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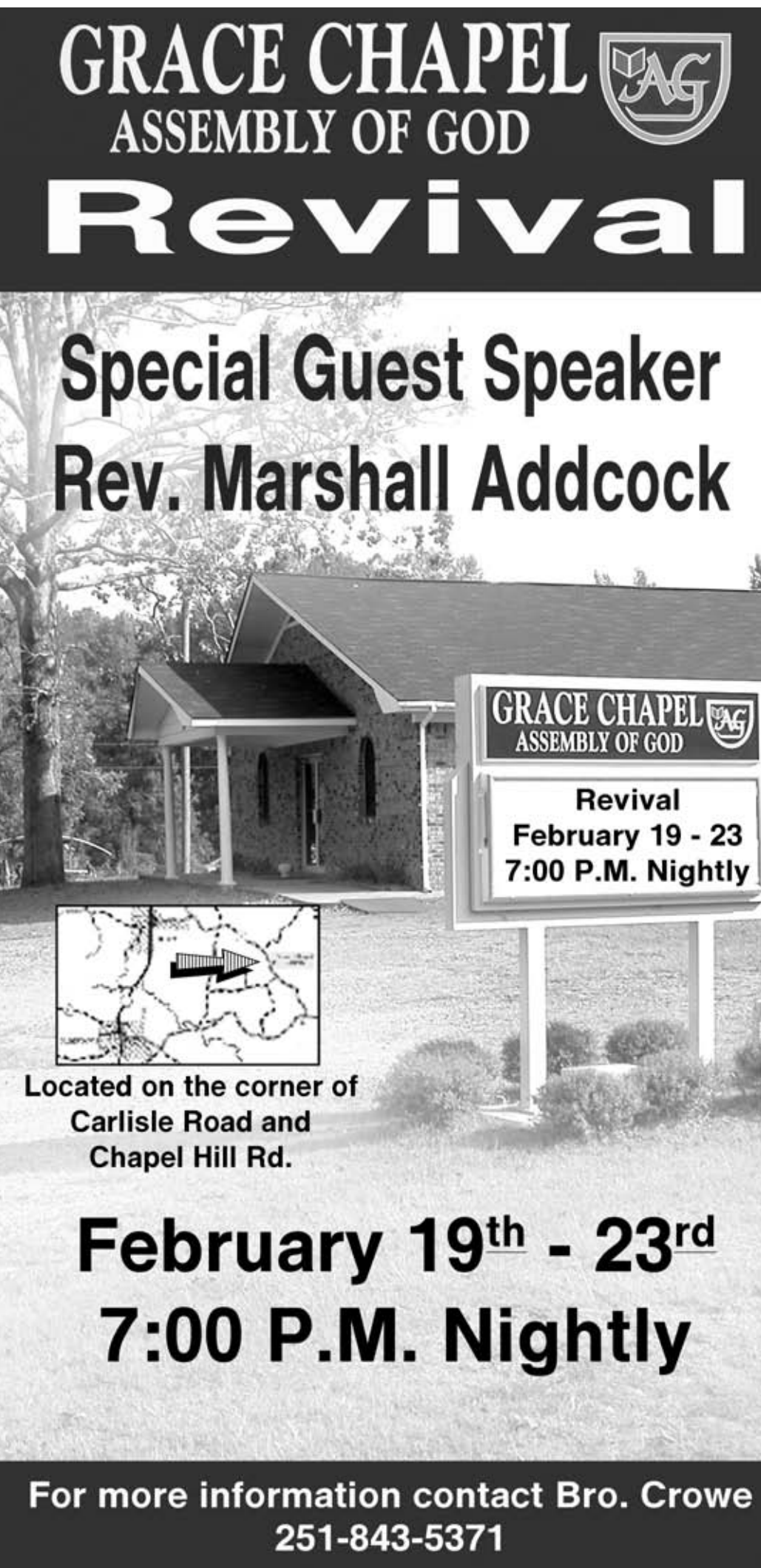
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**SoundOff**

From page 4-A

the positive attention that you give our students and our school. We look forward to having the **Sun** on our campus and invite you to come to our school anytime!

I live in an area of Tennessee where school uniforms are required. The order was issued by the Board of Education after they failed to get cooperation from both parents and students regarding a dress code. Boys were wearing pants with the waistband so low that their backside was exposed; hats and caps in the classroom, trench coats, torn shirts and jeans, and "you name it." Girls were wearing spaghetti strap shirts, skirts with the hemline too high and shirts that were cut too low and T-shirts with the armholes so large you could see in one sleeve and out the other. Boys and girls from elementary through high school were wearing T-shirts with cigarette and beer advertisements, others with offensive writing. Students and parents were notified that a dress code had been implemented and students could no longer dress as in the past. If they were to attend school they must adhere to the dress code. Both parents and children screamed "discrimination." School officials advised them that any violation of the dress code and the student would be sent home for the rest of the day; three violations and they would be expelled for a week. The violations continued and everyone got slapped with school uniforms because school is for learning and not for exposing oneself. It was not for school safety, but for student modesty. I'd also like to say that I have a grandchild in school in Mobile and she wears school uni-

forms. It has not caused her or her mother to have a nervous breakdown and they have not had to see a counselor. I would recommend that parents take a look at the type of clothes the students are wearing to school and see if they can get a clue from that.

