

COMMENTARY

Bureau's shortage of nurses no comfort

"Have you heard about bird flu?" the announcer on a TV ad for the Ohio Department of Health asks. "Are you concerned? Do you have questions? If so, go to ohioPandemicflu.gov. To prepare now, you can make a family emergency kit. ... It's time to get informed, be prepared and work together."

A flurry of the ads began hitting the airwaves several weeks ago after the Health Department launched a \$180,000 media campaign.

Yet, while the commercial spots warn Ohioans that shortages might be part of an outbreak, the department, ironically, is facing its own shortage: nurses who would be in the vanguard of its flu action plan.

A half-dozen positions that should be filled with registered nurses stand empty. A source within the department's Bureau of Infectious Disease Control said the normal complement of such nurses is 12.

Nurses who would typically fill those positions would be responsible for assuring that vital vaccines, medications and medical supplies move swiftly from staging points to the site of a flu outbreak or a bioterror event. They are the facilitators/monitors for the national stockpiles of everything from IV kits to hospital beds that are maintained by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Jay Carey, spokesman for the Health Department, said part of the problem is an overall shortage of registered nurses in the job market, compounded by an even greater scarcity of nurses with experience controlling infectious diseases. Three of the six vacancies are for nurse positions recently added as a result of a federal grant, he said.

Carey downplayed rumblings from within the Bureau of Infectious Disease Control that part of the reason for the vacancies is an inhospitable work environment that has incited more than one nurse to pack her bags.

"It's just a tumultuous situation, and it doesn't seem to get better," said Cathy Mockus, an interventions coordinator with the state's Employee Assistance Program and a steward for Service Employees International Union District 1199, which represents the bureau employees. The assistance program deals with employee wellness and health issues for the Health Department as well as for all other state departments.

Complainers in that so-called "tumultuous situation" focus generally on Bureau Chief Barb Bradley, though her personnel file contains nothing but favorable performance reviews from her superior.

That hardly squares with the contention of Lee Evans, a union staff member and one-time Health Department employee who said of Bradley, her former boss, "We not only get more complaints about her than anyone else at ODH, we get more complaints about her than everyone else at ODH."

Carey said Bradley, the bureau chief since 2000, was compelled to make dramatic changes in her operations after 9/11, changes that made the bureau a first-responder team in a terror event.

"Conflict is not unexpected as people adjust to new roles with new expectations," he said. "The Ohio Department of Health supports the bureau leadership as we work through these times of change."

Carey might have a point.

The bureau complainers, who say they grumble anonymously for fear of reprisal, might have a point.

Neither of those points is as important as bringing the department's contingent of first-responder nurses up to full strength.

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MIKE HARDEN

Safety net fails two families

Columbus buses leave 4 kids at wrong stops on Day 1

By Bill Bush
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Three young children were let off at the wrong stop by a Columbus school bus yesterday and walked about 2 miles down Weber Road in rush-hour traffic to their day-care center, their mother said.

A nearly blind child was never taken to his assigned stop, his father said, and a district official told the father not to immediately report the missing boy to police as he raced home from work to search for him.

"You don't want me to call the police, but you don't know where my son is?"

BRIAN WEAVER
talking to a district employee

Though district officials planned long and hard for the start of school yesterday, these parents said more planning was needed.

District spokesman Greg Viebranz, reached late last

night, said he could not confirm the parents' versions of events because he was at home, but he said the district would investigate today.

"Those are certainly the types of situations we need to know about," Viebranz said. "Transportation does all it can before the start of school to verify the data, make sure it's as good as possible."

"These next several days, we'll be focused on identifying these types of situations and making sure they're resolved as

See **BUSES** Page **D2**



CHRIS RUSSELL | DISPATCH

First-grader Casey Myers gets a wristband to help him travel to Northtowne Elementary School and back home again.



JEFF HINCKLEY | DISPATCH

Veteran motorcycle racer Dick Klamfoth, 77, kicks up dust as he rides near Thornville. Klamfoth won the Charity Newsies Hall of Fame Classic in 1958 and 1959.

Wheels of GLORY

Charity reviving motorcycle classic that packed them in decades ago

By Amanda Kawalek
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Painted canvas on Dick Klamfoth's living-room wall shows him in action during his motorcycle-racing days.

