

# The Daily Edition

50¢

Serving Loudon, Monroe and Surrounding Counties

Friday, November 16, 2018

## Public Intoxication At Wal-Mart



Marcus Davis

Robert Davis see PI pg. 2

## Man Charged With Second Aggravated Assault In Less Than A Month



Shane Chaney

see Assault pg. 3

## Fyre Festival Founder Sentenced Investors and Customers Lost More Than \$26 Million to Repeat Fraudster

The slick, online video promised pure luxury—it showed attractive young people frolicking on the beach near translucent Caribbean waters and partying at exclusive concerts on a private island. It touted “an immersive music experience” over “two transfor-

mative weekends” with high-end accommodations and food.

Instead, according to numerous social media posts and news media reports, the partygoers arrived in The Exumas, Bahamas, last April to find tents, cancelled

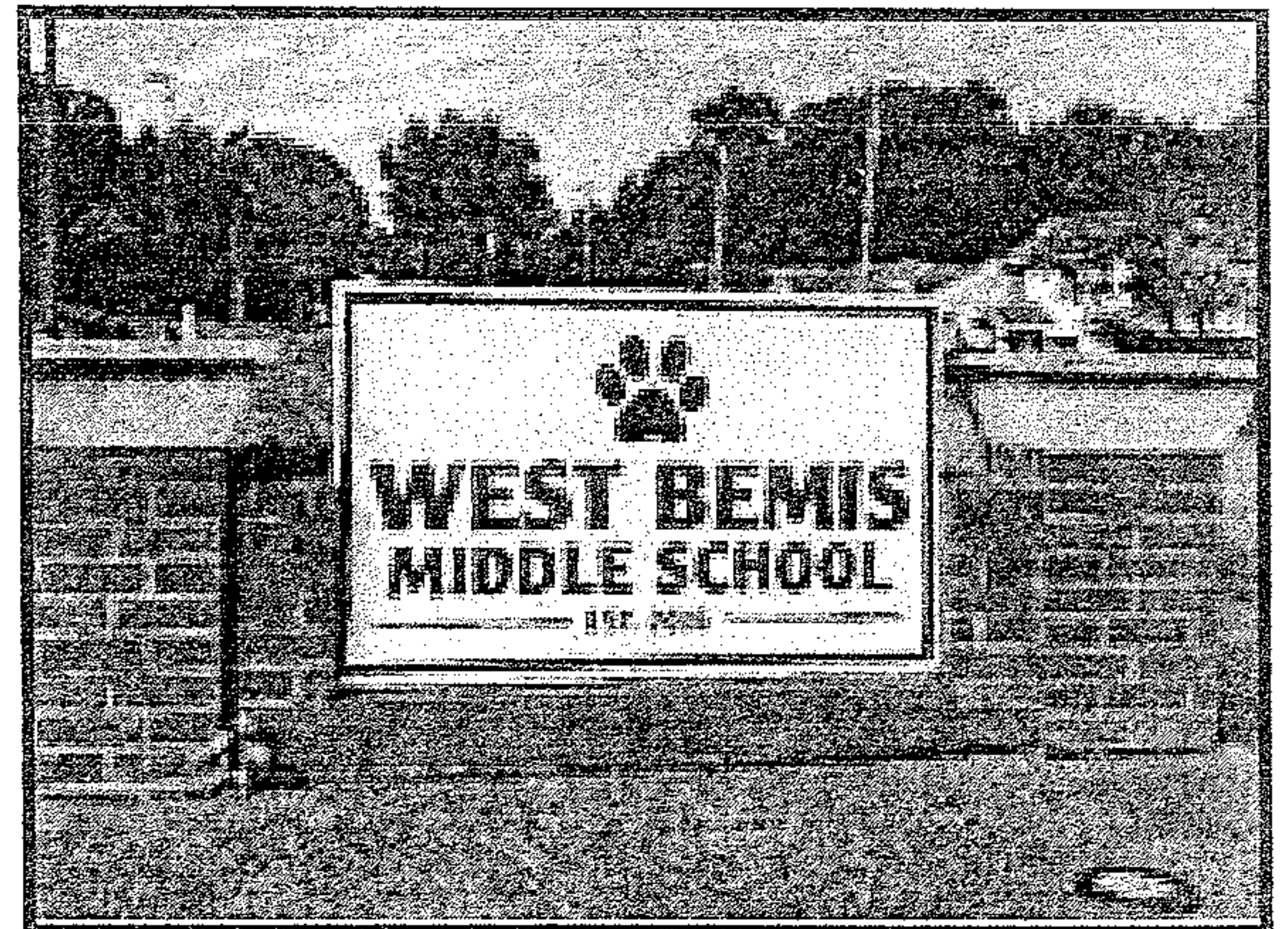
(see FBI pg. 4)

