

# Editorial: Dear mom and dad, and in some cases, school personnel: Cool it

By **KARISSA NIEHOFF**  
AND **JULIAN TACKETT**

If you are the mother or father of a high school athlete here in Kentucky or one of the key school administrators in a members school or member school district, this message is primarily for you.

When you attend an athletic event that involves your son or daughter, or the members of your student body, cheer to your heart's content, enjoy the camaraderie that high school sports offer and have fun. But when it comes to verbally criticizing game officials or coaches, it's time for everyone to cool it. "The time has come for everyone involved in the game to 'pump the brakes' as it relates to conduct at games, particularly, the parents who attend," noted NFHS Executive Director Karissa Niehoff.

Make no mistake about it. Your passion is admired, and your support of the hometown team is needed. But so is your self-control. Yelling, screaming and berating the officials humiliates your child, annoys those sitting around you, embarrasses your child's school and is the primary reason Kentucky has an alarming shortage of high school officials.

It's true. According to a recent survey by the National Association of Sports Officials, more than 75 percent of all high school officials say "adult behavior" is the primary reason they quit. And 80 percent of all young officials hang up their stripes after just two years of

whistle blowing. Why? They don't need your abuse.

"It is time for everyone to take a deep breath, regain control of their emotions, and remind themselves of the great purpose of high school sports, enjoyable participation by the student-athletes," said KHSAA Commissioner Julian Tackett. "This is a game played by imperfect humans, coached by imperfect humans, and officiated by imperfect humans. I don't know if it's the higher levels' insatiable desire for perfection through replays and the bloviating by announcers who think they know everything or the tone and tenor of general conversation in our country, but this cannot be allowed to continue in this level of sport and this level be maintained."

Plus, there's a ripple effect. There are more officials over 60 than under 30 in many areas. And as older, experienced officials retire, there aren't enough younger ones to replace them. If there are no officials, there are no games. The shortage of licensed high school officials is severe enough in some areas that athletic events are being postponed or cancelled—especially at the freshman and junior varsity levels.

The shortage is likely to get worse based on recent acts by parents and school administrators. Consider a few incidents that occurred just in the last few weeks:

- The spouse of a contest official, choosing to attend the game

her husband was officiating, was verbally abused by parents around her to the point that she genuinely feared for her safety. Her husband is trying to decide if it is worth it to continue officiating. And this conduct went unchecked by local school administrators.

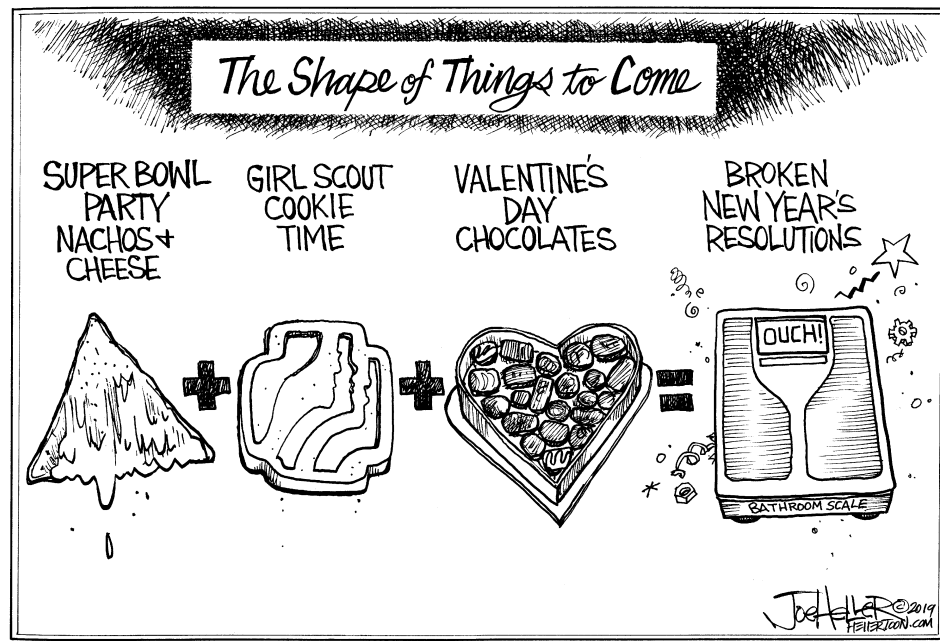
- A school Superintendent, who has a son participating and a relative coaching, sent a threatening text to the local independent contractor who assigns games. "That crew better not be on one of our games ever again" read the text. And that same school removed a team from the floor in a non-varsity game in dissatisfaction over the officiating.

- A veteran Athletic Director cursing an official during a non-varsity game and refusing to allow the official into a dressing room to retrieve his belongings after disagreeing over the handling of a fan situation.

- A veteran school Athletic Director not only refused to handle a situation with a fan when asked to do so, but after the contest, barged into a dressing room and threatened the game officials following the ejection of a head coach after a third technical foul.

"I wish I could say that these incidents occurred in another state or in a different year. Unfortunately, not only were they here in our state but in the last few weeks as well," said KHSAA Commissioner Julian Tackett.

