



Photo provided
Tennessee Secretary of State Tre Hargett, left, congratulates new 17th District senator Mark Pody upon his certification Dec. 19 to the state of office.

Pody named official State Senator

Thursday, Jan. 4, the special election results for State Senate District 17 were certified by Governor Bill Haslam and Secretary of State Tre Hargett, making Mark Pody (R-Lebanon) the official State Senator to represent Cannon, Clay, DeKalb, Macon, Smith and Wilson counties.

The special election took place on Dec. 19, 2017.

"Receiving a certificate of election today was a great honor," said Senator Pody. "I want to thank the people of Senate District 17 for giving the opportunity to represent them in Nashville."

Pody will take a seat among the state's 33 state senators in the Capitol on Tuesday as lawmakers reconvene the 2018 session of the 110th General Assembly. He formerly served as a member of the Tennessee House of Representatives, representing House District 46, for the past seven years.

"I am eager to get down to official business in the Senate next week as we craft legislation to address important issues such as opioid abuse, education and job creation, among other issues," Pody concluded.



Steve Warner photo
A Smithville man was injured Thursday morning when his 2006 Honda Accord left the roadway on SR 56 South off Rolling Acres Road and crashed into a tree.

Wreck injures Willingham

STEVE WARNER
News/Sports Smithville Review
Smithville, Tennessee

A Smithville man was injured Thursday morning, Jan. 4, when his 2006 Honda Accord left the roadway on SR 56 South of Rolling Acres Road,

According to investigating THP Trooper Rodney Whiles, 38-year-old Paul Willingham, was injured after his vehicle traveled off the right side of roadway, over corrected, continued to travel off the right shoulder, rotating counter clockwise. The vehicle's left side struck a standing tree,

rotating clockwise and came to rest. Willingham was wearing his safety belt and was charged with failing to exercise due care and transported by ground to St. Thomas DeKalb Hospital. DeKalb County Fire, Rescue and police also responded to the incident.

Take steps to cope with cold

STEVE WARNER
News/Sports Smithville Review
Smithville, Tennessee

While the temperatures have come up a bit from last week's record lows it's a good idea to be prepared for winter weather.

While the normal temperatures for January in Middle Tennessee range from 34 to 45 degrees Fahrenheit, they rarely drop below 18 or above 62 this time of year.

That wasn't true this week as we had lows of 2 degrees with a wind chill of -7.

All that cold can have devastating effects on your property and even your health.

Many are suffering from the flu, adding an extra burden for local residents already dealing with broken pipes or worse.

The CDC recommends getting a flu shot and it's not too late. Although the flu shot is not a guarantee of avoiding the flu, it does help build immunities in the community no matter what strain is going around.



Steve Warner photo
Temperatures plummeted to record lows last week in Middle Tennessee. By taking steps to properly prepare for winter weather you can avoid costly repairs and injuries.

No new investigation to be held in Agee case

STEVE WARNER
News/Sports Smithville Review
Smithville, Tennessee

Based on all the information and investigation to this point, officials determined there wasn't sufficient grounds to continue the investigation further in the death of Lauren Agee at Center Hill lake in July 2015.

Preliminary autopsy results reportedly say that 21-year-old Agee died after suffering blunt force trauma to her neck and back. The results apparently indicate that Agee also had a small amount of water in her lungs.

While no foul play was suspected, the woman's body was found by a fisherman near the Still Point Boat Ramp across from Pates Ford Marina just before 5 p.m. She had reportedly been camping near the edge of a steep cliff overlooking the lake with friends while attending the annual event known as Wakefest at the marina.

Agee's family didn't agree with the initial findings and subsequently filed a lawsuit.

The mother of 21-year-old Lauren Taylor Agee, who died on Center Hill Lake filed a \$10-million dollar wrongful death lawsuit in DeKalb County Circuit Court. The suit was filed on July 22, 2016, by Sherry Smith of Sumner County, and names several people, alleging that Agee was killed through the intentional, negligent, or reckless acts of the defendants.

Believing her daughter was murdered, Smith recently told Fox 17's Dennis Ferrier that another autopsy was later conducted, by the family's independent pathologist, which



LAUREN AGEE

reportedly found that Agee's larynx was crushed. Smith stated she believes her daughter had been choked.

At least one off duty White County officer, who has no jurisdiction in DeKalb County, and apparently worked as private security for the marina, raised the issue of an autopsy photo showing an imprint on Agee's midsection that appeared to be the outline of the bow or stern of a canoe. He suggested to Fox 17's Ferrier that Agee's body may have been placed inside a canoe after her death and blood then pooled causing the shape of a triangle.

Sheriff Ray refuted the allegation stating that the imprint is identical to a TWRA boat storage lid where Agee's body was placed face down during transport to the boat ramp.

