

more than there is to blow them out of proportion for personal gain, personal attention or personal satisfaction. Oak Ridge truly is the Energy City and there is no doubt about that. The only question, then, that remains is will this community embrace and exemplify "positive energy" in addressing its issues or we will continue to tolerate and encourage the "negative energy" we've seen far too much of in various governmental and so-called social circles in recent years, recent months and recent days?

All the way around, we can certainly do better, we certainly deserve better and we must demand nothing less.

A native of Anderson County, Tenn., Darrell Richardson serves as publisher of The Oak Ridger and oakridger.com. Email him with your letters for publication or your thoughts & concerns at drichardson@oakridger.com

— TODAY IN HISTORY —

The Associated Press

Today is **Monday, March 16, the 75th day of 2015.** There are 290 days left in the year.

On this date:

In 1521, Portuguese navigator Ferdinand Magellan reached the Philippines, where he was killed by natives the following month.

In 1802, President Thomas Jefferson signed a measure authorizing the establishment of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York.

In 1926, rocket science pioneer Robert H. Goddard successfully tested the first liquid-fueled rocket in Auburn, Massachusetts.

In 1935, Adolf Hitler decided to break the military terms set by the Treaty of Versailles by ordering the rearming of Germany.

In 1945, in World War II, American forces declared they had secured Iwo Jima, though pockets of Japanese resistance remained.

In 1965, peace activist Alice

Herz, 82, set herself ablaze on a Detroit street corner to protest the Vietnam War; she died 10 days later.

In 1968, during the Vietnam War, the My Lai Massacre of Vietnamese civilians was carried out by U.S. Army troops; estimates of the death toll vary between 347 and 504.

In 1974, the Grand Ole Opry House opened in Nashville with a concert attended by President Richard and Pat Nixon.

In 1985, Terry Anderson, Middle East correspondent for The Associated Press, was abducted in Beirut; he was released in December 1991.

Ten years ago: A judge in Redwood City, California, sent Scott Peterson to death row for the slaying of his pregnant wife, Laci.

Five years ago: Attorney General Eric Holder told a House Appropriations subcommittee that Osama bin Laden would never face trial in the U.S. because he would not be captured alive.

granted authority for the benefit of one's self or the benefit of any one individual. He should have steered clear of any appearance that he was illicitly aligning with this one problematic person about which he is supposed to vote in an unbiased way.

Furthermore, there are as many as 100 persons directly involved in the police dispute. Only one of them is the

page changes character completely. Akagi begins plastering his own face on posts about the good work the officers are doing. Two weeks ago, he posted a welcome to his secretary even though she's been employed there a year! He welcomed one new patrol officer even though he lost numerous officers because of this distressing turnover problem. Today, he posted a job opportunity

PUBLISHER'S NOTE: To the best of our knowledge, neither Mayor Warren Gooch nor Police Chief Jim Akagi had anything to do with the submission of the March 11, 2015, article and photos showing the two welcoming collegiate rowers and coaches to Oak Ridge. The annual regatta attracts more than 300 competitors to Melton Hill Lake.

Proposed cuts detrimental to mental health system

A proposed cut in the Bureau of TennCare's operating budget has consumers of mental health



MICHAEL YATES GUEST COLUMN

services, health care professionals, advocates, and law enforcement personnel concerned that the lives of those who benefit from case management services will be deeply compromised.

The proposed 2016 fiscal year budget calls for a \$30 million reduction — \$10 million in state funds and \$20 million in matching federal funds — in Level 2 Case Management Services, which funds community based care for the mentally ill in Tennessee. It is the largest reduction to a single program in TennCare's budget.

For people living with a

serious and persistent mental illness, life can be a complex challenge of balancing a multitude of fragile needs, from medication to housing, from employment to overall physical health, from substance abuse to healthy relationships — just to name a few.

Level 2 Case Management is, as Ridgeview Behavioral Health Services CEO Brian Buuck said, "A service for helping the seriously mentally ill citizens of our community function in their daily lives.

"Case management services," said Buuck, "is the key avenue by which people who have serious mental health and substance abuse issues experience the sanctuary of support and the continuity of help.

Monitoring medication, assisting with housing and

employment, coordinating both mental health and medical care, and managing life circumstances, are all aspects of how case managers help consumers of mental health services improve their life."

Is it a perfect science? No. Relapses can occur; hardships can derail recovery; and problem circumstances can lead to additional problems; but without the community-based care coordination and support provided through case management services, the intervention required can be far more costly.

Cuts to this type of service and programming would be detrimental to the mental health system. Without the care, support, and help provided through case management, individuals are prone to requiring more costly resources and services, like emergency

rooms, psychiatric hospitalizations, or jail. The likelihood for relapse is also greater without the networking and support provided by case management services.

Mental health services are effective. Individuals with serious mental illnesses are now, more than ever, able to live quality, productive lives in the community due to the significant strides that have been made at the national, state and local level to improve the availability of supports and services. It is critical that we do not regress and that consumers of mental health services receive the continuity of support, care, and help needed through Level 2 case management services.

Michael Yates is the director of development at Ridgeview Behavioral Health Services.

Oak Ridger 3/15/15