## Reputed Member Of Mafia Insane Vice Lords Convicted For Herion Distribution

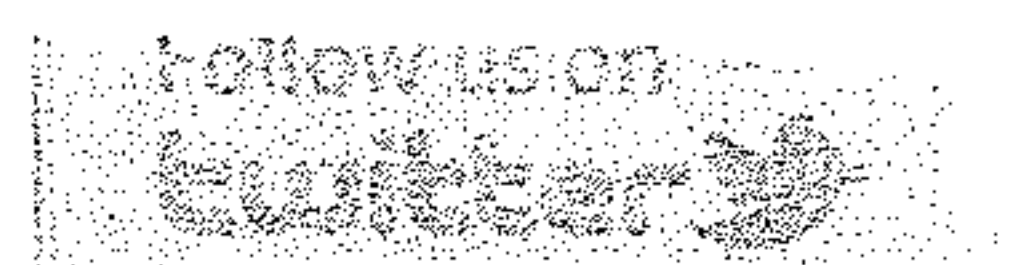
On November 13, 2018, after a five-day jury trial before the Honorable Curtis L. Collier, Senior U.S. District Judge, James Silas, 50, of the Chicago suburb of Dolton, Illinois, was convicted of

see Mafia pg. 3

## Former Middle School Bookkeeper Indicted for Theft At least \$15,908 Stolen from West Bemis Middle School.



See School P.5



### Verse of the Day

Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit. — 1 Peter 3:18

### Wazzup

Check out Ethan Vincil at Calhoun's on Friday At 7:00pm!!

### Weather

Today: Cloudy . High of 53F.

Tonight: Cloudy. Low of

31F.

Saturday: Cloudy. High of 59F.

Saturday Night: Clearing. Low of 37F.

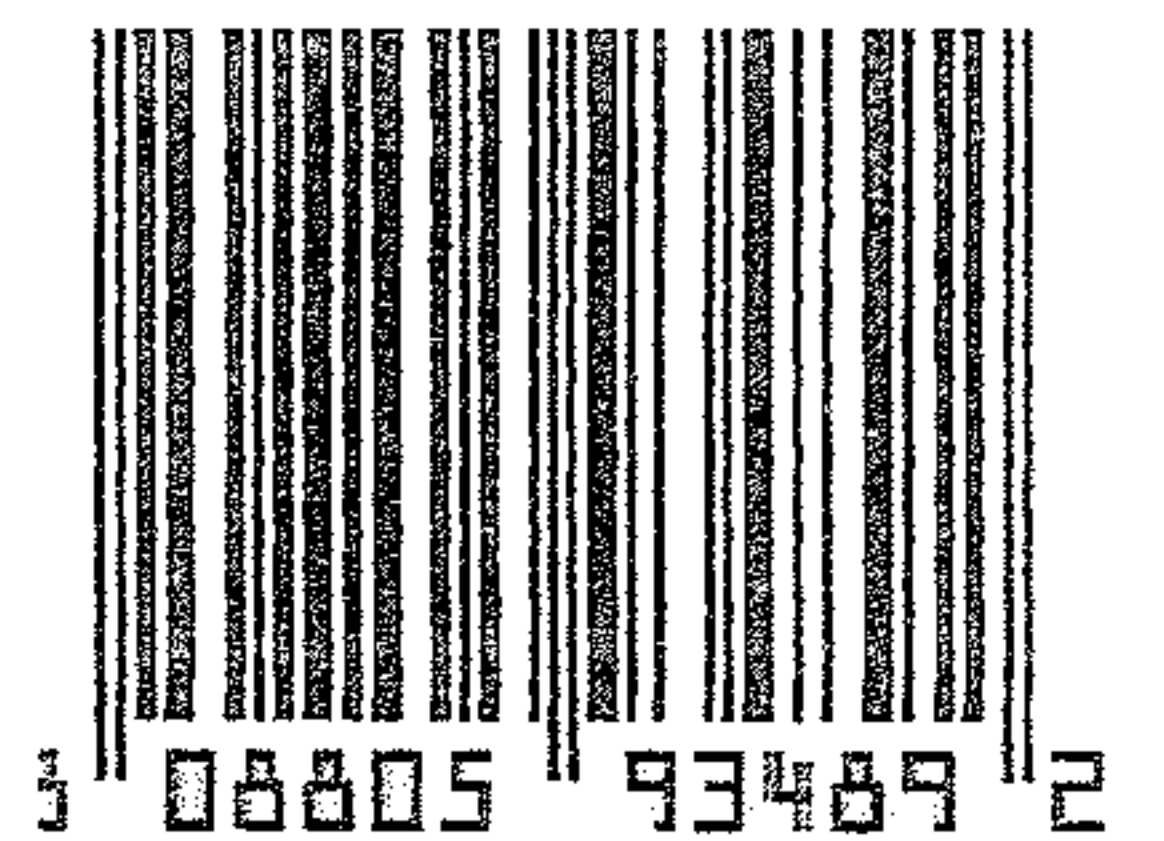
### Horoscopes

Scorpio 10/23-11/21

Your confidence is high today, and your creativity is at a peak. Nevertheless,

you're not inclined to put your skills to work for an employer when you could enhance your domestic life instead. However, you may be away from home for most of the day, so do whatever you can to improve your surroundings wherever

