

Issues Programs List  
Quarterly Issues Programs List for WEPG  
Jan. 1 – March 31, 2018  
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Section I. Issues

The station has identified the following issues as significant issues facing our community in this quarter:

**A. CRIME/LAW COVERAGE:**

January 1- New school zone cell phone law goes into effect

January 16 - Jasper man identified as murder victim in overnight shooting Stevenson, Alabama

January 23 - Local LEOs close Whitwell schools while fugitive on the loose

February 9-Local librarian arrested for stolen funds

**B. WEATHER:**

January 6 -Winter precipitation possible with school closing looming in future

January 15-Sequatchie Valley expecting a snowy Tuesday; Travel could be trecherous

Feb. 28 - Severe Weather Awareness Week in Tennessee marks the start of tornado season

March 22 – Nation Weather Service finds at least 9 tornado tracks in neighboring areas after Monday's storms

**C. NATURAL DIASTERS/LOCAL RESPONSE TO AREAS AFFECTED:**

January 25 - Recent bitter cold temps bad for plumbing; good for fishing season

**D. HEALTHCARE:** February 8 -Marion Co Schools closed for flu-related issues

**E. SCHOOL NEWS COUNTY AND STATE WIDE:**

January 14 – 2 locals inducted into the football Hall of Fame – Vic Grider and Ken Colquette

February 17 – Whitwell High teacher arrested on statutory rape charges

March 7 – Marion Co High student arrested following threat made against school

March 20 – Gov. Haslam proposes \$30 million for school safety, among other improvements

## **Section II responsive programs**

The station has broadcast programming dealing with each of the above referenced issues. Programming dealing with each issue is set out below:

A: January 1, 2018 - A new state law that makes it illegal for drivers to talk on a hand held cell phone (with device in hand) in an active school zone went into effect. Local LEOs called in and explained how this would work regarding local school zones and encouraged listeners to call in with any questions. a new law went into effect that says when school zone signs are flashing you cannot use your cell phone in the school zone unless it is in hands-free mode. Drivers under the age of 18 are not allowed to use phones at all in school zones even if it is in hands-free mode. If you break that law it is a Class C misdemeanor. You could be forced to pay up to a \$50 fine. Local LEOs will be in house to answer questions in an upcoming event.

January 16 - Reports say Stevenson Police and the Jackson County Sheriff's Department responded to a call of shots fired around 1:30 AM CST on Tuesday morning at a Sharon Drive home. Upon arrival, officers and deputies found the body of 38-year-old Joshua Todd Smith of Jasper inside the home. Authorities arrested 26-year-old Christopher Kenneth McCallie of Stevenson and charged with murder. Listeners encouraged to call 911 at any time unusual things happen in their communities.

January 23 – Local LEOs closed Whitwell schools while they continued the search for Dwayne Halfacre from Rutherford County who still remained at large in the area. Halfacre had stolen one LEO vehicle, wrecked it and then fled of foot thru the woods where he remained hidden from law officers. Since the three schools were in the vicinity of all the occurrences all listeners were updated on the events and advised to remain in doors, with secured doors and to call 911 immediately if anything unsafe occurred.

Feb. 9 - An investigation by the Tennessee Comptroller's Office resulted in the indictment of Marilyn Frazier, the director of the Orena Humphreys Public Library in Whitwell. Comptroller investigators determined that at least \$3,680.37 went missing from the library from January 2016 through June 2017. Listeners held discussion on increasing local area officials taking monies allocated for other areas.

B: January 6 – Listeners advised precipitation would be moving in over the weekend thru early Monday (1/8) with temperatures at freezing or below. Above 3000 ft snow and freezing air would be occurring. Encouraged to take precautions now and anyone that might need assistance to call the local police, fire departments and the radio station.

January 15 – Local weather report was given numerous times to warn local listeners of impending severe weather in their area. Broadcast was the following information: Snow still in the forecast for Tuesday as an Arctic cold front pushes through the area. With this system, there will be just enough moisture present for snow to develop. Snow has already developed across western and middle Tennessee tonight. This band of snow is forecast to slowly progress south and east toward the Sequatchie Valley overnight and into the day on Tuesday. Snow will start from northwest to southeast between 8am and 11am CST. Forecast guidance all agree that this event will be a quick event and moisture does appear limited at this time. Around an inch of snow will be common across the area, however, localized locations in the valley and higher elevations may end up with 2 inches by the time the snow ends roughly around 6pm CST. The station continued to broadcast this as well as talk about it during the morning talk show with listeners calling to to “remember” days of years past.

