwen with seven points. T. Greene scored five, and T. Gill had four points.

Warrior Ty Greene led all scorers with 20 points, including a trio of three-pointers. Kainan Gill scored 18.

Nolan Fawcett led McKenzie with 13 points, including a trio of threes. Cole Brown scored 12 with a three, and Avery Brown had eleven points.

DISTRICT 13-1A GIRLS BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

War Eagles Bow Out in Opening Round

BY BRAD SAM
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HALLS (February 17) — The West Carroll High School War Eagles saw their season end Tuesday with a 71-28 loss to Halls in the opening round of the District 13-1A Boys Basketball

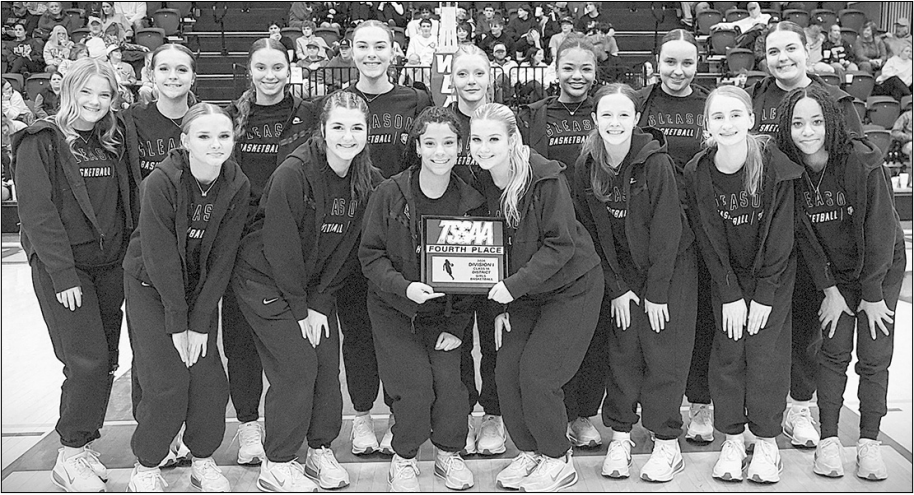
Tournament.

The host Tigers jumped out to a 25-6 lead after the first frame, pushed to 45-16 at the half. Halls had a 14-9 edge in the third and capped the win with a 12-3 tilt in the final frame.

Skyler Wilhite led West Carroll with eleven

points, including a trio of three-pointers. Chandler Rimmer scored six points, and Bryler O'Neal had four with a three. Isaiah Snyder scored three points, and Demarion Gilbert and Trey Williamson each had a pair.

Tiger Ta'Miyon Gooch led all scorers with 16 points.



Gleason Lady Bulldogs earned fourth place in the District 14A tournament held at Bethel University. The team has one senior, Madi Dean. Photo by Jeff Washburn

Greenfield Prevails in District 14A Girls Tournament at Bethel University

McKENZIE (February 19, 21) — Greenfield Lady Yellowjackets and Dresden Lady Lions prevailed in their respective contests on Thursday, February 19, at Bethel University's Crisp Arena and advanced to the championship round on Saturday at 7:30 p.m. at Bethel.

Greenfield claimed a 70 to 45 victory over Lake County during the 6 p.m. contest on Thursday, and Dresden claimed a 50-42 victory over Gleason's Lady Bulldogs on Thursday.

Gleason met Lake County on Saturday, February 21, 6 p.m. in the consolation round.

In the Gleason-Dresden contest, Gleason scored

11, 4, 11, and 16 points in the respective quarters for a total of 42. Ahmyre Allen led Gleason's scoring with 19 points. Hylan Leach had 8, Madi Dean had 8, Karlie Wilson had 6, and Kadence Witherspoon had 1.

Dresden was led by Jacie West with 12, followed by Jentri Mangiaracina with 8, Elizabeth Jarred with 7, Molly Robinson with 7, Rylee Cousins with 6, and Irah Cianfarani and Hannah Hale with 2 each.

Greenfield had 70 points. Ella Porter tossed in 31, Rayanna Fisher had 14, Skylar Arnold had 12, Maddie Paschall had 8, Jerico Montgomery had 3, and Madelyn Coble had 2.

Lake County, with a limited team of six players,

scored 45. Laken Chism scored 39, Destaney Mullins had 2, and Yharia Bolden had 4.

Gleason Lady Bulldogs placed fourth in the District 14-A tournaments at Bethel University on February 21 after a loss to Lake County 51-34.

Gleason was led by Hylan Leach with 16 points, Ahmyre Allen with 8, Kadence Witherspoon with 6, and Ava Bennett and Brylee Robertson each adding two points.

Lake County scored 51 points, mainly on the backs of two players - Destaney Mullins with 29 and Mariah Valentine with 15. Jordyn Burpo scored 4 and Yharia Bolden scored 3.

DISTRICT 13-1A GIRLS BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

Lady War Eagles Top Bradford

BY BRAD SAM
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HUMBOLDT (February 21) — The West Carroll High School Lady War Eagles finished third in the District 13-1A Girls Basketball Tournament with a 57-41 win over Bradford in Saturday's consolation game.

The Lady War Eagles had an 11-9 edge after the opening frame, but the

Lady Red Devils rallied to lead 21-19 at the half. West Carroll took control with a 17-5 tilt in the third and clinched the win with a 21-15 advantage in the final frame.

Lady War Eagle Kinsley Poff led all scorers with 20 points, including six three-pointers. Aubrey Hammett scored 13 by a trio of threes. Chloe Rimmer had ten points with a three-pointer. Marissa

Mueller scored five points, and Gracelyn Vernon had four. Alayna Lovelace scored three points, and Hailey Mitchell and Tatum Perry each hit a free throw.

MK Wilkes led the Lady Red Devils with 12 points, including a pair of threes.

The Lady War Eagles will open region play Friday, February 27 on the road against Dresden. Tipoff is 7 p.m.



Above, McKenzie High School basketball seniors with family members. Right, McKenzie High School basketball seniors (L to R): Rebel Eli Vinson; cheerleader Tobey Brooks; Lady Rebels Gracie Aird, Ashley Dunavant and Molly French; and managers Carli Beeler and Carlton Townes. Photos by Brad Sam/The Banner



McKenzie Basketball Seniors Honored

BY BRAD SAM
brad@mckenziebanner.com

McKENZIE (February 17) — Prior to their final regular season home games on Tuesday, McKenzie High School basketball senior players, managers and cheerleaders were honored

on the court, joined by family members.

Senior Lady Rebels are Gracie Aird, daughter of Matt and Misty Aird; Ashley Dunavant, daughter of James and Melissa Oswalt; and Molly French, daughter of Christina French and

Misty Gibson.

The lone senior Rebel is Eli Vinson, son of Angela Douglas.

The lone senior cheerleader is Tobey Brooks, son of Sonny and Misty Brooks.

Senior managers are Carli Beeler, daughter of

Tim and Ashley Beeler; and Carlton Townes, son of Yana and Michael Taylor, grandson of Carol Townes and great-grandson of the late Marsha Townes. Carlton carried a photo of Marsha and his late brother, Lorenzo Townes.

DISTRICT 12-1A GIRLS BASKETBALL SEMIFINALS



Left, Lady Rebel Braylin Auvenshine gets in front of the Lady Irish defense for two points. Auvenshine scored 14 points. Right, Lady Tiger Emy Olds fires a three-pointer. Olds led Central with 15 points. Photo by Brad Sam/The Banner



Lady Rebels Fall to Houston County, Lady Tigers to McEwen

BY BRAD SAM
brad@mckenziebanner.com

McEWEN (February 21) — McEwen High School hosted the District 12-1A Girls Basketball Tournament semifinals Saturday. First, the McKenzie Lady Rebels faced Houston County and were defeated 63-49 despite a tight first half. The Hollow Rock-Bruceton Central Lady Tigers closed a big gap in the third quarter, but fell 60-49 to the host Warriorettes.

Houston County Lady Irish 63, McKenzie Lady Rebels 49

The Lady Irish had a 15-11 lead after the opening frame, led by Peyton Brooks with six points on a pair of three-pointers. Kylee Smith also hit a three, and Kyaira Rains, Briley Bucciarelli and Preslee Moore each had a pair. Lady Rebel Braylin Auvenshine scored nine points with a three, and Addyson Littleton had a pair.

McKenzie had a 9-6 edge in the second quarter, led by Jaycee Stafford with eight points, including a pair of threes. Molly French hit a free throw. Alley Mitchell hit a three for Houston County. Paisley Byler had a pair, and Smith hit a freebie. At the half, the Lady Irish led 21-20.

Houston County had a 17-12 advantage in the third, led by Smith with six points, including a three. Maddie Brooks scored four, and P. Brooks hit a three. Mitchell and Rains each added a pair. Stafford led the Lady Rebels with seven points. Auvenshine hit a three, and Littleton added a pair. Entering the final frame, Houston County led 38-32.

The Lady Irish sealed the win with a 25-17 tilt in the fourth, led by M. Brooks with 15 points, including a pair of three-pointers. Rains scored five, Bucciarelli had four points, and Moore hit a free throw. Stafford led McKenzie with nine points. Ava Hastings hit a three, and Littleton also scored three points. Auvenshine added a pair.

Lady Rebel Jaycee Stafford led all scorers with 24 points, including a pair of three-pointers. Braylin Auvenshine scored 14 with a pair of threes.

Maddie Brooks led Houston County with 19 points with a pair of threes.

McEwen Warriorettes 60, Central Lady Tigers 49

The Warriorettes doubled up Central 12-6 in the first frame, led by Laila Downs-Darden with ten points, including a three. Maggie Baker had a pair. Lady Tiger Belle Blankenship hit a three-pointer, and Emy Olds also

scored three points.

McEwen pulled away with a 26-8 advantage in the second quarter, led by Downs-Darden with 19 points with a three. Millie Littleton scored five, and Ava Lastovka had a pair. Ava Finley scored four for Central, and Cloe Morgan and Abby Baker each had a pair. At the half, the Warriorettes led 38-14.

