



## A Life of Quiet Courage: Remembering Deputy Derrick Bonham

SHANNON TAYLOR  
CEO/Publisher

There are deaths that stop a community mid breath. Not because they are unexpected, but because they should never have happened.

Deputy Derrick Bonham was thirty seven years old when his life ended in the line of duty in the early morning hours of January 30, 2026. He was a sheriff's deputy, a husband, a father of three, and a man whose presence was quiet but resolute. His service was not loud. It did not ask to be noticed. It simply showed up, day after day, with steadiness and purpose.

To the world, he wore a badge. To his wife, Nicole Bonham, he was her partner, her best friend, her heart. To his children, Harper, Hayden, and Hudson, he was everything. Every choice he made, every risk he accepted, every shift worked and road answered was shaped by the gravity of loving them. He wanted their lives to be filled with safety, laughter, and the quiet certainty that their father had done right by them.

Those who served alongside him knew his devotion ran just as deep. The Weakley



Deputy Derrick Bonham

lowed his death, the weight of that loss became visible across Weakley County. Flags were lowered to half staff on county property by order of Mayor Dale Hutcherson. At the State Capitol, Governor Bill Lee ordered flags lowered in his honor. These gestures were formal, restrained, and deeply symbolic. A public acknowledgment that a life had been given in service.

But it was the people who told the fuller story.

were placed over hearts. Flags were raised. Sirens moved through the winter air not in urgency, but in reverence.

Sheriff Terry McDade later spoke of that night with visible emotion. He thanked those who stood in the cold and reminded parents to hug their children tighter. He spoke of unity, of shared grief, of a county showing up not out of obligation, but out of love. He also spoke a truth that has not loosened its grip. Deputy Bonham should still be here.

In the days surrounding his passing, agencies across Tennessee assisted with the dignified transfer of Deputy Bonham from Weakley County to Nashville and back again. Despite harsh winter conditions, law enforcement and public safety partners stood watch every step of the way. In Nashville, the Metro Nashville Police Department Drill and Ceremony Team maintained honor watch for nearly twenty four hours, remaining with him without pause. Their presence reflected the deep respect shared across agencies and the bond forged among those who serve.

Services were held on Monday, February 2, 2026, at the Greenfield School Gymnasium. Visitation began at 10 a.m., followed by a memorial service at 2 p.m. Burial followed at Highland Cemetery with full law enforcement honors. The space was filled with



SEA OF BLUE-More than 364 vehicles participated in the Sea of Blue to honor Bonham



Bonham & wife, Nicole.

quiet grief, folded flags, bowed heads, and the unmistakable weight of a life that mattered.

Out of respect for the family, the memorial service remained private, with media asked to stand aside so that dignity and space could be preserved. That decision reflected the values Deputy Bonham lived by. Respect. Humility. Care for others before self.

Deputy Bonham graduated from the Tennessee Law Enforcement Training Academy on December 21, 2023, and began serving with the Weakley County Sheriff's Office in February 2024. In less than two years, he earned the respect of colleagues and the trust of the community. He was

described by those who knew him as kind, quiet, and humble. The sort of man whose strength did not need explanation.

The events that ended his life unfolded in the early morning hours of January 30, 2026, while he was assisting the Martin Police Department at a reported disturbance at the Days Inn in Martin. Shots were fired. Deputy Bonham was struck. He was transported to a local hospital, where he was later pronounced deceased. The Tennessee Bureau of Investigation assumed responsibility for the investigation, which remains ongoing.

Yet even in the recounting of facts, the truth remains unchanged. This loss cannot be reduced

to an incident report. It cannot be contained by timelines or press releases.

Deputy Derrick Bonham lived a life defined by service, integrity, and deep love. His legacy will not rest solely in memorials or lowered flags. It will live on in the children who will grow up knowing who their father was. In the deputies who will answer calls carrying his memory with them. In a county that paused long enough to remember what was given, and why it mattered.

This is not a story about how a deputy died. It is a story about how he lived.



County Sheriff's Office and the Greenfield Police Department were not merely places of employment. They were family. He believed in the brotherhood of service and in the responsibility that came with it. He believed in standing the line for others, even when the cost was high.

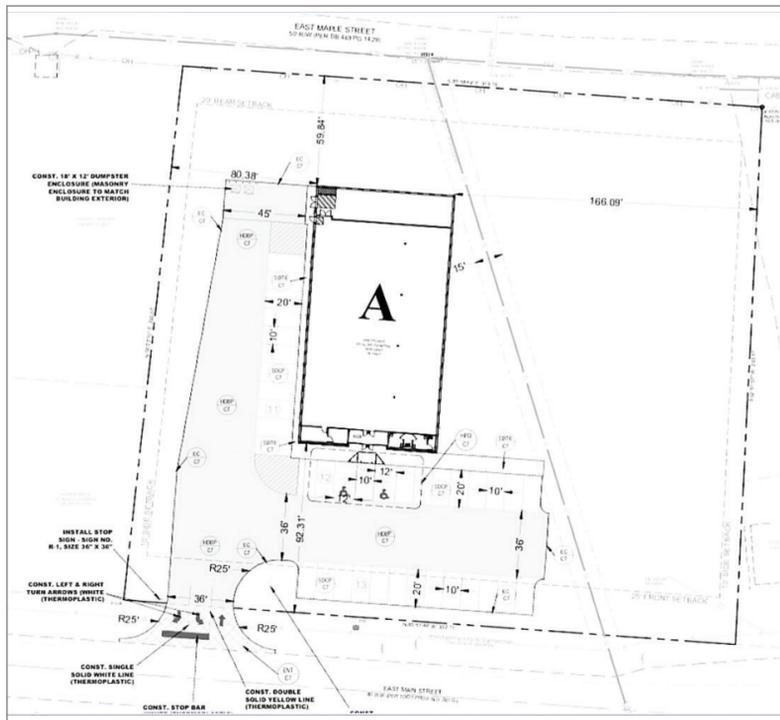
In the days that fol-



Remembering Deputy Derrick Bonham



# LOCAL NEWS



## Dresden Planning Commission to Consider Dollar General Site Plan at February 5 Public Meeting

SHANNON TAYLOR  
CEO/Publisher

Public Meeting Notice: Dresden Planning Commission to Review Dollar General Site Plan

The Dresden Municipal and Regional Planning Commission will hold a called meeting on Thursday, February 5, 2026, at 12:00 p.m. at Dresden City Hall to consider a site plan for a proposed Dollar General store on East Main Street.

According to the agenda and staff report, the proposed development would involve construction of a 10,640 square foot Dollar General store on property zoned B-1

Neighborhood Business. The property is owned by Donald Perkins and is identified as Tax Map 102A, Group D, Parcels 1.01 and 11.00. The site has access to existing water and sewer services.

The staff planner has outlined several contingencies tied to the proposal. The site plan does not currently meet minimum parking requirements under the zoning ordinance, which calls for 53 parking spaces based on building size. The developer is proposing 36 spaces and has requested a variance due to the location of an existing sewer main that limits buildable area.

Approval would be contingent upon the Board of Zoning Appeals granting that variance.

Additional conditions include approval of a pending subdivision plat to reconfigure the subject properties and driveway approval from the Tennessee Department of Transportation. Staff has recommended approval of the site plan if all contingencies are met.

The meeting will also include review and approval of prior minutes and an opportunity for citizen comments. All interested members of the public are invited to attend and participate.



## PEDIATRIC SCALDS: A Burning Issue

### DO

- Set water heater temperature to no higher than 120°F/48°C, or just below the medium setting
- Create a "no kid zone" in the kitchen around stoves, ovens and hot items
- Keep hot drinks away from the edge of tables and counters
- Use a travel mug with a tight-fitting lid for all hot drinks
- Place pots and pans on the back burner with handles turned away from the edge of the stove

### DON'T

- Leave a child unattended in the bathtub; if you must leave, take the child(ren) with you
- Allow young children to adjust the water temperature or sit near faucet handles
- Set anything hot on tabletops within reach of young children who can pull them down
- Allow appliance cords (slow-cookers, deep-fryers, coffeemakers) to dangle over the counter edge

### THE FACTS

- The average annual cost of scald injuries is \$44 million
- Over 136,000 children were seen in emergency rooms for burn injuries in 2011
- 1,100 children die each year from fire and burns



### THE FIX

If a burn injury does happen...

- Cool the burn with COOL (not cold) water to stop the burning process
- Remove all clothing and/or diaper from the injured area
- Cover the area with a clean dry sheet or bandages
- Seek medical attention



American Burn Association  
www.ameriburn.org | 312.642.9260

This material is for information purposes only. It is not a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment, which you should seek from your physician. The ABA does not endorse any specific product, service or treatment.

NATIONAL BURN AWARENESS WEEK — Observed February 1 through February 7, National Burn Awareness Week highlights the importance of preventing burn injuries at home and in daily life, with a focus on reducing risks from hot liquids, open flames, electrical sources, and chemicals, particularly for children and older adults.

*Sportsman's Banquet*  
**February 21, 2026**  
Meal: 4:30PM — Banquet 6:00PM  
Speaker: Rick Burgess  
Central Baptist Church  
801 Harrison Rd, Martin  
cbcmartin.org  
731-587-5311  
FREE ADMISSION  
FREE MEAL  
FREE PRIZES  
Tickets available at the church JANUARY 26th  
**MUST HAVE TICKETS TO ATTEND**

## REPLACEMENT

SNAP benefits for existing SNAP recipients who experienced loss due to the weather are now available.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

SNAP REPLACEMENT BENEFITS AVAILABLE — The Tennessee Department of Human Services is offering replacement SNAP benefits to eligible households that lost food due to recent severe weather, including extended power outages or household misfortune, with requests submitted through the One DHS Customer Portal.

