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Teen succumbs to injuries

BY **JAMES CLARK**
Editor for the Southern Standard
(McMinnville, Tennessee)

A McMinnville teen who was airlifted Thursday following a wreck atop Harrison Ferry Mountain has succumbed to his injuries.

Braxton R. Moody, 19, died Friday, according to the Tennessee Highway Patrol. It marks the third traffic fatality in Warren County

this year.

According to the accident report, Moody was driving a flat-bed pickup around 4:20 p.m. Thursday. His vehicle was traveling on Highway 8 toward McMinnville when it began to drift across the center line near Wash Roberts Road. It eventually made contact with a tractor-trailer heading in the opposite direction and the two vehicles side-swiped.

"The truck driver saw him com-

ing and tried to move over and get out of the way," said Highway Patrol Lt. Billy Prater. "He moved over to the emergency lane but it was not enough."

Even though the collision was a side-swipe, the impact was enough to send the Moody vehicle onto its roof. It landed on a guardrail.



MOODY

"There's no evidence of any drugs or alcohol so it looks like the driver either fell asleep or was distracted," said Prater.

Moody's passenger, McMinnville resident Noah L. Pedigo, 18, was transported to Saint Thomas River Park. The two were returning from work in Dunlap.

The driver of the semi,

Michael W. Scates, 41, of Sale Creek was not injured.

Trooper Bob Melching said Saturday both Moody and Pedigo were wearing their seatbelts. He said Moody's cellphone was found in his pocket, evidence he was not distracted by his phone at the time of the crash. As a matter of procedure, Melching said Moody's blood work would be sent for analysis, which usually takes several months.

Seizing the future



Pictured with ceremonial shovels for the groundbreaking of a \$5.5 million Automation and Robotics Training Center in McMinnville on Thursday are city and county officials with Motlow president Michael Torrence. Pictured, from left, are Steve Harvey, Gary Prater, Phillip Stout, Herschel Wells, Torrence, Carlene Brown, Jimmy Haley, Randy England and Everett Brock.

James Clark photo

\$5.5M robotics center under way



Pictured is a robot similar to those which will be located in the Automation and Robotics Training Center.

BY **JAMES CLARK**
Editor for the Southern Standard
(McMinnville, Tennessee)

The one-time vision is becoming reality.

An official groundbreaking ceremony took place Thursday for a \$5.5 million Automation and Robotics Training Center to be built next to the campuses of Motlow College and Tennessee College of Applied Technology.

Completion is estimated for February 2019.

The facility is courtesy of a state grant approved by Gov. Bill Haslam to enhance workforce training. A

dozen people spoke at Thursday's groundbreaking to put a voice to the momentum that's building.

"Our training here will be second to none," said Larry Flatt, who has been named executive director of the robotics facility. "Where we are today started with a need that was followed by a vision."

The robotics center will serve two purposes. It will be used by students as they learn advanced skills for future employment, and it will be used by industry workers already on the job to update their training.

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Assault charge leveled at Martin

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

A Warren County commissioner will face charges for banishing a woman from an open meeting.

Michael Martin has been charged with assault and is slated to be in General Sessions Court on June 26 at 9 a.m.

Commissioner Martin was hit with the charge after an argument with Warren County Animal Control director Kim Pettrey on Tuesday, June 12 during a county Health and Welfare Committee meeting. Martin chairs the committee.

The two had a verbal exchange and Martin ordered Pettrey out of the room. She removed herself from the table and stood at the doorway. When she spoke again, Martin ordered her out of the building. She refused to leave.

Leading to the assault charge is what happened next.

The warrant says, "Mr. Martin jumped up and walked at Ms. Pettrey with his hands out in a manner to touch her. Ms. Pettrey being a reasonable person was placed in fear of bodily injury at this time."

Pettrey backed out of the doorway and Martin shut the door.

When contacted about the charge, Pettrey said, "I'm tired of it. He has absolutely had it in for me. I don't understand it. I've never done anything to him. I can't understand why he's like this to me. This time though he went too far."

When contacted Friday, Martin said he does not have a personal grudge against Pettrey and said he would wait until June 26 to do his talking in court.



MARTIN

Support grows to replace Martin as committee chair

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

There is speculation Warren County commissioners will remove fellow Commissioner Michael Martin from the county Health and Welfare Committee this Monday at 6:30 p.m.

Public reaction to Mr. Martin's outburst during a committee meeting Tuesday night hasn't been kind.

"His conduct is unprofessional, borderline abusive, and he acts like a bully," said Eric King, who was in attendance at the meeting. "When he started cursing at people, and attacking visitors that were just sitting there in the room watching, something should have been done."

Martin launched verbal attacks in the direction of Commissioner Blaine Wilcher and the *Southern Standard* reporter covering the meeting. Prior to that, he tossed Animal Control director Kim Pettrey from the room and threatened to have her removed from the

building by a deputy.

Facebook seems to be the mode for most of the requests to remove Martin and motivated by a video that was secretly taken during the meeting by an unknown person and placed online.

Commissioners will meet Monday for their regular monthly session. While numerous items of business are on the agenda, none of the items point to committee restructuring.

That does not mean an item cannot be added, but it would require a majority vote from commissioners to amend the agenda.

The Warren County Executive recommends committee assignments after each election and his or her nominations are voted on by the full commission.

County Executive Herschel Wells could present a new list of committee assignments Monday night. If that happens, commissioners would have to vote to amend the agenda in order to consider the measure.

Meetings are held at Warren County Administrative Offices on Locust Street.



This is a rendering of a 74-room hotel that's proposed for Sparta Street across from the hospital. The development will include a restaurant and retail space.

TAX CHECK-IN

OVER THE 20-YEAR LIFESPAN OF THE TAX RELIEF AGREEMENT:

• Hunt Properties would save an estimated \$1.93 million in city and county property taxes.

• Hunt Properties would generate an estimated \$4.63 million in city and county hotel taxes

Tax break considered to lure hotel

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

Property tax relief is under consideration to attract a hotel into Warren County, a development appraised at almost \$10 million.

David Hunt of Hunt Properties seeks to construct a Hilton Gen 8 Hampton Inn Hotel, along with restaurant and retail space on the empty lot on Sparta Street across from Saint Thomas River Park Hospital.

The hotel would have approximately 74 rooms with an indoor swimming pool and approximately 2,000 square feet of conference room space. A retail center would be approximately 20,000 square feet. The restaurant has not been named.

Continued on **5A**

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