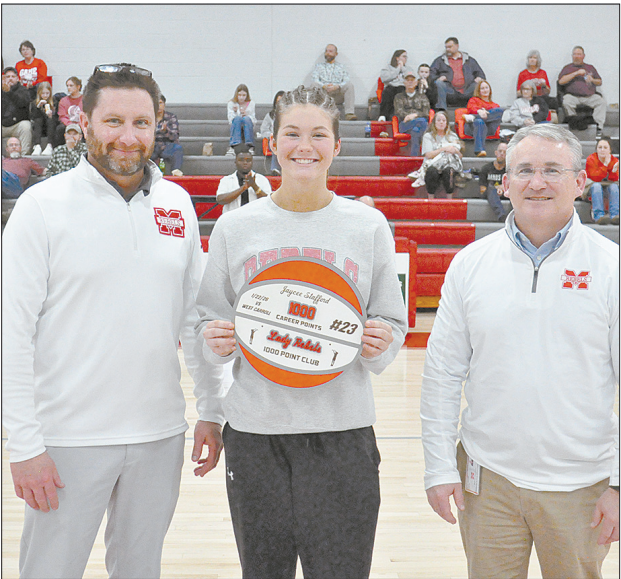
The Lady Tigers rallied 18-2 in the third to close the gap, led by Olds and Morgan with four points each. McKenzie Castleman hit a three-pointer, and Makala Bass also scored three points. Amelia Bennett and Lilly McGee each had a pair. Downs-Darden added a pair for McEwen. Heading into the final frame, the Warriorettes led 40-32.

McEwen clinched the win with a 20-17 edge in the fourth, led by Lastovka with seven points. Downs-Darden scored six, M. Baker had four points, and Littleton scored three. Olds scored eight for Central with a pair of threes. A. Baker also hit a three, and Morgan, Finley and Castleman each added a pair.

Warriorette Laila Downs-Darden led all scorers with 37 points, including a pair of three-pointers.

Emy Olds led the Lady Tigers with 15 points with a pair of threes.

McKenzie's Jaycee Stafford Welcomed to 1,000-Point Club



McKENZIE (February 17) — McKenzie High School sophomore basketball phenom Jaycee Stafford was presented a plaque Tuesday commemorating her recent achievement of 1,000 career points. Stafford reached the milestone on January 22 at West Carroll. She's the fastest in MHS history to join the 1,000-point club. Pictured are (L to R): Lady Rebel Head Coach Dru Emerson, Stafford and MHS Principal Kelly Spivey. Photo by Brad Sam/The Banner

DISTRICT 12-1A BOYS BASKETBALL TOURNEY



Above, Tiger Junah Smith drains an open three-pointer. Smith scored 14 for Central. Below, Rebel Avery Brown fires a contested three-pointer. Brown led McKenzie (tie) with 17 points. Photo by Davarion Gilbert/The Banner



Tigers End Rebels' Season

BY DAVARION GILBERT
banner@mckenziebanner.com

McKENZIE (February 19) — McKenzie High School hosted Hollow Rock-Bruceton Central Thursday for the opening round of the District 12-1A Boys Basketball Tournament. The Tigers took a thrilling 63-60 win to advance to the semifinals and end the Rebels' season.

The Rebels took the first quarter, 14-11. Rebel Eli Vinson and Kason Brown each had a pair. Avery Brown and Cayden Ownby each hit two free throw shots. Cole Brown had a pair. Tiger Nic King had three pairs. Parker Finley hit two free throw shots. Brody Huff had a pair, and Seth Thomas hit a free throw shot.

The Rebels kept the lead at halftime, 27-25. Rebel A. Brown had two pairs. Nolan Facwett hit a three-point shot. Vinson had a pair, and K. Brown hit a free throw shot. Tigers Junah Smith and Sal Sala each hit a three-point shot. Finley had a pair and two free throw shots. King and Huff each had a pair.

The Tigers took the lead,

47-43, in the third quarter. Huff scored three pairs and three free throw shots. King had two pairs. Sala hit a three-point shot and a free throw shot. Finley hit a three-point shot, and Kaydince Banks had a pair. Smith hit a three-point shot and a free throw shot. Rebel C. Brown led with four pairs. A. Brown hit a three-point shot and a pair. Vinson had three free throw shots.

The Tigers held on in the fourth and won 63-60 against the Rebels. Tiger Huff had four pairs and a free throw shot. Smith hit two three-point shots and a free throw shot. Rebel Vinson led with three pairs and a free throw shot. Kason Brown had a pair and two free throw shots. A. Brown had two pairs, and Cayden Ownby had a pair.

Brody Huff led the Tigers with 22 points. Junah Smith scored 14 points. Nic King scored 12 points.

Eli Vinson and Avery Brown led the Rebels with 17 points each, followed by Cole Brown with ten points. Kason Brown had nine points.

District 14-A All-District Girls Team Announced



BETHEL UNIVERSITY (February 21) — Members of the 2026 14-A All-District girls team included (not in order as pictured) Gracie Adams of Dresden, Yharia Bolden of Lake County, Elizabeth Jarred of Dresden, Skylar Arnold of Greenfield, Mariah Valentine of Lake County, Ahmyre Allen of Gleason, Alli McFarland of South Fulton, Molly Robinson of Dresden, Jacie West of Dresden, Lakin Chism of Lake County, Hylan Leach of Gleason, Ella Porter of Greenfield, and Rayanna Fisher of Greenfield, who was also the District 14-A MVP. Greenfield claimed first, Dresden second place, Lake County placed third, and Gleason placed fourth. Photo by Jeff Washburn

A Tribute to

BLACK HISTORY

Special Edition
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2026



CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENTS THROUGH STORYTELLING

For the past several years during February, The McKenzie Banner has produced a special edition featuring local Black residents and their stories.

We do this not because other stories are less important, but because many of these stories have remained untold. To be true stewards of history, we need not shy away or cherry pick the narrative, but welcome all voices to be part of the collective history. Only by doing this will we achieve harmony.

The Banner is thankful for each person who took the time to meet with us and share his or her stories. Thank

you for the dedication and sacrifices you've made in your respective career fields and in service to our country. Your impact on the world is greater than you realize. Thank you for entrusting us to tell your stories.

Additionally, we are grateful to each sponsor of this edition. Your support makes local journalism possible. Reader, please remember to shop local first. Small businesses are the backbone of America, and your support makes the difference.

It is our great honor to bring you this tribute to Black history.



Left, Hannah Bilger (center) is pictured with McKenzie High School Minority Council leaders, Principal Kelly Spivey and members of the University of Tennessee at Martin's Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. Above, Hannah Bilger speaks to McKenzie High School students. Photos by Lyndsey Summers/The Banner

Hannah Bilger Delivers Black History Month Address On Accountability, Personal Growth

BY LYNDSEY SUMMERS
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MCKENZIE (February 18) — Hannah Bilger was the guest speaker at McKenzie High School's Black History Month program, and she used her time at the podium to remind students of their potential — and the power they hold to shape their own futures.

Returning to the halls she once walked as a student, Bilger opened her address with gratitude and reflection.

"Thank you to McKenzie for allowing me to be here today," she said. "Being back here just reminds me that where you start is not your limit."

Bilger is a 2018 graduate of McKenzie High School. She has since obtained a bachelor's degree in communications and a mas-

ter's degree in higher education leadership from the University of Tennessee at Martin. Bilger currently serves as the community engagement coordinator for the Weakley County Prevention Coalition, where she focuses on prevention, education, outreach and building strong community partnerships.

Speaking to a packed room of students and faculty, Bilger centered her message on one repeated phrase: "You are built for this moment."

She encouraged students to understand that life's challenges are not setbacks, but preparation.

"Being built doesn't mean being perfect," Bilger said. "It means being tested. It means being stretched. It means surviving things you thought would stop you."

Throughout her speech, Bilger emphasized personal

responsibility and ownership. While acknowledging that students cannot control everything that happens to them, she stressed that they can control how they respond.

"You control the effort you give," she said. "You control your next choice."

She illustrated how small decisions accumulate over time.

"Choices stack," Bilger said, raising her arm. "Small choices become habits. Habits become your destination. Your destination becomes your future."

Bilger also addressed the labels and doubts young people sometimes face, urging students not to internalize negative narratives.

"Other people may try to put labels on you, saying that you're not smart enough, you're not enough, you're not going to make it," she said. "But those words

QUOTE

"Every generation has a moment where they decide, 'Am I going to repeat the past, or am I going to build something greater and better?' This is your moment."

— Hannah Bilger

are not the final draft."

Instead of seeking validation through attention or popularity, she encouraged discipline and direction.

"Ownership isn't always flashy," Bilger said. "Sometimes it looks like showing up when it's hard. Asking for help. Doing the right thing when no one is watching. Choosing growth over comfort."

She reminded students that change is possible — academically, personally and spiritually — but only if they decide to act.

mation: "I am built for this moment."

In a program designed to celebrate history and progress, Bilger's message focused squarely on the present — urging students to take ownership of their present circumstances.

"Every generation," she said, "has a moment where they decide, 'Am I going to repeat the past, or am I going to build something greater and better?' This is your moment."

Bilger received a standing ovation at the conclusion of her speech — but she wasn't done yet. Bilger, a member of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., later joined members of the University of Tennessee at Martin's Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. for a strolling performance that closed out the ceremony.

Linda Robinson Hicks 1966 Webb Graduate

BY BRAD SAM
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Linda Robinson Hicks was born in McMoresville to Andrew Luter, a farmer, and Onnie Luter, a homemaker, the fourth of eight siblings.

She attended Dunbar School in McMoresville and MTA in Atwood before attending Webb High School in McKenzie for her final three years.

Linda graduated in 1966 with the final class to graduate from Webb.

While at Webb, she played basketball under Coach James Greer, her cousin.

She told The Banner, "I had the best education I could have received," something she learned quickly after graduation when she moved to Chicago and joined the workforce. "I found out that I knew a lot more than most of the people I worked with, so I'll always be thankful for that education."

Her first job was as a secretary for Allied Radio, which closed. She then worked at a bank before she was hired by the University of Chicago in 1972.



Left, Thomas and Linda Hicks. Right, Linda Hicks with her two sons and four grandchildren. Submitted photos

She was hired as a medical biller, but was promoted to supervisor, manager and, eventually, director in the finance department.

Linda worked for the university for over 40 years until her retirement 12 years ago. She said, "Life was good

to me, and I think it's because of the way I was raised and the education I received."

Linda is married to Thomas Hicks and has two sons and four grandchildren.