## Support Services LLC

275 Old Latham Road, Dresden Tn, 38225  
Gina McClure M.A.L.C.A.D.C., N.C.C., L.P.C./M.S.P.™  
State licensed facility with intensive outpatient program (IOP) MRT, anger management, staying quit, parenting classes, drug testing, assessments and referrals. Saturday night @600 the 12-step group is open to the public. Mental health counseling is also available.  
1 731-333-9442

12<sup>th</sup> Annual  
**TENNESSEE TREE DAY**  
MARCH 21, 2026

Advertise Today at [www.theweakleycountyexaminer.com](http://www.theweakleycountyexaminer.com)

THE WEAKLEY COUNTY EXAMINER  
The People's Voice: Weakley's Watchdog  
ADVERTISE NOW

ADS BREAKING NEWS IMPORTANT

THE WEAKLEY COUNTY EXAMINER  
The People's Voice: Weakley's Watchdog  
ADVERTISE NOW

THE WEAKLEY COUNTY EXAMINER

THE PEOPLE'S VOICE: WEAKLEY'S WATCHDOG

CEO/PUBLISHER: SHANNON TAYLOR

WWW.THEWEAKLEYCOUNTYEXAMINER.COM

THE WEAKLEY COUNTY EXAMINER  
The People's Voice: Weakley's Watchdog

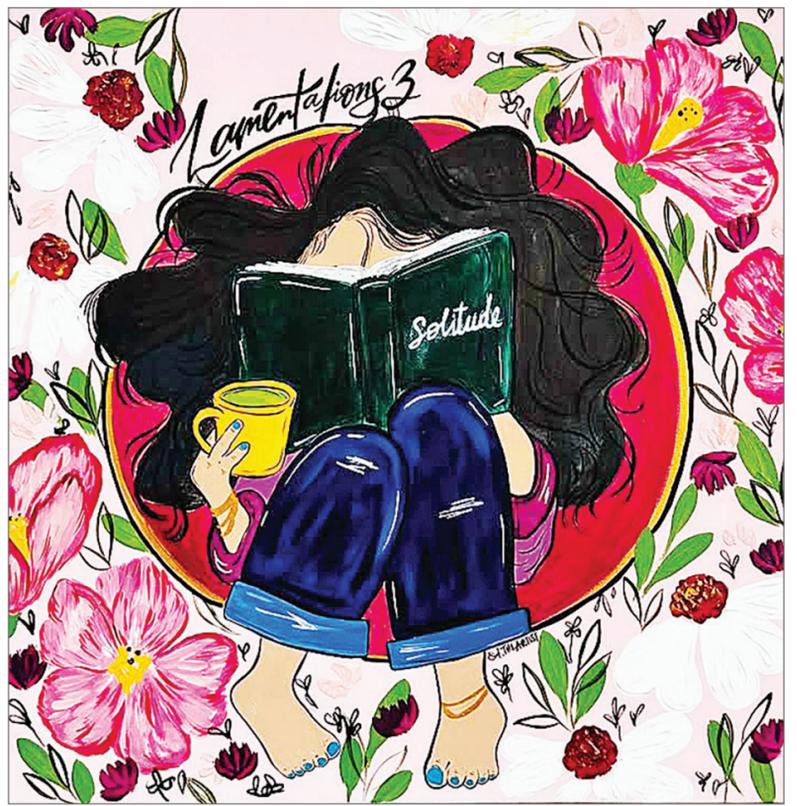
# OPINION



SNOW DAYS GALORE — This week's cartoon by DHS student Scarlett Merrell and her cousin Alison Bellucci Snow Days Galore



HONOR — Dresden Elementary School student, Fourth-Grader Scarlett Oliver, drew this piece of art in honor of fallen Deputy Derrick Bonham. She wanted to show support from the City of Dresden.



In My Solitude - A. the Artist

Letters to the Editor Policy  
[www.theweakleycountyexaminer.com](http://www.theweakleycountyexaminer.com)

Join Our Team  
 Seeking Cartoonist

[www.theweakleycountyexaminer.com](http://www.theweakleycountyexaminer.com)  
[shannon@theweakleycountyexaminer.com](mailto:shannon@theweakleycountyexaminer.com)

THE WEAKLEY COUNTY EXAMINER  
 THE PEOPLE'S VOICE: WEAKLEY'S WATCHDOG  
 CEO/PUBLISHER: SHANNON TAYLOR  
[WWW.THEWEAKLEYCOUNTYEXAMINER.COM](http://WWW.THEWEAKLEYCOUNTYEXAMINER.COM)



**DISCLAIMER: THE OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN OUR "LETTER TO THE EDITOR" SECTION ARE THOSE OF THE AUTHOR AND DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THE VIEWS OR POSITIONS OF THE WEAKLEY COUNTY EXAMINER, ITS STAFF, OR ITS AFFILIATES.**

The Pen is Mightier than the Sword

Advertise Today at [www.theweakleycountyexaminer.com](http://www.theweakleycountyexaminer.com)

ADS BREAKING NEWS IMPORTANT

# RESOURCES

**STATEWIDE**

## CRISIS LINE

HELP IN A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

**855-CRISIS-1** TN.gov/CrisisLine  
**855-274-7471** 



**BURN AN ARSONIST**

EARN A CASH AWARD OF UP TO **\$5,000**

CALL THE TENNESSEE ARSON HOTLINE

**1-800-762-3017**

SPONSORED BY THE TENNESSEE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ARSON AND THE TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND INSURANCE



**POLAR PLUNGE**  
FREEZIN FOR A REASON

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7<sup>TH</sup>, 2026**  
ALOHA POOLS AND SPAS - UNION CITY, TN

Grab some friends and come support Special Olympics Tennessee athletes by jumping into the chilly waters at Union City Polar Plunge! Every plunger receives the official Plunge souvenir and all bragging rights associated with such a brave endeavor.

[REGISTER HERE](#)



VISIT [POLARPLUNGETN.COM](http://POLARPLUNGETN.COM) FOR MORE INFORMATION!

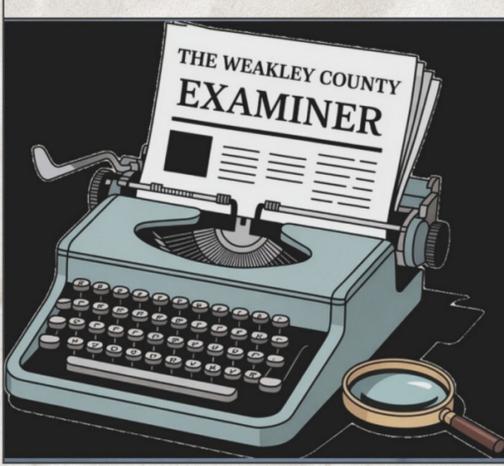
**ALOHA POOLS AND SPAS**  
1400 W Reelfoot Ave  
Union City, TN 38261  
10 AM - Registration | 11 AM - Plunge Begins

SPECIAL EDITION

WEAKLEY COUNTY **Weakley County** 36.3000° N / 88.7100° W

# EXAMINER

**NOW OFFERING INTERNSHIPS**



**ESTABLISHED IN 2025**

Dedicated to watchdog journalism, we hold power accountable in Weakley County, providing truthful reporting with independence and integrity.

**INTERNSHIP DETAILS**

**PAID INTERNSHIP**  
Marketing / Ad Sales-Commission Based  
Book / Movie Reviewers  
Columnist / cartoonist  
Covering meetings, events, writing articles  
Politics, investigative, school & community news, sports  
Contact: [shannon@theweakleycountyexaminer.com](mailto:shannon@theweakleycountyexaminer.com)

**At The Weakley County Examiner, our mission is to serve as a vigilant, independent voice for the people of Weakley County. We are committed to watchdog journalism—holding those in power accountable, exposing misconduct, and reporting the truth, even when it is uncomfortable or unpopular.**

The Weakley County Examiner's internship program provides hands-on experience in community journalism and local media operations. Interns work directly with editorial and business staff to gain practical knowledge in writing, reporting, and marketing while building a professional portfolio. High school and college students are welcome to apply.

## LGBTQ+ support hotlines & resources

*we are in this together*

**LGBT National Hotline: 888-843-4564**  
**LGBT National Youth Talkline: 800-246-7743**  
25 and younger  
**LGBT National Senior Hotline: 888-234-7243**  
50 and older  
**National Coming Out Support Hotline: 888-688-5428**

**Trans Lifeline: 877-565-8860**  
[translifeline.org](http://translifeline.org)  
**The Blackline: 800-604-5841**  
[blackline.com](http://blackline.com)  
centering on BI&POC LGBTQ+  
**DeQH Helpline: 908-367-3374**  
[dequ.org](http://dequ.org)  
centering on South Asian LGBTQ/TGNB+  
**Trevor Project: 866-488-7386**  
[thetrevorproject.org](http://thetrevorproject.org)  
for youth 25 and younger focusing on suicide prevention

**QChat Space: [qchatspace.org](http://qchatspace.org)**  
online chat space for LGBTQ+ youth

 **lgbt national help center**  
[lgbthotline.org](http://lgbthotline.org)

**LGBTNearMe.org**  
local resources nation wide

To report child abuse or neglect, call **877-237-0004** or make an online report at <https://apps.tn.gov/carat/>

*Call 911 if there is a life-threatening emergency*

## Support Services LLC

DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR HELP

275 Old Latham Road, Dresden Tn, 38225  
 Gina McClure M.A.L.C.A.D.C., N.C.C., L.P.C./M.S.P. "T"

State licensed facility with intensive outpatient program (IOP) MRT, anger management, staying quit, parenting classes, drug testing, assessments and referrals. Saturday night @600 the 12-step group is open to the public. Mental health counseling is also available.

[1731-333-9442](tel:1731-333-9442)



## Miranda's CLEANING SERVICES

**NEED A SPOTLESS HOME?**

We offer reliable one-time, recurring, and deep cleaning for your house or apartment.

