

# Black claims sexual harassment

U.S. Congresswoman co-sponsors bill to bring harassment cases to light, away from taxpayer dollars

**By Xavier Smith**  
xsmith@lebanondemocrat.com

U.S. Congresswoman Diane Black, R-Tenn., said she encountered sexual harassment during her time in the Tennessee House of Representatives, and she would co-sponsor an anti-sexual harass-

ment bill.

Black detailed the sexual harassment Wednesday and said she encountered sexual harassment starting in 1998, and she learned about the inappropriate actions of her male colleagues in the legislature.

"One member always seemed to manage to get on the elevator with me and proceed to back up until I was against the wall, and he was pressed against me. I learned fairly quickly to cross my arms with my elbows out so they dug into his back," Black said.

"Another member rarely called me by name and addressed me only as 'Nurse Goodbody.' It was objectifying, disrespectful and highly inappropriate for any work setting."

Black said she called for the resignation of a state legislator

after she learned he had an affair with an intern.

She said the country is facing a cultural shift that allows men and women to bring their sexual harassment occurrences to light and

SEE **BLACK** ON PAGE **A3**

## Lebanon welcomes Chinese visitors

Food-energy-water systems research network stops by

Staff Reports

Mayor Bernie Ash greeted participants Saturday at the Lebanon Gasification Plant from the first U.S.-China Joint Symposium on the nexus of food, energy and water systems as part of the groups research challenge.

The food-energy-water systems research network is a joint project between the U.S. and China focused on bringing together interdisciplinary environmental areas to identify and solve future challenges.

The FEWS workshop, organized earlier this year by the University of Tennessee, has identified a broad range of general issues critical to the interactions of FEWS

SEE **VISIT** ON PAGE **A3**



Submitted to the Democrat

**Lebanon Mayor Bernie Ash welcomes Chinese visitors Saturday at the Lebanon Gasification Plant. The group featured participants from the first United States-China Joint Symposium on the Nexus of Food, Energy and Water Systems.**

## Early voting passes 2,600 in special election

Election Day approaches to fill state Senate seat

**By Jacob Smith**  
jsmith@lebanondemocrat.com

More than 2,600 Wilson County residents cast their vote through Tuesday in the Dec. 19 District 17 state Senate special election.

A total of 268 people cast their ballots Tuesday, including 149 and 117 voters at the Election Commission Office in Lebanon and the Mt. Juliet Community Center, respectively. On Dec. 4, there were 337 voters, which repre-

SEE **VOTE** ON PAGE **A3**

Connect with us socially. Get the e-Edition at lebanondemocrat.com.

Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Google+, Email icons.

## SHOPPING WITH SANTA



Jacob Smith • Lebanon Democrat

Members of the Wilson County Fraternal Order of Police Lodge No. 71 took 24 children shopping Tuesday night for its annual Christmas 4 Kids event.

# POLICE, COMMUNITY GIVE CHILDREN MERRY CHRISTMAS

Annual event lets 24 less fortunate children shop with police officers

**By Jacob Smith**  
jsmith@lebanondemocrat.com

Members of the Wilson County Fraternal Order of Police Lodge No. 71 held its annual Christmas 4 Kids event Tuesday night.

Members of the lodge took 24 less fortunate children shopping at Walmart with money raised through fundraisers and do-

nations.

The lodge had a budget of about \$150 per child, but as lodge president David Willmore said, they always spend a little more.

"I've been doing this for 17 years; we always go over," said Willmore. "You know, when you got a kid, and they're picking

clothes out, and they say, 'my mom needs a hat,' or, 'my mom needs gloves;' when you see those kids saying that, that means a lot, and you can tell those kids are really appreciative of what little that we're able to help."

SEE **GIVE** ON PAGE **A3**

## Mt. Juliet teen becomes face of Books-A-Million ad campaign

Big smiles for Mt. Juliet High School freshman

**By Jacob Smith**  
jsmith@lebanondemocrat.com

Anyone doing their holiday shopping at Books-A-Million in Mt. Juliet might just see a familiar face among the holiday advertisements.

Jaxton Jordan, a freshman at Mt. Juliet High School, was selected to be part of this year's Books-A-Million national Christmas ad campaign.

According to Jordan, a representative of the company contacted his agent and asked him to be a part of the campaign that was shot in Birmingham, Alabama earlier in the fall.

"My family and I drove down to Birmingham, and I got to miss a full day of school, which is always nice," said Jordan. "Especially when I'm doing something to make money, it makes me feel kind of grown up in a way."

This isn't Jordan's first taste of fame; he's been doing commercials and performing since he was 4 years old.

