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Vol. 140 75∢ No. 107

Southern



Standard

Jail overcrowding problem across region

BEHIND BARS

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

Wanted: Jail Space

That's a sign that could hang over much of Middle Tennessee as communities throughout the region grapple with the problem of too many criminals and not enough jail cells.

Much has been said about Warren County Jail and the overcrowding issues there. The jail was built for a capacity of 251 inmates and has well over 300 prisoners on most days. Warren County is not alone.

In Cannon County, overcrowding is so severe the jail library has been turned into a holding area and inmate visitation was discontinued nearly **WARREN COUNTY**

Jail inmates: 315 County pop: 39,835 Ratio: 1 in 126

WHITE COUNTY Jail inmates: 289 County pop: 26,061

Ratio: 1 in 90

COFFEE COUNTY Jail inmates: 340 County pop: 53,161 Ratio: 1 in 156

CANNON COUNTY Jail inmates: 70 County pop: 13,829 Ratio: 1 in 197

VAN BUREN COUNTY Jail inmates: 52 County pop: 5,626

Ratio: 1 in 108

Ratio: 1 in 148

GRUNDY COUNTY Jail inmates: 92 County pop: 13,640

Inmate numbers were provided by officials at that jail.

Population figures are based on U.S. Census estimates from 2012.



three months ago. The 48-bed facility regularly houses over 70 inmates.

In White County, the jail was 62 inmates over capacity on Tuesday. It is supposed to hold a max of 227.

White County Sheriff's Department spokeswoman Cami Howard said county officials are still considering the best ways to address overcrowding with a new sheriff just elected in August.

"We're looking at more programs for inmates, ankle bracelets, really just brainstorming all sorts of ideas right now," said Howard.

Two surrounding counties that don't have a jail overpopulation problem are in new facilities.

In Van Buren County, inmates were relocated to a new jail about two months ago, upgrading from a facility

that was certified for 13 inmates to one that can house 88. There were 52 inmates at Van Buren County Jail on Tuesday, or about 1 in every 108 people in the county of 5,626.

Continued on 3A

Terrifying new spin

Towering ride talk of the fair

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

What's nearly as tall as a skyscraper, reaches highway speeds, and cre-

ates paralyzing fear? It's the newest ride at the Warren County A&L Fair called Alter Ego.

"I was crying and breathing fast and thought I was going to have a panic attack," said high school student Andrea Judkins moments after stepping off the 120-

foot ride. "It's scary. It's soooo scary. The worst part is getting stuck at the top while the other people board. You're so high in the air, your adrenaline is rushing."

Kissel Entertainment unveiled Alter Ego earlier this year and Tammy Kissel says it's been the talk of the carnival in every town. She says Kissel ordered the ride from a company in The Netherlands in November 2015 and it took more than two years to build.

The wait was well worth it.

"It's the best ride there is," said Kissel. "If you skydiving and free-falling, it's the ride for you."

Continued on 2A



The 120-foot tall Alter Ego has the ability to change your personality from calm to terrified.



Community comes together for food, fellowship, fun

BY LACY GARRISON

(McMinnville, Tennessee)

Many Warren County natives consider our fair the best. Admission is free, fall is in the air, and our community comes together for fair food and fellowship. Some even joke our small town shuts down this week.

Special education teacher Katie Rogers has attended the fair several times to watch the traditional Fairest of the Fair pageant and check out the exhibits. She perfectly summed up what makes the Warren County A&L Fair so spe-

"It brings our entire community together and it doesn't matter if you are a farmer or businessman, what church you go to, or what civic club you are a member of," said Rogers. "We all come together for

a week of fun and unity." The Warren County A&L Fair makes for the perfect family outing with cheap eats and free activities. Whether it's just you and your spouse or the whole gang of kiddos, there's plenty to do and

For Warren County resident Ayde Ray and her family of five, one evening is dedicated to walking around under the grand-

"I like that there are a lot of things to look at and do that don't require you to spend any money, which is important for a family our size," said Ray. "My favorite thing to do is walk around looking for our kids' fair art and checking out the other arts

and crafts." Several local families enjoyed the opportunity to get up close and personal with live animals, kicking up straw and feeding goats with handfuls of pellets. For Leanne Morrison and her boys, Zeke and Maddax, the petting zoo was one of

their first stops. "They have loved the lights, playing games and seeing animals at the fair that they don't get to typically see every day," said Leanne. "By walking around, you can tell the time and effort our Fair Board members put into

making this a success." Many people commented on the volunteers who put so much time and effort into keeping it free, fun and safe.

Continued on **5A**



Titus Wilcher stands in front of his "Meemaw" **Curlene Preston while mom Brandi Wilcher holds** daughter Preston before they joined in all the fair festivities Wednesday. "This is three generations right here," said Curlene proudly.



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