**BOOK NOW!**

- ✓ One-Time
- ✓ Weekly
- ✓ Monthly

**(731) 819-8302**  
 Call or text for a free estimate



# RECORDS

## JAIL REPORT

### Weakley County Jail Report January 26-Feb 1

Catherine Gail Calhoun, Sharon — Charged January 31, 2026 — Domestic Assault  
 Jessica Lynn Chumley, Martin — Charged January 28, 2026 — Introduction of Drugs Into County Jail (two counts)  
 Eric David Dunham, Martin — Charged January 31, 2026 — Failure to Appear  
 Lendel Jaye Hardin, Gleason — Charged January 31, 2026 — Aggra-

vated Stalking; Coercion of Witness (Threat); Violation of Order of Protection  
 Kevin Crawford Hazelwood, Sharon — Charged January 31, 2026 — Aggravated Assault; Domestic Assault  
 Dillon Howard Hight, Hornbeak — Charged January 26, 2026 — Failure to Appear  
 Nicole Paige Keane, Fulton, Kentucky — Charged February 1, 2026 — Driving Under the Influence, First Offense  
 Dorothy Marie Morgan, City Not Listed —



Charged January 29, 2026 — Failure to Appear  
 Miles Andrew Vincent, Martin — Charged January 27, 2026 — Aggravated Burglary; Domestic Assault; Possession of Alcoholic Beverage  
 Austin James Wright, Rives — Charged January 31, 2026 — Motor Vehicle Theft (two counts)

## PROPERTY TRANSFERS

### Weakley County Property Transfers January 26-30

Bomar Wesley and Bomar Amy to Cobb Martin K and Cobb Karen J, District 2  
 Broadus Tanya M to Nowacki Michael Scott, District 1

Lowney Bryan and Lowney Jamie to Lobe Sam Vincent Jr., District 23  
 Stokes Bobby B to Perkins Donald L, District 1  
 Cook Janson L and Cook Victoria Faith to Gordon John Michael and Gordon Kathleen Belle, District 14



Wilson Mason to Kelly Anthony, District 9  
 Smith Eric Lee to Mercer Joshua Levi, District 7

## GENERAL SESSIONS

### Weakley County General Sessions January 29-30

Lamanis Eugene Owens — Registration Expired — Dismissed  
 Lance Riley DaKota

Lowrence — Speeding — Guilty as Charged  
 Kerry Lynn McDaniel — Open Container — Guilty as Charged  
 Floridalma Villatoro — Driving Without License — Guilty as Charged



## JAN. 2025 MARRIAGES

Sky Matthew Legens and Krystal Ann Davis  
 Anton Oneal Martin and Rebecca Sierra Rushin  
 Melissa Jean Toon and Thomas Edward Allen  
 Michael Emanel Adams Bennett and Tammy  
 Jean Balthrop  
 James Paul Perkins and Melinda Kay Holdeman

# 988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

24/7 CALL, TEXT, CHAT

NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING HOTLINE

1-888-373-7888

TEXT BEFREE TO 23373



## Free to All Veterans

### Dresden ELKS Lodge 2373 Veterans Breakfast

When: Saturday, February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2026, 0700-1000 hrs.  
 Where: Dresden Elks Lodge 449 S Poplar St  
 Dresden, TN 38225-4115

We invite all service veterans to attend. This is an opportunity for all service members to come together and enjoy each other's company. We can't wait to see you.



# WEAKLEY COUNTY TENNESSEE

## 511 Elm St Martin Tn

# 731-587-5073



Foreign owned Vape, Smoke Shop and Gas stations won't notice your purchase this month, but Weakley County Tennessee's only locally owned & operated Vape shop will. Shop Local

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." — Martin Luther King Jr.





THE WEAKLEY COUNTY EXAMINER






# OBITUARIES



**Peggy Church Floyd**  
1935 - 2026

Services for Peggy Church Floyd, age 90, of Gleason, TN will be held Saturday February 7, 2026 at 1pm at Williams Funeral Home of Gleason. Burial will follow in Hopewell Cemetery in Gleason, TN. Visitation will be Friday evening from 4:30pm - 7pm at Williams Funeral Home of Gleason. It will resume Saturday morning at 11 and go until time of her funeral service. Mrs. Floyd is survived by her husband, Edgar Floyd of Gleason, TN. She is also survived by her daughters, Charlotte Addison of Gleason, TN and Sandra (Mitchell) Walker of Greenfield, TN. She leaves behind two grandchildren, Lee (Allison) Bradberry and Kristiana Bradberry, and three great grandchildren, Braden, Bristol, and (coming soon) Sloane Bradberry. Mrs. Floyd was preceded in death by her parents, W.H. "Bodie" and Stella Church, and two sisters, Sylvia Russell and Martha Lovett.



**Sandra Faye Wheeler**  
1947 - 2026

Sandra Faye Kennedy Wheeler was born on July 31, 1947 in Martin, TN, the beloved daughter of the late L.J. "Pete" and Hattie Riggs Kennedy. Her life was one rooted in the love of family and the charity for those in need, of quiet strength and loud celebration; these things defined Sandra and helped to create a lasting impression for all those who had the pleasure of knowing her.

At age 78 on January 26, 2026, Sandra passed away in her home due to effects of a long battle with Alzheimer's disease.

A Celebration of Life will be held on February 21, 2026 at 1 PM at Williams Funeral Home in Greenfield, TN. Visitation will begin Saturday morning at 12 noon and go until time of her memorial service.

In lieu of flowers, the family respectfully requests donations be made to the animal shelter of your choice or the Alzheimer's Association.

The world is better to have known Sandra Faye Kennedy Wheeler.



**Jesse Wilson**  
1940 - 2026

Services for Jesse Wilson age 85 of Sharon, TN will be held Tuesday February 3rd at 12 noon at Williams Funeral Home in Greenfield, TN. Burial to follow in Tansil Cemetery in Sharon. Visitation will begin Monday evening going from 5 pm to 7 pm at the funeral home. It will resume Tuesday morning at 11 am and go until time of his service at the funeral home. Jesse is survived by his loving wife Peggy Wilson of Sharon, daughter Valeria(Michael) Burress; along with step children April(Mark) Black, Jeff(Patti)Vinson, Aaron(Ruthie)Vinson, and Phil Vinson. He also leaves behind grandchildren Chris Burress, Lauren(Alex)Campbell, and Byron(Stephanie) Wilson, and great grandchildren, Presley, Jesse, Jared, Oaklynn, and Jace. He also leaves a sister Eva Jane Wallace. Mr. Jesse is preceded in death by his father Byron Wilson, mother Bertha Louise Crowder, wife June Wilson, and son David Jesse Wilson



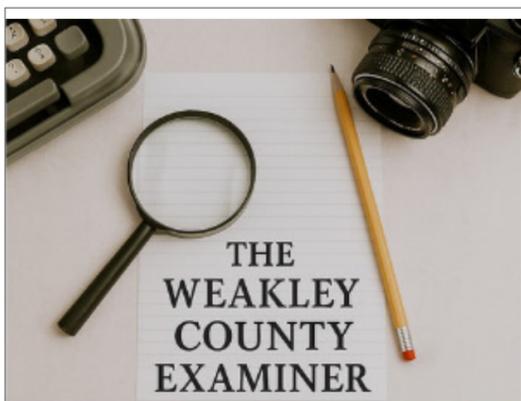
**Derrick R. Bonham**  
1988-2026

Services for Derrick R. Bonham age 37 of Greenfield, TN, will be held Monday, February 2, 2026, at 2 pm at the Greenfield Gymnasium. Burial to follow in Highland Cemetery in Greenfield. Visitation will begin at 10 a.m., followed by a memorial service at 2 p.m. Both will take place at the Greenfield School Gymnasium, located at 319 West Main Street in Greenfield. Derrick is survived by his wife Nicole Bonham of Greenfield, and three children Harper, Hayden, and Hudson. He also leaves behind 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. Deputy Bonham, graduated from the Tennessee Law Enforcement Training Academy on December 21, 2023. He honorably served the citizens of Weakley County with the Sheriff's Office for nearly two years.

All flower arrangements and gifts for the Bonham family should be delivered directly to the Greenfield School Gymnasium on Monday morning prior to 9 a.m.

Out of respect for the Bonham family, no credentialed media, independent journalists, or social media influencers will be permitted inside the memorial service venue. A designated media staging area and media conference will be held at 11 a.m. Monday in front of Greenfield Banking Company. Officials emphasized that protecting the privacy and dignity of Deputy Bonham and his grieving family remains the highest priority.

To assist the Bonham family during this difficult time, a memorial fund has been established at Greenfield Banking Company under the name "Bonham Memorial." There is another fund through the Tennessee Police Benevolent Association.

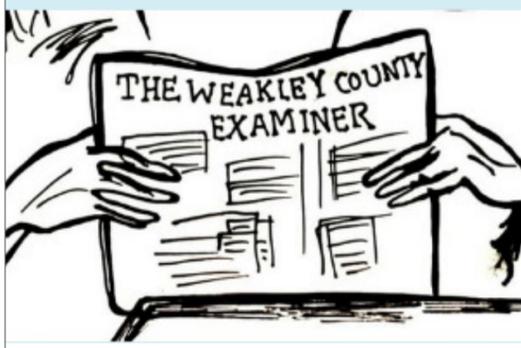


**Have a Story to Tell?**



[www.theweakleycountyexaminer.com](http://www.theweakleycountyexaminer.com)

[shannon@theweakleycountyexaminer.com](mailto:shannon@theweakleycountyexaminer.com)



When your loved one becomes a *Memory*, Every memory becomes a *Treasure*.

**Baptist Memorial Home Care and Hospice of Huntingdon**

Contact: Joyce Rollins, 731-986-3220 or 800-273-9649  
Grief support groups are scheduled on a monthly basis to provide helpful strategies for coping with the loss of a loved one by death or divorce.

**Celebration of Life**

Jackson, TN  
Contact: Billy or Jessie Spain, 731-225-3440 or 731-225-4945

Service is held each year to honor and remember children who have died, no matter the age or circumstance.

**GriefShare**

GriefShare meetings are held at churches throughout west Tennessee, and information can be found at [griefshare.org/groups/search](http://griefshare.org/groups/search).

**Online Grief Resources**

Multiple resources can be found on most West Region funeral home websites. These include links to reading material, interactive resources, and subscription services to daily grief-related emails.

**HeartLight Center**

720-748-9908  
[heartlightcenter.org](http://heartlightcenter.org)  
Since 2001, the HeartLight Center—a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization—has created an open, compassionate community that offers strength, peace, and support through support groups and education. Visit the website to learn more about services and resources.

**SPED (Supporting Parents Experiencing Death)**

Contact: Callista Joyce, 731-425-6954  
Grief sessions addressing various stages and circumstances for people experiencing grief and bereavement.

Meets in chapel at Jackson County General Hospital, 620 Skyline Drive, Jackson, TN 38301  
For more information: 731-668-4244

**GRIEF SHARE®**  
Grief Support Group  
**\*NEW SEMESTER\***  
**Mondays 5:30-7:30 pm**  
**February 2nd - April 27th**  
**Central Baptist Church**

**Stages of Grief**

denial  
anger  
bargaining  
depression  
acceptance

# CLASSIFIEDS



**MIRANDA'S**  
CLEANING SERVICE

**WARNING TO TAXPAYERS**

Friday, February 27, 2026 is the last day to pay your 2025 property taxes at the courthouse without interest. You may drop your payment in the 24 hour drop box on Saturday, February 28<sup>th</sup> until midnight. Any payments received after February 28<sup>th</sup> at the courthouse will be late. Starting March 1, 2026, 1.5% interest fee will be added.

