

Our View

DOS search raises questions of conflict

While the actions of the Cumberland County Board of Education often impact all employees of the school system, it has but one employee: the director of schools.

As the board moves forward with its search for a new director, one board member will be faced with the dilemma of evaluating her son for the position.

Shirley Parris, 3rd District representative, faces this no-win situation as her son, Darrell Threet, moves into the interview phase of the search process.

If she votes for him, there will be a question about if the vote was based on qualifications or nepotism.

Messages to Parris over the weekend were not returned at press time, so we do not know what she plans to do. However, when this same situation occurred in the 2016 director of schools search, she did not step down from the hiring process.

Board policy 1.108 requires the board to be notified before anyone is hired in the school system who is related to a member of the board, the director, an administrator, a county commissioner, or any appointed or elected county officials. No person is to supervise or be directly supervised by an employee if he or she is related to the employee.

There are several members of the board with familial relationships with employees of the school system. Unlike the county commission, no member of the board can be directly employed by the school system. But board members with a conflict of interest created by their family relationships declare these conflicts, often at the start of each meeting.

Board members with registered conflicts are Parris; Jim Inman, 1st District representative; Robert Safdie, 2nd District representative; Tony Brock, 5th District representative; and Teresa Boston, 8th District representative.

The board often makes decisions regarding employee

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Letters to the Editor

The *Crossville Chronicle* is pleased to accept letters to the editor for publication. However, all letters must be no more than 250 words, signed and include the author's telephone number for verification. Unsigned letters will not be published. The *Chronicle* reserves the right to edit and reject submitted material. Letters to the editor are accepted through our website, but they must include a telephone number and address. Letters may also be emailed to reportnews@crossville-chronicle.com or mailed to 125 West Ave., Crossville, TN 38555.

Opinions expressed on the opinion page do not necessarily reflect those of the Chronicle staff.

Who is protecting the nurses at CMC?

Dear *Chronicle*:

Nurses, caring, committed and protective of their patients — but who is protecting CMC Covenant Health nurses? As a seasoned nurse I am seriously concerned for the health and safety of nurses at CMC during this COVID pandemic. The CDC and WHO both agree nurses should have N95 respirators for personal protection and a pre-symptomatic stage (between exposure and onset of symptoms) when the person is contagious but does not show symptoms exists. If COVID can be spread by those who show no symptoms and N95 respirators are the accepted protection for nurses, then why are many CMC nurses in cloth masks rather than N95 respirators? At CMC only nurses who are in direct contact with symptomatic patients receive proper protection with N95 respirators. The rest must use cloth masks and be at risk of contracting COVID. I doubt this is the nurse's preference but rather administration's directive.

Nurses are on the forefront of this pandemic. In the ER, medical-surgical unit, or OB unit assisting with the delivery of a baby and postpartum care of the mother, nurses are up close and personal in the delivery of their care. Nurses are at risk for exposure to COVID every shift they work at CMC but with N95 respirators they decrease their risk of dying from COVID-19. Nurses are not expendable; they should not have to sacrifice their lives where they work. All nurses need proper protection with N95 respirators provided by CMC Covenant Health. The community should advocate for safety of our nurses!

Anne Koci

FIRST AMENDMENT: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

NEWS ITEM: THE CLEVELAND BROWNS REVEAL NEW UNIFORMS FOR THE UPCOMING SEASON...



Put down the scissors and hair dye

Heather Mullinix

Tidbits



back to my stylist's chair for a fresh cut and color and a little talk therapy to feel better about time marching right across my head.

Sure, I could go down the path of at-home color. But that hasn't always treated me well.

I ended college with eggplant-colored hair. I went to a professional and tried to cover it when I realized purple hair wasn't exactly the professional image I wanted to put forth during my job interviews. They managed to tame it some, but I was warned — red is hard to fix.

A few years later, I

was bored one Sunday night and decided I needed a new hair color. The light auburn promised on the box turned into fire engine red on my hair. I remember rinsing it and thinking, "This just doesn't look right."

When I saw the result of my boredom, I made an emergency trip to Walgreens at about 9 p.m., grabbing the last box of color stripper they had. It took the red out, which hadn't had time to really bond. But it also left me with drab, depressing brown.

