



NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2025

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[Legislative Council meets to address proposed bylaw changes](#)

On Tuesday, April 8, the TSSAA Legislative Council voted to remove from the bylaws the Residence Rule currently found in Article II, Section 11. A transfer student with an athletic record would still need to meet the provisions of Article II, Sections 12 and 13. A proposed change to Article I (Membership) of the TSSAA Bylaws submitted by Christ Presbyterian Academy was also approved. With the change, the method of determining classification must be the same for all schools within a Division.

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[TSSAA celebrates 100 year anniversary](#)

Let's be thankful for the influence that education-based athletics has had on our lives and committed to providing those same opportunities for future generations!

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[Seeking Adventure? The U.S. Coast Guard is Building a Team of Leaders](#)

Joining the U.S. Coast Guard is a journey alongside tight-knit crews, filled with meaningful experiences and opportunities to defend our coasts, protect our nation, and save lives. High school athletes develop the important skills of teamwork, discipline, and leadership. These are skills the Coast Guard needs for our next generation of leaders. Beyond the adventure, members enjoy immediate benefits, including tuition assistance for college or vocational training, competitive salaries, paid time off, and comprehensive healthcare, dental, and vision coverage.

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[Apprenticeship Programs: Unlocking Career Pathways in Tennessee](#)

Apprenticeship programs at Tennessee's Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (TCATs) and community colleges are opening valuable career pathways for students across the state. These programs combine hands-on training with classroom instruction, enabling participants to gain practical experience while earning industry-recognized credentials. Covering fields such as advanced manufacturing, healthcare, information technology, and more, apprenticeships are built to meet the specific needs of Tennessee's growing industries. By collaborating with local employers, these institutions ensure that apprentices receive relevant skills training, translating to high-demand job opportunities upon completion.

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Call for Submissions

We want to include your thoughts in the monthly TSSAA Newsletter! Do you have 50-500 words to share on the topic of **teaching perseverance as part of educational athletics**? We welcome submissions from principals, athletic administrators, coaches and students! Consider sharing your thoughts, essays or even poems for an upcoming issue. Please send submissions in Microsoft Word format to mgillespie@tssaa.org.

TSSAA continues its support of the **National SAT/ACT Prep Project** through the NFHS and eKnowledge which allows any Tennessee student to receive a 95% discount on SAT or ACT prep courses. This is a community-service, non-profit project and all student fees are reinvested to improve the program and reach more families. The project has more than 45,000 five-star reviews and has already assisted nearly 300,000 families. Learn more at <https://eknowledge.com/TSSAA>.



Sports News

General News

Eight new members inducted into the TSSAA Hall of Fame

Two administrators, three coaches, two officials, and one contributor make up 2025 class

April 7, 2025

Eight new members were inducted into the TSSAA Hall of Fame at the annual luncheon at the Student Union Building on the campus of Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro on Monday, April 7, 2025.

Two administrators, three coaches, two officials, and one contributor were inducted to at the annual gathering of those selected since the process began in 1982.

The members of the Class of 2025 are: **Bill Bingham**, administrator from Bristol; **Clint Jackson**, administrator from Memphis; **Jinx Cockerham**, coach from Nashville; **Donald Dodgen**, coach from Knoxville; **Pat Simpson**, coach from Nashville; **Jim Fox**, official from Knoxville; **Thomas Frierson**, official from Columbia; and **Chip Walters**, contributor from Murfreesboro.

The Hall of Fame luncheon is to not only honor the new inductees and their families, but to honor all past inductees into the TSSAA Hall of Fame.

Additional information on the inductees is provided below.

Bill Bingham, Administrator

A lifelong educator, coach, and athletic administrator, Bill Bingham has dedicated 39 years to shaping the lives of students and athletes across three states. From his early days as a standout athlete to his tenure as an influential coach and athletic director, Mr. Bingham's impact on the world of education and athletics is undeniable.

From 1956 to 1964, Mr. Bingham taught and coached both football and basketball before landing at Bristol High School in Tennessee, where he would spend the majority of his career. For 33 years, he dedicated himself to the success of the school's academic and athletic programs. He began his tenure at Tennessee High as a science teacher and assistant coach for baseball and football, helping the school earn multiple conference and state championships in these sports.