Jordan has appeared in several national, regional and local ads and commercials for companies like Toyota,



Photo courtesy of Tojuana Jordan

**Jaxton Jordan, a freshman at Mt. Juliet High School, is featured in a series of national advertisements for Books-A-Million. Jordan also previously appeared in several national, regional and local ads and commercials.**

SEE **TEEN** ON PAGE **A3**

### TODAY'S OBITS

Troy Beasley, Leslie Leah Bingham David Wayne Davis, Daniel Charles France, Nannie Sue Johnson, Doris Ann Crips Robinson and Gregory Dean Weddle.

Page A3

### YOU LIKE US!



Cynthia Truitt, of Lebanon, is The Democrat's Facebook Fan of the Day.

Follow facebook.com/lebanondemocrat

### IEWS.NOW.



Read about the time staff writer Jacob Smith got kicked out of Exit/In.

Page A4



**DICKEY'S BARBECUE PIT**  
est. 1941

©2017 Dickey's Barbecue Restaurants, Inc.

115 S. Hartmann Dr. • Lebanon • (615) 549-0033 • 11am-9pm

Cater Your  
**HOLIDAY PARTY**  
with our custom holiday catering offerings!

**10% OFF**  
**HOLIDAY MEATS & MEALS**

if ordered before 12/20/17

©2017 Dickey's Barbecue Restaurants, Inc. Not valid with any other discounts, offers or online orders. No cash value. Must present coupon at time of purchase to redeem. Limit 1 offer per person per visit. Valid at the Lebanon Dickey's location only. Expires 12/20/17.

# NEWS.NOW.

## Obituaries

### Troy Beasley

Memorial services for Mr. Beasley will be Saturday, Dec. 16, 2017 at 2 p.m. at Carr-Hellum Funeral Chapel.

Mr. Beasley, age 50, passed away Tuesday, Dec. 5, 2017 at his residence.

Survivors include his mother, Australia Beasley; son, Jordan Beasley; devoted sister, Yolanda (Gregory) Clark; and many other relatives and friends.

Arrangements are entrusted to Carr-Hellum Funeral Home at 129 Foxall St. in Hartsville, 615-374-3124.

### Nannie Sue Johnson

Graveside services for Mrs. Johnson will be held Friday, Dec. 15, 2017 at 2 p.m. in the Cedar Grove Cemetery with visitation from 11 a.m. until 1:45 p.m. in the Partlow Funeral Chapel.

Mrs. Johnson, age 91, of Lebanon, passed away Tuesday, Dec. 12, 2017.

She is preceded in death by her father, William Howard Jackson; mother, Mary Crutcher Jackson Johnson; husband, Robert Eugene "Doc" Johnson; sister, Willie Mae Harrison; and brother, William Howard Jackson.

She is survived by her sons, Larry (Jan) Johnson, Bobby (Cindy) Johnson; granddaughter, Cindy Barrett; grandson, Stevie (Tammy) Johnson; great-grandson, Chase (Katie Hale) Barrett; and great-granddaughter, Bailey Johnson.

Mrs. Johnson was retired from Bradley Candy Co. and was of the Presbyterian faith.

Pallbearers will be Stevie Johnson, Chase Barrett, Stanley Laine, Ronnie Bates, Floyd Dunnivant and Jack Armstrong.

Partlow Funeral Chapel is in charge of arrangements, 615-444-7007, obit line 615-444-7700, partlowchapel.com.

## Death Notices

### Leslie Leah Bingham

Ms. Bingham, 47, of Mt. Juliet, died Tuesday.

Visitation will be Friday from 4-8 p.m. and Saturday from noon until a celebration of life service at Sellars Funeral Home at Mt. Juliet. Interment will follow in Hermitage Memorial Gardens. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Sherry's Run.

### David Wayne Davis

Mr. Davis, 61, died Saturday.

Funeral services were Wednesday at 11:30 a.m. at Sellars Funeral Home in Lebanon. Interment followed at 2 p.m. in Middle Tennessee State Veterans Cemetery.

### Daniel Charles France

Mr. France, 63, of Old Hickory, died Tuesday at the Residence of Alive Hospice in Nashville.

Graveside services will be Tuesday in West Middletown Cemetery in West Middletown, Pennsylvania. Visitation will be Sunday from 1-4 p.m. at Bond Memorial Chapel and Tuesday from 10 a.m. until noon at Dunlope-Shorac Funeral Home at 215 Fernwood Road in Wintersville, Ohio.

### Gregory Dean Weddle

Mr. Weddle, 46, of Mt. Juliet, died Tuesday.

A celebration of life service will be Friday at 6 p.m. at Bond Memorial Chapel. Visitation will be Friday from 4-6 p.m. at the funeral home. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Mt. Juliet Christian Academy for the Sidney Weddle Tuition Fund.