At this point, I was lucky. The cost to fix a bad at-home color job is usually quite high. I had escaped for about \$20. But I didn't love my hair.

The next day, I decided to seek some professional advice. I hadn't found anyone local following a move about six months earlier, so I found a walk-

in salon that I knew to be pretty good.

"I want highlights," I said.

That would break up the blah that was my hair, I thought.

I told them what I had done. They carefully examined my hair.

My hair is usually a big curly mess. That's just how it is. Ask a curly-headed person how they fix their hair and you'll usually get a response along the lines of, "I try not to anger it." My general routine has always been shampoo, condition, curl cream or mousse or gel, and then air dry. I don't even know where my hair dryer is any more.

This routine had left my hair in good shape for the abuse I decided to subject it to in a fit of Sunday boredom.

See **DYE • 6**

Giving my pain a purpose

Marianne Dunavant

Guest Column



of the head as they both lay faced down. Chris was 33, and Josh was only 18.

When Chris didn't come home from work, I continually called him without getting an answer. I knew this was not like him, so I got in my car and drove to his work, hoping his car wouldn't be there and maybe he just forgot his phone. Sadly, it was just the opposite, his car was there and so were many other emergency vehicles.

I quickly got out of my car and asked if Chris was okay, begging for answers. Then, I saw a face I recognized walking towards me with a look that told me everything I needed to know. Chris was gone.

At that moment, I, too, had become a victim of crime. But I had no idea

what to do next, much less what rights I had. All I knew was I was going home alone, and Chris was never coming home again.

Thanks to the wisdom of our legislators and their leadership in passing the Crime Victims Bill of Rights in 1998, most victims of crime have their rights spelled out in the Tennessee Constitution. But unfortunately, the way it is worded means that those rights didn't apply to me — and in too many cases, the rights that are meant to be guaranteed for other victims are not enforceable under the current law.

That's why I am a part of a movement in Tennessee to strengthen the constitutional rights of crime victims by passing what is called Marsy's Law. When the legislature returns to session, we strongly urge them to take up and pass Marsy's Law this year to strengthen the constitutional rights of crime victims and to make them enforceable.

The Marsy's Law bill

must pass two consecutive legislative sessions before the constitutional amendment will be placed on the November 2022 ballot for voters to approve.

Whenever a person is arrested for committing a crime, they are read their Miranda Rights and given instructions on what is going to happen to them next. But I can tell you from firsthand experience, as a crime victim, we are thrown into a situation we've never been in before, with no support and no idea what to do next.

I learned a few days after Chris' death that because we were not married, his family, who lived in other states, were the only ones with any rights. While I absolutely agree his family should have rights, I too, as his partner and future wife should have been included.

I was the person who lived with him, paid bills with him, and had dreams to build a family with

See **PAIN • 3**

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Crossville Chronicle

(USPS No. 138940)

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Published three times a week (Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday) by the Crossville Chronicle at 125 West Ave., Crossville, TN, 38555. Periodical postage paid at Crossville, TN 38555. Publication Number USPS 138940.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Crossville Chronicle, 125 West Ave., Crossville, TN 38555. Telephone number is 931-484-5145. Subscription rate for one year inside Cumberland County is \$72 (\$41 for six months or \$29 for three months); senior citizens rate for one year is \$65 (\$35 for six months or \$23 for three months); out-of-county but in the state rate is \$85 (\$49 for six months); and the out-of-state rate is \$127 (\$70 for six months). Digital only subscriptions are \$65 (\$35 for six months). Mastercard and Visa are accepted.

The Crossville Chronicle Editorial Board includes Bill Atkinson, publisher; Heather Mullinix, editor; Cheryl Duncan, assistant editor; Michael R. Moser, editor emeritus; and Kristin Bowman, sales representative.

THE CROSSVILLE CHRONICLE ALSO PUBLISHES
The **Glade Sun** and **Tansi SMOKE SIGNALS**
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Obituaries

The *Chronicle* publishes obituary notices in the first edition after it receives them from the funeral homes. Obituaries may also be submitted online at obituaries.crossville-chronicle.com.