In the 1950s, success brought him fame across the country. In Columbus, he was known as the first Ohioan to win the Charity Newsies Hall of Fame Classic, a gem on the U.S. motorcycle scene from 1939 until 1980.

Held at the state fairgrounds, it was the biggest motorcycle competition in the country for nearly five decades. But by the 1970s, its hell-raising crowd began to get out of hand. The

race was canceled in 1980.

"I got tired of going to the races up there, all the rowdiness of the crowds," Klamfoth, now 77, said from his home in Thornville. "It was uncalled for, and it should have been stopped."

A generation later, much of the biking crowd has melted away. They're as likely to have investment portfolios as tattoos, and they're likely to be in the crowd on Sept. 23, when the Charity Newsies revive the classic at Scioto Downs.

Motorcycle racing is nothing new at the harness track, 6000 S. High St. Harleys replaced horses there each September in 2003 and 2004, when

See **GLORY** Page **D3**

He fought so others didn't have to, says dad of fallen soldier

Meigs County native, 24, killed Sunday in Iraq

By Holly Zachariah
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

As the oldest of six children, Joshua D. Jones had always taken on the role of family protector.

That sense of responsibility was also behind the southeastern Ohio native's decision to sign up for military service nearly three years ago.

"Whenever he was talking about the Army, he always said he was going to go fight so that his siblings would never have to," Jones' father, Gary, said yesterday from his home in Langsville, in Meigs County. "I was just so proud of him for everything."

The Department of Defense says that Jones, a 24-year-old Army specialist, was killed Sunday in Baghdad when his

Humvee was attacked by small-arms fire. Jones was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, in Fort Hood, Texas.

Now that word of the death is spreading through the tight-knit Appalachian community where Joshua Jones was raised, his father says he has been overwhelmed by the support of others.

Jones and his wife, Tiffany, had moved to Georgia just before he enlisted in the Army in January 2004. There, he earned his general educational development diploma. After finishing boot camp at Fort Knox, he was stationed in Louisiana, and then at Fort Hood. He shipped to Iraq on Dec. 6 last year, his dad's birthday.

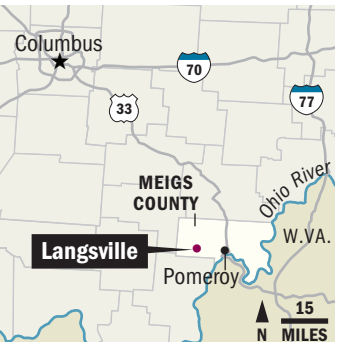
He last visited home in June, and spent some quality time with his 2-year-old daughter,

See **SOLDIER** Page **D3**



FAMILY PHOTO

Sp. Joshua D. Jones was in a Humvee hit by small-arms fire and died of his injuries. He leaves a wife, who is pregnant, and a 2-year-old daughter.



THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Decision in judge's case to come after election

Squire will stay on ballot as she awaits disciplinary ruling

By Kevin Mayhood
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Voters won't know whether the state's Franklin County judge or found that she had acted unethically until after she appears on the November ballot for re-election.

Carole Squire, a Democrat seeking a second term on the Domestic Relations/Juvenile Court bench, received a postponement in her disciplinary hearing yesterday. Her hearing won't be completed until at least mid-October, too late for the Board of Commissioners on Grievances and Discipline to issue a finding before the election, board officials said.

Squire, 53, faces four counts of misconduct, filed by state Disciplinary Counsel Jonathan E. Coughlan. The charges are based on complaints from several lawyers.

"It has been claimed by the



Carole Squire, a judge on the Franklin County Domestic Relations/Juvenile Court, faces four counts of misconduct.

Disciplinary Counsel from the onset that the disciplinary process was not invoked against me to influence the election, a claim that I flatly reject," she said in a statement yesterday. "If the process was not invoked to influence the election, why should anyone care that the charges will not be resolved by the election?"

Chris Geer, a Republican running against Squire, is disappointed by the delay. Voters won't have a decision in the hearing that they "can rely on to make the decision they must make on Nov. 7," Geer said.