*2025 Taxes*

2025 County taxes are due and payable thru February 28, 2026. In accordance with state law, interest in the amount of 1 ½ percent beginning March 1 will be added per month. All 2025 Tax Relief Applicants must pay their taxes and use their tax relief vouchers by March 1<sup>st</sup> to avoid paying interest.

**Additional Warning**

*2024 Taxes*

2024 property taxes are delinquent. Interest began accruing at a rate of 1 ½ percent per month since they became delinquent. Interest at the rate of 18% is added the month of February. This amount is in compliance with state law. You are advised that after February 1, additional charges will be imposed in consequence of suits to be filed for enforcement of the lien for property taxes for prior tax years; until filing of such suits taxes may be paid in our office. A list of delinquent property taxpayers is available online at weakleycountyttn.gov. All unpaid 2024 taxes will be filed with the delinquent tax attorney on March 17, 2026.

NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE

**1-800-799-7233**

AVAILABLE 24 HOURS EVERYDAY

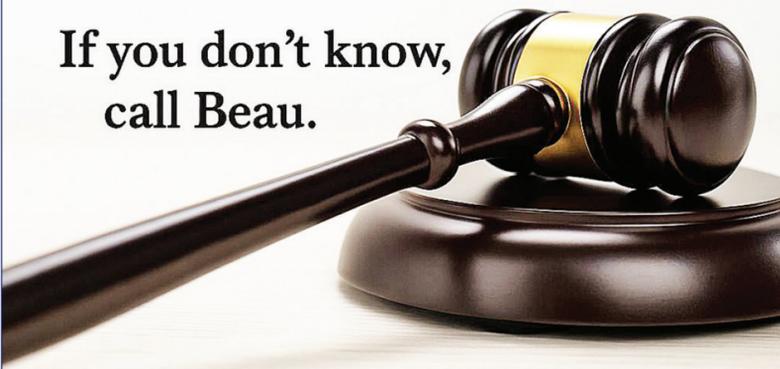
**BRADBERRY & PEMBERTON**

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

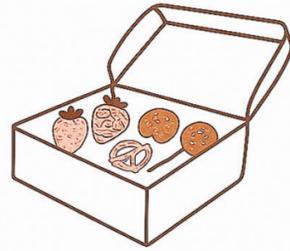
109 N. POPLAR ST, DRESDEN, TN

(731) 364-5411

If you don't know,  
call Beau.



FRESHLY DIPPED TREATS



**TREATed**  
WITH LOVE

731-418-0219

cecebeckett2@gmail.com

Serving Clarksville & surrounding areas

PRICE LIST

THE EXAMINER  
AD PACKAGES

Holiday Special: e-edition, website, social media	\$75
Full Page	\$250
Half Page	\$150
Quarter Page	\$75
Eighth Page	\$50
Business Card	\$25
Classified Display	\$15
Front Page Banner	\$150
Political Ad Front Page	\$200
Facebook Only	\$50
Tik Tok Only	\$50
Social Media Package	\$75

WWW.THEWEAKLEYCOUNTYEXAMINER.COM



**THE WEAKLEY COUNTY**  
**EXAMINER**



**Nick's**  
Neighborhood  
Lawns



MOWING & WEEDING SERVICES

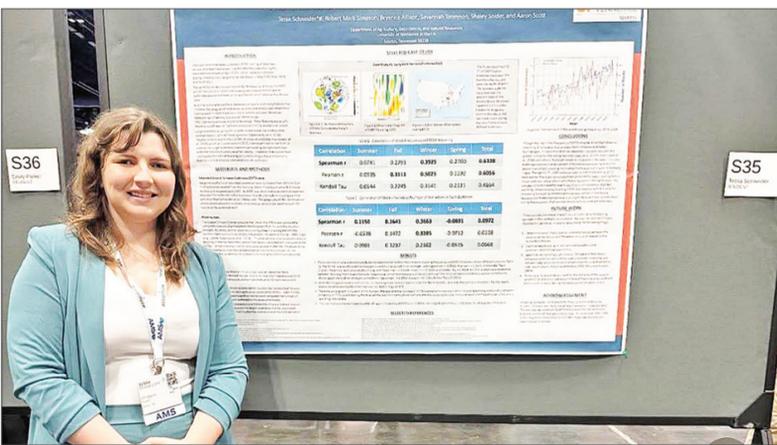
Proudly serving Obion and Weakley County with dependable, affordable lawn care.

Whether you need a quick mow or full yard maintenance, Nick keeps your lawn sharp, clean, and summer-ready.

- ✓ Locally Owned
- ✓ Prompt & Professional
- ✓ Fair Rates • Free Estimates

**CALL NICK 731-446-5807**

# LOCAL NEWS



**UTM STUDENT RESEARCH PRESENTATION** — University of Tennessee at Martin senior Tessa Schneider, also known as Tessa Storm, presented collaborative research on the influence of atmospheric blocking on tornado outbreaks at the American Meteorological Society Conference held this week in Houston, Texas. Schneider's work was conducted under the mentorship of Dr. Mark Simpson, Ms. Shaley Snider, and Mr. Aaron Scott through the UT Martin College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences, with support from the UT Martin Office of Research, Outreach and Economic Development.



**UT MARTIN STUDENTS REPRESENT SKYHAWKS AT MODEL USDA** — Three University of Tennessee at Martin students, Miracle Brown, Luke Stepney, and Jordyn Mattison, are representing the Skyhawks this weekend at the Model USDA event hosted by Arizona State University, pictured with former U.S. Secretaries of Agriculture Dan Glickman and Ann Veneman, with participation supported through a USDA NextGEN grant led by Tennessee State University's College of Agriculture and UT Martin as a partner.

## How NILvana Sports Is Using Super Bowl Week to Train the Next Generation of Sports Professionals

PRESS RELEASE

For most people, the Super Bowl is a spectacle watched from the stands or the couch. For NILvana Sports, it is a workplace.

This week, the West Tennessee nonprofit will operate on-site as an official credentialed media organization, covering events throughout Super Bowl week while creating hands-on, career-focused opportunities. From photography and interviews to digital storytelling and behind-the-scenes production, the NILvana Sports team will work at one of the world's largest sporting events, gaining firsthand experience in the fast-paced environment of professional sports media.

But for NILvana Sports, the goal is big-

ger than coverage. It is preparation.

Founded by Henry County native Dr. Josh Greer, the Paris, Tennessee-based nonprofit is built on the simple belief that real careers are shaped by real experience. As a nonprofit, educational, and media platform, NILvana Sports helps students develop job readiness skills through immersive, hands-on learning, professional mentorship, and scholarship opportunities that reduce barriers to entering the sports industry.

While the organization now provides national exposure through credentialed coverage of major events such as the Super Bowl and the NFL Draft, its impact remains deeply local. NILvana Sports regularly produces multimedia coverage

for West Tennessee high schools, giving students consistent opportunities to practice storytelling, photography, broadcasting, and content creation close to home while serving their own communities.

"We want students doing the work, not just studying it," Greer said. "When they step into environments like the Super Bowl or even a Friday night high school game, they're building confidence, skills, and connections that last far beyond the classroom."

Today, NILvana Sports serves more than 50 students across the United States through both in-person and remote training. Participants receive education in Name, Image, and Likeness strategy, brand development, resume preparation, digital media production,



and career readiness. The result is a growing pipeline of students who graduate with professional portfolios and meaningful experience.

Among those representing NILvana Sports this week is former student management student Joey Cascarano, who will assist with photography and digital content creation as part of the credentialed media team, continuing the organi-

zation's commitment to mentorship and applied learning.

Beyond Super Bowl week, NILvana Sports will also serve as a sponsor at the National Collegiate Sports Sales Championship in Atlanta, further expanding experiential opportunities for students interested in sales, media, and event operations.

At its core, the mission remains straightforward. Remove barriers. Cre-

ate access. Put students where opportunity happens.

For more information about NILvana Sports, partnership opportunities, or student involvement, visit [NILvanaSports.com](http://NILvanaSports.com) or email [NILvanaSports@gmail.com](mailto:NILvanaSports@gmail.com).

Player 1: QB Sam Darnold— Seattle Seahawks  
Player 2: WR Cooper Kupp— Seattle Seahawks



**WEAKLEY COUNTY PREVENTION COALITION AT NATIONAL LEADERSHIP FORUM** — Members of the Weakley County Prevention Coalition attend Day 1 of CADCA's National Leadership Forum at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center, joining prevention leaders from across the country to focus on this year's theme, Resilient Communities, Lasting Change. The coalition is representing Weakley County while participating in sessions centered on building stronger, healthier communities and bringing new prevention strategies home. For the first time, three THRIVE youth members are attending the forum and will take part in SAMHSA's inaugural Youth Summit, which highlights youth voice, prevention efforts, and issues impacting young people nationwide.



**WEAKLEY CHAMBER BUSINESS OF THE MONTH** — Gleason Flower Market and Gifts has been named the December 2025 Weakley County Chamber of Commerce Business of the Month. Owner Leah Sawyers and her team were recognized for their creativity, care, and personal attention, as well as their meaningful role in celebrating life's moments and serving the City of Gleason and Weakley County with pride.

# NEWS UPDATE

When a reporter sits down at the typewriter, he's nobody's friend. -Theodore White

# UTM SPORTS

## Skyhawk Guard Damien King Tabbed as Ohio Valley Conference Men's Basketball Freshman of the Week

RYNE RICKMAN  
UTM Sports Director

Damien King, a 6-4, 200-pound guard on the University of Tennessee at Martin men's basketball team, was named the Ohio Valley Conference Freshman of the Week today.

King becomes just the 14th Skyhawk representative to be crowned as an OVC Freshman of the Week as a UT Martin rookie now has won this award 10 times out of 13 weeks so far during the 2025-26 campaign.

