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Incident leaves principal in limbo

By Charles Mattox
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An incident Tuesday afternoon, Feb. 10, which occurred immediately after school let out has resulted in Nicholas County High School Principal Joe Orazen, "not serving as principal of Nicholas County High School," according to a statement released through the school's administration.

No one is commenting when, or even if, Orazen will return to his job, or if criminal charges will be brought against him or anyone else involved in the incident. School officials have made no statement of substance on the record regarding the incident with the exception of stating that Orazen is on administrative leave.

Superintendent of Nicholas County Schools Greg Reid declined to comment

on the employment status of Orazen or answer questions related to the incident. He referred all inquiries through Hank Bond, Director of the Office of Public Relations and Communications for the school district.

Bond released the following statement.

"Respecting the principles of due process, it is only possible to state at this time Mr. Joe Orazen is not serving as principal of Nicholas County High School," Bond wrote in a Feb. 13 press release. "Respecting those principals the district cannot confirm nor deny any information surrounding this issue or answer questions concerning this in any way, until due process has completely run its course."

Bond later confirmed that Orazen was on administrative leave.

According to Carlisle Chief of Police William Denton,

Officer Darrell Layne was called to the school at approximately 3:14 Feb. 10, and took a male juvenile from school grounds to the Nicholas County Hospital's emergency room.

Over two hours later, Layne left the emergency room and the juvenile was released into the custody of his parents/legal guardians, according to Denton and the Carlisle dispatch log.

"It is my understanding that Officer Layne continues to investigate the incident," Denton said Monday morning.

Televised reports on two Lexington news stations featured interviews with a juvenile male, who alleged in both interviews that Orazen assaulted him over a dispute regarding a cell phone.

Members of the Nicholas County School Board met in open session Monday night Feb. 16.

Board members discussed eight items listed on the agenda.

There was no discussion by any board member or other school supervisors present regarding the incident or action taken against Orazen, who was present for the meeting, sitting in the front row.

Orazen declined comment except when asked if he had resigned.

"Absolutely not," he said. "Absolutely not."

The Mercury received several calls Tuesday regarding a perceived breakdown in discipline since Orazen's absence.

"There were three fights today," one caller, who has a family member teaching at the high school, said. "The kids are running wild and think they have control of the school now. When one teacher told a group of students to behave they replied

"we don't have to anymore, Orazen is gone" and so now I'm afraid for my loved one to even teach at the school. I'm scared for the safety of

the teachers because no one can control the kids and the staff now thinks if they defend themselves they will be fired."



Photo Submitted

NCHS Principal Joe Orazen is currently on administrative leave following an incident at the high school Feb. 10.

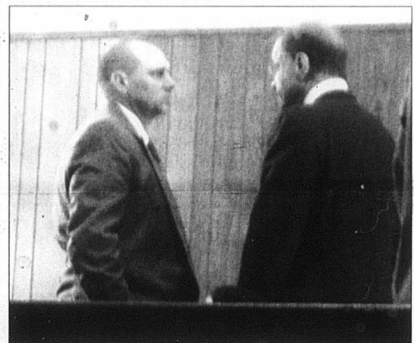


Photo by Charles Mattox

Boone County Deputy Sheriff Scott Hill, left, discusses his case with his attorney Burr Travis after Hill testified to members of the Nicholas County grand jury Monday.

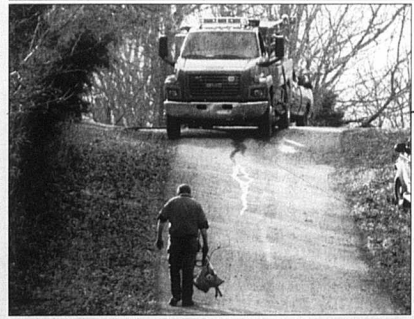


Photo by Charles Mattox

Nicholas County firefighter Mike Warner, exhausted, bleeding and all the hair singed off of both arms trudges toward a Nicholas County Fire Truck after battling a 50-acre brush fire along Ritchie Road, just off Bald Hill Road in northwestern Nicholas County, Tuesday afternoon.

No indictment issued in fatal shooting

By Charles Mattox
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Members of a Nicholas County Grand Jury returned a "No True Bill" Monday morning in regard to the shooting death of Brenda Pollitt Dailey. Dailey was shot to death Dec. 29, by off-duty Boone County Deputy Sheriff Scott Douglas Hill.

Jurors noted on their written report that the Dailey-Hill shooting case was one in which "there were insufficient votes to indict."

Commonwealth Attorney Doug Wright said a No True Bill was not the same as a dismissal.

"If new evidence is found we will present the case again," he said.

The case was complex and led to family members of the deceased seeking answers.

"I want the truth to come out," Jill Johnson, sister of the deceased said as the grand jury members went

into closed chambers. "I think the man that shoots a woman in the back... Well... that's just not right. God know what happened that night and I've put my trust in the Lord. I don't want revenge. I just want some answers."

Johnson said there were several aspects of the, investigation and shooting, which she did not understand and she hoped an indictment would bring those aspects to the public forefront. She was present in the courtroom and nearby much of the morning, as was Hill, his wife and attorney.

Hill declined speak on the record, but directed questions to his legal advisor, veteran attorney Burr Travis of Florence.

"I was contacted by Mr. Hill the night this happened," Travis said. He, like his client, was also reluctant to speak on the record, as the grand jury was still in the process of hearing testimony, but did want the citizens of Nicholas

County to know that Hill "did everything he could to avoid the shooting." Travis called the shooting a "terrible tragedy."

Hill shot Dailey to death just before midnight on Dec. 29, near the community of Headquarters, in northern Nicholas County.

Investigators said Dailey, 55, of 2630 Headquarters Road was shot to death after concerns escalated over a horse named Romeo.

Investigators say Hill arrived at Dailey's rented farm near Headquarters, to transport Romeo, which belonged to Brenda's nephew, Zach Pollitt. Investigators say interviews with Hill, Zach Pollitt and others, indicated that Brenda Dailey had requested her nephew, who had recently lived with her, to have the horse moved from the farm by midnight that evening. Zach Pollitt knew Hill was involved with horses and called him to help him remove Romeo.

Travis said Hill was

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Hopkins injured in accident

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A Carlisle man remains hospitalized in the intensive care unit at the University of Kentucky Medical Center following a Feb. 13 two-vehicle accident in Bourbon County.

Timmy Hopkins 30, of Carlisle, is "making progress," according to family members who remain near his side.

Hopkins was injured at approximately 3:50 p.m.,

Friday the 13th when he was involved in an accident near the intersection of US 460 and the Paris Bypass.

According to a Paris Police Department news release, their investigation "revealed that a 1994 Chrysler driven by Hopkins turned into the path of a 2007 Mack Truck, driven by Keith A. Bryant, 29, of Cynthiana."

Bryant was uninjured during the accident and refused medical treat-

ment at the scene, according to the PPD release. Hopkins was rushed to the University of Kentucky Medical Center where he was admitted in critical condition.

Paris Chief of Police Tim Gray and his officers continue to investigate the accident.

Hopkins family members say they appreciate all the prayers that have been said on Timmy's behalf and they ask that those prayers continue.

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