Donald Stuart Ashburn

April 23, 2020

Donald Stuart Ashburn, 45, Johnson City, passed away unexpectedly Thursday, April 23, 2020, at his residence. A native of Chattanooga, he had lived in Carter County for several years. He was a graduate of Cumberland County High School, Crossville. He was owner of Big Stu's Sports Cards, Johnson City. He loved to fish and collect sports cards.

He was preceded in death by a brother, John Benjamin Ashburn; his paternal grandmother, Geneda Ashburn; and his maternal grandmother, Betty Jean McGill.

Survivors include a son, Austin Stuart Ashburn; a stepson, Blake Ivers; his mother, Linda McGill Ashburn; his father and stepmother, James Allen and Louise Ashburn; a brother, Andrew Lee Ashburn; several aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews and cousins.

A family private service will be conducted at a later date. Condolences may be sent to the family at www.memorialfcelizabethton.com.

Memorial Funeral Chapel is serving the Ashburn family.

A guestbook may be signed at www.crossville-chronicle.com.



William Alan Barrett

Dec. 26, 1961—April 22, 2020

William Alan Barrett, 58, of Crossville, passed away Wednesday, April 22, 2020, at Metropolitan Nashville General Hospital in Nashville.

He was born Dec. 26, 1961, in Baltimore, MD, son of the late William J. Barrett and Hazel Edwards Barrett.

William worked as a residential maintenance technician. He was also a member of the Church of God.

He is survived by his wife, Tammy Barrett of Crossville; daughter, Brittany Barrett of Crossville; sons, Brandon Barrett of Crossville and Anthony Barrett of Maryland; grandchildren, Emory Abston, Brady Barrett, Adella Barrett, Bailey Sturgill and Aubree Grant; brothers, David Barrett of Crossville and Gary Barrett of Maryland; and sister, Barbara Geiger of Crossville.

In addition to his parents, William is preceded in death by his brother, Anderson Wayne Barrett; and sister, Carolyn Hilker.

Memorial services will be held at a later date.

Bilbrey Funeral Home, Inc. (www.bilbreyfh.com) was in charge of the arrangements.

A guestbook may be signed at www.crossville-chronicle.com.



Raymond H. Bilbrey

Jan. 15, 1951—April 19, 2020

Raymond H. Bilbrey passed away at his home in Odum, GA, April 19, 2020. He was born Jan. 15, 1951, to Lee H. Bilbrey and Alta Godsey Tabor in Crossville.

He is survived by his wife of 40 years, Brenda (Dent) Bilbrey; daughter, Rachel (Bilbrey) Clary; granddaughter, Annsley Clary; sisters, Jeannie Johnson, Betty Blaylock, Ulla Zigan, Barbie Kendrick, Tina Bilbrey, Nancy Sygulla and Carma Gomez; and brother, Lee Allen Bilbrey.

Raymond graduated Cumberland County High School while working as a DJ at WAEW radio station in Crossville. He then moved to Georgia where he continued radio broadcasting and was part owner of radio stations.

He was preceded in death by his son, Nathaniel Bilbrey; sisters, Harlene Parker, Rita Waters and Emily Whittaker; and brother, Ronald Tabor.

Rinehart Funeral Home of Jesup, GA, was in charge of arrangements, with burial in Pinecrest Memorial Cemetery.

A guestbook may be signed at www.crossville-chronicle.com.

Bernard Reagan

April 1, 1940—April 23, 2020

Bernard Reagan, 80, of Crossville, passed away peacefully at his home surrounded by his loving family on Thursday, April 23, 2020.

He was born April 1, 1940, in Jamestown, son of the late Emmett Reagan and Minnie (Cook) Reagan.

After serving his country in the Army, Bernard worked as a long haul truck driver. He was a member of the Masons and was of the Baptist faith.

He is survived by his daughter, Vickie Sexton of Crossville; four grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; brother, Tom Reagan of Crossville; and sisters, Bonnie Hood of Pikeville, Zola Cross of Crossville and Bernice Davis of Crossville.

In addition to his parents, Bernard is preceded in death by his wife, Lola Pugh Reagan; and sons, Ronald Reagan and Michael Reagan.

Private services are being held.

Bilbrey Funeral Home, Inc. (www.bilbreyfh.com) was in charge of the arrangements.

A guestbook may be signed at www.crossville-chronicle.com.