She is an active member of the Webb Alumni Associ-

ation, serving as co-chairperson over scholarship funds. She's also the vice president and treasurer of the organization's Chicago chapter.

She said, "Webb was really significant because of who I became and how I was able to succeed, sup-

port my family and educate my children. I learned so much. I didn't realize how much until I got out into the real world. It shaped my whole life, really made me who I am. Being brought up in church and school, that combination and the fam-

ily atmosphere, it was just great. I wish that my kids could have experienced what I did."

She noted that her grandchildren love to visit Webb, and the three oldest are Webb scholarship recipients.



Michael Tate

A Lifetime of Service to Community and Country

BY LYNDSAY SUMMERS
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Michael Tate has dedicated much of his life to service — service to his country, to his workplace and to his community. Asked how he hopes to be remembered, his answer is simple: for his fairness.

That principle has followed Tate from his early adult years into retirement, influencing the way he works, leads and serves.

After graduating from an integrated Trezevant High School in 1969, Tate attended vocational school and worked briefly before being drafted into the U.S. Army during the Vietnam era. He served two years in communications, supporting troops overseas while stationed in the United States.

His assignments included White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico, Fort Campbell in Kentucky and West Point in New York, where he helped train cadets in field communications.

Within three weeks of leaving the Army, he was hired for a job with DuPont, where his father worked. That opportunity turned into a 42-year career.

At DuPont, Tate started in production and steadily moved up to supervisor and, later, area manager. He ran a \$4 million experimental pilot plant and helped develop products containing titanium dioxide — a white pigment used in paint, cosmetics and building materials found in everyday life.

"I did good service for the company," he said.

His leadership style centered on recognizing people as individuals.



Left, Michael Tate is pictured with his wife, Monica Adams Tate. Right, Michael Tate's children — Terence, Erica and Treven Markee — are photographed together. Submitted photos

"I'm not a believer of treating everybody the same," Tate said. "Everybody's different. You have to learn whoever you deal with and treat them accordingly ... and try to treat them like you would be treated."

While he built a long and stable career, Tate also witnessed moments that revealed lingering racial tensions. He recalls an incident early on when someone kicked him in what was described as a prank. The individual later apologized. He also remembers nooses appearing in certain areas of the plant, though no one ever claimed responsibility.

"Discrimination is so ... disguised now," he said. "But it's there."

Rather than withdraw, Tate leaned further into service.

After retiring in 2014, he became increasingly active in civic life. He serves on the Carroll County Election Commission, helping monitor and administer elections.

The role involves reviewing voter registration information, ensuring procedures are followed correctly and preparing for busy election cycles.

He also serves as a board member for West Tennessee Legal Services and is an active member of the NAACP. His appointment to West Tennessee Legal Services came after the passing of an NAACP representative from Carroll County. Tate believes his corporate experience and active involvement in the NAACP played a role in his selection.

With the NAACP, he works on issues that arise locally — cases involving discrimination, housing concerns or situations where individuals believe they have been treated unfairly.

"We mainly work on problems when they arise," he said. "When we think somebody has been wronged ... we try to represent them, look out for their best interest."



Tate said he grew up around the NAACP. Family members and acquaintances were involved, and he understood what the organization stood for. Joining after retirement felt like a natural extension of values he had long carried.

"That's the whole purpose of a quality life," he said. "Serving your fellow man."

His commitment to service has also included time on the Huntingdon Planning Commission, where he participated in discussions about the city's future growth and development. He twice ran for county commissioner, saying he believed he could help the county. Though he was not elected, he remains engaged in local issues.

Tate also plays a key role in preserving Black history in Carroll County through his work with the Webb School Alumni Association,

where he serves as first vice president. Though he did not attend Webb himself, his siblings did. In his role, he manages bylaws and policies and works to ensure the organization stays on course.

"Some organizations, if they deviate from their bylaws and policies, they can become nonexistent," he said.

For Tate, preserving history is tied to protecting community identity. Many former Black school buildings in the county — including the McLemoresville, Trezevant and Atwood (MTA) School he attended for several years — have been destroyed or repurposed, and records have been lost.

"Preserving Black history, especially now, is more important than it ever was," he said.

Throughout his life, Tate has seen change. He attended segregated schools before graduating from an integrated high school.

He served in the military during a turbulent period in American history. He built a decades-long career in industry and later stepped into public service roles.

He acknowledges progress over the past 50 years but also sees continuing inequities in employment opportunities and representation.

"It's gotten better," he said. "But it's still a lot of things that ... it's a lot of glass ceilings."

Tate and his wife, Monica Adams Tate, have lived in Huntingdon for decades. Tate has three children: Treven Markee Tate and the late Erica Tate Harris and Terence Tate. He is the grandfather of six and great-grandfather of three.

When reflecting on his life, Tate does not point first to military assignments, management titles or board memberships. He returns to character, to fairness and to service.



Ruby Bridges is escorted to class by the U.S. Marshal Service. Photo Courtesy Associated Press

Did You Know?

The history of African Americans has been shaped by many influential figures, including various civil rights activists. Ruby Bridges may be one of the youngest. At age six, Ruby Bridges became the first African American student to integrate the formerly all-white William Frantz Elementary School in New Orleans.

Although Bridges lived five blocks away from William Frantz Elementary School, she had to attend kindergarten several miles away at an all-black segregated school. Bridges volunteered to take an entrance test to be able to attend the all-white school. The test was purportedly designed to be extremely difficult so that

students would have a hard time passing it, and thusly New Orleans could avoid de-segregation if all the African American children failed the test.

Individuals from the NAACP informed Bridges' parents that their daughter was one of only six African American students to pass the test. On November 14, 1960, she was escorted to class by her mother and the United States Marshals Service due to the presence of angry mobs outside the school. Bridges was the first African American student to attend the school and the first black child to attend an all-white elementary school in the south.

The first day of school

proved poor as nearly all of the white parents at the school had kept their children home and Bridges spent the day with the principal. The ensuing days weren't much better. Eventually, only one teacher in the school, Barbara Henry, formerly of Boston, agreed to teach Bridges. Bridges never missed a day of school that year, even though she ate lunch alone each day and no one played with her at recess.

Her early foray into civil rights prompted Bridges to establish The Ruby Bridges Foundation to promote tolerance and change through education.



Classmates from the Webb Class of 1966 (L to R): Neal Williamson, Peggy Hillsman, Dr. Joe Bryant, Priscilla Staten Smith and Ike Gilbert. Submitted photo

Priscilla Staten Smith

1966 Webb High School Graduate

BY BRAD SAM
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Priscilla Staten Smith was born in Milan and raised in Huntingdon.

She's the daughter of Jim Staten, a construction worker who worked across the country on U.S. highways, and Susie Staten Marshal, who sold insurance and also worked at the office of Dr. Gideon in Huntingdon.

Priscilla attended school in Clarksburg and then at Hale Junior High in Huntingdon. She spent her final three years at Webb High School, where she graduated in 1966 at age 16 as part of the final graduating class.

While at Webb, she played basketball and was a temporary hall monitor. Her teachers were Robert Simmons and Doris Woodard. Priscilla was part of Woodard's business department.

Priscilla attended Tennessee State University and graduated with an associate's degree in Business Education.

She worked for the State of Tennessee for 20 years before moving to St. Louis, where she worked at the Missouri Botanical Garden for 14 years until her retirement six years ago.



Priscilla's Webb High School graduation photo. Submitted photo

At the garden, she was an interpreter in the historic home of founder Henry Shaw and managed the volunteer tour guides.

She's an active member of New Sunny Mount Baptist Church, serving as secretary, Sunday school superintendent and a member of the choir.

Priscilla is also a member of the Webb Alumni Association. Since last year, she has served as the national secretary for the organization and is a past parliamentarian.

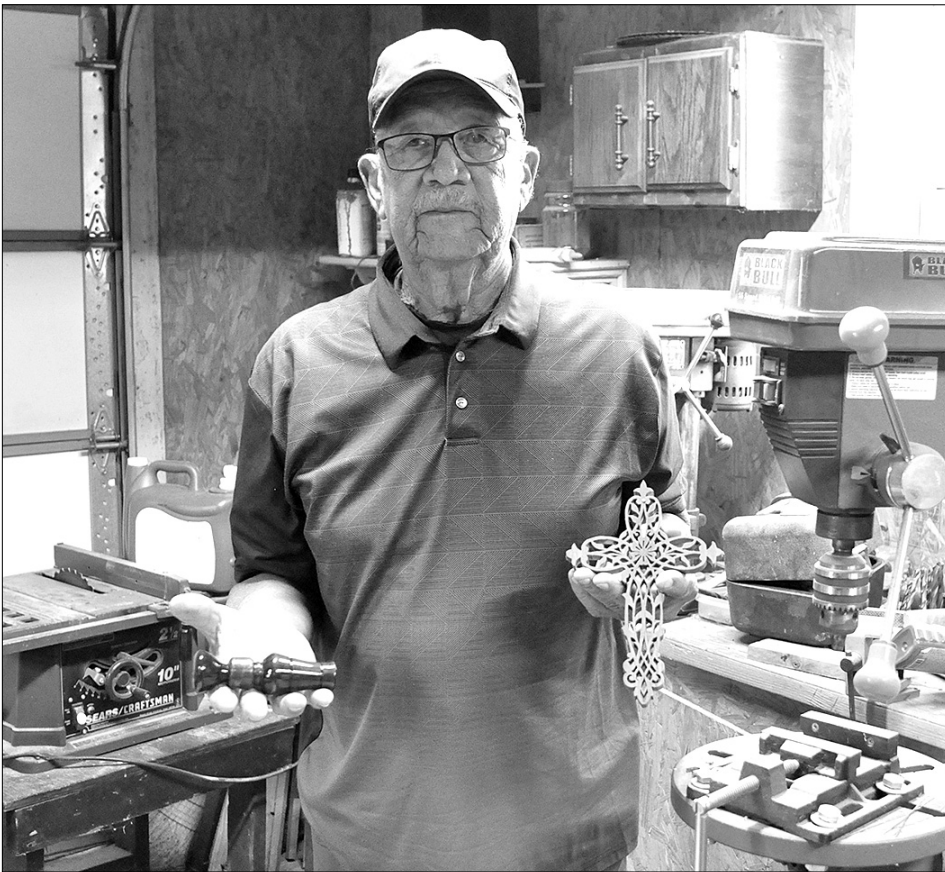
She told The Banner, "Being a part of the last class, to see that as a people we have

come together, and we are not going to let the history of Webb High School go away. It was an important part of the community for many years. After integration, we were scattered, but a few people came together to protect the legacy. The intent now is to keep bringing in our children and grandchildren to continue the legacy, or it could all be lost. It's a legacy that has to continue, and, with the people we have in positions now, I'm excited to see how it's going to continue."