(Continued on page 6)



**PI**  
 Marcus Davis, 36, N B Street Lenoir City, was charged with Mfg/Del/Sale or Poss. Of Meth, and Poss. Of Drug Para.  
 Robert Davis, 61, Morganton Road Greenback, was charged with Mfg/Del/Sale or Poss. of Meth, and

Poss. Of Drug Para. Officer S. Runyan LCPD, was dispatched to Walmart to a public intoxication call. A employee stated 3 males were leaving Walmart and getting into a maroon vehicle sitting in front of the lawn and garden. Upon arriving to the area Officer

made contact with the subjects sitting inside the vehicle. During questioning right seat passenger Marcus Davis was seen concealing an unknown item and was removed from the

vehicle for a pat down of weapons. As he stepped out of the vehicle he then was seen dropping a clear plastic baggie down at his feet, which later field test-

See PI ctd to pg. 3

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PI ctd from Pg.1

ed positive for methamphetamine. Driver Robert Davis was removed at this time and during pat down search was found to have approx..7 grams of a crystal like substance in a clear bag located in a cigarette pack believed to be meth-

amphetamine. A search of the vehicle Officer recovered over 10 needles, 2 cut coke cans with unknown white substance on them, filters used with needles to filter narcotics, and several caps, all considered to be drug para. Both were placed under arrest.

## Assault

Shane Chaney, 32, West 1st Ave Lenoir City, was charged with Aggravated Assault. Officer Espinoza was dispatched to Athens Community Bank in regards to a possible domestic assault. Officer made contact with the victim who stated she was on her way to pick up Shane Chaney at the Bank parking lot. When victim made contact with Chaney she noticed his demeanor was unusual. Victim began to question Chaney about why he was acting strange. Chaney admitted he had some alcoholic beverages throughout the day. Both parties began to argue about Chaney's drinking problem. Victim stated during the argument Chaney grabbed her by the throat and attempted to hit her, before Chaney could hit victim she was able to run to her vehicle. While in the vehicle Chaney did struck and broke the passenger side rear view mirror. During the investigation it was discovered that victim did have contusions on her neck. Chaney was placed under arrest.

enhancement filed by the United States, Silas faces a statutory mandatory minimum of 20 years to life in prison, to be followed by no fewer than 10 years of supervision by U.S. Probation. He also faces a fine of up to \$20,000,000.

Witnesses at trial testified that Silas, who is reputed to be a member of the nationwide street gang Mafia Insane Vice Lords and known by the moniker "the Prince," served as a multi-kilogram source of supply to heroin distributors and fellow gang members based in Chattanooga, Tennessee; Knoxville, Tennessee; Atlanta, Georgia; and elsewhere. Beginning in 2016, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) conducted a series of court-authorized wiretaps on a number telephones belonging to gang members as a component of the large-scale investigation. Through these wiretaps, they discovered the involvement of Silas in this interstate conspiracy. Silas was arrested in Illinois and brought to the Eastern District of Tennessee for trial.

This investigation was conducted by the DEA, in conjunction with the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office, and with the assistance of local and federal law enforcement agencies in the Chicago area. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Kyle Wilson and Scott Winne represented the United States at trial. Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael Porter indicted the case and handled pre-trial matters.

## Mafia

conspiring to distribute one kilogram or more of heroin.

Sentencing is set for 2:00 p.m., April 24, 2019 in U.S. District Court in Chattanooga. Based on a prior drug conviction and a corresponding notice of

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# FBI

concerts, and cheese sandwiches in lieu of gourmet food. Many attendees had paid thousands of dollars for their tickets.

"It was heavily marketed on social media by celebrities and via word of mouth. The festival targeted people in their 20s and 30s, so a lot of people on social media knew about it," said Special Agent Matthew Taylor, who oversaw the investigation out of the FBI's New York Field Office.

Fyre Festival founder William "Billy" McFarland's company, Fyre Media, started a year earlier with an app that was designed to book celebrities for special events. He got the idea after meeting and striking up a friendship with a celebrity in the music industry.

The business appeared to be an opportunity to capture a customer base of wealthy young people. McFarland's sales

pitch was strong, and at least 80 investors ponied up more than \$24 million to be a part of it.

