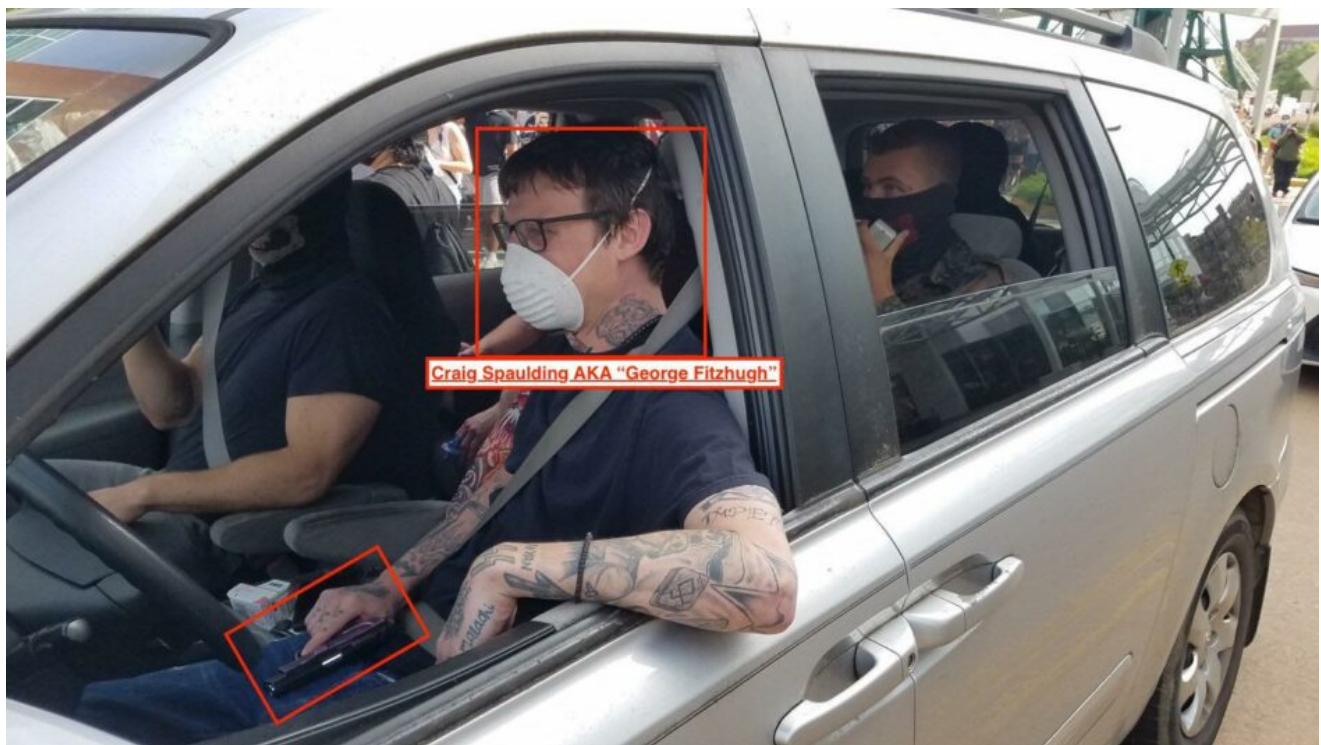




# Details scant in neo-Nazi's gunshot death

Betty Bean | April 14,

2021 | [Knox Scene \(https://www.knoxtntoday.com/category/knox-scene/\)](https://www.knoxtntoday.com/category/knox-scene/)



**Craig Spaulding at the wheel**

The Nazi death head crawling up the late Craig Spaulding's neck said it all.

Not that he was shy about announcing himself as a proselytizing racist; but the skull and swastika tattoo – adapted from the Totenkopf images worn by Hitler's SS – needed no explanation, particularly when paired with his favorite Volksfront T-shirt, which he frequently wore when he and friends went

out on the town to defend Confederate monuments or harass Black people, gay people, immigrants, anti-fascists or most anybody but White Anglo-Saxon Protestants.

He also sported an "Iron Guard" grid tattooed on his forehead that was identical to symbols left behind in 2019 by arsonists who torched a building at the Highlander Center, a historic civil rights training school famously attended by Martin Luther King Jr.



**Craig B. Spaulding**

In summary, Spaulding, whom witnesses say was present at the 2017 "Unite the Right" rally at Charlottesville, Virginia, where the crowd chanted, "Jews will not replace us," was a well-known racist activist, at both the local and national level, and is mentioned on the Southern Poverty Law Center's Hate Watch site. Here's a **[television clip \(https://www.wate.com/news/2-dogs-shot-in-east-knox-county-neighborhood/\)](https://www.wate.com/news/2-dogs-shot-in-east-knox-county-neighborhood/)** from 2015 when he shot his neighbor's dogs.