In 1973, he took on the dual role of Head Football Coach and Athletic Director at Tennessee High, where he would go on to leave a lasting legacy. Under his leadership, the school won six state championships and one national championship, with individual athletes excelling in various sports. He helped build a winning culture, guiding the football team to multiple Big Nine Conference championships, including a state title in 1971 and 1972. His coaching record was impressive, with a 36-14 mark as the head football coach.

As Athletic Director from 1973 to 1995, Mr. Bingham coordinated schedules, ticket sales, and budgets for all sports, ensuring Tennessee High maintained the highest standard for athletics. His contributions also led to the establishment of several sports programs, including boys and girls cross country, girls' basketball, and volleyball.

Throughout his time as Athletic Director, Mr. Bingham's work was recognized through numerous honors, including being named Athletic Director of the Year in 1990 and receiving the TSSAA Distinguished Service Award in 2013. In addition to his coaching and administrative success, he also served as the Director of the Arby's Basketball Tournament from 1983 to 1995 and was an advocate for student-athletes through his involvement with organizations such as TIAAA, BTEA, TEA, NEA, and the TSSAA Board of Control.

Clint Jackson, Administrator

A distinguished educator, coach, and administrator, has made an indelible mark on the Memphis educational and athletic landscapes over his extensive career. A 1971 graduate of Hamilton High, he went on to earn his undergraduate degree from LeMoyne-Owen College in 1976, graduating with honors. He furthered his academic achievements with a Master's Degree in Athletics Administration from Memphis State University, followed by over 45 additional graduate hours in Administration and Supervision from Trevecca Nazarene University. In addition, Mr. Jackson earned a Certificate in the Principles of Leadership at the prestigious Principal's Institute at Harvard University, further solidifying his leadership abilities.

Beginning his career in education, Mr. Jackson taught English, Health, and Physical Education at Memphis Northside High and Sheffield High before transitioning into administration. His leadership journey included roles as Assistant Principal at Lanier Jr. High and Interim Principal at Mitchell High, Orleans Elementary, Coro Lake Elementary, and Ida B. Wells Academy. He served as the Principal of Fairley High from 1998 to 2011, where his transformative leadership helped the school rise from the State's Probation School List to the Good Standing List, resulting in significant financial bonuses for employees. His tenure was marked by high achievements, with Fairley High earning the Memphis Education Association School of the Year award in both 1999 and 2010. Additionally, he was named a Turnaround School Leader by the Tennessee Department of Education.

Mr. Jackson served on the TSSAA Legislative Council from 2007 to 2011, contributing to the governance of high school sports in Tennessee. He also served as a basketball official for the Memphis/Shelby County Basketball Officials Association for five years.

In 2013, he became the Director of Athletics at LeMoyne-Owen College before retiring in 2021. He has continued to do consulting work for both the West Memphis school district as well as the Memphis-Shelby Co. school system.

Jinx Cockerham, Coach

Her legendary career at Father Ryan High School made a lasting impression on high school athletics, particularly in volleyball and girls' basketball. With an extraordinary 40 seasons as Head Volleyball Coach and 42 years as a girls' basketball coach—33 of those as Head Coach—Jinx's leadership and accomplishments have helped define Father Ryan as a powerhouse in both sports. A trailblazer in high school athletics, she played an instrumental role in the development of volleyball as a TSSAA-sanctioned sport, expanding opportunities for female athletes across the state of Tennessee.

Jinx continued her academic and athletic journey at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU), graduating in 1970. She joined the Father Ryan faculty that fall, teaching typing, shorthand, and business, while quickly establishing herself as a respected educator and coach. Over 46 years at Father Ryan, Jinx built a legacy not just as a coach, but as a mentor and leader who would forever shape the lives of her students and athletes.

As the Head Volleyball Coach from 1976 to 2015, Jinx built a championship program that became a beacon of success. Under her leadership, the volleyball team won five TSSAA State Championships (1992, 1999, 2004, 2006, and 2015), cementing Father Ryan's dominance in the sport. Her ability to develop players and teams led to a reputation for excellence that resonated far beyond the Father Ryan community.

