

# Corker vs. Trump state's top news story of 2017

**NASHVILLE (AP)** — Republican Bob Corker's war of words with President Donald Trump and his surprise decision to retire from the Senate after two terms is the top Tennessee news story of 2017, according to an annual Associated Press survey of reporters, editors and broadcasters. The *Southern Standard* was among news outlets voting in the poll.



**U.S. Sen. Bob Corker's war of words with President Trump was voted the state's top story of 2017.**

Corker took Trump to task after the president said both sides were to blame for deadly violence surrounding a white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, Va., in August. Those comments, Corker said, showed Trump had not yet been "able to demonstrate the stability, nor some of the competence, that he needs to demonstrate in order to be successful."

After he announced he wouldn't run again, Corker doubled down on his criticism of the president, charging that Trump had turned the White House into an "adult day care center" and was setting the U.S. "on the path to World War III." Trump hit back at Corker, tweet-

ing he was a "lightweight" and charging that the lawmaker "couldn't get elected dog catcher in Tennessee."

Corker maintained in a recent interview he would have won the nomination and the general election had he chosen to run again.

"Do I realize that some of the conversations I've had publicly since that time have affected my current standing with some Republican voters? No question, in a big way," he said. "Do I think that goes away over time? I do."

"Tennessee is still a place that respects and wants to

## TENNESSEE'S TOP 10 OF 2017

Here is a look at the top 10 Tennessee stories of 2017, according to an Associated Press survey of reporters, editors and broadcasters.

- 1. CORKER RETIRES:** Republican U.S. Sen. Bob Corker engages in a war of words with President Donald Trump before and after deciding against seeking a third term.
- 2. GAS TAX:** Lawmakers pass Gov. Bill Haslam's road funding program called the Improve Act that includes a 6-cent gas tax increase, the state's first hike since 1989. The measure also cut taxes on investment income, manufacturers and groceries.
- 3. CHURCH SHOOTING:** A man opens fire at a Nashville church, killing one woman and wounding six others.
- 4. UT FOOTBALL COACH:** Turmoil envelops the University of Tennessee's athletics program after Butch Jones is fired as football coach.
- 5. TENNESSEE WILDFIRES:** Prosecutors drop arson charges against two juveniles in connection with the Tennessee wildfires that killed 14 people and tore through thousands of homes and businesses in 2016.
- 6. HOLLY BOBO:** A jury convicts one of three men charged in the kidnapping, rape and murder of Holly Bobo more than six years after she vanished.
- 7. MISSING STUDENT:** A 15-year-old Tennessee girl is rescued near a cabin in a remote part of northern California more than a month after her 50-year-old teacher kidnapped her and set off a nationwide manhunt.
- 8. PILOT TRIAL:** The federal fraud trial gets underway for former executives and sales representatives at the truck stop chain controlled by Cleveland Browns owner Jimmy Haslam and Gov. Bill Haslam.
- 9. GOVERNOR'S RACE:** Five Republicans and two Democrats join the 2018 governor's race.
- 10. ABORTION LAWS:** Tennessee's attorney general agrees the state will drop two abortion limits similar to Texas laws struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court. State lawmakers also pass a bill to ban most abortions after 20 weeks.

elect people who have the ability to be pragmatic and get results," he said.

Lawmakers' passage of Gov. Bill Haslam's road funding program was

voted the state's No. 2 story of the year. Dubbed the Improve Act, the measure included a 6-cent gas tax increase, the state's first hike since 1989. The

measure also cut taxes on investment income, manufacturers and groceries.

The Greeneville Sun's Michael Reneau said the debate over Haslam's pro-

posal "divided his own party and at times was very contentious. But it brought into the spotlight Tennessee's much-neglected infrastructure and sparked conversations about how to fund services."

A man opening fire at a Nashville church, killing one woman and wounding six others, was ranked the state's No. 3 story. The shooting "exemplifies the growing concern for unprovoked gun violence that is gripping the nation and has led to churches throughout Tennessee rethinking their safety measures," said *Southern Standard* editor James Clark.

The turmoil surrounding the University of Tennessee's football program after the firing of coach Butch Jones was the No. 4 story. The school was close to hiring Ohio State defensive coordinator Greg Schiano before that deal fell through amid a public backlash stemming from an unproven claim in court documents that he might have known about sexual abuse of boys when he was an assistant at Penn State.

