

## Our View

## Other Tennesseans could be honored

A great deal of discussion in the past several weeks has swirled around a day proclaimed in honor of Confederate general Nathan Bedford Forrest and a bust of his likeness on display in the Tennessee Capitol.

Last week, the Tennessee General Assembly effectively ended discussion by voting to keep the statue and the day in his honor.

A House committee voted 11 to 5 to keep the statue. The Senate voted to keep July 13 as Nathan Bedford Forrest Day in Tennessee, though they did change the law so Gov. Bill Lee doesn't have to sign the proclamation.

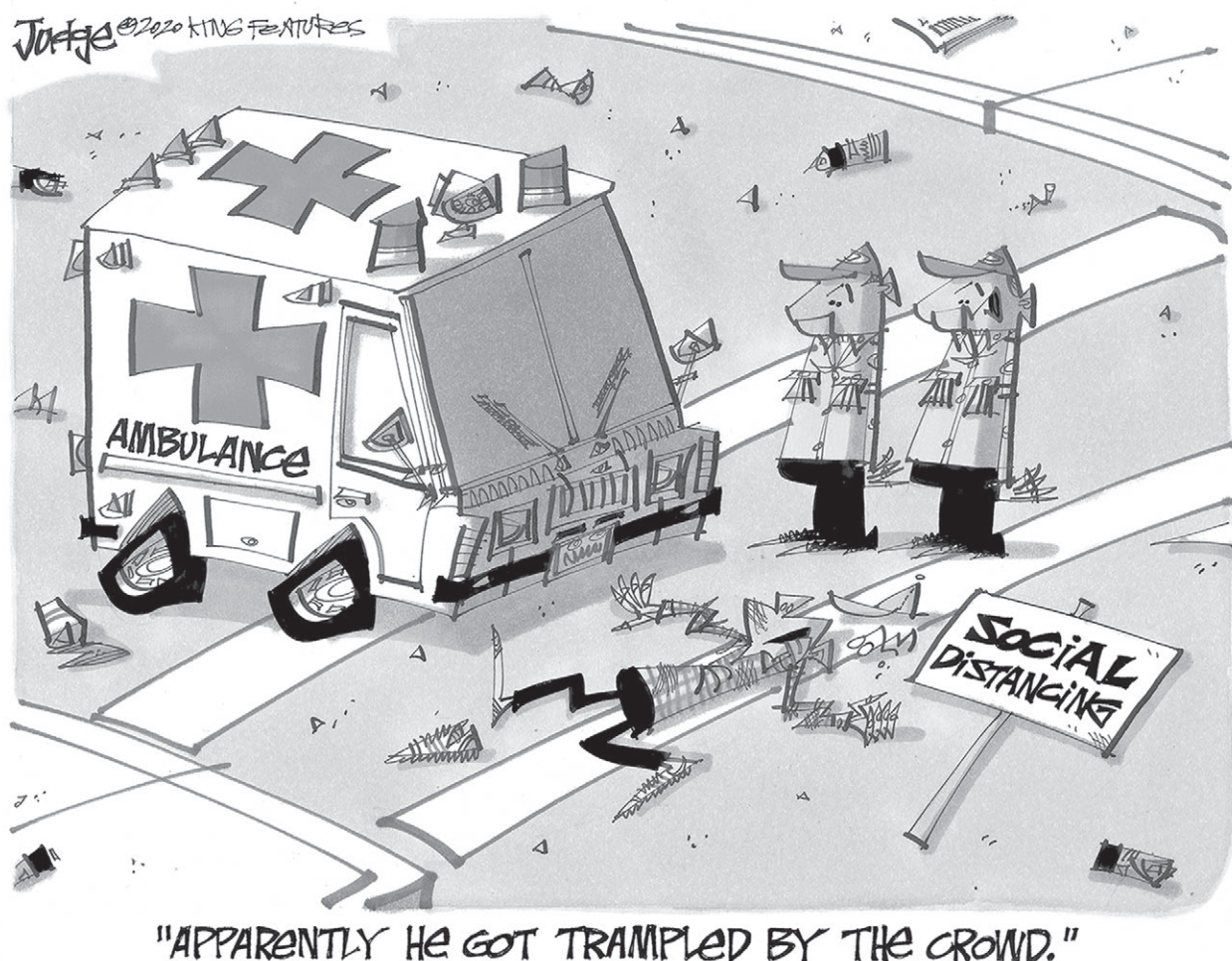
Some have decried the efforts to end the recognition of Forrest as an effort to erase history. But what we choose to honor with statues or holidays says a lot about what we value as a state. Removing a statue from the hallowed halls of our government or ending the practice of setting aside a day in honor of this person does nothing to change history. And a statue does nothing to tell you about the man being honored.