In addition to her volleyball success, Jinx's influence in girls' basketball was equally profound. Serving as Head Coach from 1980 to 2013 and Assistant Coach from 1971 to 1980, she helped guide the team to three TSSAA State Basketball semifinals (1998, 1999, and 2003), reaching the championship game in 1998. Her teams amassed over 15 region championships and 20 district championships during her tenure, further establishing her as one of the region's premier basketball coaches.

Jinx's career has been marked by numerous accolades, including receiving The Tennessean's Fred Russell Lifetime Achievement Award in 2016, recognizing her contributions to the community and sports. Her legacy was further solidified when she was inducted into the Father Ryan Hall of Fame as part of the inaugural class in 2019. She is also a member of the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Hall of Fame and received the TSSAA A. F. Bridges Award in 2000-2001. She has received many Coach of the Year honors, including the prestigious honor from the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS).

Donald Dodgen, Coach

Coach Dodgen's remarkable 38-year coaching career stands as a testament to his dedication, leadership, and influence on student-athletes at the high school and college levels. With a career that spans multiple schools and sports, he has had an enduring impact on both the

athletic programs and the communities he served. His legacy as a basketball coach, athletic director, and mentor has made him one of the most respected figures in Tennessee high school athletics.

A standout athlete in his own right, Coach Dodgen played at Tennessee Wesleyan, where his talent on the court helped propel him into the spotlight as both a player and coach. His achievements were honored with inductions into multiple halls of fame, including the Tennessee Wesleyan Hall of Fame (as both player and coach), Gatlinburg-Pittman High School Hall of Fame (as a player), Farragut High School Hall of Fame (as a coach and administrator), and the KIL Coaches Association Hall of Fame.

Coach Dodgen's coaching journey took him to several schools, where he coached basketball and girls' softball. Starting at McMinn County High School, then moving on to Gatlinburg Pittman High School, and eventually spending the majority of his career at Farragut High School, he left an unforgettable impact on each place that he served. As a basketball coach, his overall record of 655 wins and 309 losses speaks to his consistency and excellence. At Farragut, where he spent the bulk of his coaching tenure, he compiled an impressive 308 career wins, including a trip to the state tournament in 1982 and multiple region and district championships.

In 2010, Coach Dodgen transitioned into the role of Athletic Director at Farragut High School, where he has overseen the growth and success of the school's athletic programs. Under his leadership, Farragut has won 13 state championships across various sports. His leadership has been instrumental in creating a culture of excellence, and Farragut High School's success on the state level is a direct result of his vision and dedication to student-athletes.

Pat Simpson, Coach

A legendary figure in the world of high school athletics, Coach Pat Simpson has left an enduring legacy through his exceptional contributions as a wrestler, coach, and mentor. A proud graduate of Father Ryan High School, Class of 1974, Coach Simpson was a key member of Father Ryan's State Champion wrestling teams in 1971 (freshman year) and 1974 (senior year). His excellence on the mat continued at the collegiate level, where he became a trailblazer for Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU). He won the NCAA Regional Championship in 1979—making history as the only MTSU wrestler to claim a regional title—and became the first Blue Raider to compete in the NCAA Championships, a remarkable achievement that would set the tone for his future as a coach.

In 1979, Coach Simpson returned to his alma mater, Father Ryan, where he would dedicate himself to building a powerhouse wrestling program that has since earned legendary status. As the head wrestling coach at Father Ryan from 1979 to the present, Coach Simpson has led the team to 22 State Championships—12 in traditional wrestling and 10 in duals. Under his leadership, Father Ryan has become one of the most successful wrestling programs in the state, with 63 individual state champions who have collectively won an astounding 93 state titles.

In addition to his success on the mat, Coach Simpson has been a pillar of leadership in the athletic department. His coaching excellence extends beyond wrestling; he served as the head softball coach at Father Ryan from 1987 to 1997, leading the team to its first state championship in 1995 and a runner-up finish in 1996. Over his 11 years at the helm of the softball program, he accumulated more than 190 wins and built a foundation of excellence in multiple sports at Father Ryan.

In 2006, Coach Simpson was inducted into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame for his "Lifetime Service to Wrestling," a fitting honor for a coach whose contributions have shaped the careers of countless athletes. He was also named National Prep Coach of the Year by the National Wrestling Coaches Association on two occasions, in 2016 and 2023, an extraordinary achievement that highlights his sustained excellence in coaching.