Feb 28 - The following details were aired for the upcoming severe weather. February 25th – March 3rd is Tennessee Severe Weather Week, when residents should take time to review their storm knowledge and make sure they are prepared for severe weather should it impact them. . Details were covered daily on the proper procedures for weather in our area.

March 22 – Broadcasting of the area severe weather -The U.S. National Weather Service office in Huntsville, Alabama, which is responsible for issuing warnings and forecasts for North Central Alabama along with three Tennessee counties — Lincoln, Moore, and Franklin County (which sits directly west of Marion County) — has stayed busy since the storms ceased on Monday night. They've confirmed multiple tornadoes across their warning area in Alabama, including one along Hwy. 65 in the Francisco community in far northwest Jackson County. This was a small or weak tornado and more information is expected from the NWS soon. Others include an EF-1 in Russellville, EF-1 in

Morgan County near Hartselle, EF-1 near Hazel Green in Madison County, EF-2 in Marshall County, two EF-1's in Lawrence County, and an EF-0 in Colbert County. One of their survey teams found evidence that a small/weak tornado occurred east of Decherd, Tenn. in Franklin County during the storms. More information is pending regarding that twister at this time.

C: January 25- Recent bitter cold temperatures across the Tennessee Valley may cause some people to worry about their plumbing, but for recreational boaters and swimmers who battle water weeds in area lakes, the deep freeze has been a good thing. "Mother Nature is the best aquatic plant management tool we have," says Brett Hartis, PhD, with TVA. Local fishermen called in and explained for our area just what the cold did for the upcoming fishing season.

D. February 8 – Director of Schools of Marion County, Mark Griffith, made public announcements the district would suspend school for Friday, 2/9 and Monday, 2/12 in effort to slow spread of flu. Griffith offered on air a PSA that the district would continue to monitor the situation and encouraged parents to adhere to common sense health protocol and seek medical attention if necessary as well as reminded parents to keep child home with a fever for 24 hrs AFTER the fever had broken and remained normal. Radio announced school closures throughout the day and aired on TV cable channels as well.

E: January 14 – Area coaches were inducted into the football Hall of Fame featuring 2 local coaches, Grider, Colquette. Legendary high school football coaches Vic Grider (South Pittsburg) and Ken Colquette (Marion County) won a combined eight state high school championships and lead the 17 member class of 2018 for the Greater Chattanooga Sports Hall of Fame. The induction dinner was Monday February 26 at 6:30 p.m. at the Chattanooga Convention Center. Listeners called in giving their thoughts and congrats to both men.

Feb 17 - A Whitwell High School teacher and local pastor was arrested on Friday night for statutory rape. Marion County Sheriff Ronnie "Bo" Burnett confirms that teacher Joseph "Joey" Smith was arrested following multiple statements given to the department alleging Smith was involved in a sexual relationship with a 17-year-old student. Smith was taken into custody on charges of statutory rape by an authority figure, which is a Class B felony in Tennessee, according to the District Attorney's office. Smith, a 2000 graduate of Whitwell High, had been serving as a CTE (career tech) instructor for the structural systems (carpentry) program at the school and was also the head baseball coach for Whitwell Middle School. He has also served as the pastor of Valley View Baptist Church and Fairview Union Church in the Whitwell area in recent years.

Listeners called in and discussed in depth the safety of our children and how many were considering home schooling due to the increasing rise of school problems, locally as well as state and nation wide.

March 7 - A student at Marion County High School was arrested after making threats against the school on Wednesday. Officials say the incident, which happened during school hours, was addressed immediately by school administration who followed pre-planned protocol for these situations. A school resource officer (SRO) with the Marion County Sheriff's Department took the student, a minor, into custody. Director of Schools, Dr. Mark Griffith, says the student has been expelled for 365 days, pending a disciplinary hearing, which is required as part of students' due process. The threat and resulting arrest at MCHS comes just weeks after a threat to "shoot up" the school at South Pittsburg High School late last month by a 17-year-old student. The student involved in that incident was also taken into juvenile custody and expelled for 365 days following a disciplinary hearing.