

Todd County Standard

TRENTON ARTS

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AMY DYE MURDER CASE

Social services coverup?

Records show scope of investigation was changed to avoid public scrutiny

BY RYAN CRAIG
TODD COUNTY STANDARD

The day after the Todd County Standard asked for records pertaining to a murdered child under the care of the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, social workers were changing the scope of the state's investigation so it wouldn't have to divulge any files under Open Record laws.

According to records the Standard obtained last week after winning a lawsuit for the Cabinet's

files concerning Amy Dye, a 9-year-old girl found murdered near Trenton Feb. 4, 2011, social workers had a conversation to clarify whether the Cabinet's investigation was a "fatality investigation."



Amy Dye

Records now show that the cabinet made a choice within a few days of Amy Dye's death and a day after the Standard filed an open records request to declare the scope of the investigation in a way that would

keep the files from becoming public. In a Feb. 16, 2011 email with another cabinet employee, local social worker Sarah M. Gill recorded in the official files that there was a request for open records.

"If it had been a fatality investigation, then records would have to be released," the email to Gill from another employee said. "Since it is not a fatality investigation, then they don't have to release them. They did not say who had requested them."

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Lawmaker wants General Assembly to make social services more open

BY RYAN CRAIG
TODD COUNTY STANDARD

A state representative from Hopkinsville said he wants the Kentucky General Assembly to take a long, hard look at the Cabinet for Health and Family Services and especially at legislation that will help make it more transparent.



Tilley

In response to questions by a Hopkinsville radio station (WHOP) about the Amy Dye murder case, Rep. John Tilley, D-Hopkinsville, said it was a "systematic failure" by the cabinet that kept

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HONORING THOSE WHO SERVED



Kelly Shanks / Standard

The medals of the late Sgt. 1st Class James William Gibson (above) are on display in the gym of Todd County Central High School prior to being presented to Gibson's family at the school's annual Veterans Day program. An American flag (below) is held by an audience member watching the program.

Brothers accept medals for veteran who died on furlough in 1951

BY TONYA S. GRACE
TODD COUNTY STANDARD

Jimmy Shemwell posed for pictures with the Gibson brothers in the school gym.

Cameras clicked as family members recorded the moment for posterity.

In their midst were the medals held aloft — seven medals awarded posthumously to the deceased brother of Doug, Bobby Lee, Lonnie and Wayne Gibson.

Sgt. 1st Class James William Gibson of Elkton died in 1951 in an automobile accident while home on furlough from his service in the Korean War, having never received the medals recognizing his military service.

This past Friday, his brothers accepted them for him.

The medals were presented to the four men during Todd County Central High School's annual Veterans Day Program in the school gym.

"It's unbelievable," said Doug Gibson, who was the one to originally approach Shemwell, the president of the Todd



County Veterans Affairs Committee, several months ago about getting the medals for which his brother was eligible. Older brother James had been special to him. Gibson said he came across papers containing information about the medals

after his mother's death and wanted to see about obtaining them.

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Todd man found guilty of kidnapping; sentenced to 15 years

BY TONYA S. GRACE
and CATHERINE DARNELL
TODD COUNTY STANDARD

A Todd County man was found guilty and sentenced to 15 years in prison for the kidnapping earlier this year of Demika Peterson, a Trenton resident who was living at the Royal Arms Apartments in Elkton at the time of the kidnapping.

The trial of Larry Burnette, Peterson's former boyfriend, took place on Nov. 7 and 9 in Todd County Circuit Court, with



Burnette

jurors finding him guilty of four counts, including the kidnapping charge as well as stalking in the first degree, wanton endangerment in the first degree and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon.

The jury fixed his punishment at 15 years for the kidnapping and five years each for the stalking, wanton endangerment and

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Guthrie Council OKs alcohol sales ordinance

BY CATHERINE DARNELL
TODD COUNTY STANDARD

At a special-called meeting last week at Guthrie City Hall, the Guthrie City Council passed on first reading several important pieces of business.

The first was 2011-9, the Ordinance Regulating the Sale of Alcoholic Beverages Within the City of Guthrie, which was read in summary form, the entire ordinance

being several pages longer. Among other items approved on first reading were fees for licenses.

Distilled spirits and wine retail package license, per annum, \$600; Distilled spirits and wine special temporary liquor license per event, \$100; special temporary wine license per event, \$50; special private club license, \$300; Distilled spirits and wine special Sunday retail

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Audit, financial report: Schools need to be 'more strategic'

BY MELONY SEMBERGER
TODD COUNTY STANDARD

An auditor's report for fiscal year 2011 showed Todd County Schools had a decrease in net assets and an increase in expenses. Meanwhile, a financial report for the month of October indicated the district continues to spend more than what it receives in funding.

School board Chairman Matt Perry expressed his concerns, especially when all four schools in the system produced little gains in the latest cycle of state testing and requests are being made for additional programs and staff.

"Are these programs working?" Perry asked district personnel and school principals during the

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