Coach Simpson was inducted into the Middle Tennessee State University Athletics Hall of Fame in 2021, becoming the first wrestler to earn this prestigious honor. This recognition places him alongside some of the greatest athletes in MTSU history, including his former teacher, Boots Donnelly (Father Ryan Class of 1961).

Jim Fox, Official

Jim Fox has a remarkable 40-year career as a TSSAA official. Starting in 1981, Mr. Fox's dedication to officiating spanned four decades, earning him a reputation as one of the most respected and revered officials in the state. Throughout his tenure, he officiated an impressive 11 state championships/tournaments across three sports—seven in baseball, two in basketball, and two in football.

One of Mr. Fox's crowning achievements came in 1993, when he completed the rare and coveted trifecta of working state tournaments in basketball, baseball, and football all within the same calendar year. This extraordinary feat is a testament to his versatility and commitment to officiating at the highest levels across multiple sports. Throughout his career, he also worked numerous playoff games, including five semifinal games in football, earning him the trust and admiration of his colleagues, coaches, and supervisors alike.

In addition to his high school officiating career, Mr. Fox spent 28 years officiating collegiate basketball at the NAIA, JUCO, and Division III levels. Over those years, he officiated hundreds of games, as well as numerous tournaments and championships, further cementing his legacy as one of the premier officials in the state.

Throughout his illustrious career, Mr. Fox's dedication to his craft and his community was recognized by numerous organizations. He was inducted into the Knoxville Football Officiating Association Hall of Fame in 2021 and received the Knoxville Quarterback Club High School Official of the Year award in 1993. In the same year, he was honored with the TSSAA Distinguished Service Award as an official, acknowledging his exceptional contributions to the field of officiating.

Thomas Frierson, Official

With a remarkable 50-year career as a TSSAA official, Thomas Frierson has established himself as one of the most respected and dedicated officials in Tennessee high school sports. Over the course of his distinguished career, he has officiated in multiple sports, including baseball, basketball, football, softball, and volleyball, and continues to contribute to the world of officiating today by working in softball, football, and volleyball.

His passion for the sport and dedication to excellence is evident in his work as a TSSAA Basketball Supervisor and Assigning Officer (2022-Present), where he oversees more than 1,000 games a season.

He has also taken on the responsibility of training and preparing officials for success, conducting biannual TSSAA Play-Day training sessions and an annual TSSAA Officials Training Camp, where he helps refine the skills of both veteran and rookie officials. His leadership in these areas has made him a trusted and invaluable figure within the officiating community.

He has been named the TSSAA's A. F. Bridges "Official of the Year" in 2000, 2006, and 2012, recognizing his exceptional work on the field and his commitment to the integrity of high school sports. He has officiated over 1,200 basketball games throughout his career, including numerous appearances at the TSSAA Basketball State Tournament. He was selected to work the TSSAA Basketball State Finals on four occasions, a testament to his ability to handle the pressure and responsibility of officiating the state's biggest games. Additionally, his work in postseason basketball includes 38 appearances in sectional and substate games.

Mr. Frierson has also served as a TSSAA postseason football official, 5 years of service in postseason softball, and 2 years of service in postseason volleyball, where he has consistently demonstrated his versatility and commitment to officiating across multiple sports.

As a member of multiple officiating associations, including the Columbia/Lawrenceburg Basketball Association, South Central Basketball Association, Columbia Football Association, Central Football Association, Midwest Volleyball Association, and Columbia Softball Association, Mr. Frierson has been an integral part of the officiating network in Tennessee. His broad involvement with these organizations has further solidified his legacy as one of the most influential officials in the state.

Chip Walters, Contributor

For over 45 years, Chip Walters has been a defining voice across Middle Tennessee, leaving an unforgettable mark on the region's sports broadcasting landscape. His career, highlighted by dedication, passion, and versatility, spans numerous sports, events, and communities, making him one of the most respected figures in Tennessee media.

The 2024-25 season marks a significant milestone in Walters' career—his 33rd year broadcasting for Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) and his 16th year as the "Voice of the Blue Raiders." Walters' journey with MTSU athletics began in 1991, when he first joined the university's broadcasting team as a football color analyst. After six years in this role, Walters transitioned to the play-by-play booth in 2009, where he has been the voice of both MTSU football and men's basketball ever since.