Forrest was born in Chapel Hill, TN. His father was a blacksmith. He died when Forrest was 16, and the young man moved to the Memphis region where he later made his fortune buying and selling cotton, land and slaves.

He volunteered as a private in the Confederate army, but he decided to bankroll a unit. He was commissioned as a lieutenant colonel.

See **HONORED** • 3A

**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.



## 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 Unsigned letters will not be published.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](mailto: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.**

## Urge Congress to support suicide prevention action

**Dear Chronicle:**

In this time of uncertainty, it is especially important to take care of our mental health. That is why, on June 22, I will be taking part in the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's virtual 2020 Advocacy Forum. As part of the event, I along with thousands of advocates across the country will be reaching out to members of Congress to urge their support of the suicide prevention legislation and policies that we know can save lives.

I will be asking for:

- Increased federal funding for suicide research
- Continued support for suicide prevention programs and resources for Veterans and Service Members
- Passage of the National Suicide Hotline Designation Act (H.R. 4194/S. 2661), making 988 the future, easy-to-remember phone number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

Suicide Prevention is very important to me because I have lost a sibling to suicide. I firmly believe that every one is this world has an important purpose. I also believe that we need, as a society, need to reach out more to our veterans as well as our teens and young adults. I am hoping, that together, we can get our message out and help prevent suicide.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Join me by contacting your members of Congress and asking them to support these policies, and visit [afsp.org/advocacy](http://afsp.org/advocacy) to learn more about AFSP's advocacy and how YOU can make an impact in your community. Together, we are saving lives and bringing hope to those affected by suicide.

Sincerely,  
**Jenifer Caldwell  
Clarkrange**

## Insurance companies should provide uniform payment

Rep. Cameron Sexton

### Legislative Wrap



efficiencies into the marketplace.

Regardless of which sector of our economy we want to discuss, there will be people who push toward innovation and those who shy away. Change is difficult, but change can turn the status quo upside down. In health care, telehealth is one example of turning the status quo upside down. This concept isn't a new idea for Tennessee, and each year, we have gained a little more momentum in our pursuit of becoming a national telehealth leader.

I have heard President Trump, federal and state officials, as well as health experts continually promote telehealth. Hospital executives have also shared their thoughts with me about its value and importance and what telehealth means for the future of health care delivery in

Tennessee. Telehealth has provided a mechanism to continue caring for patients and monitoring diseases or ailments efficiently and effectively during the pandemic. Traditional visits are no longer necessary in certain situations that would have required time away from work, such as routine check-ups, physical therapy, mental health and follow up visits.

As a child, my grandfather would tell me stories about the local doctor carrying around "the black bag." This was just his way of describing house calls because patients were not always required to come into a doctor's office or clinic in those days. What's the difference between then and now? The doctor was in charge of a patient's needs; this is not true today. Some things were also just easier back then — but that doesn't mean we can't make them easy again. In fact, telehealth brings "the black bag" approach back into the home, workplace or other mobile locations. It will also allow our

current and future health professionals to once again make those routine house calls to a larger number of citizens, but only if we can create a uniform payment system, and everyone is on the same page — insurers, providers, doctors and patients.

While many of Tennessee's leaders have fought for a more robust telehealth program for several years, others continue to fight against it — particularly the idea of payment parity or uniform payment for telehealth and traditional visits. You will often hear insurers say let the free-market work. I am a firm believer in free-market principles, and these principles almost always work, until you face a monopoly. To date, only BlueCross-BlueShield has made the decision to provide payment parity in telehealth, and I applaud them for it. Meanwhile, other insurers are continuing their monopolistic operations by refusing payment parity and even slashing in-network pro-

See **PARITY** • 5A

## Racism is a public health crisis

Jaelani Turner-Williams

### Other Words



We're facing a state of emergency. Not only has the death toll of the COVID-19 pandemic risen above 105,000 in the United States alone, but it seems to be disproportionately lethal for Black Americans. While COVID-19 is still a growing pandemic, it's unmasking itself as a racial injustice as well.

A growing number of communities are treating racial disparities like these as a public health issue. Last year, Milwaukee declared racism a public health crisis. And this May, amid rising racial disparities in COVID-19 deaths, Franklin County — the large-

est county in Ohio and home to the state's capital, Columbus — did the same.

But in the wake of George Floyd's death and nationwide uprisings that were often met with harsh repression, it's clear that COVID-19 isn't the only epidemic disproportionately devastating Black communities. At least 1,252 Black Americans have been shot and killed by the police since

2015.

Columbus is no exception. In 2017, the Columbus Police Department was ranked No. 1 among large U.S. cities whose police forces disproportionately kill Black people.

In the years before Floyd's death, several incidents traumatized the city's close-knit Black community.

