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Coroner orders inquest in Taser death

Washington police twice shocked city man in November

By KATHIE O. WARCO, Staff writer
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An inquest will be held next month into the death of a Washington man who died four days after being twice shocked with a Taser by Washington police last November.

The inquest into the death of

Ronald Petruney will be held April 22 at the Washington County Courthouse, Washington County Coroner S. Tim Warco announced Tuesday. Petruney was the 50th person to die in the United States in 2009 after being shot with a Taser by police.

Petruney, 49, of 1090 Jefferson Ave., was pronounced dead at

Washington Hospital's critical care unit Nov. 21. He had been hit with the Taser on Nov. 17.

Warco said Tuesday that he has received the necessary toxicology and autopsy reports to allow him to schedule the inquest.

Washington police Chief James R. Blyth said city police turned over all relevant reports to the

coroner and district attorney's office.

Blyth has not identified the two officers who shot Petruney with the Taser. The two officers have worked since the incident and are not under any restrictions.

One of the officers was patrolling Jefferson Avenue just after 1 p.m. Nov. 17 when he en-

countered Petruney on the ground near his apartment suffering from what appeared to be a seizure.

Petruney then stood up, disoriented, and attempted to walk into traffic, police said. Petruney refused orders to sit down and charged the officer, biting him and swinging his arms when the two began to struggle.

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FAMILIAR FOES

Washington High School looks to avenge a 80-45 regular-season loss against South Fayette in tonight's second round of the PIAA Class AA playoffs.

PAGE B1

McGuffey teachers to strike Monday

Union: Board not bargaining in good faith

By DAWN GOODMAN, Staff writer
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McGuffey School District teachers will strike Monday because an agreement on a new contract cannot be reached with the school board.

The two sides have been bargaining for more than a year, efforts that included bringing in an independent fact-finder to make recommendations for a new contract.

The board unanimously voted against the fact-finder's report twice while the teachers voted for it both times.

"This is the last thing we want to do, but the school board has left us with no other options," said

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Capturing the sun



Alexis DeBlaso, 10, colors a bright sun with chalk on the sidewalk along Forrest Avenue in Washington Tuesday. In the background are Alyssa Ringer, 19, and her niece, Christina Montgomery, 6.

JIM McNUTT / OBSERVER-REPORTER



RECALLS BY HONDA

Honda Motor Co. will recall more than 410,000 Odyssey minivans and Element small trucks because of braking system problems that could make it tougher to stop the vehicle if not repaired.

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WEATHER



Fog in the a.m.; mostly sunny. High 62. Low 34. Complete weather, PAGE B8

Expert praises Trinity in technology, criticizes special education track

By DAWN GOODMAN, Staff writer
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A consultant gave recommendations to the Trinity Area School Board education committee Tuesday, detailing what the district does well and how it can improve.

The board hired James C. Manley as a consultant to provide recommendations to improve student achievement. However, he also highlighted positive findings to reinforce some of the high performance conditions already in place.

He, along with newly hired Superintendent Paul Kasunich, will give a public presentation about the 36-page report at 6:30 p.m. March 25 in the high school cafeteria.

Manley created the report after visiting each school and meeting with building level administrators, representative teacher leaders, parents and secondary students. He also held a public forum to get input from the community.

Manley's report describes the ideal school district in five areas: leadership and governance; curriculum, instruction and achievement; learning climates and culture; accountability for teachers

Public invited

Consultant James C. Manley and new superintendent Paul Kasunich will give a public presentation about the 36-page recommendation report at 6:30 p.m. March 25 in the high school cafeteria.

and students; and systems thinking, which includes special education.

He said the ideal district follows a leadership framework that is based on an exciting, future-focused school vision. That district identifies core values and beliefs, which are clearly communicated and practiced. He suggested that Trinity develop a shared vision and promote a learning organization concept throughout the district.

He said an ideal district also has a strong focus on student achievement and high learning standards are evident for all content areas. He suggested linking curriculum and instruction to assessment and defining academic rigor.

He said Trinity has an excellent array of technology and should

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Pilot Edward Smith, left, and an unidentified man stand near a plane that crashed along a beach in Hilton Head, S.C., Monday. Officials said a beachgoer was killed during the plane's emergency landing.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Aircraft in emergency landing kills beachgoer on Hilton Head Island

ASSOCIATED PRESS

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, S.C. — Robert Gary Jones was a pharmaceutical salesman on a business trip, looking forward to getting home to celebrate his daughter's third birthday. He was enjoying a moment to himself on this resort island, jogging on the beach and listening to his iPod.

Officials say the Woodstock, Ga., man neither saw nor heard what struck him from behind Monday evening: A single-engine plane making an emergency landing.

The Lancair IV-P aircraft, which can be built from a kit, had lost its propeller and was "basically gliding" as it hit and instantly killed Jones, Ed Allen, the coroner for Beaufort County on the South Carolina coast, said Tuesday.

"There's no noise," said aviation expert Mary Schiavo, a former inspector general for the National Transportation Safety Board. "So the jogger, with his ear buds in, and the plane without an engine, you're basically a stealth aircraft. Who would expect to look up?"

The pilot, Edward I. Smith of Chesapeake, Va., and his lone passenger both walked away from the crash landing near the Hilton Head Marriott Resort and Spa.

Marshall Clary was sitting in his home office overlooking the beach when the crash happened about 6:10 p.m. He said he heard nothing when the plane hit Jones and didn't realize something was wrong until he heard emergency helicopters overhead a short time later.

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