Beyond his play-by-play duties, Walters has taken on a variety of other roles that have made him an integral part of the MTSU and Middle Tennessee community. He hosts the *Derek Mason* and *Nick McDevitt* radio shows, serves as emcee for numerous Blue Raider events, and hosts *The Roundtable*, a weekly radio show on Murfreesboro's WGNS that has become a local staple.

A microphone veteran with more than 40 years of experience, Walters' influence extends far beyond MTSU. As a student at MTSU, Walters began his career calling local high school games in the area, a passion that would carry him into his professional career. He served as the public address announcer for the TSSAA Blue Cross Bowl and the Boys and Girls State Basketball Tournaments, and more recently, he has been a play-by-play announcer for the TSSAA Network and NFHS Network broadcasts of state championship events in football, basketball, and baseball. Walters has also emceed numerous TSSAA events, including the prestigious Mr. and Miss Basketball awards ceremony. Chip has also served as a host on the *TSSAA Spring Fling HQ* broadcast, a role he has held since its inception.

Before joining MTSU, Walters got his start in broadcasting at WKRM/WKOM in his hometown of Columbia, Tennessee, where he called football and basketball games for Columbia Central High School while still a student. Walters honed his skills further during his time at MTSU, calling games for Shelbyville Central on WHAL-AM and for Murfreesboro-area high schools on WGNS. After college, Walters spent five years with the Vanderbilt University football and basketball broadcast team, further developing his craft before returning to Middle Tennessee to serve his community and the TSSAA in such an impactful way.

[Sports News](#)[General News](#)

TSSAA announces formation of student advisory committee

20-member committee of student-athletes will meet for the first time in May

April 23, 2025

The TSSAA is proud to announce the formation of its first ever Student Advisory Committee. The committee is composed of 20 student-athletes from member schools across the state and will meet for the first time in early May of this year.

There are six members from each grand division (East, Middle, West) and one unified pair. The committee members represent 12 TSSAA sanctioned sports, including three unified sports.

The committee will represent student-athletes and the TSSAA, ensuring their perspectives are heard in governance and addressing key issues such as rules, regulations, and special initiatives. Their mission is to advocate for students, enhance sportsmanship, and foster a safe, ethical, and competitive environment both on and off the field.

“We are excited to have a group that will have a recognized voice for the nearly 150,000 student-athletes that participate in TSSAA sanctioned sports,” stated Mark Reeves, TSSAA Executive Director. “Ultimately, the organization’s purpose is to serve student-athletes by providing opportunities that will enable them to become the best version of themselves.”

Discussion to form the committee began upon the retirement of Stephen Bargatze in 2022. Stephen was the coordinator of the Student Services Program, “The Right Team.” This TSSAA program dealt with student leadership development, alcohol, tobacco and drug prevention education, and sportsmanship and citizenship education. Bargatze’s retirement left a vacancy that needed to be filled.

After the addition of two new employees, Lamar Lee and Lexie Crawford, the ability to pursue the establishment of a Student Advisory Committee became more of a reality. Lexie and Lamar were eager to take part in forming the committee and will continue to play a significant role moving forward.

Guidelines for the committee were presented to the Board of Control for approval and schools were informed about the launching of the committee at the beginning of this year.

In addition to the first meeting this May, the committee members will participate in multiple meetings throughout the upcoming school year. The committee members will give input regarding TSSAA rules and regulations and actively participate in TSSAA campaigns (Officials Appreciation, Mental Health, Bullying, Sports Medicine Appreciation, and Drinking & Driving.) They will be charged with promoting a positive image of student participation in interscholastic competition. They will also be given the opportunity to volunteer at state championship events throughout the school year.

The 20 committee members were selected from nearly 200 applications that were received by the TSSAA. All applicants were required to have a 3.0 GPA or higher and be a rising junior or senior. Other criteria include demonstrating leadership within their school, strong character and commitment to sportsmanship and integrity, and two recommendation letters from their Principal, Athletic Director, teacher, or coach.

