

Chattanooga Times Free Press



They're baaaack!
Netflix revival
of 'Gilmore Girls'
launches Friday

IN LIFE › E1



St. George
eyed as
55-room
hotel

IN BUSINESS › C1



Alabama not
the only stout
defense in this
year's Iron Bowl

IN SPORTS › D1

WOODMORE ELEMENTARY

SCHOOL BUS DEATHS ROCK COMMUNITY

FEDERAL PROBE LAUNCHED



PHOTO BY BRUCE GARNER / CHATTANOOGA FIRE DEPARTMENT

BY KENDI A. RAINWATER
AND DAVID COBB
STAFF WRITERS

Six Woodmore Elementary children died in a bus crash Monday, with just one school day remaining until Thanksgiving break.

The school bus carrying 35 students overturned and crashed into a tree less than a mile from the school around 3:20 p.m.

The crash happened on two-lane Talley Road in the heart of a residential neighborhood just north of Brainerd Road, turning front lawns into triage stations for injured students rescued from the bus and staging grounds for frantic

See DEATHS › A7



PHOTO BY ANGELA LEWIS FOSTER

Top: Emergency personnel work at the scene of the accident on Talley Road in Chattanooga. The bus crashed into a tree around 3:20 p.m., officials said. **Above:** A woman escorts three children away from the scene.

Corker: Scrapping Iran deal a mistake

Foreign relations committee chairman urges Trump "strongly enforce" deal with Iran

BY DAVE FLESSNER
STAFF WRITER



Bob Corker

President-elect Donald Trump, who vowed on the campaign trail to rip up the Iranian nuclear treaty, should do more to enforce the agreement rather than discard it right away, U.S. Sen. Bob Corker, R-Tenn., said Monday.

Corker, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and a critic of the deal that outgoing President Barack Obama negotiated with Tehran leaders last year, said he expects the incoming Trump administration should and will do more to police what he said were ongoing violations of the pact by the Iranian government. But since the U.S. government and its allies have already returned billions of dollars of once-frozen assets to Iran, Corker cautioned against reneging on the agreement once Trump is sworn into office in January.

Inside

› Haslam vows to pursue arsonists responsible for state's wildfires, **B1**
› For Trump, many meetings, Cabinet picks still coming, **A3**

See CORKER › A8

For Trump and GOP, 'Obamacare' repeal is risky

BY ALAN FRAM
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Here's the idea: Swiftly pass a repeal of President Barack Obama's health care law, perhaps soon enough for Donald Trump to sign it the day he takes the presidential oath. Then approve legislation restructuring the nation's huge and convoluted health care system — despite Republican divisions, Democratic opposition and millions of jittery constituents.

What could go wrong? With Republicans controlling the White House and Congress in January, they're faced with delivering on their long-time promise to repeal and replace "Obamacare." Here are hurdles they'll face:

SPEED VS. DELIBERATION

Trump and congressional Republicans will be under intense pressure from their core conservative supporters to repeal Obama's 2010 health care law — and fast. After all, Congress already sent Obama a repeal bill last January, which he vetoed, and many GOP voters will see no reason for delays this time.

But there probably won't be anything fast about Congress' effort to replace Obama's law, which is likely to take many months.

See OBAMACARE › A8

Authorities say Texas, Missouri police officers shot in ambushes

BY JIM SALTER
AND DAVID WARREN
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A manhunt was underway Monday in Texas for a suspect wanted in the fatal shooting of a veteran police detective in what authorities say was one of several attacks targeting law enforcement in multiple states.

The San Antonio detective as well as officers in Missouri and Florida were conducting routine tasks Sunday when they became the targets of violence.

The detective was writing a traffic ticket when he was shot to death in his squad car late Sunday morning outside police headquarters. "I think the uniform was the target and the first person that happened along was the first person that [the suspect] targeted," San

See AMBUSHES › A7



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A woman leaves balloons at a makeshift memorial Monday for slain San Antonio police officer Benjamin Marconi, 50, a 20-year veteran of the force there. Marconi was fatally shot during a traffic stop near police headquarters Sunday.

