

# Pucker up, piggie!



Hickory Creek principal Mike Mansfield kisses a pig during a school assembly on Thursday. Mansfield was caught in the compromising position after students purchased more than 800 books during the school's recent book fair.

# Schools hire company to upgrade energy efficiency

BY **LISA HOBBS**  
Reporter for the Southern Standard  
(McMinnville, Tennessee)

Energy Systems Group edged Ameresco as the energy services provider for Warren County Schools.

Warren County School Board members began looking into hiring a company to make energy-efficient upgrades throughout the school system and recouping the expense with energy cost savings. Consideration was prompted by pending renovation projects at Bobby Ray and West Elementary schools.

A field of several companies was narrowed to three and then two: Energy Systems Group (ESG) and Ameresco.

Both companies provided presentations as part of their bid to win the contract and underwent background checks by Director of Schools Bobby Cox.

"I've followed up with several schools that I know who have worked with ESG," said Cox. "I'm more familiar with them. I checked on references provided by Ameresco. I got a phone call from a superintendent in Kentucky who left me a message. He was very complimentary of Ameresco. I'll open it up for discussion by board members and if you want my recommendation, I'll make it."

Board member Bill Zechman voiced approval for Ameresco.

"When we got down between Ameresco and ESG, both of them are highly qualified and highly capable," said Zechman. "Ameresco's analysis of the lifecycle of our buildings ... I was impressed with the software that basically helps us to know when to stop investing in old buildings and go on and build a new one. That was impressive. We try to squeeze every year, month and day out of old buildings and that's just what we do. That's no different from other school districts. I thought that analysis was very impressive."

Ameresco also caught the attention of School Board member Teddy Jones.

"I know ESG has a lot of local support and a lot of local jobs, but I want to say I'm impressed with Ameresco's effort to woo us. They put up a good presentation and really looked into what the school system has."

Zechman made a motion to award the contract to Ameresco, but that is when the switch was flipped.

"I have to go with ESG," said Cox, when asked his recommendation. "I've talked to several folks who are not only personal friends of mine, but individuals I can trust. I know the work at Trousdale. I know the work at Murfreesboro city. I know Wayne Miller, who is the former director of TOSS (Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents). Tim



**JONES**

Little is our engineer and he works on that team as well. If you are asking for my recommendation, it would probably have to be with ESG."

Zechman stated, "Personally, it's not going to break my heart if we go with ESG. If motion dies from lack of a second, that's not a problem."

His motion died, and a motion to hire ESG passed unanimously.

# Speaker says education, job skills produce higher pay

BY **BILL ZECHMAN**  
Special to the Southern Standard  
(McMinnville, Tennessee)

Tennessee Commissioner of Education Candice McQueen projected a bright economic future for the state and Warren County while she praised local business and school leaders Tuesday.

Higher-paying, more secure jobs will result from both traditional education and skills training, Dr. McQueen emphasized in her remarks at a Partners in Education luncheon in the fellowship hall of Central Church of Christ.

"Some communities are moving ahead of others by investing in human capital," McQueen said.

Thanks to a strong relationship between the private sector and schools, Warren County is a conspicuous example of the progress such partnerships can energize, she affirmed.

McQueen credits Gov. Bill Haslam's Drive to 55 initiative as a critical and potent force in moving Tennessee to the top ranks in economic development and the advancement of individuals and communities. The governor's goal is to increase dramatically the number of Tennesseans earning either college degrees or certifications in job skills such as welding or auto mechanics.

McQueen called attention to the Career-Technical Education (CTE) courses at Warren County High School. One such program is Mechatronics, whereby a WCHS senior graduating with a Level I certification



Tennessee Education Commissioner Candice McQueen says learning a trade skill is a way to higher earning power.

can go directly into a job paying more than \$30,000 a year.

Those graduates have the option of pursuing a Level II certification along with an associate's degree at Motlow State Community College, and then completing a BS in engineering at Middle Tennessee State University. Those students are highly recruited by industry, where management-level positions often pay more than \$100,000 a year.