2025-2026 TSSAA Student Advisory Committee

Emmalee Lentile - Harding Academy

Ethan Stickles - Houston High School

Henry Cannon - Memphis University School

Myla Thompson - Memphis Middle College High School

Hope Tusa - Henry County High School

Mariah Valentine - Lake County High School

Kimora Fields - Bradley Central High School

Jenna Gonzales - Bearden High School

Maud Fiorello - Girls Preparatory School

Grayson Gregory - Webb School of Knoxville

Reese Russell - Anderson County High School

Austin Glass - Volunteer High School

Bryson Azarigian - Montgomery Central High School

Hezzie Lee - Christ Presbyterian Academy

Avelyn Welch - Merrol Hyde Magnet School

Faith Ivy - Goodpasture Christian School

Brindley Duncan - Tullahoma High School

Brady Swallows - Warren County High School

Daniel Varnell - Nolensville High School

Brandon Brooks - Nolensville High School



General News

Meeting Agendas/Minutes News

Legislative Council meets to address proposed bylaw changes

Residence Rule addressed

April 8, 2025

The TSSAA Legislative Council met at the TSSAA office building in Hermitage on Tuesday, April 8 and voted on six proposed changes to the TSSAA Bylaws.

The Council voted to remove the Residence Rule from the bylaws (the Residence Rule is currently found in Article II, Section 11 of the TSSAA Bylaws). A transfer student with an athletic record would still need to meet the provisions of Article II, Sections 12 and 13.

A proposed change to Article I (Membership) of the TSSAA Bylaws submitted by Christ Presbyterian Academy was approved. The change is that the the method of determining classification shall be the same for all schools within a Division.

A full summary of the meeting can be found by clicking on the link below.

Documents

[Legislative Council Summary \(April 8, 2025\) \(PDF\)](#)



DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

Sports News

General News

Longtime tennis official honored for distinguished service

McKinney has worked 11 TSSAA Spring Fling State Championships

April 2, 2025

His own prep playing career consisted solely of time on his high school baseball and basketball teams.

There was even a trip as a freshman to the Kentucky High School State Tournament at Freedom Hall in Louisville, the only of Ron McKinney's four years not spent in Tennessee.

Memories are plenty. But McKinney's first time ever officiating a tennis match, scratch that, a district tournament, for the TSSAA still brings a chuckle.

After all, McKinney expected to be the supporting help.

Instead, he was the lone official. This, after tennis friend and occasional foe on the Nashville club circuit, Clyde McCampbell, convinced McKinney to lend a hand officiating high school tennis.

More than 20 years later, and as McKinney is honored as a TSSAA Distinguished Service Award recipient, the memory lingers in vivid detail.

"It was kind of funny, Clyde asked me to do it and back then, the certification process was not quite as involved as it is now," McKinney said. "I think maybe you just took a simple test and off you went."

"Well, my first assignment, Clyde asked me to go to Shelbyville and officiate a district high school tournament. I assumed either he or someone experienced would be there with me. But I get down there, and I'm by myself. And I kind of had to learn from the get-go."

The education was immediate. McKinney remembered walking out onto the court and inspecting the setup to ensure it met state high school tennis regulations, a move that prompted a friendly message from the host coach.

"It was really kind of amusing, because I was kind of surprised to be there by myself," said McKinney, who played baseball and basketball at Columbia Central and graduated from MTSU with a degree in business administration. "The coach at Shelbyville then was a great guy, very helpful and understanding and as I was going through the routine, measured the nets and all of this, he said, 'Ron, you can measure these nets but we don't have any way to adjust them.' That was my first experience."



Ron McKinney

An Estill Springs, Tennessee, native who also lived in Winchester, Fayetteville and Huntingdon as well as Columbia, with one year in Fulton, Kentucky, interspersed for his father's job as retail store manager for National Stores, McKinney still is amassing tennis memories.

He's worked 11 TSSAA Spring Fling State Championships and logged seven years as a head referee. He's still officiating collegiate tennis matches and holds calendar dates in April for a trio of matches at his alma mater, MTSU, as well as a couple more at Tennessee Tech.

"Over the years, I've officiated a lot and now it is mostly college stuff," said McKinney, quick to thank his wife, Ann, of 60 years for her understanding, as well as that of his daughter, Kimberly, a runner and yoga enthusiast. "I did some USTA stuff when I started helping high schools locally and down in Shelbyville, but the Tennessee High School State Tournament is my favorite event of the year.

"I love the kids being part of the team and it's a big deal to them and you've got the parents and grandparents and all of that stuff. "

TSSAA proudly salutes Ron McKinney for his many years serving as a TSSAA official.