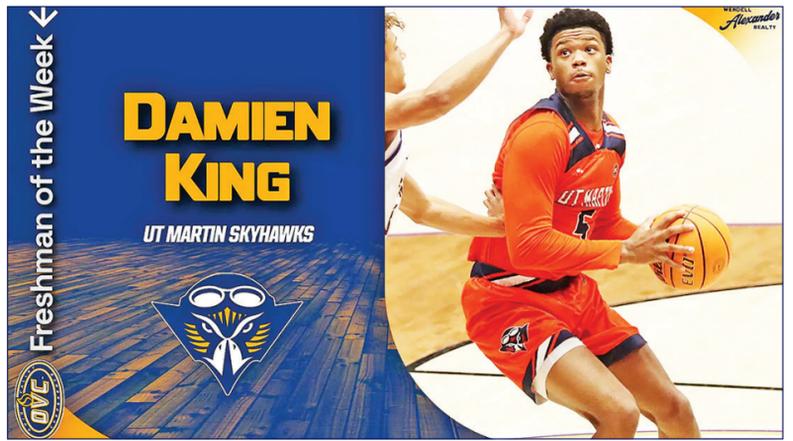
Hailing from Ander-

son, Ind., King helped the Skyhawks to an OVC road sweep last week – downing Eastern Illinois (76-68 on Thursday) and Western Illinois (84-44 on Saturday). The victories helped UT Martin retain sole possession of first place in the league standings, starting an OVC slate with a 9-2 record for the first time in program history.

King cracked the starting lineup for both games last week, averaging 12.0 points, 5.0 rebounds and 3.0 assists per outing while shooting 56.3 percent (9-of-16) from

the floor. He went off for a career-best 17 points (on 7-of-8 shooting) with four rebounds and two assists against Eastern Illinois and followed that with seven points, six rebounds, a career-best four assists and a steal in a career-high 28 minutes at Western Illinois.

On the season, King has cracked double figures in the scoring column on three separate occasions and has six multi-steal performances. He has especially performed well as of late as he is shooting 57.6 percent (19-for-33) in OVC



play. The Skyhawks are set for a stretch of three

home games in five days this week, beginning tomorrow with a 7:30 p.m.

matchup against league rival Little Rock.

## UT Martin Men's Hoops Start Bustling Home Week Tomorrow Against OVC Preseason Favorite Little Rock

RYNE RICKMAN  
UTM Sports Director

The busiest home stretch of the season for the University of Tennessee at Martin men's basketball program begins tomorrow with a matchup against Ohio Valley Conference rival Little Rock at the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center. Tipoff is set for 7:30 p.m. as the backend of a doubleheader with the women's team.

The Skyhawks are making a bid for their first double-digit home win streak since claiming 10 consecutive victories from Jan. 13, 2024 (last seven contests of the 2023-24 season) through Dec. 15, 2024 (first three outings of the

2024-25 campaign).

UT Martin (17-5, 9-2 OVC) will seek revenge on a Trojan squad that has won four straight in this series. Afan Trnka (team-high 17 points, 5-of-8 shooting from three-point range) and Andrija Bukumirović (14 points on 6-for-7 shooting) each scored in double figures against Little Rock in last season's OVC Championship quarterfinals.

The Skyhawks are coming off a historic 84-44 triumph at Western Illinois on Saturday, generating its largest margin of victory in an OVC contest in school history and the first 40-plus point win in any OVC game since Jan. 20, 2022. UT Martin held a NCAA Di-

vision I opponent with 13 or fewer field goals for the first time since at least the 2001-02 season while conceding its lowest defensive field goal percentage (.265, 13-of-49) to a Division I foe since Dec. 21, 2015.

Filip Petkovski (career-highs of 17 points and eight rebounds at Western Illinois) became the eighth different Skyhawk to lead the team in scoring in 2025-26, completing the most successful month of January (8-1 record) in program history.

The Trojans (9-13, 6-5 OVC) have lost each of their last three contests - all of which have occurred on the road. Braxton Bayless managed team-highs of 24 points,



five rebounds and five steals in Saturday's 87-77 setback at Tennessee Tech.

Johnathan Lawson (16.3 points per game, 10 three-pointers on a 45.5 percent clip) and

Tuongthach Gatkek (13.7 points, 11.0 rebounds, 5.0 assists and 3.0 steals per game while shooting 65.4 percent) each excelled against UT Martin in 2024-25.

Links to watch the

ESPN+ live video stream, hear the WCMT 1410 AM/100.5 FM radio broadcast, follow along with live stats and browse Skyhawk game notes can all be found above.

## Skyhawks Go for Eighth Straight Home Win Tuesday Versus Little Rock

PARKER GRIFFITH  
UTM Sports

Date (Time): Tue., Feb. 3, 2026 (5:30 p.m.)

Opponent (Record): Little Rock Trojans (10-11, 6-5 OVC)

Head Coach: Steve Wiedower (Central Arkansas, 1987)

Record (Seas.) Overall/LR: 24-27 (2nd)/Same

Location (Arena): Martin, Tenn. (Kathleen & Tom Elam Center)

Radio: WCMT 100.5 FM (PxP: Chris Brinkley; Analyst: Davis Gregory)

TV/Streaming: ESPN+ (PxP: Chris Brinkley; Analyst: Davis Gregory)

UTM vs. WIU: UTM leads series 6-5

The University of Tennessee at Martin women's basketball team saw its four-game win streak come to an end Saturday with an 80-54 loss at Western Illinois at Western Hall in Macomb. The Skyhawks were first on the board in the contest, but Western Illinois took the lead less than a minute later and held it for the remainder of the game. The Leathernecks used a balanced, efficient attack to take down the Skyhawks, with the six players who played the majority of the game all scoring in double digits. The Skyhawks shot just

37.3-percent from the floor and had a season-low three assists, compared to 14 by the Leathernecks. Kenley McCarn continued her streak of 20 consecutive games this season, scoring double figures with a team-high 12 and was followed by Grace Billington and Sidni Middleton, who each had 11.

Kenley McCarn currently leads the Skyhawks with 16.5 points per game, while Zy Thompson and Sidni Middleton follow at 10.4 and 9.6, respectively. On the boards, Thompson leads UT Martin with 5.8 rebounds per game, while Brittani Wells leads in assists and steals at 3.8 and 1.9. As a team, the Skyhawks are averaging 65.4 points and 34.2 rebounds per game, while their opponents average 62.6 and 38.9. They are currently shooting 41.2-percent from the field, 29.4-percent from 3-point range and 74.1-percent at the free-throw line.

Little Rock is currently 10-11 on the season and 6-5 in OVC play after a 72-47 loss at Tennessee Tech Saturday. The Trojans currently average 58.2 points per game, while allowing 60.6. Little Rock is shooting 35.4-percent from the floor, 27.0-percent

from 3-point range and 71.3-percent from the free-throw line. On the boards, Trojans average 36.4 rebounds per game, while giving up 39.2.

Jordan Holman currently leads the Trojans in points per game (16.6), rebounds per game (6.1), steals per game (1.7) and blocks per game (1.1). Mya Cotto and Brenna Burk follow Holman in scoring, with each averaging 7.7 points per game.

Saturday will be the 11th all-time meeting between UT Martin and Little Rock with the Skyhawks leading the all-time series, 6-5. In Martin, the series is tied with each team winning three games.

The Skyhawks have made a 3-point field goal in 533 consecutive games, a streak dating back to Feb. 3, 2009 against Austin Peay and ranking seventh nationally. Tuesday's game against Little Rock will mark the 17th anniversary of the beginning of the streak.

With 12 points at Western Illinois, Kenley McCarn has now scored 10 or more points in each of the Skyhawks' 20 games this season. She is averaging 16.5 points on the season and has scored 10 or more points in 28 of her last 30 games.



At 92.0-percent Sidni Middleton currently ranks fourth in the nation and second in the OVC in free throw percentage. So far this season, Middleton has made 46 of 50 free-throw attempts.

February has been by far the best month of head coach Kevin McMillan's career. He is currently 101-27 (.789) during the month. This past January was also kind to McMillan as he went 6-3, his best record in the month since 2020-21 when he went 7-1. When the calendar flips to the new year McMillan also excels, as he is currently 215-97 (.689) in the months of January, February and March over the course of his career.

The Skyhawks currently have the 67th-best

field goal percentage defense in the nation at 37.7-percent, while they rank 80th in the nation in steals per game at 9.9. In addition, the Skyhawks are ranked 104th in defensive rebounds per game at 26.3. At the free throw line, UT Martin is 59th in the nation in free throws made per game (14.1), 78th in free throw percentage (74.1) and 83rd in free throw attempts per game (19.1).

Skyhawk guard Kenley McCarn has started her career on the right foot by scoring double figures in 77 of her 88 career games. Last season, she became just the 19th player in program history to reach 1,000 career points and currently averages 15.6 points per game for her career. With 13 points at Morehead State, she officially

became one of the Top 10 scorers in UT Martin history. She currently ranks 9th in program history with 1,372 career points.

After the Skyhawks' win over Lindenwood, the Skyhawks are currently 7-1 overall and 4-0 in OVC play at the Kathleen & Tom Elam Center this season. The only loss came on Nov. 9 to then No. 8 Tennessee, giving UT Martin a seven-game home win streak.

UT Martin has posted a 157-56 record at home during the Kevin McMillan Era, dating back to 2009. Since taking over as head coach, the Skyhawks have notched a .737 winning percentage. The home squad has also posted a 114-30 record in the Elam Center (.792) against OVC foes during the same span.



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
TENNESSEE  
MARTIN

# LOCAL NEWS

## Deputy Derrick Bonham Killed in Line of Duty in Martin as Investigation Continues into Fatal Early Morning Shooting

SHANNON TAYLOR  
CEO/Publisher

A Weakley County Sheriff's Office deputy was killed in the line of duty during the early morning hours of Friday, January 30, 2026, after responding to assist the Martin Police Department at a disturbance call in Martin.

At approximately 2:51 a.m., Martin police officers were dispatched to the Days Inn at 800 University Street for a report of possible shots fired. Deputies with the Weakley County Sheriff's Office were requested to assist.

As deputies were responding to the area at approximately 3:09 a.m., an occupied vehicle was observed leaving the area of 821 University Street near Pocket's gas station. During that encounter, the driver fired shots, striking a Weakley County deputy.

Martin police officers responded immediately to the shooting scene, where the suspect was taken into custody. The wounded deputy was transported to Volunteer Community Hospital, where he was later pronounced deceased.