In December 2018, 16-year old Julius Tate was killed by the Columbus police during a sting operation. Tate's death also led to his girlfriend, Masonique Sanders, being given a three-year juvenile sentence in conjunction with Tate's

murder, taking the fall for an injustice many believe the police committed.

By May 29 this year — following George Floyd's murder, and on what would have been Tate's 18th birthday — the city was engulfed by protests many felt were overdue.

Although the county had declared racism a health crisis only days earlier, police cracked down harshly. Even elected officials who showed up to support demonstrators — including Columbus City Council members and Rep. Joyce Beaty, a 70-year-old Afri-

See **CRISIS** • 3A

(USPS No. 138940)

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

**MEMBER**  
2020  
TENNESSEE PRESS ASSOCIATION

**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.

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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](http://obituaries.crossville-chronicle.com).

### Bobby D Easterly

Oct. 9, 1944—June 11, 2020

Bobby D. Easterly, 75, a longtime resident of North Ridgeville, OH, passed away after a long illness at his residence on Thursday, June 11, 2020. He was born on Oct. 9, 1944, in Crab Tree, TN. Bobby retired as a laborer and a heavy machine operator after many years. He was a member of Local Laborer Union #316 and the Local Operator Union #18. Bobby enjoyed collecting guns, gambling, long drives through the countryside, and helping people out.

He is survived by two sons, Bobby (Tracy) of North Ridgeville and Alva (Jeannine) of Eaton Township; two daughters, Jennifer (Jeff) of Crossville and Charmany of North Ridgeville; 12 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; three sisters; two brothers; and by many nieces and nephews.

Bobby was preceded in death by his wife of 47 years, Phyllis; two grandchildren; four sisters; four brothers; and by his parents, Cardell and Audrey Easterly.

The family will receive friends on Tuesday, June 16, from 5-7 p.m. at the Liston Funeral Home, 36403 Center Ridge Rd. (at Stoney Ridge Rd.), North Ridgeville. A private family service will be held on Wednesday, June 17, with Pastor Dave Swartz will officiating. Burial will be private following the service at Butternut Ridge Cemetery in Eaton Township.

A guestbook may be signed at [www.crossville-chronicle.com](http://www.crossville-chronicle.com).



### James J. Lintz

May 7, 1938—June 10, 2020

James J. Lintz was born on May 7, 1938, in Durand, MI. He passed away on June 10, 2020. James worked for General Motors and retired with 32 years of service.

He moved to Fairfield Glade in 1991.

He is survived by his wife, Mary Ann Lintz; daughter, Kim (Chris) Bonomo; son, Steven (Melissa) Lintz; five grandchildren, Braxton (Samantha) Lintz, Spencer (Paige) Bonomo, Gariella Bonomo, Bianca Lintz and Nika Bonomo; two great-grandchildren, Ryker and Savannah Lintz; brother, Jack (Penny) Lintz; and sister-in-law, Dianne Gage and Bruce Tite.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Albert and Louvia Lintz.

James served in the Army National Guard. He was also a member of St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church.

Memorial services for James will be held on Thursday, June 25, at 10 a.m. at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church.

Donations may be made to the Cumberland House Hospice Auxiliary, P.O. Box 1943, Crossville, TN 38558-1943.

Crossville Memorial Funeral Home and Crematory, Inc. was in charge of the arrangements.

A guestbook may be signed at [www.crossville-chronicle.com](http://www.crossville-chronicle.com).

### Leona Stewart

Sept. 5, 1935—June 7, 2020

Leona Stewart, 84, of Crossville, passed away Sunday, June 7, 2020, at Cumberland Medical Center.

She was born Sept. 5, 1935, in Fountain City, daughter of the late Jess Cox and Delphi (Jones) Cox.

Leona worked for many, many years as a switchboard operator for Bell Telephone. She was a loving wife and mother who loved her family, especially her granddaughter.

She is survived by her husband, Alex J. Stewart of Fairfield Glade; daughter, Kim DeMent of Ohio; son, Alex Stewart, II (Melissa) of Kentucky; granddaughter, Abigail Isabella Stuart; brothers, Clifford Cox of Kentucky and Walker Cox of Kentucky; and sister, Michael Hamlin of Ohio.

In addition to her parents, Leona is preceded in death by her brothers, Bobby Cox and Fate Cox; and sister, Ardella Hatfield.

Funeral services were held at Bilbrey Funeral Home on Saturday, June 13, at 1 p.m. with Rev. John Stewart officiating. Interment in Crossville City Cemetery.

Bilbrey Funeral Home, Inc. ([www.bilbreyfh.com](http://www.bilbreyfh.com)) was in charge of the arrangements.

A guestbook may be signed at [www.crossville-chronicle.com](http://www.crossville-chronicle.com).