Killings of police officers in the U.S.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

› **Nov. 2:** Two Des Moines, Iowa-area police officers were fatally shot in separate ambush-style attacks while sitting in their patrol cars. Scott Michael Greene, an unemployed 46-year-old father, is charged with killing Urbandale police officer Justin Martin, 24, and Des Moines Police Sgt. Anthony Bemino, 38, within minutes of each other.

› **July 17:** A Missouri man armed with two rifles and a pistol and wearing a ski mask ambushed and killed three officers in Baton Rouge, La. The gunman, Gavin Long, was killed by police. His mother said the Iraq war veteran suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder.

› **July 17:** A gunman in Dallas opened fire at a protest about recent killings by police of black men in Minnesota and

See KILLINGS › A7



Business	C1	Life	E1	Sports	D1
Classified	F1	National	A4	Stocks	C4-5
Comics & Puzzles	E2-3	Obituaries	B2	Television	E5
Editorials	B6-7	Politics	A5	Weather	C6
Entertainment	A2	Region	B1	World	A6

Today's Online Poll
OPENED AT MIDNIGHT
Will you go see Toby Keith perform at Riverbend?
TIMESFREEPRESS.COM

Yesterday's Poll Results
AS OF 9 P.M. MONDAY
Do you have confidence in Tennessee's teachers?
YES: 53% NO: 47%

Deaths

CONTINUED FROM A1

parents who pleaded for information about their children from emergency personnel.

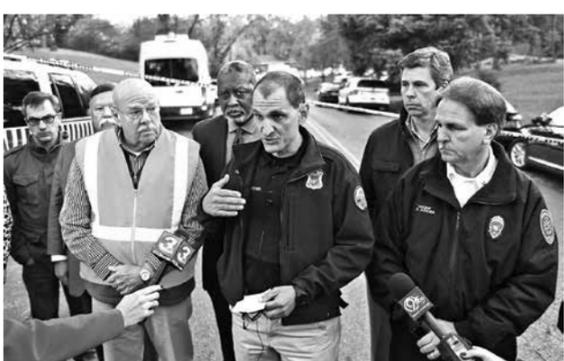
Some asked to approach the wreckage, but emergency responders on the other side of a web of yellow caution tape kept them away while working to track down information on children for distraught family members.

Five students died on the bus and another died at Erlanger hospital, according to officials. Other students were in critical condition Monday night.

Students who were not rushed to the hospital walked away from the scene clutching their parents' hands, looking dazed. They had cuts and blood on their faces. Other students laid on stretchers in yards, waiting for additional ambulances.

It took emergency crews several hours to remove trapped children from the bus, and investigators were at the crime scene late into the night. The National Transportation Safety Board has launched a federal probe into the crash, and investigators are expected arrive in Chattanooga this morning.

"What has happened [Monday] is every public safety official's worst nightmare," said Chattanooga police Chief Fred Fletcher. "But that is nothing in comparison to the nightmare that families, friends and our commu-



STAFF PHOTO BY ANGELA LEWIS FOSTER

Chattanooga police Chief Fred Fletcher, center, talks with the press Monday at the scene of a school bus wreck involving multiple fatalities on Talley Road in Chattanooga. Listening are, from left, Hamilton County District Attorney Neal Pinkston, Hamilton County Mayor Jim Coppinger, Hamilton County Emergency Medical Services director Ken Wilkerson, interim superintendent of Hamilton County Schools, Kirk Kelly, Chattanooga Mayor Andy Berke and Fire Chief Chris Adams.

nity is going through with this tragic loss to children in our community."

The best way to support the county's students is by allowing kids to attend school today, said Hamilton County Schools Interim Superintendent Kirk Kelly, and counselors will be available.