The fallen deputy was identified by Sheriff Terry McDade as Derrick Bonham, a Greenfield resident, husband, and father of three. Bonham had served with the Weakley County Sheriff's Office for nearly two years and was described by colleagues as kind,

quiet, humble, and deeply committed to his family and his profession.

The Tennessee Bureau of Investigation was requested to take over the case and is leading the ongoing investigation. Officials have stated there is no continuing threat to the public.

Before the suspect's name was formally released by state authorities, The Weakley County Examiner confirmed the identity through direct witness accounts and confirmation from two separate officials familiar with the investigation. The suspect was later publicly identified by the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation as Kristi Dawn Cunningham, born December 14, 1981.

Cunningham is originally from Ohio and later relocated to Jackson, Tennessee. At the time of the shooting, she was staying at the Days Inn in Martin, where deputies were responding to the initial disturbance call. Investigators allege that a deputy encountered Cunningham while checking the nearby gas station area for potential witnesses connected to the reported shots fired.

Publicly available records indicate Cunningham previously worked in management and corrections related roles, with professional profiles referencing experience in operations, supervision, and unit management. Authorities have not stated whether her prior employment his-



tory has any relevance to the current case.

More than a decade ago, Cunningham also appeared in a nationally aired human interest segment on Good Morning America that focused on a rare genetic occurrence involving the birth of biracial twins with distinctly different skin tones. That segment, which remains publicly accessible, was not related to any criminal matter. Officials have not indicated that the appearance has any relevance to the current investigation.

A local witness who was near the scene provided additional details to The Weakley County Examiner and requested anonymity. According to the witness, Cunningham was observed near the Martin McDonald's location at approximately 2:51 a.m., shortly after leaving the Days Inn area, and appeared to be attempting to blend in. The witness stated that Cunningham then went

to a nearby Shell station, entered the store, attempted a card transaction that declined, exited the building, and left the area.

The witness reported that Cunningham then encountered a Weakley County sheriff's deputy, at which point the shooting occurred. By approximately 4:20 a.m., people in the area were aware that an officer had been shot. The witness described a significant law enforcement presence, estimating roughly eighteen police vehicles at or near the scene as officers secured the area and sought access to surveillance footage from nearby businesses, including drive through camera recordings. The witness stated that Cunningham appeared to be taken into custody quickly.

According to information released by the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, Cunningham has been charged with one count of First Degree

Murder. She is being held without bond. Authorities have not publicly confirmed where she is currently housed. Earlier reports indicated she may have been held in Obion County before being transferred, but her current location has not been officially confirmed. Formal court filings are expected to provide additional clarity.

At this stage, no motive has been publicly identified. Investigators have stated only that the shooting occurred for reasons still under investigation. A probable cause affidavit and additional charging documents have not yet been released, leaving unanswered questions about what precipitated the fatal encounter.

What is known is that Deputy Bonham was assisting another agency when he was killed. Martin Police Chief Phillip Fuqua confirmed Bonham was responding in support of his department at the time of the shooting. Sheriff Terry McDade later described the killing as intentional and devastating, stating that Bonham was the type of deputy any department would want to hire.

In the days following Bonham's death, Weakley County and surrounding communities responded with visible grief and solidarity. Flags were lowered to half staff across county property. A Sea of Blue procession brought hundreds of law

enforcement and emergency vehicles through the county in his honor. Agencies from across the state assisted with the dignified transfer of his body, standing watch despite harsh winter conditions.

Funeral services for Deputy Bonham were held Monday, February 2, 2026, at the Greenfield School Gymnasium, followed by burial at Highland Cemetery with full law enforcement honors. Out of respect for the family, the memorial service was closed to media.

As the investigation continues, critical questions remain unanswered. Officials have not yet released details regarding what triggered the initial disturbance call, whether surveillance footage captured the shooting, or what specific evidence supports the first degree murder charge. Those answers are expected to emerge through court proceedings and official filings rather than press releases.

For now, the facts remain stark. A deputy responded to assist. He did not come home. A community lost a husband, a father, and a public servant whose life ended while doing the work he believed in.

This story will be updated as verified information becomes available through official investigative and court records.

## 11-Year-Old Among Victims as Winter Storm Fern Becomes One of Tennessee's Deadliest Weather Events

SHANNON TAYLOR  
CEO/Publisher

An 11-year-old boy in Crockett County is among those who lost their lives as Winter Storm Fern swept across Tennessee, turning days of snow, ice, and bitter cold into one of the deadliest winter weather events the state has seen in recent years.

The Crockett County Sheriff's Department confirmed that the child's death was weather-related, making him one of the youngest victims tied directly to the storm. Officials have not released further details out of respect for the family, but the confirmation underscored the severity of the conditions that gripped West Tennessee and much of the state as the storm moved through.

State officials later confirmed that Winter Storm Fern was re-



sponsible for more than twenty weather-related deaths across Tennessee. Those deaths occurred in multiple counties and were linked to a range of storm-related circumstances, including vehicle crashes on snow- and ice-covered roads, exposure to extreme cold, carbon monoxide poisoning associated with alternative heating sources, falls, and medical emergencies exacerbated by

power outages and freezing temperatures.

In West Tennessee, additional deaths were confirmed in counties neighboring Crockett County, including Haywood and Obion counties. Authorities in those areas reported that the storm generated a high volume of emergency calls as road conditions deteriorated and temperatures dropped well below normal winter

averages. In at least one case in the region, a fatal vehicle crash occurred on a snow-covered roadway, though officials noted that not every storm-period death was formally classified as weather-related.

Middle Tennessee and East Tennessee also reported multiple fatalities connected to the storm. In some cases, individuals were found in homes without adequate heat

after extended power outages. In others, investigators cited carbon monoxide exposure tied to generators or alternative heating methods used during the prolonged cold snap. Law enforcement agencies and emergency management officials across the state repeatedly warned residents about the dangers of icy roads, overexertion in extreme cold, and improper use of heating equipment.

The Tennessee Department of Health and the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency continued to review deaths during and after the storm to determine whether weather conditions played a contributing role. Officials emphasized that winter storm fatalities are not limited to the height of snowfall but often occur in the days that follow, as lingering ice, power disruptions, and freezing tem-

peratures create ongoing risks.

Winter Storm Fern impacted much of the central and eastern United States, but Tennessee was among the hardest-hit states in terms of confirmed fatalities. Emergency officials said the storm's reach and intensity, combined with prolonged cold and infrastructure strain, contributed to the high death toll.

As communities continue to recover, state and local leaders have urged residents to take winter weather warnings seriously, check on vulnerable neighbors, and use caution when traveling or heating homes during severe cold events.

For many families, including the family of the 11-year-old boy in Crockett County, the storm's impact will be felt long after the snow and ice have melted.



**BLESSING BOX ALERT:**

WITH THE COLD WEATHER OUR BLESSING BOX USAGE HAS INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY.

YOUR DONATIONS ARE NEEDED! PLEASE DROP OFF CANNED PERISHABLES AT OUR POST FROM 2 PM TO 9 PM DAILY OR TEXT 731-819-6183 TO FIND OUT HOW TO DONATE MONEY THAT OUR AMERICAN LEGION MEMBERS WILL SHOP FOR THE PANTRY.

Every little bit helps!

The American Legion  
Post 55  
221 Central Street  
Martin, Tennessee



**BLESSING BOX DONATION REQUEST** — American Legion Post 55 in Martin is asking for community assistance to restock its Blessing Box as winter conditions increase demand, with donations of non-perishable food items or monetary contributions accepted to support local individuals and families in need.



**CLERK'S PROPERTY OFFICE**

901 Broadway #24210  
SMB#34686  
Nashville, TN 37202

24 1 \*\*\*\*\*AUTO\*\*5-DIGIT 38320 77024-07229

**PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT** — The Weakley County Register of Deeds is warning residents about unofficial mailers requesting payment for property deed copies, reminding the public that all real estate deeds are available free of charge through the Register of Deeds office by contacting April Wright Jones at 731-364-3646.

# COMMUNITY NEWS



## Gleason Saddle Club to Host 2025 Awards Banquet and End-of-Year Meeting January 24

SHANNON TAYLOR  
CEO/Publisher

Everyone is invited to attend the 2025 Gleason Saddle Club Awards Banquet and End-of-Year Meeting.

The banquet will be held on Sunday, January 24, at 2 p.m. at the Tosh Event Barn. Location: 65 Henry Cemetery Lane Henry, Tennessee 38231-3554

Attendees are asked to bring a dish to share as the club gathers to cel-

brate the accomplishments and memories of the 2025 saddle club season. Guests are welcome, so feel free to invite a friend.

Following the meal and awards presentation, members will hold an end-of-year meeting to formally close out the 2025 season, elect officers for 2026, and begin planning for the year ahead.

This is also an opportunity for members and supporters to share ideas

for growth. Suggestions for future events, community involvement, and ways to strengthen the club are encouraged. Anyone interested in serving as a board member or officer is invited to join the conversation and be part of shaping the club's future.

All ideas, enthusiasm, and involvement are welcome. The club looks forward to seeing everyone there and working together to build a strong 2026 season.

## WARNING ISSUED AFTER TWO BOYS NEARLY DROWN IN ICY SHELBY COUNTY POND

SHANNON TAYLOR  
CEO/Publisher

Shelby County authorities are urging parents to talk with their children about the dangers of icy water after two young brothers nearly drowned Friday night when they fell through thin ice at a pond in Southeast Shelby County.

The incident happened at the Southwind Lakes apartment complex near East Shelby Drive. Officials said the boys, ages 12 and 7, were walking across what appeared to be frozen water when the ice gave way beneath them.

A sister who was with

the boys ran for help and called 911 as nearby residents tried unsuccessfully to reach them. Deputies with the Shelby County Sheriff's Office arrived within minutes.

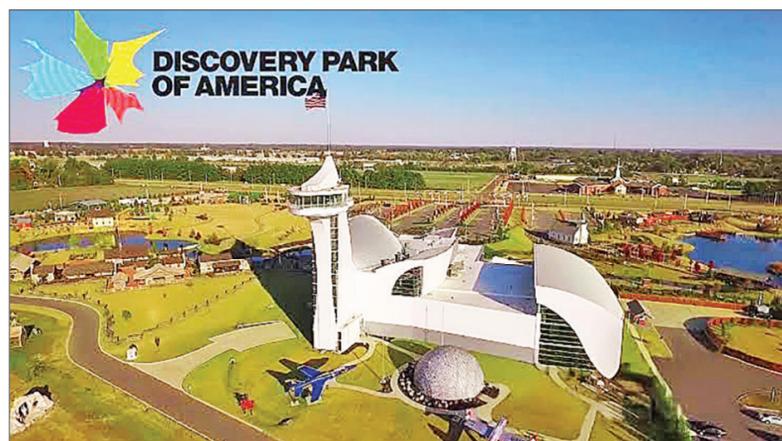
One deputy entered the freezing pond to rescue the children while other responders assisted from the shore. Emergency crews performed lifesaving measures at the scene before transporting the boys to the hospital.

