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School system is serious about safety



Knox County Superintendent of Schools Bob Thomas spoke at a school safety press conference held Thursday morning at South-Doyle Middle School.

By Pete Gawda

Knox County Schools mean business when it comes to the safety of students. That fact was apparent at a school safety press conference held Thursday morning at South-Doyle Middle School in preparation for the start of school on August 7.

Superintendent of Schools Bob Thomas, Knoxville Police Chief Davis Rausch, Chief of Administration Lee Tramel of the Knox County Sheriffs

Office and Gus Paidouais, chief of security for Knox County Schools all stressed student safety in their remarks.

"Safety is first and foremost" Thomas said, noting that the school system's about 350 buses travel 3 million miles a year serving 90 schools. He stated that school buses will have enhanced radio and GPS systems. He added that the buses also have video cameras for security and some carry teacher assistants.

The superintendent urged drivers to be slow and patient in school zones, especially around buses. He said motorists should stop well behind stopped school buses.

Chief Tramel also urged drivers to slow down, take their time and be patient.

Chief Rausch urged motorists to watch for student walking and waiting for buses. He said his officers would focus on speeding and reckless driving noting

Cont. on page 4

PARC disagrees with Police Internal Review

By Mike Steely
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"As far as the Committee, we have seven board members, five did not concur and two concur with the findings," said the executive director of the Police Advisory and Review Committee Thursday.

The finding by PARC is unusual in that the group doesn't support the report of Knoxville City Police's Internal Review involving an off-duty city officer who held a woman at gunpoint for five minutes in a Jefferson County encounter. Director Clarence Vaughn III read the vote aloud during the meeting.

Police Chief David Rausch told The Focus that ruling means the civilian review group will continue to investigate the incident and report back to the police department. The quarterly meeting of PARC took place in the small assembly room of the City-County Building with a large crowd attending that included the African American woman Tonya Jameson and her family. Jameson recalled the encounter before PARC, dressed much as she was during the encounter.

Chief Rausch defended the actions of Officer Matthew Janish, who is white, saying that the off-duty policeman held the lady until local police arrived and acted under the powers of any citizen. Officer Janish was not present at the meeting. The police chiefs said that he has apologized to Jameson as did the officer. The internal review report was made in June.

PARC has been accused of siding with the police department on prior incidents so Thursday's action broke precedent.

Jameson charges the incident resulted from racial profiling, which Chief Rausch said he

Alvin Frye gave 93 years to family, community



The late Alvin Frye with a Central High School cap. The owner and operator of Fountain City Exxon was a community leader and well-known icon of Fountain City. (Photo courtesy of Michael Grider)

"I had the privilege of attending events in recent years in which Mr. Frye was honored and I don't believe you could have found a more honest, hardworking man or better Christian any place. He was always kind to me and a long-time friend of my father. He was a great man, and this Country would be a much better place if we had more people like Alvin Frye."

— John Duncan Jr.
 U.S. Representative

By Mike Steely
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The city lost an icon, a leader and beloved senior citizen July 22 when Fountain City's Alvin Glenn Frye passed away at 93.

Alvin Frye was a Navy veteran of both WWI and the Korean War. He was an active member of the Fountain City Lions Club, Knoxville Rotary Club and owner and operator of Fountain City Exxon for more than 25 years but had other service stations in the area and served the community for more than 60 years. Frye was a member of the First Baptist Church of Fountain City, a member of Kappa Beta Temple and was a 32nd degree Mason.

Many people considered Alvin Frye the "Community Caretaker" and his hospitality at the service station and in the community was notable.

"Alvin cared about his community and his country, and always looked out for the least amongst us," said Knox County Mayor Tim Burchett. "During World War II, he served in some of the same areas my dad did and they saw some pretty fierce combat. He was a great example of the Greatest Generation, and he'll be missed. I'm asking folks to pray for his family and loved ones."

"If you like our air, you should try our gas" is what was printed next to the free air supply at Alvin's Exxon. Indeed, I filled up at Alvin's every time I could. It didn't take long to meet him when our family moved to Fountain City in 2005. He was always kind and sincere when we would chat by the pump. I witnessed his kindness when he allowed IDUs from people who couldn't afford the stations services up front. Godspeed to the great man of service we all knew and loved," said City Councilman Mark Camper, who represents Fountain City.

"Fountain City lost a true friend

Continued on page 3

Continued on page 2

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