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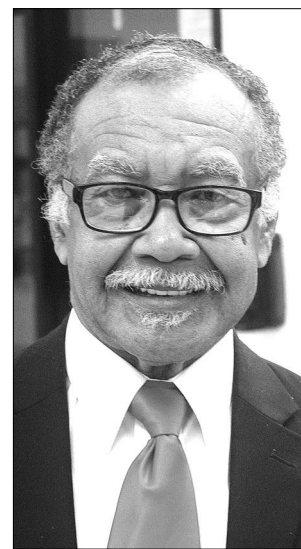


## What important event do you recall that is part of Black History?

By *Roving photographer Clevis Jeffries*



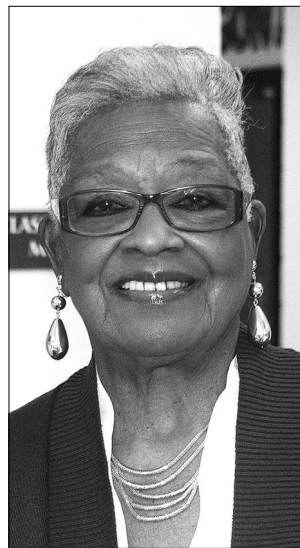
"Barack Obama becoming president of the United States."  
—Amy Coffey



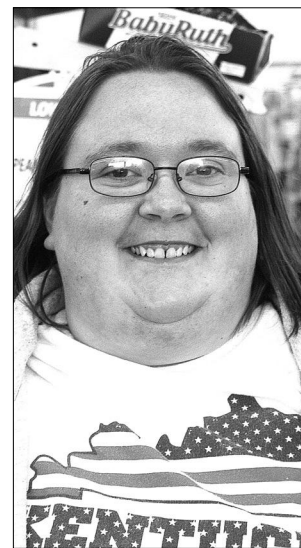
"The Green County School System becoming integrated in the late 1950s."  
—Mike Ingram



"President Abraham Lincoln and his issuing of the Emancipation Proclamation."  
—Courtney Mudd



"Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his 'I Have a Dream' speech."  
—Jane Groves



"Rosa Parks and her refusal to sit in the back of the bus."  
—Crystal Rayburn



"The election of Barack Obama as President of the United States."  
—Clara Miller

## What's Happening

All times are Central

### Tomorrow

### Happening Soon

### Ongoing events

#### Christian Book Club

The Christian Fiction Book Club will meet Thursday, Feb. 7, at 10 a.m. at the Green County Public Library.

#### Blood Drive

The American Red Cross will have a Blood Drive Thursday, Feb. 7 from 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the Greensburg United Methodist Church on West Court Street in Greensburg. Eat iron-rich foods and drink plenty of water. The goal is 70 units.

#### GCIS SBDM Council

The Green County Intermediate School SBDM Council will hold its regular monthly meeting Thursday, Feb. 7 at 4:30 p.m. in the school conference room.

#### GCIS PTO to meet

The Green County Intermediate School PTO will meet Thursday, Feb. 7 at 5 p.m. in the school's library. PTO President Jennifer Davenport invites all interested to attend as spring activity planning will be begin.

### Weekend

#### Nature program

Mikayla Groce will be at the Green County Public Library Friday, Feb. 8 at 2 p.m. for an after school nature program focusing on Salamanders. Meet real live salamanders and learn about their environment.

#### Kentucky Arts event

The Frozen Tea Party/Play-Along is Feb. 9 and Feb. 16 at 9 a.m. at Kentucky Classic Arts at Centre Square, 237 N Spalding Ave, Lebanon. The event will include brunch and high tea, an interactive show, games, photos and sing-along with Elsa, Anna, and friends. The event is \$25 per person (children under 10 must attend with a ticketed adult). Reservations by web at [www.kyclassicarts.com](http://www.kyclassicarts.com) or call 270-699-ARTS.

#### Make a bracelet

Make a diffuser bracelet at the library Monday, Feb. 11 at 10 a.m. Please register for this class by calling 270-932-7081.

#### Barn Lot comedy

Barn Lot Theater will present the comedy "The Last Roundup of the Guacamole Queens" February 14-17 and 21-24 with all shows at 7 p.m. For tickets, call 270-432-BARN or visit <http://www.barnlottheater.org>.

#### Workforce Meeting

There will be a Cumberland Workforce Development Board meeting Tuesday, Feb. 19 at 10 a.m. at the Lake Cumberland Area Development District Office in Russell Springs. For information call 270-866-4200.

#### Children programs

Every Tuesday morning at 10 a.m., the Green County Public Library has Terrific Tuesday Story Hour for 2 to 5 year-olds and Thursdays at 10 a.m. a LapSit Lullaby program for babies and toddlers, birth up to 2 years. For information, contact the library at 270-932-7081.

#### Color Me Calm

Color Me Calm, an adult coloring program, takes place at the Green County Public Library every Thursday at 10 a.m.

#### Chair exercises

Join the Green County Public Library every Tuesday, from 1 to 2 p.m., for Chair Exercises.

#### Head start apps

Green County Head Start is now accepting applications for the 2019-20 school year for eligible three-four year olds. For information call 270-932-6618.

#### Tax preparations

Free assistance with income tax preparation is available for residents of Green, Taylor and surrounding counties from the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide program. Services will be Tuesdays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., through April 9 at the Greensburg Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Other times may be available, call Brenda Cook at 270-932-7459 for information. AARP membership is not required.

### Greensburg Record-Herald

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