## FINES: Property backs up to North School

• From 1A

eral Sessions Court. The lawsuit requires again serving the property owner notice of the suit. The court could then order the property sold to satisfy the fine.

A notice had also been served on at least one of the property occupants.

“We did that in hopes that — they’re the ones operating whatever is going on — in hopes they would get that cleaned up,” Burnett said.

If the board authorizes a lawsuit, Burnett said he would need proof of the property impacting the health, safety or welfare of the community.

“If I were standing before the judge, I would want to see what those issues are,” Burnett said.

The committee has photographs from when the complaint was first filed. More recent photos show wood stacked, as though for firewood. That would not be a violation, Burnett said. A photo showing an old mattress would be a violation, except it appeared the mattress was in the road right-of-way.

“With what you have written, the teeth you have deals with health, safety and welfare. You have to be able to show insect issues, rodent issues, vermin issues, mosquito issues, tires, water,” Burnett said.

He cautioned anyone taking photographs could not take photos of someone or property where there is an expectation of privacy.

And, if the issues weren’t “obvious,” then there would be a question of how the situation impacted health, safety and welfare, Burnett said.

Board member Tom Isham said county property taxes had not been paid on the property since 2014.

“That’s \$2,453 in taxes,” he said. “But that property is not scheduled to go on the next tax sale.”

Burnett said it would be an easier case forward than the civil fine case. It would also allow the property to be returned to the tax rolls.

Koester questioned how the new owner would remove the residents and clean up the parcel. Burnett said the owner could start foreclosure proceeding and have the individuals removed.

Board member Craig Clark said the committee had already determined the property was in violation of health and safety standards.

“It needs to be cleaned up,” he said. “We recognize this is a problem for the neighbors.”

Burnett said he understood the frustration of the neighbors. But the county’s resolution on health and safety standards only

allows the committee to address those issues. State law, however, does provide more authority for counties to set property standards, but that was not what Cumberland County adopted.

Isham moved to advance the assessment of civil fines to general sessions court, supported by Clark.

Clark also suggested the county fast-track a tax sale if taxes are not brought up to date.

The motion passed with board member Bobby Rhea voting no. He preferred the tax sale option.

The panel also heard from residents of Grace Hill Dr., who complained of a property with trash, debris, fallen trees and brush strewn around the yard. Neighbors said trash was allowed to sit by the road for several days, with one neighbor saying they had driven over glass due to the trash.

Photos showed boxes piled on the front porch, which neighbors said was a fire hazard.

They were concerned about snakes living among the boxes and possibly harming a child. The property backs up to North Cumberland Elementary School, not far from the playground.

However, as the panel questioned how to proceed, it was discovered only two of the complain-

ing neighbors own property within 150 yards of the home in question. Efforts to reach the neighbor living across the street had been unsuccessful to date, the school system owns the property to the rear and Hwy. 127 forms the side property line.

Burnett suggested neighbors consult restrictions in the property deeds.

“Any property owner can file suit to enforce those restrictions,” Burnett said.

He also said he would consult with the school system’s attorney about possible risks to students.

Property at Springwater Circle has been cleaned up, with a final bill of about \$1,000.

The property had been the site of a burned down trailer. Debris had been piling up for months.

Hyder said she was there as the contractor removed load after load of debris. When it was done, “everything looked so nice,” she said.

Burnett said he will place a lien on the property for the cost of the clean-up. The county can execute the lien and sell the property to recoup its costs.

■ Heather Mullinix may be reached at [hmullinix@crossville-chronicle.com](mailto:hmullinix@crossville-chronicle.com).

## CRISIS: Second wave of virus expected

• From 2A

can American congresswoman — were maced by police.

Columbus Mayor Andrew Ginther imposed a 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew that was far more ruthlessly enforced than the state’s prior stay-at-home orders under COVID-19. While Black citizens have been both shot at and arrested for violating curfew, white protestors — including armed protestors outside the Ohio statehouse — were allotted noticeably more privilege while demonstrating against stay-at-home orders.

Protests against police violence continue, but

they’ve been red-lined to keep Black demonstrators boxed in — making it much harder to practice basic COVID-19 safety like social distancing. And so the second wave of the coronavirus is closer than we expect, particularly for those protesting racial inequity.

As more and more citizens take to the street to protest these injustices, law enforcement will need to take accountability for their injustices toward African Americans in order for resolutions — in health and public safety — to be found.

But one thing is clear: In more ways than one, racism is a threat to our

public health. Our community — and this country — need to treat it that way.

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## Correction

A list of summer feeding sites published in the June 9 *Crossville Chronicle* incorrectly stated South Cumberland Elementary was closed. The school is open and serving as a feeding site for summer meals. Meals are available Monday and Thursday from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. through July 24.