AUTHOR

John Brice



Sports News

General News

Gene Menees announces retirement as Assistant Executive Director of TSSAA

After more than three decades with the organization, Menees will step away at the end of August of this year

April 13, 2025

Gene Menees, Assistant Executive Director of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association (TSSAA), has announced his retirement, effective August 31, 2025, after serving in that role for 34 years for the organization.

Mr. Menees was hired as an Assistant Executive Director of TSSAA in 1991. As the association's administrator for baseball and basketball, Menees assigned officials for tournaments, oversaw officials camps, conducted rules meetings, and organized and directed state championship events in both baseball and basketball. He also worked closely with the state's officials, coaches, supervisors, and school administrators. Among other responsibilities with the organization, Menees was in charge of the organization's sportsmanship initiative. He also oversaw the registration of all officials.

"It's truly hard to put into words what Gene has meant to this organization—because, honestly, you just can't," stated TSSAA Executive Director, Mark Reeves. "While he's mostly known for his contributions to basketball, baseball, and all things officiating, his impact stretches far beyond that. Gene has faithfully served our membership in countless ways and has been a tremendous mentor to me personally. His presence in this office and across the state will be deeply missed."



Gene Menees



Gene Menees, Bernard Childress, Ronnie Carter

Prior to joining the TSSAA staff, he was a teacher and coach at DCA and Davidson Academy in Nashville. He played baseball at Vanderbilt University and was drafted by the San Diego Padres. Menees spent seven years in professional baseball, including one year in Class A, four years in Class AA, and two years in Class AAA. After signing with the Cincinnati Reds organization in 1978, he played two years with the Nashville Sounds. In addition to his duties with the TSSAA, Menees officiated basketball at the collegiate level until 2018.

In 2016, Menees was honored by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) with their prestigious NFHS Citation Award.

Mr. Menees, age 72, has been married to the former Patsy Corr Menees for the past 48 years. They have two daughters, Sara Miles (Trey) and Katie Menees Frazier, and four grandchildren, Hutson Miles (20), Harper Kate Miles (18), Max Frazier (15) and Molly Frazier (14).

TSSAA thanks and salutes Gene Menees for his many years of service to the association and to student-athletes across the state.



Sports News

General News

TSSAA celebrates 100 year anniversary

Executive Director Mark Reeves reflects on the centennial celebration

April 11, 2025

Today, April 11, 2025, is the 100th anniversary of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association. On this day, 100 years ago, several principals and superintendents adopted a constitution and bylaws at the Tennessee State Teachers Association meeting. This effort was led by G.C. Carney, principal of Nashville Central High School, and A.J. Smith, superintendent of the Clarksville School System. The organization aimed to agree upon principles for interscholastic competition that each administration would enforce to keep education-based athletics in its proper perspective while attempting to foster fair competition. Those fundamental principles are the organization's foundation and still ring true today.

As you would on any birthday, I encourage you to take some time and reflect. What are some of your fondest memories as a coach or administrator? What memories do you cherish from your days as a student athlete? When were you inspired by those that you lead? When were you inspired by those who have led you? What experiences and relationships have kept you coming back during difficult times? What is a story from your school community that could inspire those who wear the uniform and would still ring true in the hearts of those who cheer from the stands?

On this one-hundredth anniversary of the organization, please take some time to think about those who got you where you are today, the student athletes who have kept you there, and those you have yet to meet. Your influence is far-reaching. The ripple effect that you will have and already have had on the next generation is something to be proud of and to build on.

We also encourage you to review one of the country's most extensive collections of interscholastic athletics history.

[TSSAA Championship History](#).

Here, you can walk down memory lane for your school community and reflect on some moments you may remember. We want to build on the robust history of the schools that founded the organization. You can also contribute to this collection by submitting information from schools in your area using the link below.

[Current and Former Member Schools](#)

It may be a little cliché, but we all stand on the shoulders of those who came before us. Let's be intentional in thanking those who have carved our path and purposeful in contributing to memorializing the history of your respected school community. While we're at it, let's be thankful for the influence that education-based athletics has had on our lives and committed to providing those same opportunities for future generations!

Happy Birthday TSSAA!

AUTHOR

Mark Reeves