"McFarland was a skilled, believable salesman. He represented Fyre Media as very profitable to potential investors to draw them in, which was a lie," Taylor said. "The sales pitch ultimately worked, and he convinced people to invest in what they thought was a lucrative opportunity."

But after the festival was cancelled, investors and investigators soon learned that McFarland, 26, had used various fraudulent tactics to lure in investors. He used fake financial statements about the company and told his investors that a venture capital firm would be investing in Fyre Media. In fact, the venture capital firm had not agreed to invest, because the firm had not vetted the documents McFarland provided to them.

(Those documents ultimately turned out to be fraudulent.) Fyre Media made only a small fraction of the money—and completed few of the celebrity bookings for the Fyre Festival—that McFarland had claimed to his investors.

"The sales pitch ultimately worked, and he convinced people to invest in what they thought was a lucrative opportunity."

Matthew Taylor, special agent, FBI New York

McFarland also told investors he had purchased event cancellation insurance for the Fyre Festival so they could recoup their investment if the festival did not work out as planned. In actuality, he never bought the insurance, and the investors lost their money.

After the FBI learned of the potential fraud and conducted a subsequent investigation, McFarland was

arrested and charged with wire fraud last year. Yet, after pleading guilty to crimes related to Fyre Media and the Fyre Festival and awaiting sentencing, McFarland began a new but similar fraud scheme to continue supporting his own lavish lifestyle, which included high-end clubs, travel, and other luxuries. McFarland used another company, NYC VIP Access, to claim to procure tickets for exclusive sporting events, fashion galas, music festivals, and award shows. Given the notoriety of the Fyre Festival, he hid his involvement in the company though his employees, but he still collected the proceeds. For nearly a year, the company received approximately \$150,000 from 30 victims, who either never received the tickets they were promised or received tickets different from what they paid for.

"McFarland did not have access to the tickets he said he had access to," Taylor said. "Although this fraud was brazen, it's not unusual to see recidivism among fraudsters." In March, McFarland pleaded guilty to wire fraud related to his original crimes, and in July, he pleaded guilty to an additional wire fraud charge, bank fraud, and false statements stemming from his subsequent scheme. On October 11, he was sentenced to six years in prison. As part of his guilty pleas, McFarland agreed to forfeit \$26 million in ill-gotten gains. Money that can be recovered through the asset forfeiture process will be returned to victims, if possible, though that will likely be a small portion of what was lost.

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## School

An investigation by the Tennessee Comptroller's Office, in cooperation with the Jackson Police Department, has resulted in the indictment of Judy Hale, the former bookkeeper at West Bemis Middle School in Jackson.

The investigation began after Jackson-Madison County School District officials reported missing deposits to the Comptroller's Office and Jackson Police.

Investigators determined that Hale stole at least \$15,908 between July 2017 and October 2017. She failed to deposit cash from candy, T-shirt, cookie dough, and discount card fundraisers. Instead, she kept the money for her personal benefit.

Investigators were unable to account for an additional \$6,475 that was collected from fundraising activities but not deposited. Hale did not prepare and keep detailed records of these collections, and investigators were not able to definitively determine who was responsible for this shortfall.

Additionally, Hale used a school credit card to make unauthorized personal purchases including

pet supplies, fuel, tires, hair dye, and grocery items. She also improperly utilized the school's tax-exempt status to avoid sales taxes on purchases. She failed to pay the balance of the card on time, which resulted in a large unpaid balance, interest, and late fees.

Judy Hale was suspended without pay and subsequently retired from the Jackson-Madison County School System effective October 7, 2017. She was indicted by the Madison County Grand Jury on October 29, 2018 for one count of theft over \$10,000.

"School system officials must ensure that bookkeepers and cashiers follow established policies to separate money handling responsibilities," said Comptroller Justin P. Wilson. "Reconciling credit card statements and depositing collections within three days also help avoid fraudulent activity."

### The Good News

The Rev. Dr. Julius McCarter  
Scripture: Mark 13:1-8

The point of this reading from Mark is not to predict the precise timing of the end of the world, even though some

might be tempted to read it as such. This passage is not so much about what is to come, but about what is actually happening around Jesus' disciples.

During the 2,000 years since the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the temple has been destroyed and the Roman Empire has fallen. There have been earthquakes and famines, but humanity continues to thrive upon the earth. Jesus' words invite us then to think not so much about rulers and kingdoms on earth, but about the kingdom of God. The stone structures of humanity may tumble and fall, but God will always love and care for us. God will not abandon us. We are called to live in faith and to trust in the word of promise God has bestowed upon us -- the gift of grace given to us through Jesus Christ.

Prayer: Lord, the world may seem to be coming to an end

because of the carelessness of humanity, but we will hold fast to your covenants and the gift of grace given to us, through your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

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