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Tiger leader coaches baby girl into the world. | **D1**

MAY 30, 2010
COMMERCIALAPPEAL.COM

GATES FOUNDATION GRANT

Early start gives city schools edge in hiring star teachers

With new office's help, openings filled at toughest locations

By **JANE ROBERTS**
robertsj@commercialappeal.com

Hamilton High, one of the most troubled high schools in the state, is not a place where teacher candidates line up to work.

This spring, the principal filled all 13 vacancies — including those for hard-to-find math teachers — before school was

out.

One, an algebra 1 teacher from Oberlin College, scored so high on a national teacher certification test that the testing company flagged her scores.

The 6-foot-3 principal, Michael Bates, is so pleased, he's nearly skipping around the South Memphis campus.

"The quality of candidates we interviewed allowed us to get what I believe

are some of the best mathematics teachers out there."

Hamilton, on the failing-school list for eight consecutive years, hired early in the season this year, which gave it a crack at teachers who typically get snapped up — mostly by suburban schools — because they are good.

As late as last year, MCS hired 70 percent of its new staff a month before

school started, leaving it with applicants who more often have lower GPAs than early signers, or who don't have degrees in the subjects they are to teach — or both.

The key turned out to be asking teachers in February what their plans were for fall. The district was flooded when 67 percent of teachers responded.

Please see **HAMILTON, A5**

FIGHT ISN'T OVER

Family battles to bring home remains of WWII bombardier



Courtesy of Leslie Kelley Roane

Last view of John C. Kelley alive: Taken from film footage of bombing mission during September 1943. Kelley is on the right in full leather flight suit, eating a sandwich, talking and smiling. He died three months later as a prisoner of war.

By **MICHAEL LOLLAR** / lollar@commercialappeal.com

WAR WAS PERSONAL in the 1940s. After school, 10-year-old Annie Laura Jones and her friends pulled a red toy wagon up and down the streets of Memphis collecting cans and scrap iron to be melted down to make bullets.

"We were involved in the war effort. It wasn't just something you would sometimes read about in the newspaper," says Jones. "I remember so vividly the horrible waste of so many fine young men having to die."

Her family went without things they had taken for granted — Hershey bars, bubble

gum, sugar, leather shoes, rubber tires. The raw materials were used to feed and clothe soldiers and fight the war. Jones, 78, was in the fourth grade when her father picked her up early at Snowden School to tell her that her family would be hanging a star in the

Please see **WAR, A5**

MORE ON THIS STORY

For more information about First Lt. John C. Kelley and his family's quest to bring him home to Garland, Tenn., go to this website: johnckelley.wordpress.com. For more photos of Kelley, click the link for this story at commercialappeal.com.

'Top kill' failure a major setback

'This scares everybody,' says BP chief operating officer

By **LESLIE KAUFMAN**
AND **CLIFFORD KRAUSS**
New York Times

NEW ORLEANS — In a demoralizing setback, BP engineers said on Saturday that the "top kill" effort to stem the flow of oil gushing from a well a mile beneath the surface of the Gulf of Mexico had failed and after consultation with government officials they had decided to move to another strategy.

Doug Suttles, BP's chief operating officer, said at a news conference that the engineers would try once again to solve the problem with a containment dome and that it could take four to seven days for that dome to be in place.

"After three full days of attempting top kill we now believe it is time to move on to the next of our options," Suttles said.

Suttles said the operation had pumped 30,000 tons of mud into the well and yet had failed to stop it from flowing.

"This scares everybody — the fact that we can't make this well to stop flowing," Suttles conceded in a media briefing Saturday evening.

Rear Adm. Mary Landry of the Coast Guard called the failure "very disappointing."

The decision to abandon the top kill technique, the most ambitious effort yet to plug the well, comes as the latest in a series of

Please see **OIL SPILL, A3**

INSIDE

Rig report: Doomed rig troubled before blast, sinking. | **A3**

Shrimp: Troubled industry faces major issues. | **A3**

Kane convinced he had solved the mortgage puzzle

By **TREVOR AARONSON**
Special to The Commercial Appeal

Ten months before the bloody West Memphis gun battle that left two police officers dead, Jerry R. Kane began fielding questions from distressed homeowners around the country.

Angela Stark, an associate of imprisoned tax protester Irwin Schiff, hosted Kane on a monthly Internet call-in show that attracted as many as two dozen participants.

While Schiff contended the Internal Revenue Service had no authority to collect taxes, Kane argued homeowners didn't have to pay on their home loans because the banks had securitized the loans by selling them into globally traded

financial instruments.

In a sense, Kane told homeowners, the banks had already been paid for the loan, so they didn't owe any money after all.

During Kane's July 8, 2009, call-in show, a listener questioned the Ohio man's teachings, since mortgage contracts allow banks to sell loans as they continue to act as the servicer of those loans — a standard arrangement for millions of U.S. home owners with mortgages.

"If you're not going to make the payments, I mean, how does it work?" the caller asked Kane. "You made an agreement to do that."

"Well, you also made an agreement that you could prepay it, didn't you?" Kane asked.

Please see **KANE, A5**

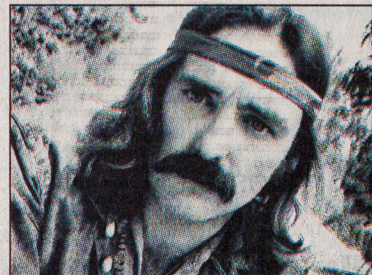
IN TODAY'S NEWSPAPER

Hopper was cinema rebel

Cancer kills him: Best known as a biker in "Easy Rider," Dennis Hopper took on many offbeat roles in his career, which was punctuated by feuds with collaborators. | **A2**

Wendi C. Thomas: Black women struggle to pay the bills, much less save money. One recent study found that the median wealth for never-married women of color, ages 18-64, is zero. | **V1**

Go West: South Main is drawing small shop owners from East Memphis and Germantown. They're attracted by incentives, cheap rents and quirkiness. | **C1**



Associated Press files

Pictured here in 1969 as "Billy," one of two bikers in "Easy Rider," Dennis Hopper's use of drugs accelerated even as he played a drug smuggler/user.

Civilian deaths: The military reports that "inaccurate and unprofessional" work by Predator drone operators led to an Afghan strike that killed 23 civilians. | **A4**



Back and forth

Stormy with occasional sun. High 90. Low 71.

DETAILS, D14



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