Priscilla has one son and three granddaughters who reside in Nashville.

"If you really think about it, if we begin to teach history exactly the way that it happened - good, bad, ugly, no matter what - I believe that we're going to find that we are closer, more connected than we are apart. "

— Ruby Bridges



H.B. Adkisson does decorative woodwork in his home shop, including duck calls and decorative crosses. Photo by Brad Sam/The Banner

H.B. Adkisson

BY BRAD SAM
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H.B. Adkisson of McKenzie was born in Trezevant in 1939 to Dink and Essie B. (Hampton) Adkisson.

He was the youngest of ten children, and his mother died when he was very young. He was raised by his father and sisters.

The family were sharecroppers, raising cotton, corn and hogs.

H.B. describes his father as “kind of a cultured guy,” and told The Banner about his “ginseng hunting” for extra money. “When I was a child, this would be in August, he would come home and he’d have these roots. We had an old pump, and I had to pump that old pump and wash those roots. He’d lay them on top of the house to dry, and he’d ship them. That was one of the ways he made money.”

H.B. first went to Clay School, a two-room school in Trezevant, about a mile and a half from his house on Highway 79.

He attended Webb School in McKenzie from ninth grade until his graduation in 1959. He spent two years on the old Webb campus, with multiple buildings for things like the dormitories, cafeteria and gymnasium. Then, the new building was constructed with everything under one roof.

While at Webb, H.B. played basketball and participated in agriculture activities such as livestock judging, in which he competed at the state level one year.

He also did some wood-working, which led him to devote some of his time in retirement to decorative woodwork.

After high school, H.B. did farm labor and worked at a service station until he joined the military.

He attended basic training at Ft. Smith in Arkansas and advanced training at Ft. Bliss in El Paso. He then went to Ft. Sill in Oklahoma for ballistic missile training.

H.B. said, “I only saw a live missile one time, but it wasn’t a live warhead. We went to White Sands, New Mexico, and fired it. We only did that one time. We left Ft. Sill in a convoy. We fired at a target 114 miles away and hit 14 feet from center of target. We were right there, in a bunker, no more than 140 yards from it, and you’re looking at it going up. A missile going up doesn’t look like what you see on television, it kind of lags, then goes up.”

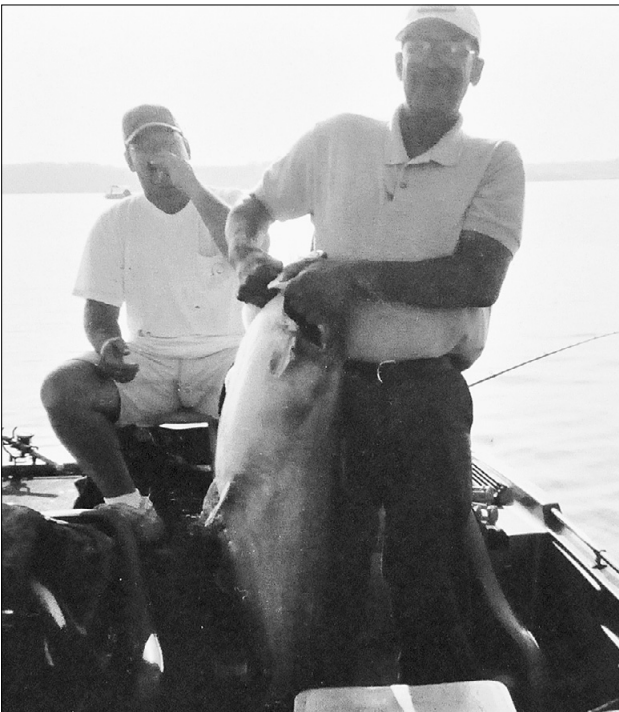
He was deployed to Korea for 14 months with the 3rd Missile Battalion, 81st Artillery Regiment.

At the time, units were just beginning to integrate. His unit had about 350 men, and only seven were black.

H.B. described the experience, “You wind up on duty more than most people. And that’s just a fact. And your promotions aren’t going to come on like other



Above, H.B. Adkisson won the company golf tournament during his tenure at the Milan Arsenal. Below, H.B. Adkisson caught a 50-plus pound catfish while fishing in Camden. Submitted photos



people.”

He appreciated the chance to travel. On the journey across the Pacific Ocean, his ship made stops in Hawaii and Japan.

At the end of his deployment, H.B. returned to Ft. Sill and retired from military service.

He worked at Brown Shoe Company for less than a year before he was hired at the Milan arsenal, where he worked until his retirement in 1999.

He hired in on production for about ten months, then transferred to security, where his military specialization in safeguarding classified materials was a valuable asset.

When Vietnam ended, his unique skill set allowed him to stay on when the arsenal decreased its ranks from a wartime high of about 7,000 people down to about 2,000.

It was also during his time at the arsenal when H.B. picked up golf. Some coworkers challenged him to try it, and he practiced hard.

When he first played in the arsenal’s golf tournament, he finished in last place. Five years later, he won it.

Golf would become a big part of his life as he would travel to places like Memphis, Nashville and Little Rock to compete.

H.B. also became a member of the Carroll Lake Golf Club, possibly the first black

member.

He won back-to-back senior club championships in 2003-4.

In addition to golfing, H.B. took up fishing, which he continued until around 2020. The highlight of his time on the water was catching a 50-plus pound catfish in Camden.

One hobby he has continued is woodworking. He has a small shop beside his home where he crafts duck calls, decorative crosses and clock bodies.

He enjoys attending Nights on Broadway and going to the movies.

H.B. said, “You know, I’m a different kind of person. I enjoy people, but I enjoy peace more than anything. I just like to be at peace with everybody. I don’t like confusion. I like to be successful with anything I do, but I still love to be at peace. And I like to treat everybody fairly. I don’t look at you as a white man. I look at you as a human being. And I guess that’s one of the reasons I got along so well at the arsenal, because I treated everybody with the same respect. I didn’t have any favorites, and I don’t think of myself as better than anybody. You know, I just do the best I can. That’s it.”

H.B. has one daughter, Kimberly Bell Webb, two sons, Rodney and Randall and four grandchildren.

He attends Mount Ararat Baptist Church in Trezevant.

John D. Williams

A Testament to Webb School’s Resilience

John D. Williams was one of the last students to graduate from Webb School, receiving his diploma just one year before desegregation. Looking back, Williams credits many of his life’s successes to the lessons instilled by his Webb School instructors.

Between 1958 and 1966, Webb School served as the sole educational facility for Black students in grades one through twelve in Carroll County.

Williams graduated as part of a 52-member class. At the time, opportunities for Black students were often limited by segregation and economic barriers. Some of his classmates went on to college; Williams did not.



“Many of us did not have that opportunity, but we were given enough education from the staff here at Webb High School,” said Williams. “We were prepared to deal with life as it was presented to us in the world.”

Williams said his instructors taught him and his classmates more than academics. They taught them how to communicate with others, how to carry themselves with dignity and how to treat people with respect. He said the school presented him with opportunities that, otherwise, he might not have had.

After high school, Williams took a job with a local construction company. Though grateful for the opportunity, he soon realized construction was not the path he wanted to pursue long-term. After working two or three other jobs, he made a decision that would reshape

his future: he enlisted in the United States Air Force.

Williams served his country for four years before returning to Carroll County, where he settled in Huntingdon.

He began working for RJR Archer — now Gränges — an aluminum manufacturing company, starting as a packer. Through the years, he climbed the ranks — machine operator, lab technician, final inspector, supervisor — eventually becoming manager and superintendent of the finishing department. Williams served as superintendent for 33 years before retiring in 2002 as the startup coordinator for the company’s new plant.

Since retiring, Williams has dedicated his life to ministry, serving as pastor of Timberlake Grove Baptist Church in Wildersville.

“Webb prepared me to do all of these things,”

said Williams. “I feel like my entire life was affected by the education I got at Webb High School.... It is actually a thrill for me to be able to say, ‘Thank you, Webb High School.’”

Williams has served as the second vice president of the Webb School Alumni Association. The alumni group operates nationwide, connecting a community of classmates who, together, work to preserve the legacy of their alma mater.

The present-day Webb School building houses an on-site museum dedicated to preserving the history of the school and its students. The museum is open to the public on Tuesdays and is available for tours any day of the week upon appointment.

Now recognized on the National Register of Historic Places, Webb School stands as a symbol of resilience — and Williams remains one of its living legacies.

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“My humanity is bound up in yours, for we can only be human together.”

— Desmond Tutu

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A327



Left, Minority Council President Carlton Townes presents a certificate to Dr. Karlene Ellis (left). Right, Minority Council Vice President Aleecia Williams presents a certificate to Jeremy Bilger (left). Photos by Lyndsey Summers/The Banner



McKenzie Minority Council Lauds Bilger, Ellis for Service

BY LYNDSY SUMMERS
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During Wednesday's Black History Month program, the McKenzie High School Minority Council honored Jeremy Bilger and Dr. Karlene Ellis for their years of service and impact on students.

Minority Council Vice President Aleecia Williams presented a certificate to Bilger, recognizing his faithful leadership and commitment to uplifting others.

Bilger moved to McKenzie in 2007 with his wife, Aimee, and two children, Hannah and Joe'L. He served six years

as a youth pastor at Brooks Chapel in South Fulton and now serves as assistant pastor, continuing his dedication to ministry and service.

Bilger holds a bachelor's degree in health science with a minor in coaching and serves as the assistant soccer coach at McKenzie High School. He is also the founder of UP Outreach, an organization supporting senior citizens and promoting dignity and purpose at every stage of life. Williams noted that his impact reaches far beyond the church and into the everyday lives of those he serves.

Minority Council Presi-

dent Carlton Townes then honored Dr. Karlene Ellis for her inspiring journey and commitment to education and leadership.