**Spaulding at a rally**

So, when rumors leaked out last weekend that the 33-year-old married father of three had died, members of local anti-fascist groups took notice, and started looking for answers. First, it was thought to have been a traffic accident, but when no announcements came from any local law enforcement agencies that theory became increasingly unlikely.

On Monday, we requested and obtained a brief, redacted incident report from the Knox County Sheriff's Office. It clarified the who, what, where and when – but left the how and the why dangling.

Here's what we know from the public record: Three deputies arrived at 2329 Belt Road in South Knoxville at 8:14 p.m. Thursday, April 8, to investigate a report of an accidental shooting. The victim, Craig Briggs Spaulding, had already been taken to UT Medical Center. The weapon was a Beretta. The name of the person who called in the shooting is redacted, although one witness – Rodney Joseph Eller, 75, is mentioned by name. A second page was added a short time later saying Spaulding was dead.

The Belt Road property belongs to Robert D. Nichols. Also listed as an owner is **Ragnarök Tactical (<https://www.facebook.com/RagnarokTacticalTN/>)**, which paid \$20.06 in property taxes in 2015. Ragnarök Tactical is a gun-dealing business that operates on weekends in a mall in Kodak. It advertises as "your one-stop shop to customizing your AR-15."

The Knoxville Radical Alliance, which tracked Spaulding's activities, reported that Spaulding, who had a lengthy criminal history, worked in the Ragnarök Tactical booth at a Knoxville Expo Center gun show in January. The name Ragnarök is taken from an apocalyptic Norse myth that foresees a violent, end-time battle and the rebirth of a new world. Norse mythology is popular among the groups with whom Spaulding associated.

A source who knew Spaulding from face-to-face confrontations at public events describes him as "very sincere in his Nazism. He definitely tried to evangelize it." She and others who knew him are concerned that any memorial service could draw a crowd of racist activists to Knoxville.

Spaulding leaves a wife and three young children.

**Betty Bean (<mailto:bbeanster@aol.com>)** writes an opinion column for *KnoxTNToday.com*.



Add a comment...



**Greg Trostle**

Great writing betty I dont think I'm gonna miss that tool bag.

Like · Reply · 2 · 2w



**Stephanie Carpenter**

Couldn't happen to a nicer guy.

Like · Reply · 2 · 2w



**James Corcoran**

Could the name that's redacted be a minor?

Like · Reply · 2w



**Elizabeth Bean**

No way to know without an inside source. Yet.

Like · Reply · 1 · 2w



**Kathy Campbell**

Prayers for his wife and children this is so so sad .

Like · Reply · 2w



**Shannon Harrington**

The death of a well known nazi is sad? They are better off without him.

Like · Reply · 6 · 2w



**Chris Jarrett**

I just hope his kids can escape from all the horrible things he taught them, but something tells me that a person willing to be married to an outspoken, actual nazi is gonna be just as garbage as he was.

Like · Reply · 7 · 2w



**Jacob William Holt**

Do you approve of the lifestyle he chose?

Like · Reply · 0w

Craig B. Spaulding  
(<https://www.knoxtntoday.com/tag/craig-b-spaulding/>)

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## KNOX NOTES



**Knox County Board of Education** has a called meeting at 10 a.m. Friday, April 30, for one purpose – to eliminate the mask mandate for students and staff, effective immediately.

Currently, the requirement for face coverings would “sunset” on Aug. 1, 2021. The agenda item Friday would move the sunset to April 30, 2021. At a recent meeting, board chair Susan Horn and members Mike McMillan, Patti Bounds and Betsy Henderson did not wear a mask, violating their own policy and the county’s health board recommendations.

The community is divided on this issue with some parents saying they won't send their kids to school without a mask requirement. No one under age 16 has been cleared for a vaccination. Tuesday, May 25, is the last day for students in this school year. If the BOE must politicize mask-wearing, surely it can wait four weeks to change the rules. Friday's meeting is at the City County Building so it will be televised on CTV, Comcast channel 12.

**Mayor Glenn Jacobs** will present his FY 21-22 budget at 9:30 a.m. Tuesday, May 4, at the Karns Sportspark, 8050 Oak Ridge Hwy.

**Outdoor Senior Job Fair** for anyone 50+ will be held 9-11 a.m. Wednesday, May 5, at the CAC Ross Building parking lot, 2247 Western Ave.

**South Knox Alliance** will meet from 6-8 p.m. today (4/29) with **Karen Terry New Door Realty LLC** (<https://www.facebook.com/TNHomesbyKaren/>). It's a meet-n-greet for the South Knoxville business community. Light refreshments, door prizes and business

card exchange.

**North Hills Garden Club** is hosting its yearly plant sale on Saturday, May 1, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 2511 North Park Boulevard. The **event**

**(<https://www.facebook.com/NorthHillsGardenClub>)** will take place rain or shine.

Residents of historic North Hills donate different varieties of hardy perennial plants and shrubs harvested from their own gardens.

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