Squire asked for the delay after learning that the \$100,000 the state's insurance program had allotted for her defense is

See **JUDGE** Page **D2**

GLORY

FROM PAGE D1

the race attracted about 10,000 fans, but organizers couldn't put a race together last year.

The Newsies seized the opportunity to put the event back under its fundraising banner, said George Gans, president of the Newsies. The charity provides clothing to Franklin County schoolchildren. Its most visible activity is hawking special editions of *The Dispatch* on the first Saturday of December each year.

"Motorcycle racing has a completely different image than it used to," Gans said. "It used to be the bad-boy image; now it's the baby-boomer image. The demographics have changed."

Both the riding crowd and the sport have changed, said Greg Pearson, a motor-sports historian from Culloden, W.Va.

Much of the renewed interest in motorcycling is among older riders on big cruising bikes.

"The guys who ride Harleys now are pretty much weekend warriors," he said. "They take off a lab coat and put on a leather jacket. They want to be Marlon Brando for the weekend."

He doesn't expect any problems at Scioto Downs.

"The real fans tend to be there because they love the racing and they love the guys,"

Pearson said. "They're not there to get drunk or make a scene."

The rough bike image might have faded, but it hasn't disappeared, said Bob Althoff, whose Harley Davidson dealership, A.D. Farrow Co., is the Newsies' partner in promoting the race.

"We're never going to lose that, and we don't want to," he said. "It's all a part of it."

The revival of the Newsies race is a fancy way of bringing the various fans of motorcycling together, Althoff said.

"The fun thing about the sport is that the family keeps getting bigger. We're seeing more women, young people and minorities all the time."

"Even though it's not the appearance of Sunday afternoon tea at church, motorcyclists have hearts of gold," he said. "There's no pretenses, just good people that enjoy other's company."

For Klamfoth, the race will serve as a pleasant reminder of his glory days. He predicts a full house at Scioto Downs.

Family, business and age eventually ended his racing career, but he occasionally rides his red Honda along the country roads near his home east of Columbus, where motorcycle memorabilia remain prominent in his living room.

"Columbus used to be the place to come," he said. "They had one race every week, sometimes two or three, and

If you go

► **What:** Charity Newsies Hall of Fame Classic

► **When:** Saturday, Sept. 23

► **Where:** Scioto Downs harness racing track, 6000 S. High St.

► **Tickets:** \$20 general admission or \$30 for clubhouse seating, at the gate or in advance by calling 1-866-439-3138. Proceeds from program and program ad sales benefit Charity Newsies.

SCHEDULE

► **4 p.m.:** Gates open; TV screens will show the Ohio State-Penn State football game.

► **4:30-5:30 p.m.:** Autograph session with past Newsies winners and racers

► **7 p.m.:** Opening ceremony

► **7:30 p.m.:** Racing begins

For more information, call Scioto Downs at 614-491-2515

you could race until your heart's content."

Racers who competed in the Charity Newsies Grand National finals or won the junior/ amateur or novice event, and want to participate in the autograph session, should call Greg Pearson at 304-743-0344 or Darris Blackford at 614-228-6353.

akawalek@dispatch.com



JEFF HINCKLEY | DISPATCH

Dick Klamfoth stands on his back porch with a marble etching commemorating his three victories in the Daytona 200 motorcycle race. (The second piece is a monument company sample.)

SOLDIER

FROM PAGE D1

Cami, the elder Jones said.

"And then not long after he was home, we got the call.

"His wife is expecting again," Gary Jones said. After pausing to collect himself, he added:

"He was a great husband, and a great father. I wish this second child would have at least gotten the chance to know that."

Gary Jones said his son most cherished his role as protector, but he also was passionate about his hobbies, which included riding all-terrain vehicles in the rough Meigs County countryside and racing remote-controlled cars.

"If it had wheels, he loved it,"

Gary Jones said. "That's all he loved until his daughter came along, and then he understood the joys of being a dad."

He said he's still awaiting word from the Army on when his son's body will arrive home. Whenever that is, he said, the whole family will be there waiting.

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Making plans for the weekend? Thursday's **Weekender** serves as a handy guide to what's going on around town.

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PAGE D3