Ellis grew up in Jamaica and became a first-generation college student before earning her doctoral degree. She attended Bethel University, where she excelled academically and athletically, helping lead her soccer team to three national tournament appearances. Her team was later inducted into the Bethel University Hall of Fame.

Today, Ellis serves as a special education teacher and as McKenzie High

School's head soccer coach, where she mentors student-athletes and has led the program to record-setting success. She also founded the Carroll County Special Athletic Games to promote inclusion and remains active in mentoring and community service.

Townes praised Ellis for her strength, dedication and unwavering belief in students' potential.

The recognition of Bilger and Ellis served as a reminder that Black History Month is not only about honoring the past, but celebrating the leaders making an impact today.

The History And Impact Of the Divine Nine

Black History Month often highlights the lasting influence of historically Black fraternities and sororities, commonly known as the "Divine Nine."

The Divine Nine refers to the nine historically Black Greek-letter organizations that make up the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC), founded in 1930 at Howard University. The organizations were established between 1906 and 1963 during a time when Black students were largely excluded from campus life and leadership opportunities.

The nine organizations are Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. (1906), Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. (1908), Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. (1911), Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. (1911), Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. (1913), Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. (1914), Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. (1920), Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. (1922) and Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Inc. (1963).

Beyond social fellowship, these organizations were founded on principles of scholarship, service, leadership and advocacy. Members have historically played key

roles in civil rights efforts, education initiatives and community development across the nation.

One of the most recognizable traditions of Divine Nine culture is the step show. Stepping is a rhythmic, synchronized performance art that uses clapping, stomping, chanting and coordinated movement to tell stories, express pride and represent organizational unity. The tradition draws influence from African dance, military drills and Black collegiate culture.

Closely related is strolling, a coordinated line dance performed by fraternity and sorority members at events and celebrations. Unlike stepping, strolling is typically done in a line formation to music, emphasizing unity and brotherhood or sisterhood.

Today, Divine Nine organizations continue to serve communities through mentorship programs, scholarships, voter registration efforts and service projects, maintaining a legacy that spans more than a century. Their traditions — from scholarship to stepping — remain a vibrant part of Black cultural and collegiate life.

Things You Probably Didn't Know Were Created By Black Inventors

Blood Bank

Charles Richard Drew became interested in researching the preservation of blood when he was studying at Columbia University. Drew discovered a method of separating red blood cells from plasma and then storing the two components separately. This new process allowed blood to be stored for more than a week, which was the maximum at that time. Drew documented these findings in a paper that led to the first blood bank.

Potato Chips

George Crum was working as a chef at a resort in New York. A customer sent his dish of french fries back to the kitchen, claiming that they weren't good. In an irritated fit, Crum cut the potatoes as thinly as possible, fried them until they were burnt crisps, and threw a generous handful of salt on top. Thus, the chip was born.

Gas Mask

Garrett Morgan developed what he called the safety hood after noticing how many firefighters were killed by smoke on the job. The hood, which went over the head, featured tubes connected to wet sponges that filtered out smoke and provided fresh oxygen.

Protective Mailbox

Philip B. Downing created a mailbox design that featured an outer door and an inner safety door to avoid parcels being stolen. This safety device allowed mailboxes to be set up everywhere.

Home Security System

African American nurse Mary Van Brittan Brown, devised an early security unit for her own home. She and her husband took out a patent for the system in the same year, and they were awarded the patent three years later, in 1969. Home security systems commonly used today took various elements from her design.

Three-Light Traffic Light

Garrett Morgan was the first Black person in Cleveland, Ohio, to own a car. After he witnessed a severe car accident at an intersection in the city, he expanded on the current traffic light by adding a "yield" component, warning oncoming drivers of an impending stop.

Refrigerated Trucks

Frederick McKinley Jones created a roof-mounted cooling system that was used to refrigerate goods on trucks during extended transportation in the mid-

1930s. He received a patent for his invention in 1940 and co-founded the US Thermo Control Company, later known as Thermo King.

Automatic Elevator Doors

Alexander Miles took out a patent in 1887 for a mechanism that automatically opens and closes elevator shaft doors. His designs are largely reflected in elevators used today.

Folding Cabinet Bed

In 1885, Sarah Goode became the first Black woman to receive a US patent. She moved to Chicago and opened a furniture store. It was there she came up with an industry changing idea that brought more urban residents with limited space into her store.

Improved Ironing Board

In the late 19th century, the ironing board was improved by Sarah Boone. One of the first Black women in U.S. history to receive a patent, she created a narrower and curved design, making it easier to iron garments. Boone's design morphed into the modern board that we use today.

Electret Microphone

Dr. James E. West co-invented a foil electret microphone, which was less

expensive to produce than the typically used condenser microphones.

Color IBM PC Monitor, Gigahertz Chip

You can thank Mark Dean for co-inventing the color monitor. Without his invention, we'd still be typing in a colorless interweb.

Super Soaker

Summer just wouldn't be the same without Lonnie Johnson's invention. Johnson was an Aerospace Engineer for NASA who happened to invent the popular children's toy.

Lawn Sprinkler

This invention by Joseph A. Smith helped dads everywhere keep their grass green while allowing kids a fun toy to jump around in.

Peanut Butter

Everyone and their dog can thank George Washington Carver for the invention of peanut butter.

Clothes Dryer

George T. Sampson created the clothes dryer in 1892.

Laserphaco

Patricia Bath, an ophthalmologist and laser scientist, invented a device and technique used to remove cataracts and revive patients' eyesight.

Automatic Gear Shift

Richard Spikes created the automatic gear shift, helping people drive up hills everywhere.

Folding Chair

John Purdy created the folding chair, which is used in picnics and school graduations everywhere.

Golf Tees

Golf was a totally different sport before Dr. George Grant came along.

Ice Cream Scooper

Alfred L. Cralle invented the ice cream scooper, allowing kids to have larger scoops than spoonfuls.

Source: DailyHive.com



Madam C.J. Walker was the child of former slaves. She later became the first female African American millionaire. Photo Courtesy A'Lelia Bundles/Walker Family Collection

Did You Know?

Madam C.J. Walker invented a line of African American hair products after suffering from a scalp ailment that resulted in her own hair loss. She promoted her products by traveling around the country giving lecture-demonstrations and eventually established Madame C.J. Walker Laboratories to manufacture cosmetics and train sales beauticians.

Walker was born Sarah Breedlove on December 23, 1867, on a cotton plantation near Delta, Louisiana. Her parents, Owen and Minerva, were enslaved and recently freed, and Sarah, who was their fifth child, was the first in her family to be free-born.

At age 14, to escape both her oppressive working environment and the frequent mistreatment she endured at the hands of her brother-in-law, Sarah married a man named Moses McWilliams. On June 6, 1885, Sarah gave birth to a daughter, A'Lelia.

When Moses died two years later, Sarah and A'Lelia moved to St. Louis, where Sarah's brothers had established them-

selves as barbers. There, Sarah found work as a washerwoman, earning \$1.50 a day — enough to send her daughter to the city's public schools.

In 1907 Walker and her husband traveled around the South and Southeast promoting her products and giving lecture demonstrations of her "Walker Method" — involving her own formula for pomade, brushing and the use of heated combs.

As profits continued to grow, in 1908 Walker opened a factory and a beauty school in Pittsburgh, and by 1910, when Walker transferred her business operations to Indianapolis, the Madam C.J. Walker Manufacturing Company had become wildly successful, with profits that were the modern-day equivalent of several million dollars.

Her business acumen led her to be one of the first American women to become a self-made millionaire. She was also known for her philanthropic endeavors, including a donation toward the construction of an Indianapolis YMCA in 1913.

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— Madam C.J. Walker



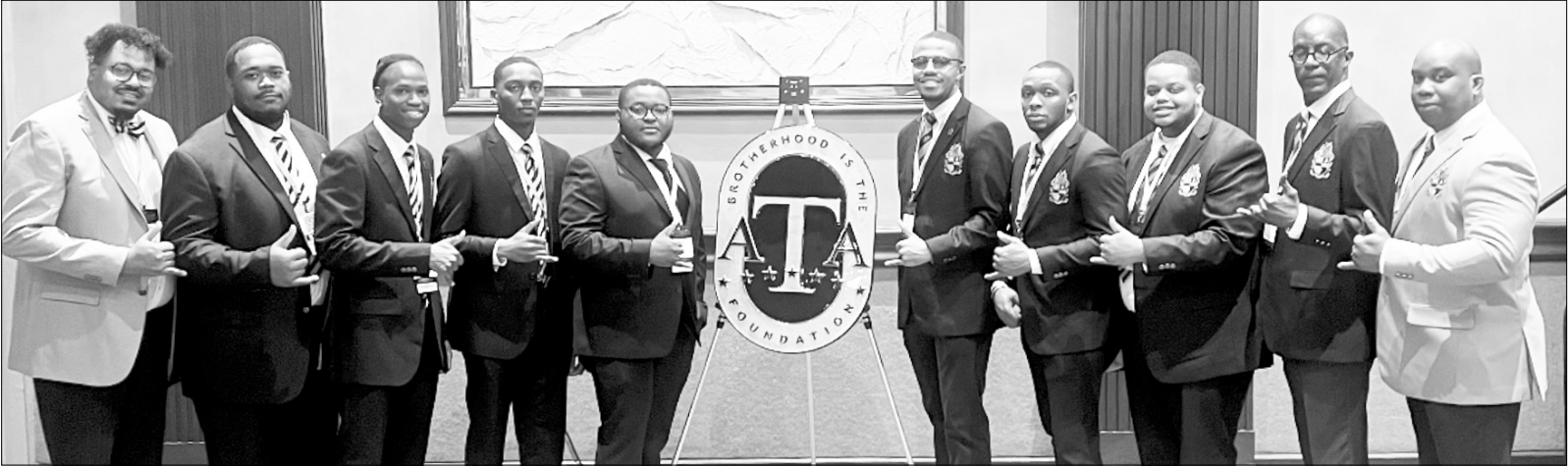
Left, Braxton Hobson. Right, Hobson (center) is pictured alongside his family. Submitted Photos

Braxton Hobson’s Journey from Student to ‘Mr. B’

BY LYNDESEY SUMMERS
lsummers@mckenziebanner.com

Braxton Hobson can pinpoint the exact moment he realized he wanted to be a teacher. He was a senior at McKenzie High School, watching his teachers interact with him and his classmates, when a thought suddenly struck him: those same teachers had taught and inspired hundreds of students before, and they would continue impacting hundreds more even after he left the school. Somewhere in that realization, Hobson knew he wanted to be part of that legacy. Six years later, now nicknamed “Mr. B” by hundreds of McKenzie Middle School students, Hobson stands at the front of a seventh-grade English classroom in the same school he once attended, just down the hall from his former teachers. He now bears the same responsibilities as his mentors, but he has a slightly different perspective.