Thank you, Dee Ann, for the great coverage of Career Tech Week. I also appreciated the fact that your paper covered the racial discrimination lawsuit settlement that was agreed to last week by the Board of Education.

What would be wrong with letting the children wear blue jeans and solid color shirts to school? Nothing! You try to find some of those plain, solid color jackets and coats to fit the schools' stupid "colors" list. It will make you crazy! But what do schools care, as long as they can dump more unnecessary expense on us parents?

I think that certain people that leave messages in the SoundOff just need to mind their own business. It's none of their business how parents raise their kids and if they are not your kids it shouldn't matter to you what they are doing.

To the parents that gripe about uniforms costing more than regular clothes. There are two stores in Gilbertown where you can purchase uniform clothes cheaply, much cheaper than brand-name jeans and shirts.

May I say that, as a teacher, I cannot see where uniforms have made any difference in my classroom. The more well-off children still wear EXPENSIVE uniforms while the poorer ones have CHEAPER dollar-store brands, and the more affluent children still rub it in their faces. It happened just today in my classroom. Uniforms didn't solve anything along those lines, and I can say that for a fact from having witnessed it for several years as a teacher in a public school.

I am a single mother and uniforms for my three children cost me a lot more than I should have to spend, even if I buy them at some of the dollar stores. I HATE uniforms and so do my kids! Plain old blue jeans and shirts would look really nice, and a lot of schools have these as their "uniforms". Why not here?

Teachers have no business in bars or honky-tonks. They are responsible for a lot of little lives and trust me, as a former partygoer who loved to drink with the best of them, I know now that what you do on your private time CAN and DOES affect those around you in your profession. Think about it. I wish I had thought about it 20 years ago. I might

still have my job ... as a teacher.

I would like to echo the comment from last week, thanking Probate Judge D'Wayne May for leaving the county car parked at the Courthouse when he isn't using it for official business. That may seem trivial to some people but to me, as a taxpayer, it means a lot. I also like what he had to say about being open with the news media.

I know there have been a few SoundOffs lately about cruelty to animals, but I have to pass a place every morning going to work that just makes me sick. These people obviously don't have a lot, and I know they may not be able to afford much, but they have several horses on a very small enclosed place and these horses are STARVING to death. They are getting leaner by the day. If there is an agency that I can call, please let me know. People who can't afford to feed themselves surely don't need animals to feed also.

**(ED. NOTE:** The Choctaw Co. Sheriff's Department enforces state laws regarding neglect or cruelty to animals. Call them at 205-459-2166.)

Some of the teachers of Washington County want to express their concern over the recent letter regarding uniforms. There are many teachers in favor of uniforms. Parents who support uniforms need to let their voices be heard, also. Those people who are against uniforms, need to read the dress policy in the countywide handbook. These restrictions will be enforced if the uniform policy is abolished. More class time will be taken to enforce the handbook rules vs. the uniform policy. Any student who fails to dress

appropriately will not be allowed to attend class until proper clothes can be secured. If necessary, parents/guardians will be called to bring proper clothes to the school. This comes directly from the county handbook.

I am telling my school board members right now, I taking a stand next school year ... my child will NOT be forced to participate in this socialist uniform scheme any longer. NO MORE, do you hear me??? There are SIMPLE dress codes that would work much better than this mess we have now. I may end up in jail but if I do, so be it. We live in America, NOT communist China.

Parents are more worried about what their child's teachers are doing on their OWN time than what their CHILD is doing on the weekend. We sell alcohol where I work. Some parents would be shocked that their children could be the same ones we see trying to get adults to buy their alcohol. Thankfully, the adults I have seen have walked away laughing at the kids. Some of you people should stop "preaching to the choir" and start preaching to your kids at home!

Could you contact law enforcement with this question? If a person or a business serves someone alcohol and that someone goes out and has an accident or causes an accident, could the person or business who served the drinks be charged, held responsible or sued in addition to the person who had the accident? For example, if John Doe goes to a club or restaurant and gets wasted, and then goes out and runs over someone, could the club or restaurant be held accountable for serving that person too much booze? It would be an interesting article.

**Letters**

From page 4-A

have to buy three sets of clothing (school, casual, and dress). Often it is difficult to find clothing that meets the school uniform guidelines (try finding a decent hunter green jacket!) This leaves parents to pay more for clothes just so their children can attend the public schools that our tax dollars fund.

Consider this ... in the Washington County school system 60.9% of students applied and were approved for free or reduced price lunches in the 2005-06 school year. Knowing that, how can our local school board place an additional burden on those struggling families by requiring that they purchase school uniforms or lose their right to a public school education? In other cases where mandatory school uniform policies are in place, courts have ruled that the school system must provide assistance to families who cannot afford the uniforms. I think our local school boards should be no different. If our school board puts policies in place that require families to spend additional money to be allowed to attend public school, they should be required to help those in need meet the requirements of those policies. Of course in a school system where funding is limited and in many cases over the years our students have had to share textbooks because there were not enough to go around, that does not seem to be the best use of our tax dollars.

If school uniforms are a financial burden on you or your family please contact me at [dyessli1@millry.net](mailto:dyessli1@millry.net) or call (251) 846-3170. Working together we can change our mandatory school uniform policies.

Lisa Dyess



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