

# Inmate's letter confesses to murder of black man

**MURFREESBORO (AP)** — A Tennessee jail has intercepted a letter from an inmate to a white supremacist group in which he confesses to killing a black man.

The *Daily News Journal* reports 53-year-old John Daniel Carothers is charged with murder in the death of 40-year-old Robert Miller, who was set ablaze at a Veterans' Affairs assisted living home in March. The letter has Rutherford County prosecutors considering further investigation to determine if hate crime sentencing enhancement could be applied, the newspaper reports.

In the letter addressed to the American Institute of Theology in Arkansas, Carothers requested a study Bible and says he believes

the Bible is "about white people and for white people" and says he is in jail "for burning a black man I set him on fire with lighter fluid poured on his head."

Murfreesboro police detective Jacob Fountain testified at an Aug. 8 court hearing that jailers decided to intercept the letter after researching the organization to which the mail was addressed.

"They saw it was what they believed to be like a white supremacist type deal," Fountain told the court last month when describing jail staff's research into the AIT.



CAROTHERS

The Anti-Defamation League describes AIT as a small but longstanding group in the Christian Identity movement, which espouses a racist and anti-Semitic religious doctrine.

District Attorney Jennings Jones said local officials don't see many racially motivated crimes in Rutherford County.

"We have our share of crime, but we really have not seen this style of crime driven by racial animus," Jennings said. "This deviates from what we normally see in Rutherford County."



Lisa Hobbs photo

**Before leaving office, former Warren County Executive Herschel Wells signs a proclamation to raise awareness and prevent suicide. September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month in Warren County. Pictured is Wells with CHEER Mental Health director Bryan Herriman.**

# Kavanaugh hearings begin

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh declared fervently at his Senate confirmation hearing Tuesday the court "must never, never be viewed as a partisan institution." But that was at the end of a marathon

day marked by rancorous exchanges between Democrats and Republicans, including dire Democratic fears that he would be President Donald Trump's advocate on the high court.

The week of hearings

on Kavanaugh's nomination began with a sense of inevitability that the 53-year-old appellate judge eventually will be confirmed, perhaps in time for the new term on Oct. 1 and little more than a month before congressional elections.

# CHEER tries to lower suicide rate that claims 1 life over 45 each day

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

Each day in Tennessee, an average of three people die by suicide.

In 2016 — the latest year for which state-specific figures are available — there were 1,110 recorded suicide deaths in Tennessee, a rate of 16.2 per 100,000.

Did that get your attention? Bryan Herriman, director at CHEER Mental Health hopes so.

"We're trying to raise public awareness about suicide," said Herriman. "Suicide is one of the most disruptive and tragic events a family and a community can experience, which is why we try to raise awareness by recognizing September as Suicide Prevention Awareness Month."

As of 2016, suicide is the second-leading cause of death for young people ages 10-19 in Tennessee, with one person in this age group lost to suicide each week. We lose one person between the ages of 10-24 every four days, and every day we lose at

least one person over the age of 45 — with midlife and older adults remaining at higher risk.

Suicidal thoughts, much like mental health conditions, can affect anyone regardless of age, gender or background. In fact, suicide is often the result of an untreated mental health condition. Suicidal thoughts, although common, should not be considered normal and often indicate more serious issues.

Suicide is never caused by a single event. It is the result of many factors over a period of time. Pressures such as unrealistic academic, professional, social or family expectations can create a strong sense of rejection and can lead to deep disappointment. Teens and young adults are especially prone to feelings of loneliness, hopelessness and rejection as a result of these pressures.

Statistics from the Tennessee Department of Health: Tennessee veterans, active-duty military personnel, and National Guardsmen face a disproportionate risk as com-

pared to the general population of Tennessee, with more dying from suicide than combat.

The highest risk for suicide is among the survivors of those who died by suicide or those who have attempted suicide.

More people die by suicide each year than from homicide, AIDS, or drunk driving. Some 42,000 Americans die by suicide each year. Suicide is the leading cause of violent deaths in Tennessee, as well as nationally and worldwide, far above homicide and death due to natural disasters.

Every day, 117 people die by suicide in the United States — about one every 12 minutes.

Mental health experts say never keep a person's suicidal feelings a secret. Saving a life is more important than keeping a promise.

If you know someone who is thinking about suicide, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255. It's available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

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# Tennessee jail refuses to detain immigrants

**MEMPHIS (AP)** — Non-citizens suspected of living in the U.S. illegally won't be held in a Tennessee jail past their scheduled release dates, despite federal requests to keep holding them.

## STATE ROUNDUP

But the Commercial Appeal reports the Shelby County Sheriff's Office is still cooperating in other ways with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

In April, the county attorney's office ruled ICE's 48-hour detainer requests likely violated the U.S. Constitution.

Sheriff's policy adviser Debra Fessenden says ICE is still notified whenever a non-citizen is booked into the jail. The immigration agency is allowed to make arrests at the facility, and can be notified of suspects' release times.

A Tennessee law mandating compliance with ICE detainer requests goes into effect next year. It's unclear how that will affect Shelby County's policy.

arrested a woman who led them on an interstate chase going in the wrong direction.

News outlets report Knoxville police arrested 28-year-old Casey Rebecca Yates of Knoxville on Sunday night.

Police say officers responding to a report about a possible overdose attempted to pull Yates out of her car outside a store. She drove away and struck a police officer. The officer was not seriously injured. Police chased her vehicle going in the wrong direction on Interstate 40 and then on Interstate 640 before she was caught.

Yates faces multiple charges and traffic violations, including aggravated assault on a police officer and driving under the influence.

**KNOXVILLE (AP)** — Police in Tennessee have