Hobson grew up surrounded by people who understood what it meant to invest in others. The youngest child of Craig and Renee Hobson, he learned from an early age that investing in the people around him wasn’t a choice so much as a way of life. His father preaches at St. John Baptist Church and works in human resources. His mother worked for years as a special education teacher and still runs a local tutoring program at Webb School, called Two Sisters and a Book. Hobson’s parents also made sure he and his siblings understood his family’s proximity to slavery and Jim Crow Laws. Hobson’s great-grandfather was enslaved. His grandfather, Ralph Tate, lived through segregation. Hobson’s parents taught him to treat his family’s history not as a source of fear, but as vital information that has shaped his family’s



Above, Hobson (second from left) is pictured with his Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. brothers. Right, The Call Me MiSTER program at the University of Tennessee at Martin prepares young men from diverse backgrounds for a career in education. Hobson (right center) is seen alongside his Call Me MiSTER peers. Submitted Photos



story and affected how he carries himself through the world. “We were taught from a very young age that the black experience is very different from others,” said Hobson. “We knew we needed to be really conscious about how we handled things.” Knowing how to carry oneself is a lesson Hobson brings into his classroom every day, and one he hopes his students will carry out of it. When it came time to choose a path after high school, Hobson found one that aligned with the values his parents had instilled. The Call Me MiSTER program at the University of Tennessee at Martin gave Hobson a path to becoming an educator. The program recruits young men of diverse backgrounds into the teaching profession on one foundational belief: that representation can help students connect in the class-

room. Hobson joined the Call Me MiSTER program in 2020, fresh out of McKenzie High School, alongside a handful of other prospective teachers. “When you put a whole bunch of new guys in a room together, you start realizing the ways you’re different. You grow together. It was a very different feeling of motivation,” said Hobson. He and his cohort grew into a brotherhood. The program opened him up to a side of his culture he’d never experienced. Growing up in McKenzie, close friendships with other young Black men had been rare. At UTM, surrounded by his cohort and later his brothers in Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., he encountered spoken word poetry, new music and new perspectives on what it meant to be a young Black man in America. His uncle had been a member of Alpha Phi Alpha before him, and the organization, whose

members include Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., gave him a model of Black manhood rooted in service and community investment. It was in that space that literature began to take on new meaning for Hobson. Poetry became key to his identity. In college, Hobson and his fraternity brothers would sit together and work through poems, searching for meaning between the lines. He began to see literature as something alive, something people had always used to make sense of struggle, joy and survival. “Invictus,” written by a man on his deathbed claiming mastery over his own fate, landed differently once he understood the story behind it. Langston Hughes and Maya Angelou took on a new weight. Hobson returned to books he had loved as a child and found entirely different stories living underneath the ones he remembered. That widening of his own

world is precisely what he now wants to offer his students. He plans to meet his students exactly where they are. He wants to teach them that the songs they listen to on the way to school, the lyrics they have memorized without thinking about why, are forms of poetry, that they come from the same tradition. He wants his students to see culture as something to be understood, not overlooked. “At the end of the day, we’re all people,” said Hobson. “But just because we’re all people doesn’t mean we need to ignore our own history and our differences. I think that’s part of what makes us great as a people is understanding each other’s differences.” After a brief teaching stint in Fulton County, Ky., Hobson returned to his hometown in 2025. He considers the 2025-26 school year his true first full year teaching. He is candid about still

learning the craft, still figuring out what sticks and what doesn’t, still leaning on mentors and listening to his students when something isn’t working. He wants his classroom to become a safe space for his students. “I tell them to be completely honest with me 24/7,” he said. “I tell them, ‘If you don’t like what I’m doing, let me know. Let’s talk about it.’” But his purpose has never wavered. He was poured into — by this community, by his family, by his fraternity, by the long line of people who came before him and carried far heavier burdens. Now it’s his turn to be a role model for the children in this community. “History is the past, but right now we’re here,” Hobson said. As he continues his teaching career, Hobson wants to focus on making a difference in the present, encouraging his students to do the same.

“Hold fast to dreams, for if dreams die,
life is a broken winged bird that cannot fly.”

Langston Hughes

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Left, Tremayne Johnson at On Tha One, a music school he founded. Center, Tremayne Johnson with his nieces Emari (left) and Janeya, students at his music school. Top Right, Johnson is pictured with Bethel Renaissance Percussion. Right, Tremayne Johnson with his mentor, friend and colleague, band director Keith Breeden. Submitted photos

Tremayne Johnson

Sowing the Seeds of Music, Faith and Resilience

Tremayne Johnson is a musician, composer, educator, mentor and business owner whose story is one of hard work, tenacity and resilience.

Johnson grew up in Smyrna, a small community outside of Huntingdon, in a family full of musicians.

He is the Director of Percussion for Bethel University's Renaissance, the Director of Music at Brooks Chapel Kingdom Harvest, the founder and owner of On Tha One School of Music and the owner of Masterworks Detail Shop. His career has also included studio work and composition.

As the first and only Director of Percussion, Johnson teaches and manages percussion across Renaissance's many programs and productions.

Renaissance Regiment, Bethel's answer to marching band, is one of the biggest lines on Johnson's agenda, but before its creation in 2015, there was Renaissance Revolution.

Revolution was the vision of Renaissance founder Peter Jeffrey, who wanted to do something unique. Johnson said, "He basically gave me a blank slate and said, 'This is what I'm thinking, but I'm going to put this in your hands.'"

What started with seven students grew within two years to nearly 70 kids performing as a full stage band with a small orchestra, horns and a full percussion line. Johnson wrote all of the arrangements.

Johnson laments that Revolution has gone by the wayside, but it's one of many experiences to come from Renaissance that he cherishes.

He recalled another, when he and some of his students contributed to David Phelps' chart-topping Southern Gospel album Freedom. "I was blessed to be able to write some percussion parts, and

our percussion line was featured on the album."

Johnson expressed his love for the annual Christmas with Renaissance, particularly the year that one show was performed at the Tennessee Performing Arts Center in Nashville.

Johnson championed the creation of the Renaissance Marching Invitational high school band competition.

Johnson said of recruitment, "That process to me, I don't recruit a kid to the idea of a university, I recruit a kid to the concept of life-changing events. I believe in sowing into that kid, them trusting me enough for me to help them to get to the next stage in their life. Because at the end of the day, that's the only thing that matters is the student."

"I don't necessarily look for that kid that might be the greatest. I like the underdog. I like that kid that has untapped potential. That's my calling card, I'm able to see something that they don't see in themselves. That's how I've been successful at Bethel."

Another big pillar of Johnson's life and career is church music.

"My mom and dad [Marilyn and Danny] are phenomenal singers and musicians, two of my biggest cheerleaders and inspirations. I grew up in a van traveling to churches and performing. I've been playing drums since I was two. As I got older, I started playing a little bit of piano. "I love teaching choir music. Getting them to understand that you've gotta set the table. That's what music does for ministry. It sets the table for the pastor to be able to move forward."

Johnson was part of the music program at Hopewell Missionary Baptist Church in Yuma for 12-15 years before becoming the Minister of Music at St. John #2 Baptist Church in Denmark, Tenn. for 12 years.

He's now the Director

of Music at Brooks Chapel Kingdom Harvest in South Fulton, where his uncle Jessie Webb leads the worship.

Johnson reiterated how deep church music runs through his blood. "Believe it or not, at one point in time, between my entire family, we serviced over 60 percent of the local churches in this area. My entire family is all musicians and singers."

Long before Renaissance Regiment, Johnson was a "band kid" at Hollow Rock-Bruceton Central. "I've been up under [longtime band director] Keith Breeden since fourth or fifth grade. I've literally been teaching bands since I was 15 or 16. I had a lot of inspiration there, Brian Lowe, Chris Abbott, Keith Breeden, Nancy Matheson, a lot of other people."

Indeed, Breeden and Johnson have a long history together. When Breeden left Bruceton for McKenzie, Johnson followed as an instructor, a role he continued for much of Breeden's tenure.

Band came naturally to someone from a family as musical as Johnson's. "It's band. You get out there, you learn your music, you make sure it's good to go. I enjoy it so much, because you get to see the growth. You get to hear the music when it's really bad, and then by the end of the year you've got this phenomenal product that's running like a well-oiled machine. I've been able to translate that well to what I'm currently doing."

Johnson carries a unique distinction in this area. He won a percussion championship both as a student and as an instructor. His Central Tigers won the title his junior year (1998), and Breeden's Marching Rebels won it in 2001 with a squad that included longtime Renaissance Director Matthew Holt, who would later recommend Johnson for the Bethel percussion position.

Never quite satisfied with his own status quo, Johnson has added private instruction to his repertoire in recent years, leading to the opening of On Tha One School of Music in McKenzie on January 1 of this year.

"The vision actually came as my brother [Ethan] was passing away. I told him I was going to open a music school, and he said, 'Duh, why are you not already doing it?'"

Longtime friends Jobina and Kenny Gordon provided Johnson a room to get started. He began with a couple of students and kept growing from there.

He said, "I attest my growth in the beginning with the vision that I cast with my brother. I was fortunate to be able to have a really in-depth conversation with him before he passed away."

Johnson's students now include Ethan's daughters, Emari and Janeya, fulfilling a promise made to his late brother.

On Tha One has 25-30 active students, with more on the waiting list. The staff includes eight instructors, and he plans to hire three or four more.

Lessons are available for nearly any instrument, including strings, percussion, winds and vocals.

Johnson plans to expand to more locations.

He also officially launched another venture on January 1, Masterworks Detail Shop at 534 N. Main Street in McKenzie.

The business employs six detailers, but Johnson has immediate plans to add some daytime detailers and mobile detailers. "We'll have mobile units that will be out. If you can't get to us at the brick-and-mortar, we'll come to you."