"We will have support for our students, our staff, members of our community," Kelly said. "We will continue to provide this support for as long as it is needed. ...We will do everything we can to try and help the families involved in this tragedy."

Twenty-three students were transported to T.C. Thompson Children's Hospital at Erlanger for treatment. Parents of Woodmore students were seen running up the street

toward the hospital, and families filled the hospital's waiting room praying for good news.

The driver of the bus, whose identity had not been released as of press time, was on his regular route, officials said.

He was questioned Monday and was cooperating with investigators, Fletcher said. A warrant was issued to remove the data recorder on the school bus and to review the video on that school bus, he added.

"Certainly, speed is being investigated very, very strongly as a factor in this crash," Fletcher told reporters.

The speed limit on the road is 30 mph.

Hamilton County Schools contracts its bus-

School Services, one of the nation's largest suppliers of school bus services. In Hamilton County, Durham operated about 240 of the district's 300-350 buses. The others are operated by independent contractors.

Gov. Bill Haslam said the state is going to do everything it can to assist in the wake of the tragedy.

"It's a sad situation any time there's a school bus with children involved, which there is in this case," he said. "We will do everything we can to assist in what I think is going to be a very sad situation."

Once more is known about the cause of the crash, Haslam said, it would be a good time to discuss having seat belts on buses.

California, Florida, Louisiana, New Jersey and New York all have mandatory school bus seat belt laws, and Texas requires seat belts on school buses purchased after 2010, according to the Governors Highway Safety Association.

Rep. Joe Armstrong, D-Knoxville, led an unsuccessful effort to require seat belts on Tennessee school buses last year after two students and a teacher's aide died in a bus crash in Knoxville. Many lawmakers opposed the proposal, saying it was too expensive.

In the 2014 crash, the driver was texting and swerved over a concrete median, crashing into another bus, according to an investigation by the National Transportation Safety Board.

The crash resulted in a new Tennessee law increasing penalties for bus drivers caught texting and driving.

Just last week, a bus of Chester County high school students crashed in Nashville and more than 20 students were injured.

The bus driver lost control, swerved to the left side of an exit ramp and then over-corrected back to the right and struck a guardrail and overturned, the Tennessee reported.

Fifty-three children were killed across the nation while riding in school buses from 2004-2014, according to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration.

Late Monday night teachers from across the district gathered at Woodmore Elementary School painting a colorful mural of encouragement and support.

At the scene of the crash Monday afternoon, a chaplain with a Hamilton County badge asked one mother if he could pray with her.

She said yes.

The two began praying, echoing the prayers of thousands from around the city — and country — as news of the accident spread.

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Seatbelts and safety

The University of Alabama in 2010 completed a three-year project for the Governor's Study Group on School Bus Seat Belts and the Alabama State Department of Education. Some of the findings:

Students are six to eight times safer riding to school in a school bus than riding to school in their parents' cars.

Nationally, up to three times more school bus-related pupil deaths take place outside the bus (loading/unloading) than inside the bus.

The addition of seat belts would make already-safe school buses even safer.

Based on 170,000 observations of pupils in pilot-project buses, the average seat belt-use rate was 61.5%.

Adding seat belts increases the thickness of seat-backs, leading to fewer rows of seats.

Source: University of Alabama

Ambushes

CONTINUED FROM A1

Antonio Police Chief William McManus said at a news conference Monday.

In Missouri, a St. Louis police sergeant was shot twice in the face Sunday evening while he sat in traffic in a marked police vehicle. The sergeant was released from the hospital Monday.

Police officers were also shot and injured during traffic stops in Sanibel, Florida, and Gladstone, Missouri, on Sunday night, but authorities have not suggested these were targeted attacks.

The shootings come less than five months after a black military veteran killed five white officers at a protest in Dallas — the deadliest day for American law enforcement since Sept. 11, 2001.