County approves personnel policy changes for COVID-19

By GARY NELSON

Chronicle senior staff writer

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, Cumberland County commissioners approved a resolution to change the county's personnel policy, adding a few paragraphs to address county employees working from home and administrative leave.

"Certain policies needed to be added for audit purposes," the resolution states. "Although the county offices following the policies do have some employees that are working from home, none are on administrative leave."

The additions to the policy include the following:

Teleworking/working from home

During the threat of all types of major emergencies and disasters, both natural and manmade, the county mayor may determine temporary changes are needed in the operation of county government.

"The determination must be made in writing and be provided to all county-wide elected officials and the county commission. During that time, the Cumberland County mayor or elected official may allow employees to work from home as needed," the resolution states. "Employees will follow processes created by the mayor or elected official

in regards to timekeeping, requirements for work, and supervision of the employee in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act."

Administrative leave
"The county mayor or elected official may reduce or suspend normal operating hours for certain offices or departments or may grant additional paid leave to full and part time employees, within the confinements of the budget and in accordance with local, state and federal laws," the policy states.

The complete policy can be found online at the official county website at www.cumberlandcountyttn.gov.

The county commission unanimously approved the resolution and changes during its teleconference meeting Monday night.

The county commission approved the following board appointment resolutions during its April 20 teleconference meeting:

Cumberland County Board of Equalization — members appointed are Willie Freeman, Bill Hargis, Daniel Husk, Levonn Hubbard and Rhonda Recor. The board reviews property owner complaints during annual property tax assessments. Members must complete a minimum of four hours of annual training as provided by the Comptroller of the Treasury.

Volunteers needed to help the elderly

Visiting with the elderly is a priceless service that anyone can do. Volunteers are needed to "make a visit." For more information on the UCDD/AAAD volunteer program, contact Kym Dunham, public guardianship office, at 931-476-4149.

PAIN: All victims deserve support

• From 2

him. But somehow, in that moment, I no longer mattered.

Marsy's Law defines a victim more broadly to include a person who has lived with a murder victim. Current law chooses one or the other. Marsy's Law would allow for both the family and a person who has lived with the murder victim to be heard.

Marsy's Law also gives victims greater legal standing in court. That means a victim or their family can speak in the courtroom when called upon at any stage of the proceeding. Right now, victims are only allowed to speak when the convicted criminal is being sentenced.

I have given my pain a purpose over the last decade by strongly advo-

cating for victims' rights. Marsy's Law will not change my past, but it will change and strengthen the rights for other crime victims in future cases.

Please take the time to research and understand the power behind Marsy's Law by visiting Marsys-LawforTN.com. Encourage your state senator and representative to support Marsy's Law for Tennessee this year.

Crime can happen to you just like it did to me. And victims deserve our support NOW. We must not wait any longer for our rights to be firmly guaranteed and enforceable in our state constitution.

...

Marianne Dunavant is the Victim Outreach director for Marsy's Law for Tennessee.

SEARCH: Parris should step aside in process

• From 2

pay and benefits and policies for the operation of the school system. They can also approve agreements with the teachers. These decisions will impact their loved ones — and every other employee.

They grant tenure to teachers meeting certain criteria, and they are the final appeal in grievances or disciplinary action.

But they are not part of the hiring process for anyone other than the director of schools. They are not responsible for supervis-

ing or critiquing any other employee of the school system other than the director.

That kind of direct supervisory and employment relationship requires a higher level of discernment than the general conflict-of-interest statement. For the process to move forward without the stain of nepotism or favoritism, Parris must step aside and allow the eight board members to determine the fate of the four local candidates.

—Crossville Chronicle

County Medical Examiner — James Wojick, M.D. was reappointed to be Cumberland County medical examiner for a five-year term.

Both resolutions were approved unanimously.

Sue York, 1st District commissioner, did not participate in the teleconference meeting.

■ Gary Nelson may be reached at gnelson@crossville-chronicle.com.



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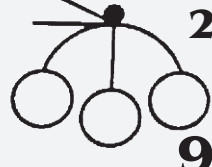


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The Palace Theatre is scheduled to reopen May 1st. Please check with The Palace or our website as many of our shows have canceled or rescheduled.

Please Visit Our Website for Updates!
palacetheatre-crossville.com

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