Just over a year after the loss of his brother, Johnson himself would stare into the face of death and confront the biggest challenge of his life.

On March 26, 2023, he fell off the stage at Brooks

QUOTE

"I've never missed a band camp... I taught all of my band camps laying down in the middle of the band room floor. [...] Those kids on the percussion line picked me up out of the truck every day and took me into band practice. Every day."

— Tremayne Johnson on his recovery after fracturing multiple vertebrae in his neck

Chapel during Sunday service. "I still can't tell you exactly what happened. I fell face-first, and my body burned."

Johnson had fractured multiple vertebrae, C3-C7, in his neck. Had the C2 been affected, he would have been paralyzed for life.

He said, "I made a promise to the Lord while I was laying in the hospital. The devil came to me and he wanted me to die. He wanted me to quit. I woke up screaming. 'I'm not going to do it.'"

I made a promise then, if you let me get out of this bed, I'm not going to play with it. Because I know I've got favor on my life. I understand. I get it."

Johnson had surgery that Thursday to fuse the affected vertebrae and began therapy immediately. By Saturday, he walked the floor with no cane or walker. By the next Tuesday, he walked three floors of the hospital, including the floor where his brother had died.

The neurologist and other doctors were in disbelief at the speed of his recovery. "Most people with a situation like this don't recover that fast," he said. Johnson was out of the hospital in less than two weeks.

Renaissance Regiment camp started a couple of months later. Johnson noted, "I've never missed a band camp... I taught all of my band camps laying down in the middle of the band room floor."

Johnson faced another health scare the next year when he nearly lost a foot to diabetes. "I was stubborn, I didn't think it was that bad. I taught nine days of camp outside in a walking boot on a cane. I was going septic. Those kids on the percussion line picked me up out of the truck every day and took me into band practice. Every day. So you wonder why I have so much respect for those guys over there, because they've been there with me. I'd be hollering and jumping on them, and they're the ones holding me up. They would take me out there to yell at them."

He credits the Center for Wound Healing in Paris for saving his foot, though he had a toe amputated. Another year later, in the summer of 2025, Johnson had a minor surgery on

his other foot, putting him in a boot for another camp season.

He said, "I've been through a lot. Your average bear would have quit, but I don't consider myself an average bear. There's no quit in me. And I'm not going to let you quit on me. If we start together, we're not going to quit. Just part of it. That's one of the things I live by."

He cited a few figures who have inspired him over the years.

He credits educator Mr. Ivory Adkisson with showing him the importance of having Black educators in the classroom. "The absence of the African-American educator in your rural public schools is what causes a lot of issues. It's because there's not enough of us that are being seen to get any kind of understanding."

Johnson continued, "One of my big inspirations as far as understanding Black History was [the late] Mr. Alvin Fields. He was our manager when my parents had our family group and he was really big into the civic leagues and everything Black. He was a very big inspiration as far as understanding who I was as a young Black kid. At the time, I didn't realize that the seeds that he was sowing into me would be something that would come to fruition later."

"And Mr. Joe Jones, who used to work with my dad. When I first got the job at Bethel, he was one of the ones that I talked to daily. He really gave me some words of encouragement on moving forward, how to handle myself, how to carry and conduct myself. He took care of me. He really sowed seeds into me."

He also cited his family, particularly his parents and uncles, including his pastor, and Holt.

Johnson said, "My main goal in life is to sow seeds. I'm gonna sow seeds into any and every thing that I can get my hands on. When I'm gone, when it comes time for you all to put me in the ground, I want it to be to the point where you have to have my funeral on the football field."

Johnson, 45, has three sons, Zayveon Johnson, Korvelle Johnson and Boston Johnson; a daughter, Da'Shauna Parker; and four grandsons.

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Remembering Reverend Jesse Jackson

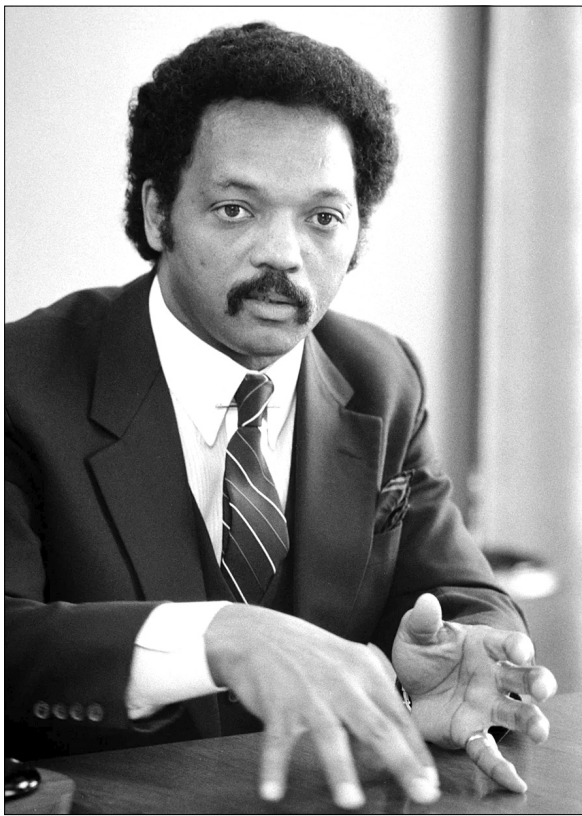
1941 — 2026

BY LYNDSAY SUMMERS
lsummers@mckenziebanner.com

America said goodbye to Reverend Jesse Jackson on Tuesday, February 17. The prominent civil rights leader, who reminded the country to “keep hope alive” in a 1988 Democratic National Committee speech, died at 84 after a long journey with a progressive neurological disease.

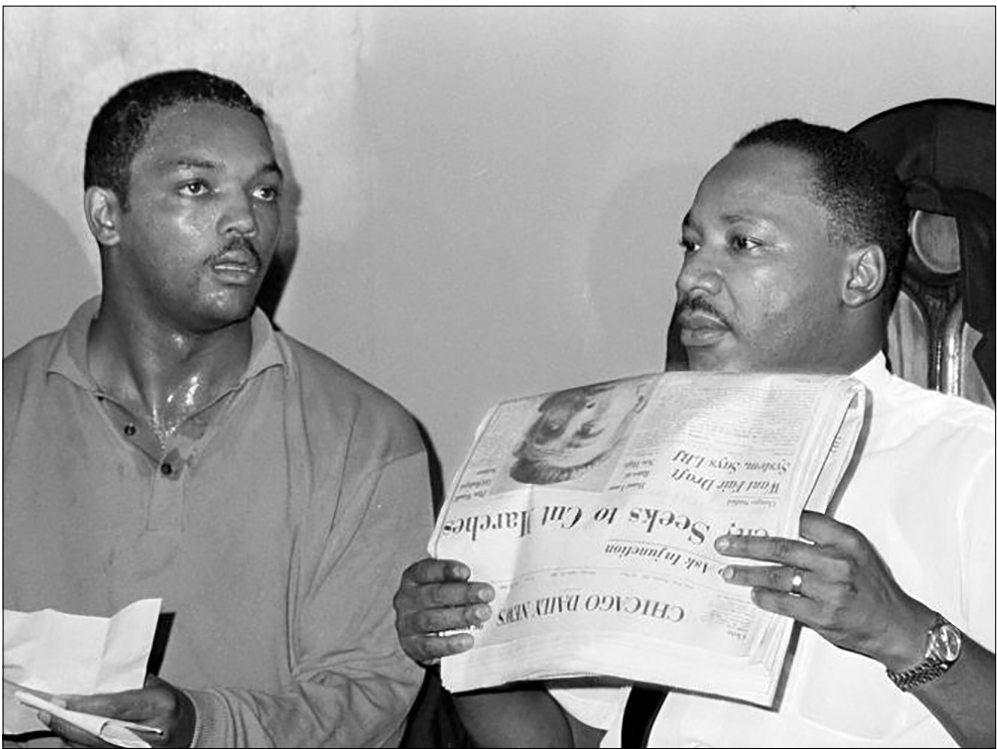
Born in 1941 in Greenville, South Carolina, Jackson became an advocate against racial injustice at an early age. His early work includes organizing with the Congress of Racial Equality, participating in marches and sit-ins. He was one of the eight African Americans involved in a sit-in at the Greenville Public Library, later arrested for “disorderly conduct.”

During his divinity studies at the Chicago Theological Seminary, Jackson began rallying support for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Jackson joined the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) to work alongside King full-time, shortly after participating in the 1965 Selma-to-Montgomery march



in Alabama. Jackson was at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis when King was assassinated in 1968. After King's death, Jackson's advocacy transformed. He resigned from SCLC and founded the organization People United to Save Humanity, or PUSH, in 1971. At first, PUSH worked to improve the economic conditions of Black communities in America. Later, the organization expanded into

politics, hosting a weekly radio show and presenting awards to Black people. Jackson became the second Black person to make a bid for a nomination by a major party in 1984, running as a Democrat, but he never made it to a general election. His 1984 presidential bid prompted the launch of the National Rainbow Coalition, which advocated for social programs, voting rights and affirmative action. Jackson



Left, Reverend Jesse Jackson, photographed in 1983. Above, Reverend Jesse Jackson (left) is pictured with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (right) in Chicago on August 19, 1966.

merged PUSH and the National Rainbow Coalition in 1996 to form the Rainbow PUSH Coalition. Jackson won the Democratic primaries in five states and secured 18 percent of the total primary vote (80 percent of the Black vote) in the 1984 Democratic race. Four years later, his presidential bid picked up more support. He won 13 state primaries, including Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana,

Mississippi and South Carolina. Jackson doubled his primary votes from his first attempt, coming second in the 1988 Democratic race. Jackson later became an elder statesman within the Democratic party. Despite being diagnosed with progressive supranuclear palsy — a condition which shares features with Parkinson's disease — Jackson remained an outspoken advocate for civil rights.

He was arrested twice in 2021 over his objection to the Senate filibuster rule, and he appeared at the 2024 Democratic National Convention. Jackson is survived by his wife, Jacqueline, and their children: Santita, Jesse Jr., Jonathan, Yusef, Jacqueline and Ashley. His legacy of activism will forever be ingrained in United States history.