Race was a factor in the Dallas attack, but police have not said if race played a part in any of the attacks on Sunday. In San Antonio, police say the suspect is black and the officer was white. In St. Louis, the suspect was black. Police have not released the race of the officer shot.

McManus identified the San Antonio detective killed Sunday as Benjamin Marconi, 50, a 20-year veteran of the force. The search for a male suspect was still underway Monday. McManus said he doesn't believe the suspect has any relationship to the original motorist who was pulled over.

Surveillance video shows the suspect at San Antonio police headquarters about four hours before Marconi was shot.

The suspect asked a desk clerk a question but left before receiving an answer, said McManus, who declined to say what the man asked.

"I don't know why he was in headquarters. We have some ideas," he said.

St. Louis Police Chief Sam Dotson declined to name the 46-year-old officer on his force who was shot in the face Sunday evening, but said he is a married father of three who has been with the department for about 20 years.

"This officer was driving down the road and was ambushed by an individual

who pointed a gun at him from inside of his car and shot out the police officer's window," Dotson said during a news conference.

The suspect, identified as 19-year-old George P. Bush III, was wanted for questioning in recent violent crimes that included several robberies, a carjacking and perhaps a killing, Dotson said. He didn't elaborate. Police said Bush's weapon was recovered from the scene.

"We believe he knew he was good for those crimes and that we were looking for him," Dotson said. "That's why he aggressively attacked a police officer."

Police said Bush was later killed in a shootout with officers.

At least two other police officers were also shot in other cities Sunday night, but it wasn't clear whether the incidents were targeted attacks.

An officer with the Gladstone, Missouri, police department near Kansas City was shot, while the suspect was shot and killed. Gladstone police said Monday that the officer, whose name has not been released, is out of surgery and expected to recover.

Sanibel, Florida, officer Jarred Ciccone was shot in the shoulder during a traffic stop, and was treated for his injuries and released. Authorities said they arrested Jon Webster Hay, 49, about 90 minutes after the shooting. They said he was booked into jail on an attempted murder charge Monday once he was released from a hospital, where he was treated after being wounded during a standoff and shootout with officers.

Killings

CONTINUED FROM A1

Louisiana. The attacker, Micah Johnson, killed five officers and wounded nine others and two civilians before police killed him with a robot-delivered bomb when negotiations failed.

July 13, 2014: Jersey City, N.J., Officer Melvin Santiago was shot in the head by a man who had grabbed a security officer's gun, waited for police to arrive and then opened fire outside a drug store.

May 9, 2015: Two Hattiesburg, Miss., police officers, Benjamin Deen and Liquori Tate, were shot to death during a traffic stop. Three suspects were later arrested.

Dec. 20, 2014: Two New York City police officers, Wenjian Liu and Rafael Ramos, were ambushed and fatally shot while in their vehicle without warning by a man who approached the passenger window of their marked police car.

Sept. 12, 2014: A survivalist ambushed two Pennsylvania state troopers outside of a police barracks late at night, killing Cpl. Bryon Dickson and wounding Trooper Alex Douglass. Eric Frein led authorities on a 48-day manhunt through the heavily wooded Pocono Mountains before U.S. marshals captured him.

June 8, 2014: A man and a woman ambushed two police offi-

cers eating lunch at a Las Vegas pizza restaurant, fatally shooting them before fleeing to a nearby Walmart where they killed a third person and then themselves in an apparent suicide pact.

May 25, 2013: Bardstown, Ky., Officer Jason Ellis was fatally shot

in an ambush as he cleared debris from a parkway exit ramp.

Aug. 28, 2010: Two police officers were ambushed in a tiny Alaskan village of Hoonah before a SWAT team and dozens of other law officers surrounded a house where the gunman took refuge. Officers

Tony Wallace and Matt Tokuoka died after the shooting.

May 20, 2010: Two West Memphis, Ark., police officers were shot to death by two men wielding AK-47s along a busy Arkansas interstate. Sgt. Brandon Paudert and Officer Bill Evans died at a nearby hospital.

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