# New batch of laws now in effect

**NASHVILLE (AP)** — School bus drivers must be at least 25 years old in Tennessee starting New Year's Day under one of 16 new state laws now in effect.

Lawmakers made the change in reaction to a November 2016 school bus crash that killed six elementary school children. The driver, Johnthony Walker, was 24 at the time.

Authorities say Walker was speeding and had received a cellphone call before he wrecked the bus on a curvy Chattanooga road that was carrying 37 children. The 25-year-old faces 34

charges, including six counts of vehicular homicide.

The law also requires a school bus driver safety program, five consecutive years of driving experience for drivers and appointment of school district and charter school transportation supervisors.

But it stops short of requiring new school buses in Tennessee to be equipped with seat belts, a legislative push that fell flat in the General Assembly early in 2017.

A variety of other laws that passed during the 2017 legisla-

tive session also took effect Monday.

One requires Tennessee public colleges and universities to spell out free speech policies, including a provision that prevents blocking speakers on campus whose anticipated speech may be considered "offensive, unwise, immoral, indecent, disagreeable, conservative, liberal, traditional, radical, or wrong-headed."

Drivers of any vehicle will now face a maximum \$50 fine for talking on a hand-held cellphone while driving in an active

school zone. Drivers under 18 also wouldn't be allowed to use hands-free phone devices and would face up to a \$50 fine for it.

And drivers will only be allowed lights on the front of their cars, flashing or otherwise, that are white, amber or some combination of the two.

People also will not be allowed to buy used cars that have been recalled until the dealer has fixed the issue. And after 30 days of waiting for a repair part, the manufacturer will have to pay the dealer 1 percent monthly of the car's trade-in value while the

car isn't allowed to be sold.

Another new law adds five new courts in Tennessee to a program that aims to help children from troubled homes by establishing "Zero to Three Initiative Courts" within either a Juvenile Court or General Sessions Court.

Legislation that will let trained soldiers bypass firing range requirements for a state handgun permit also takes effect Monday.

The General Assembly starts its next months-long session of lawmaking Jan. 9.



## GENERAL SESSIONS

BY **DUANE SHERRILL**  
Reporter for the Southern Standard  
(McMinnville, Tennessee)

Sentences were handed down by Circuit Court Judge Bart Stanley during recent court action.

Included in those receiving sentence:

Jackie Ray Narramore was ordered to serve 360 days of a 10-year sentence and pay \$2,000 plus costs for possession of meth and drug paraphernalia.

Keith L. Gregor was ordered to serve 180 days of a three-year

sentence, perform 60 hours public service work and pay \$250 plus costs for being a habitual traffic offender, driving on a revoked license and disorderly conduct.

Cynthia Guzman was instructed to serve 45 days of an 11-29 sentence, pay \$600 plus costs, perform 24 hours public service work and lose her driver license for two years for second-offense DUI and reckless endangerment.

Nicole Muncey was directed to serve 90 days of an 11-29 sentence, make restitution to

Walmart and must stay out of the store for theft.

Charles Ryan Norris was instructed to serve 90 days of an 11-29 sentence and make \$900 restitution for theft.

Joe Robert Pickel was directed to serve 50 days of an 11-29 sentence, perform 32 hours public service work, pay \$50 plus costs and lose his driver license for one year for DUI, driving on a revoked license and theft.

Darell Lyn Pack was ordered to serve a nine-month sentence at 75 percent for aggravated criminal trespassing.

## Poole sentenced for DUI

BY **DUANE SHERRILL**  
Reporter for the Southern Standard  
(McMinnville, Tennessee)

A woman will serve a month in jail after she crashed her car while driving under the influence with two children.

Heather Leann Poole was directed to serve 32 days of an 11-month, 29-day sentence, perform 24 hours public service work, pay \$350 plus costs, attend DUI Class and lose her driver license for one year for DUI.

She was the driver of a vehicle involved in a crash earlier this month at the intersection of

Shelbyville Road and Patton Road.

Deputy Ben Cannon said he could tell something was wrong with her when he arrived to investigate.

"She was stumbling and unsteady on her feet," the deputy reported, noting she confessed to taking pills. "She said she had taken hydrocodone and Lorazepam."

Poole did poorly on her field sobriety tests and was arrested for drunk driving. She was originally hit with reckless endangerment charges because of her child passengers but they were dropped as a result of her plea to drunk driving.



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