Notable Firsts for Black Americans

The United States is shaped by the diverse population that calls the nation home. Black individuals are among the extraordinary contributors to the national fabric, and many have blazed trails, benefiting countless others as a result. Future generations may owe their opportunities to these pioneering individuals who have elicited change and opportunity. The following are some noteworthy Black Americans who made a lasting impact on the United States and even the globe.

Jackie Robinson

Sports fans can attest that the most universally recognized barrier broken in American sports occurred on April 15, 1947. That was when Jackie Robinson took to the baseball diamond to play for the Brooklyn Dodgers. Robinson was the first Black athlete to participate in Major League Baseball in the modern era, during a time when Black players typically were restricted to the Negro Leagues. The National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum says that Robinson was a central figure in the civil rights movement both on the diamond and beyond.

Shirley Chisholm

Elected to the U.S. Congress in 1968, Shirley Chisholm was the first Black woman to serve in such a role. She represented New York's twelfth congressional district, and four years later, threw her hat into the national arena. Chisholm was the first woman to seek the nomination for President of the United States from a major party. Residents of Brooklyn can visit Shirley Chisholm State Park, which abuts the Belt Parkway and Pennsylvania Avenue.

Hattie McDaniel

An accomplished actress, Hattie McDaniel was the first Black person to win an Academy Award, earning it for Best Supporting Actress in 1940 for her role as “Mammy” in “Gone With the Wind.” Despite this groundbreaking achievement for a Black artist, she was not allowed to sit with her white castmates during the ceremony. McDaniel paved the way for Sidney Poitier, who won the award for Best Actor in 1964, and later Halle Berry, who won Best Actress in 2002.

Benjamin O. Davis, Sr.

On October 25, 1940, Davis was promoted to

Brigadier General, becoming the first Black American General Officer in the U.S. Army. The U.S. Army Center of Military History says his promotion occurred just before the U.S. entered World War Two, and was a significant step toward racial integration in the armed forces. Davis' son, Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., commanded the Tuskegee Airmen, the first Black American military pilots.

Barack Obama

Forty-three white men preceded Barack Obama in holding the highest office in the country as President of the United States of America. Obama was inaugurated as the forty-fourth president on January 20, 2009, and remained in office until 2017. He was the first Black man to become president, defeating Senator John McCain, and later, Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney. Obama's historic terms may have set the course for the vice presidency of Kamala Harris, who became the first Black American and first Asian American vice president in 2021.

Many Black individuals have helped to shape the United States, setting an example Americans from all backgrounds can follow.

Color A Masterpiece COLOR ME P.H.D.

Mary Winston Jackson

April 9th 1921 - Feb. 11th 2005

Mary Winston Jackson was an American mathematician and aerospace engineer. In 1958, she became the first African-American female engineer to work at NASA. Her contributions to Project Mercury were highlighted in Margot Lee Shetterly's book, "Hidden Figures," which was made into a film in 2016, highlighting Jackson alongside fellow NASA mathematicians Katherine Johnson and Dorothy Vaughan. As Jackson's daughter Carolyn Lewis said, "She was a scientist, humanitarian, wife, mother, and trailblazer who paved the way for thousands of others to succeed, not only at NASA, but throughout this nation."

Did You Know?

Black History Month has a lengthy history that dates back more than a century. According to History.com, historian Carter G. Woodson and minister Jesse E. Moorland founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH) in September 1915. Promoting the achievements of Black Americans was among

the various missions of the ASNLH. One of the ways the ASNLH sought to achieve that mission was through the establishment of Negro History Week in 1926. Organizers chose the second week of February for the event because that week happened to be when Abraham Lincoln (1809) and Frederick Douglass (1818) were born. Lincoln

and Douglass played pivotal roles in the abolition of slavery in the United States. After the establishment of Negro History Week in 1926, more and more cities began to celebrate it. History.com notes that by the 1960s Negro History Week had evolved into Black History Month on college campuses, eventually leading to formal recognition of the event by American president Gerald Ford in 1976

“Life is not a spectator sport. If you’re going to spend your whole life in the grandstand just watching what goes on, in my opinion, you’re wasting your life.”

— Jackie Robinson

“In recognizing the humanity of our fellow beings, we pay ourselves the highest tribute.”

— Thurgood Marshall

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“If they don’t give you a seat at the table, bring a folding chair.” — Shirley Chisholm



Left, Carlton Townes (second from left) represented Tennessee DECA at the State Capitol, where he and other students met State Representative Tandy Darby. Right, A young Carlton Townes (center) is pictured with his older brother, Lorenzo Townes, and his great-grandmother, Marsha “Mimi” Townes. Lorenzo and Mimi both made lasting impacts on Townes’ life. Submitted photos

Carlton Townes *Leading With an Open Heart*

BY LYNDSY SUMMERS
lsummers@mckenziebanner.com

At just 18 years old, Carlton Townes is already taking the city of McKenzie by storm.

As a high school senior, the first African American Tennessee DECA Vice President of Marketing from his town and the organizer behind McKenzie’s first-ever Community Prayer Service, Townes had a busy 2025. Luckily for McKenzie, the young man doesn’t plan to slow down.

When asked what it means to make history, Townes turned the focus away from himself. He talked about the students watching him. He talked about family. He talked about what it means for someone younger to see what he’s done and decide they can be the first to do something, too.

He wants his success to be a mirror for the kids coming up behind him — proof that they can be the first in their family to attend college, land a certain job or chase something bigger than what they see around them. He wants them to look at someone from their own town, from their side of the tracks, and know it’s possible to exceed expectations.

Before receiving any title or winning any election, Townes’ sense of purpose was shaped by the support he received from his family.

“In order for me to run in my life, there were people who came before me who had to take tiny steps,” Townes said. “My grandmother walked so that we could run. Her mother walked so she could run. In my family, there’s always been someone who had to walk in order for the next person to be able to run.”

Townes’ great-aunt clips every newspaper article written about him and calls to read it aloud. “Our boy done been in the paper again,” she’d say.

When he was considering whether to run for DECA state officer, it was his great-grandmother, Marsha “Mimi” Townes, he talked it through with — and prayed with before making his decision.



Carlton Townes. Photo by Amy Bourne/Amy Bourne Photography

Mimi died on January 8 of this year after a brief illness. Townes carried her illness through December, the hardest month he can remember. Her death shifted something in him.

“Bringing in the first of the year with my grandma being in the hospital, it really tore me at me,” said Townes. “I mean, that’s my girl. That’s my rock. Everybody has their girlfriends or friends or besties or pals that just bring out the best in them. Well, that’s my grandmother.”

Going into a monumental year, Townes was especially crushed.

“Some people would have been angry with God,” said Townes. “I was angry, but then I became more at peace with it. I’m at peace because I don’t have to worry about her hurting anymore. But I’m still kind of mad. Why couldn’t He just let her see me graduate, or let her be at this next community prayer service, or be at my farewell for DECA in February?”

But even in his grief, Townes found peace and a sense of heightened purpose. His great-grandmother endured a time of segregation, gave up her own education opportunities and laid down a path for her family. Mimi led her life with love, leaning on God and becoming a strength for her family. Townes wanted to be a reflection of her even after her death.

“I feel like, every single day, there’s parts of her that I see in me now,” said Townes. “The love that my grandmother had that she poured into me is what I like to pour into everybody.”

Townes doesn’t care where someone comes from, what they believe or what labels they carry. He wants to know people as they are.

“You can put the worst person in front of me,” he says, “and I want to know them for who they are.”

That mindset led him to organize McKenzie’s first Community Prayer Service in September 2025, centered on unity. He reached out

QUOTE

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— Carlton Townes

across churches, counties and communities, inviting anyone who wanted to come. Black or white. Republican or Democrat. Regular churchgoer or someone who hasn’t prayed in years.

A projected 185 people attended the first community event at McKenzie’s downtown Veteran’s Park.

Now Townes is planning a second service, scheduled for March 1 at McKenzie’s Park Theatre, focused on “Seasons of Life.” It will include speakers, praise and worship and a symbolic chain-breaking exercise he encountered at a youth camp in Florida — an opportunity for participants to release whatever is holding them back.

The theme feels especially personal for Townes this time around. He’d been planning the service through the grief of losing Mimi, pushing through exhaustion and self-doubt. He’d also recently come to the realization that it has been almost five years since he lost his older brother, Lorenzo Townes. Two of his biggest inspirations, the people who made him into the young man he is today, are gone.

“God knew what he was doing leading me to this topic,” he said, “because now I’m able to talk with people about it.”

Townes is equally honest about what it costs to move through the world the way he does. He was among those who received racist threatening text messages that circulated in the region last year.

“I was so terrified,” he said. “I didn’t want anyone to think of me differently.”

He speaks plainly about inequities he has seen — underfunded schools in majority-Black counties, teachers stretched thin,

young people written off before they’ve had a chance.

He notes how his aunt, who works at McKenzie Housing Authority, tells every child who comes through that they are going to be somebody someday. It’s a detail that inspires him.

“The thought that just because you’re Black, you can’t be great — that should not be a thing,” he says. “Everyone has the potential to be great.”

When he faces prejudice, his response is to work harder and want more — for McKenzie, for Carroll County, for the world.

That drive recently took him beyond McKenzie. Just days before his interview with The Banner, Townes returned from a DECA trip that included meetings at the state capitol, where he spoke with legislators about career and technical student organizations and their impact on Tennessee students. He admitted the moment felt intimidating, even more so when State Representative Tandy Darby (R-Greenfield) referred to him as “Mr. McKenzie.”

“I was like, wait a minute — I’m talking to state senators and representatives,” he said with a laugh. “As long as I didn’t have to talk to the governor, I was fine.”

Looking ahead, Townes plans to study nursing, pursue certification as a nurse midwife and eventually earn a degree in hospitality and tourism. He hopes one day to open a hotel in McKenzie and bring economic opportunity home.

But that’s the long game. Right now, Townes is focusing on finishing high school.

Asked whether he ever imagined being here, he laughed and shook his head. “I never imagined myself being a state DECA officer. I never imagined having this kind of impact on my community,” he said, then paused. “Give me ten more years. Let’s see where God takes me.”

Mimi and Lorenzo walked so Carlton could run. Now he’s running — and clearing a path for whoever comes next.

“Grandparents can do more for us than anyone else in the world; they sprinkle stardust in our eyes.” — Alex Haley, author of Roots

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