The 12 year old was treated and has since been released. His 7 year old brother remains in critical condition. The deputy who entered the

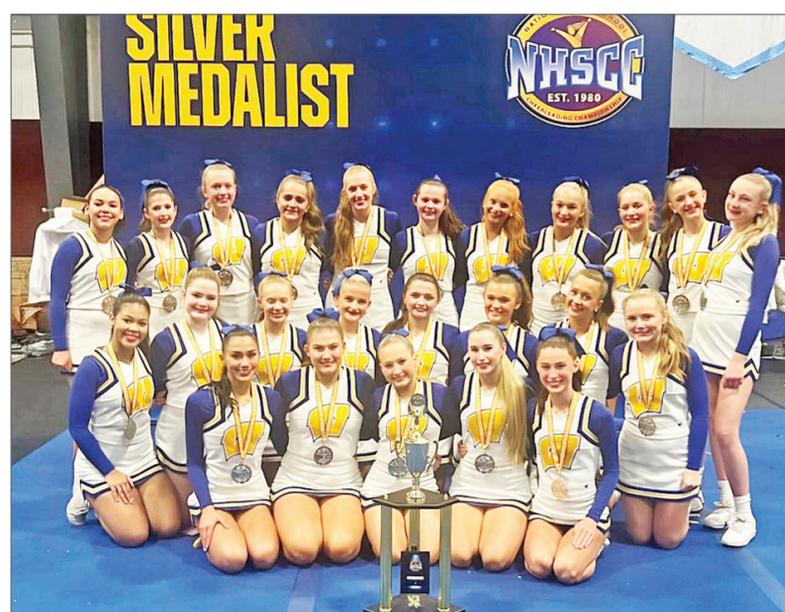
water was also taken to the hospital for weather related injuries and has since been released.

Officials said partially frozen ponds and lakes are extremely dangerous and can appear solid when they are not. Once someone falls through the ice, heavy clothing and freezing temperatures significantly increase the risk of drowning.

Law enforcement is asking parents to remind children to stay away from ponds, lakes, and other bodies of water during freezing conditions, even if the surface appears solid.



**FREE CHILD ADMISSION EXTENDED** — Discovery Park of America has extended its January promotion offering free admission for children through Saturday, February 14, 2026, following recent winter weather, allowing families additional time to explore exhibits with support from Magnolia Place.



**WESTVIEW HIGH SCHOOL EARNS NATIONAL RUNNER-UP HONORS** — The Westview High School team captured second place at the national level, delivering a flawless routine and earning top recognition on the national stage. The team will return home with new hardware after an outstanding performance that reflects their dedication, precision, and hard work.

*Sportsman's Banquet*  
**February 21, 2026**  
Meal: 4-30PM ~ Banquet 6-00PM  
Speaker: Rick Burgess  
Central Baptist Church  
801 Harrison Rd, Martin  
cbcmartin.org  
731-587-5311  
FREE ADMISSION  
FREE MEAL  
FREE PRIZES  
Tickets available at the church JANUARY 26th  
**MUST HAVE TICKETS TO ATTEND**

**UNION CITY**  
**MEET YOUR NEXT GOVERNOR**  
**ONE TOUGH MOTHER FOR TENNESSEE**  
WWW.GREENFORGOVERNOR.COM  
**FEBRUARY 7, 2026 | 10:00 AM**  
DISCOVERY PARK OF AMERICA  
830 EVERETT BLVD, UNION CITY, TN 38261  
**FUEL OUR FIGHT**  
GREENFORGOVERNOR.COM/DONATE

**Support Services LLC**  
275 Old Latham Road, Dresden Tn, 38225  
Gina McClure MA,LCADC, NCC,LPC/MSP "T"  
State licensed facility with intensive outpatient program (IOP) MRT, anger management, staying quit, parenting classes, drug testing, assessments and referrals. Saturday night @600 the 12-step group is open to the public. Mental health counseling is also available.  
1 731-333-9442

**COMMUNITY EVENT NOTICE** — The Obion County Democratic Party will host a public meet and greet reception with Jerri Green on Saturday, February 7, 2026, beginning at 10 a.m. at Discovery Park of America, inviting community members to hear directly from the candidate as part of local civic engagement efforts.

**12th Annual TENNESSEE TREE DAY**  
**MARCH 21, 2026**

ADMIN@MISFITMILITIA.COM YOUTUBE.COM/@MISFITMILITIAOFFEE  
**WELCOME MISFITS MILITIA COFFEE AND BREAKING BREAD WITH KAY KAY TO VINTAGE & VAPOR MARKETPLACE.**  
Stop in for fresh coffee and free sourdough samples from our newest Dyersburg vendors. Swing by Vintage & Vapor for coffee and sourdough from our newest partners, Misfits Militia Coffee and Breaking Bread with Kay Kay. Open 10 to 7, Monday through Saturday.  
511 ELM ST. MARTIN, TN 38237  
MISFITMILITIAOFFEE.COM 1 731-420-4583 1 731-587-5073

**THE WEAKLEY COUNTY EXAMINER**  
Only \$5 Per Month  
**SUBSCRIBE NOW**  
www.theweakleycountyexaminer.com  
Only \$5 Per Month  
**THE WEAKLEY COUNTY EXAMINER**  
The People's Voice: Weakley's Watchdog

# BOOK & MOVIE REVIEWS

## Review: Iron Lung Is Earnest, Uneven, and Worth Watching

SHANNON TAYLOR  
CEO/Publisher

There is something undeniably sincere at the center of *Iron Lung*. You can feel it in the pacing, in the claustrophobic silences, in the way the camera lingers just a beat longer than comfort allows. This is a film made by someone who cared deeply about the source material and wanted to honor it, not dilute it. That matters. It shows.

Directed by and starring Markiplier, the film adapts the minimalist horror of the indie game *Iron Lung* into a feature-length descent into isolation and dread. As a translation of atmosphere, it largely succeeds. The submarine feels oppressive. The

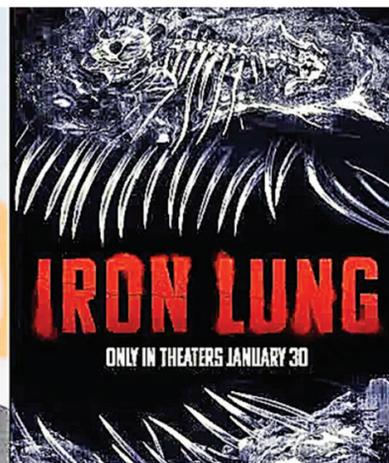
sound design does much of the emotional labor. The fear is quiet, patient, and persistent rather than loud or performative.

That said, the film does not always trust its audience or itself. At times, it feels longer than it needs to be, lingering in ways that do not always deepen tension. A tighter runtime could have sharpened the impact without sacrificing mood. More importantly, viewers unfamiliar with the game may find themselves disoriented. The film assumes a level of knowledge that not all audience members will have, and a bit more contextual grounding would have gone a long way in anchoring the story and raising the stakes.

Markiplier's perfor-

mance is earnest, but uneven. His physical presence works well in a confined, solitary setting, and he carries the weight of isolation convincingly. Where the performance falters is in emotional range. Moments that call for visible grief, panic, or emotional rupture often land softly when they should cut deeper. The restraint sometimes reads less like control and more like absence. Acting, especially in a film this intimate, demands vulnerability, and that is where growth is still needed.

None of this negates what the film does well. This is a respectful, thoughtful adaptation made with clear affection for its origins. It avoids cheap scares and leans into atmosphere, which



is a risk many adaptations do not take. The film feels personal, almost private, like a passion project made public. *Iron Lung* is not a failure, nor is it a breakthrough triumph. It sits somewhere in between. A solid seven out of ten.

A good film that could have been stronger with sharper editing, clearer narrative support for newcomers, and a more emotionally expansive lead performance. It is a promising step that suggests Markiplier has the instincts of a filmmaker,

even if his craft as an actor is still catching up.

For fans of the game, it is worth the watch. For others, it may feel incomplete, but never careless. And that, in a landscape crowded with hollow adaptations, counts for something.

## Book Review: Sula by Toni Morrison

ISABELLA THOMISON  
Book Reviewer

*Sula* is legendary author Toni Morrison at her very best. The 1973 fiction novel follows two young Black girls, Nel and Sula, as they come of age in the segregated

fictional Ohio town, Medallion.

Morrison builds an excellent world in the Bottom, establishing a history of the town in the first chapter. Then, we learn about the vastly different upbringings Nel and Sula have, and

their friendship. Every chapter in the book spans a year in the story, allowing us to follow the lives of our main characters. The upbringings cause them to lead very different lives with Sula being sometimes morally questionable in in-

creasingly shocking ways and Nel being more level headed. This eventually leads the two to end their friendship in adulthood following Sula's objectionable life decisions, but Nel is still haunted by the friendship they once shared.

*Sula* is considered pivotal in Black feminist literature, and for good reason. Few novels explore girlhood without centering other topics like romance as brilliantly as Morrison does here, and with as much nuance to develop realistic

characters, not idealistic ones. *Sula* is a brilliant exploration of a turbulent friendship, a deep dive into two individuals, and all that comes with them.