### Doris Ann Crips Robinson

Funeral services for Mrs. Robinson will be Saturday, Dec. 16, 2017 at 1 p.m.

at Ligon & Bobo Funeral Home with Brother Dickie Johnson officiating. Interment will follow at Wilson County Memorial Gardens. Visitation will be Friday from 2-8 p.m. and Saturday after 11 a.m. at Ligon & Bobo.

Mrs. Robinson, age 78, of Lebanon, passed away Tuesday, Dec. 12, 2017 at Quality Care.

Born Feb. 9, 1939 in Wilson County, she is the daughter of the late John George Crips and Mildred Bingham Crips. She had worked at Walmart and Texas Boot. She was a member of Good Hope United Methodist Church.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by a son, Phillip Wayne Robinson.

She is survived by her husband of 60 years, Paul D. Robinson; three children, Pamela Faye (John Lee) Thompson, Beth (Timothy Burns) Robinson, John Paul (Alicia) Robinson; five grandchildren, Brandi (Daniel) Harp, Matthew (Alicia) Robinson, Paige (Jeffrey) Musser, Faith Robinson, Tiffany (Dallas) Garrett; and five great-grandchildren.

Memorials may be made to Good Hope United Methodist Church.

Ligon & Bobo Funeral Home in Lebanon is in charge of arrangements, 615-444-2142, ligonbobo.com.

## TEEN FROM PAGE A1

Russell Athletics, Dollar General and Hibbett Sporting Goods, among others.

"I've been in entertainment basically all my life. I enjoy it," said Jordan. "Each experience is different, and I get a chance to meet some really cool people."

Most recently, Jaxton was featured in the music video for Danielle Bradbery's song, "Sway." Bradbery was the winner of season four of "The Voice," and at the time was the youngest artist to have won. The song was the lead single for her second studio album.

Jordan said he enjoys the entertainment industry, but isn't sure yet if he'll pursue a career in it.

"I've had an opportunity to do some really neat things, but right now, football is my passion," said Jordan. "I have an opportunity to play for coach Trey Perry and the awesome football staff at Mt. Juliet High School, along with some other very talented athletes, so right now that's my focus."

Jordan's Books-A-Million advertisements can be seen at the Mt. Juliet Books-A-Million until the end of the year.

"It's always nice to see a project after it's done," said Jordan. "We don't always get to see the things I do, but the Books-A-Million ad is up in stores locally, so my family and I went by the store to see it in person. It was fun."

Commission office at 2013 E. Main St. in Lebanon and the Mt. Juliet Community Center at 1075 Charlie Daniels Pkwy. in Mt. Juliet.

Residents voting early or on election days should remember to bring valid photo identification issued by the Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security, as well as photo identification issued by Tennessee state government or the federal government, are acceptable even if they are expired. College student identification will not be accepted.

Visit [wilsoncountynotes.com](http://wilsoncountynotes.com) for more information.

## VOTE FROM PAGE A1

sented the biggest single-day voter turnout for the special election, as polling places opened in Watertown and at Lighthouse Church in Mt. Juliet.

The special election will fill a seat left vacant by Mae Beavers after she decided to resign her position to focus on her run for Tennessee governor.

Candidates for the seat include Democrat Mary Alice Carfi and Republican Mark Pody.

Early voting for the general election will run through Thursday from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. at the Wilson County Election

## GIVE FROM PAGE A1

According to Willmore, school resource officers talk with teachers at each school in Lebanon and Watertown to find out which children are in need. This year, students from every school in the two cities participated. Mt. Juliet police officers hold a similar event for children in Mt. Juliet.

Officers with the lodge took the children shopping Tuesday night with a focus on making sure they had enough clothes. Four Seasons Coach Leasing donated a charter bus and a driver to take the officers and children to Walmart.

"We talk to their guardians before we take them out," said Willmore.

"They usually tell us what the kids' needs are. If they need pants or shirts or gloves, it's usually pants. Sometimes we have kids wearing the same two to three pairs of pants everyday with holes in their shoes. That's really unacceptable. When we see that happening, we as a community need to step up and do something."

The lodge held a fundraiser golf tournament in October, where teams competed for a cash prize. Bates' Ford even donated

a truck for the event that was placed on the fourth hole. Anybody who got a hole-in-one would win the truck. Nobody did, so the truck was taken back to the lot.

The winning team at the event was the representatives of Bates' Ford, and they donated their prize money back to the Christmas 4 Kids program.

"The Wilson County Sheriff's Office had a team, and they got second, and they donated their money back, too," said Willmore. "It went on down the line like that, and every team that we had donated their money back to us."

The Music City Mopar Club donated \$1,000 for the event, and several other Wilson County citizens stepped up to help out, as well.