High school students who successfully complete job training courses and who sit for the industry certification exams have "a phenomenal opportunity" in the job market, McQueen said. Warren County graduates enjoy an

extra advantage in having a local Tennessee College of Applied Technology, where the fundamental skills learned in high school can be further developed, leading to higher certification levels.

"The No. 1 question I am asked by industries thinking about Tennessee for their location or expansion is 'How can I get students in here?'" McQueen said, stressing the need for high schools to partner with manufacturers in creating situations for work experience and on-the-job learning.

The commissioner's complete address can be heard in a public affairs broadcast this week on WCPI 91.3. The half-hour program will air Monday at 10:30 a.m. and 10:35 p.m., Wednesday at 2:30 p.m., and Thursday at 2:35 a.m.

## OBITUARIES

### Margaret Ann Wilcher, 68

A celebration of life for Mrs. Margaret Ann Wilcher, 68, of McMinnville will be conducted at 3 p.m. on Sunday, March 18, at Dayspring Community Church, 4295 Smithville Highway. Mrs. Wilcher passed from this life Wednesday, March 14, at Saint Thomas River Park Hospital.

Margaret was born in McMinnville, the daughter of the late Loyd and Mamie Pedigo. She drove a school bus for Warren County School District for almost 15 years. Mrs. Wilcher loved to cook, going to the beauty shop, and being a housewife, but her favorite thing was to spend time with her grandchildren. On March 23, Margaret and her husband, G.L. would have been married for 50 years. She was a loving wife, mother, and grandmother.

Margaret was preceded in death by her parents, Loyd and Mamie Pedigo. She is survived by her loving husband, George "G.L." Wilcher; two sons, Blaine (Lorie) Wilcher and Michael Wilcher; and five grandchildren, Lindsay (Michael) Mooneyham, Kelsey Wilcher, Zoe Wilcher, Annie Wilcher, and Isaac Wilcher.

In lieu of flowers, please make Bible donations in Margaret's name through the Gideon Bible Program at High Funeral Home, 101 College Street, McMinnville, TN 37110.

Coffee County Funeral Chapel is in charge of arrangements (931) 723-3330.

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(McMinnville, Tenn.) March 18, 2018



### Rudolph B. "Rudy" Newby, 94

Rudolph B. "Rudy" Newby of Tullahoma passed this life Wednesday, March 14 at his home at the age of 94.

Mr. Newby was born in Warren County in the Daylight community to the late Sam H. and Bertha E. Newby. He served his country in the United States Army during World War II and went on to work as an insurance agent with Kentucky Central Insurance. Mr. Newby was a longtime member of First Baptist Church in Tullahoma where he had served as a deacon and trustee. He was also a member of the Kiwanis Club and the Life Underwriters.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by wife Florene Newby; one son George Stephen Newby; one daughter Claudia Reed Newby; brothers G.W. Newby, his twin, Randolph Newby, J. Paul Newby and Clayburn Robinson; and sisters Lowry Turner, Rowena Boyd, and Jim Newby Robinson.

Mr. Newby is survived by daughter Libby Sohrabi and her husband Nader of Wartrace; grandchildren Erin Carner and her husband Matt, Allison Newby, Nick Sohrabi and his wife Melissa, Evan Sohrabi and his wife Heather, and Carrie Miller and her husband Jesse; and great-grandchildren, Jackson, Shepherd and Allison Carner, June, Ivy, Audrey and Owen Sohrabi and Mason and Ella Miller.

Funeral services will be held Sunday, March 18 at 2 p.m. at Kilgore Funeral Home Chapel with pastors Andy Stallings and Kevin Ivy officiating. Burial will follow at Rose Hill Memorial Gardens. For those who wish, in lieu of flowers, the family asks donations be made to Hospice Compassus, 110 East Lauderdale Street, Tullahoma, TN 37388.

Kilgore Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.  
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