[www.theweakleycountyexaminer.com](http://www.theweakleycountyexaminer.com)

# Giveaway Giveaway

Share & Like this post, Tag 3 friends, Invite 3 friends

[shannon@theweakleycountyexaminer.com](mailto:shannon@theweakleycountyexaminer.com)

# THANKS A LOT!





Love

## THE WEAKLEY COUNTY EXAMINER

The People's Voice: Weakley's Watchdog




## Join Our Team Seeking Cartoonist

[www.theweakleycountyexaminer.com](http://www.theweakleycountyexaminer.com)  
[shannon@theweakleycountyexaminer.com](mailto:shannon@theweakleycountyexaminer.com)










ADVERTISE NOW

# MOVIE TIME









## Book & Movie Reviews

[www.theweakleycountyexaminer.com](http://www.theweakleycountyexaminer.com)



ADVERTISE NOW

# CRIME



## Former Illinois Deputy Sentenced to 20 Years for Killing Massey

SHANNON TAYLOR  
CEO/Publisher

A former Sangamon County Sheriff's deputy in Illinois was sentenced Thursday to 20 years in prison for the fatal shooting of Sonya Massey, a 36-year-old Black woman who called 911 in July 2024 to report a possible prowler outside her Springfield home.

The deputy, Sean Grayson, was convicted in October 2025 of second-degree murder after jurors found that he unjustifiably shot Massey inside her house despite her being unarmed and compliant. Body-worn camera footage shown at trial depicted the in-

teraction escalating after Massey, who was experiencing a mental health episode, held a pot of hot water.

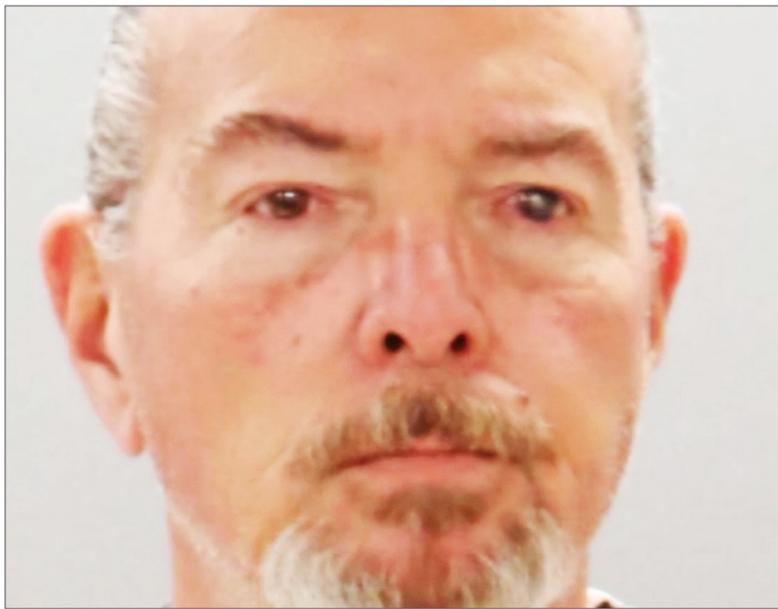
Grayson claimed he feared for his safety, but prosecutors argued she posed no threat. The case drew national attention, protests, and scrutiny of law enforcement responses to calls for help. Grayson received the maximum sentence under Illinois law and will serve at least part of it in prison.

Massey was a mother of two and her family, including her teenage daughter, had pushed for accountability throughout the legal process. During sentencing, family members spoke about

the impact of her loss and the fear it has instilled in their community.

In addition to the criminal case, Sangamon County reached a multi-million-dollar settlement with her family, and the shooting prompted broader reforms, including changes to police hiring practices and federal oversight agreements aimed at improving use-of-force training.

The judge also imposed supervised release conditions following Grayson's prison term. The tragic outcome has intensified ongoing conversations about policing, mental health crisis response, and justice system reform.



## Knoxville Man Arrested After Police Say He Possessed Hundreds of Child Sexual Abuse Images

SHANNON TAYLOR  
CEO/Publisher

A 64 year old Knoxville man is facing serious criminal charges following an investigation by the Special Crimes Unit of the Knoxville Police Department.

Thad Milam was arrested Tuesday, January 27, after investigators received information indicating he was in possession of child sexual abuse material. According to police, the investigation began when a woman reported meeting Milam through an

online dating application. She told investigators that Milam sent her a video depicting a man engaged in sexual activity with an underage female and later confirmed through text messages that he was involved in sexual relationships with underage girls.

Detectives with the Special Crimes Unit conducted a knock and talk at Milam's residence on North Forest Road. While officers were speaking with him, Milam allegedly attempted to delete text messages from his phone. The de-

vice was immediately seized as evidence.

During questioning, Milam admitted to sending the video that prompted the investigation and told detectives he possessed hundreds of images and videos involving the sexual abuse of minors.

Milam has been charged with one count of sexual exploitation of a minor and tampering with evidence. Investigators say additional charges are expected as the investigation continues.

## Jackson Police Department Investigates Officer-Involved Shooting

SHANNON TAYLOR  
CEO/Publisher

The Jackson Police Department is investigating an officer-involved shooting that occurred Sunday afternoon in Jackson.

Officers were dispatched at approximately 1:40 p.m. to the 400 block of East Lafayette Street. Upon arrival, officers encountered a

41-year-old man who was armed with a firearm. During the encounter, officers discharged their weapons, striking the individual.

The man was transported to a local hospital, where he remains in critical condition. No officers were injured.

Consistent with departmental protocol, the incident was reported to District Attorney Gen-

eral Jody Pickens. At her request, the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation has been contacted and will lead the independent investigation due to the involvement of law enforcement officers.

The investigation remains ongoing. Additional details will be released as they are confirmed and become available.

SPECIAL EDITION

WEAKLEY COUNTY **Weakley County** 36.3000° N / 88.7100° W

---

# EXAMINER

---

**NOW OFFERING INTERNSHIPS**

**ESTABLISHED IN 2025**

Dedicated to watchdog journalism, we hold power accountable in Weakley County, providing truthful reporting with independence and integrity.

---

**INTERNSHIP DETAILS**

**PAID INTERNSHIP**  
Marketing / Ad Sales - Commission Based

Book / Movie Reviewers  
Columnist / cartoonist  
Covering meeting, events, writing articles  
Politics, investigative, school & community news, sports  
Contact: shannon@theweakleycountyexaminer.com

**E** At The Weakley County Examiner, our mission is to serve as a vigilant, independent voice for the people of Weakley County. We are committed to watchdog journalism—holding those in power accountable, exposing misconduct, and reporting the truth, even when it is uncomfortable or unpopular.

The Weakley County Examiner's internship program provides hands-on experience in community journalism and local media operations. Interns work directly with editorial and business staff to gain practical knowledge in writing, reporting, and marketing while building a professional portfolio. High school and college students are welcome to apply.

**\$Examiner25**

**THE WEAKLEY COUNTY EXAMINER**

THE PEOPLE'S VOICE: WEAKLEY'S WATCHDOG

CEO/PUBLISHER: SHANNON TAYLOR

WWW.THEWEAKLEYCOUNTYEXAMINER.COM

Follow us on

Facebook now to take part in the

GIVEAWAY!

# BLACK HISTORY MONTH



## She Refused to Move: The 15-Year-Old History Forgot

SHANNON TAYLOR  
CEO/Publisher

Claudette Colvin was just 15 years old when she made a decision that helped ignite the modern civil rights movement, even though history largely passed her by.

In March 1955, nine months before Rosa Parks' arrest, Colvin refused to give up her seat on a segregated bus in Montgomery, Alabama. She was a high school student riding home after class when the bus driver ordered her and three other Black students to move so white passengers could sit.

Colvin refused. She later said she felt Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth pressing down on her shoulders, telling her to stay where she was. Police officers dragged her from the bus, handcuffed her, and arrested

her. She was charged with violating segregation laws and assaulting an officer.

Despite her courage, civil rights leaders at the time made a difficult and painful decision. They did not build a movement around Claudette Colvin. She was young, outspoken, and from a working-class family. Later, when she became pregnant, leaders feared white courts and the media would use her personal life to undermine the broader cause. Her story was quietly set aside.

Colvin did not disappear from history entirely. She became one of the key plaintiffs in *Browder v. Gayle*, the federal case that ultimately ended bus segregation in Montgomery. While Rosa Parks became the public face of the boycott, Claudette Colvin helped

secure the legal victory that made segregation unconstitutional.

The cost of that bravery was lasting. Colvin struggled to find work and eventually moved to New York, where she spent decades working as a nurse's aide. For years, she carried the weight of having done something extraordinary and being told it was not the right moment for the world to hear it.

Her story is a reminder that movements are built by many hands, not just the names printed in textbooks. She stood firm when it was dangerous, stayed strong when it was inconvenient, and helped change the law even without recognition.

Black history is filled with women like Claudette Colvin. Brave, young, imperfect, and essential.

## Pauli Murray: The Legal Architect of Civil Rights History the Nation Nearly Forgot

SHANNON TAYLOR  
CEO/Publisher

For Black History Month, it is worth taking time to talk about a woman whose work quietly reshaped American law and whose name is still unfamiliar to many.

Pauli Murray was born in 1910 and grew up in a segregated South that constantly reminded her where society believed she belonged. Murray refused to accept that limitation. She became a writer, activist, and legal scholar at a time when Black women were routinely excluded from academic and professional spaces. She graduated first in her class at Howard University School of Law, yet was denied further opportunities because she was both Black and a woman.

What Murray did next changed history. Her legal research and writing formed the backbone of

arguments that would later be used to dismantle segregation. Her work influenced Thurgood Marshall's thinking as the legal team prepared for *Brown v. Board of Education*. Years later, her scholarship became foundational in the fight against sex discrimination. Ruth Bader Ginsburg would later acknowledge that Murray's ideas helped shape her own landmark cases.

Long before the law recognized how race and gender discrimination overlap, Murray was writing about it with precision and urgency. She argued that inequality could not be separated into neat categories and that justice required confronting all forms of discrimination at once. That thinking now underpins modern civil rights law.

Murray went on to become the first Black person to earn a doctorate of law from Yale Universi-

ty. In 1977, she broke yet another barrier when she became the first Black woman ordained as an Episcopal priest. Alongside her legal work, she wrote openly about identity, trauma, and belonging in a society that often tried to erase her voice.

Pauli Murray did not seek fame, and she did not lead crowds or deliver televised speeches. She changed the country through words, research, and relentless insistence that the law live up to its promises. Many of the rights Americans rely on today exist because of arguments she made years before the nation was ready to listen.

Black history is not only found in the names everyone knows. It is also written in the lives of people like Pauli Murray, whose influence runs deep, even when history failed to say her name out loud.





Only \$5 Per Month

# SUBSCRIBE NOW

[www.theweakleycountyexaminer.com](http://www.theweakleycountyexaminer.com)



Only \$5 Per Month