"Danny Tidwell donated \$500 just this morning," said Willmore. "We had an anonymous shopper - they didn't want their name mentioned - in Walmart while we were there donate \$100, and Jennifer Joyce and Joyce Jameson, the managers at Walmart, gave us two \$50 gift cards and, of course, goodie bags for all the kids. So we're super grateful to them."

## VISIT FROM PAGE A1

with environmental concerns. The visitors, who are members of academia, government agencies and private industry, have expertise covering food, energy, water, sociology and policy in their respective country.

A recent award from the U.S. National Science Foundation to faculty and

scientists at the University of Tennessee and the Oak Ridge National Laboratory supports a Research Coordination Network, designed to support FEWS. The grant will partner with the National Science Foundation and China awards to three teams of Chinese institutions, led by Nanjing University, South China University of Science and Technology and Remin

University of China, respectively, to develop research priorities transcending U.S. and Chinese grand challenges.

Frank Löffler directs the effort. Löffler is a University of Tennessee-Oak Ridge National Laboratory Governor's Chair professor for University of Tennessee's departments of microbiology, among other titles.

# Journey to Bethlehem nativity scene to open this weekend

By Jacob Smith  
[jsmith@lebanondemocrat.com](mailto:jsmith@lebanondemocrat.com)

The Journey to Bethlehem live nativity scene will be open to the public Friday and Saturday from 7-9 p.m. at Lebanon Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

The free community drive-through event will take place at the church at the corner of Castle Heights Avenue and Leeville Pike in Lebanon. "If you have lived in Lebanon for any length of time and love the celebration of

Christmas, you are probably familiar with the event named Journey to Bethlehem," said Beth Petty, an organizer. "Journey to Bethlehem is a ministry of the Lebanon Cumberland Presbyterian Church that had its beginnings more than 40 years ago. It is a drive-through live nativity in which you are invited to take time from the hustle and bustle of the holiday season and reflect on the true meaning of Christmas. Each year, the congregation comes together to tell

the story of Christmas by displaying 10 scenes that depict the events surrounding the birth of Jesus."

The event invites visitors to drive through a nativity scene that features live actors and animals, as well. In the past, oxen, donkeys and even camels were featured.

A narration of the nativity scene will be available to visitors who tune their car's radio to 91.9 FM.

For more information, call 615-444-7453 or visit [lebanoncpchurch.org](http://lebanoncpchurch.org).



Democrat File Photo

The annual live drive-through nativity scene will be Friday and Saturday from 7-9 p.m. at Lebanon Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

## BLACK FROM PAGE A1

hold people responsible for their actions.

"There is no place in the public or private sector for sexual harassment or assault. Period. This should be intolerable in the House and the Senate, whether it's elected officials or their staff. Congress should be a place of safety for everyone working here and the secrecy of this behavior has gone on far too long," Black said.

Congress' Office of Compliance has paid nearly \$20 million in the past 20 years in various legal settlements, including discrimination and sexual harassment, according to Black.

"Using taxpayer dollars to settle those claims behind closed doors is despicable and serves to protect perpetrators while

silencing victims," said Black, who was one of several legislators who did not know about the payments.

"When I found out about these funds and payouts, I was extremely disturbed and joined my House colleagues in a bipartisan effort to bring transparency to allegations of sexual misconduct occurring on Capitol Hill," she said.

Black cosponsored the Congressional Accountability and Hush Fund Elimination Act, which would prohibit the future use of tax dollars to pay settlements in discrimination and sexual harassment cases.

"It publicly exposes perpetrators and requires them to reimburse taxpayers with interest for the funds they have used to settle claims," Black said.

Currently, victims look-

ing to file harassment complaints have a 180-day window to file a report, followed by up to 30 days of counseling and another 30 days of mediation. Their office is then notified and a non-disclosure agreement is signed, a lawyer is provided by Congress for the accused, and the victim must provide his or her own attorney.

Black called the process "arduous" and "unfair." She said the bill would eliminate non-disclosure agreements and allow victims to make public statements.

"Full transparency is the only way to allow healing for victims and justice for perpetrators. The public should know where tax dollars have been directed, while allowing victims the opportunity to come forward without fear of retribution," Black said.

# Lebanon Publishing

## THE GREAT HOLIDAY

Share the sweepstakes with your friends and family on social media to receive an additional entry in the sweepstakes

Enter for your chance to WIN A \$100 Country Casserole Gift Card for the Holidays!

14825 Lebanon Rd, Old Hickory, TN 37138  
(615) 754-2701  
<https://www.facebook.com/countrycasseroles/>

ENTER AT  
[LebanonDemocrat.secondstreetapp.com/Great-Holiday-Giveaway-Sweepstakes](http://LebanonDemocrat.secondstreetapp.com/Great-Holiday-Giveaway-Sweepstakes)