



(L to R): Stephanie Slack-Allen, DNP, APRN, PMHNP-BC; Chris Blount, PA-C; Elly Riley, DO; Lori Holladay, NP; Jill Bennett, NP; Katharine Bullock, FNP; and Emily Ezell, DO.



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GRANDPARENTS' Day
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

Tuesday, September 8, 2026

McKENZIE, TENNESSEE

Vol. 156 / No. 36 / 75¢

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McKENZIE WEATHER

SEPT. 8-14 • NWS FORECAST

TUE SEPT 8		94°/72°	0%
WED SEPT 9		95°/73°	0%
THU SEPT 10		93°/69°	60%
FRI SEPT 11		90°/68°	40%
SAT SEPT 12		91°/68°	30%
SUN SEPT 13		92°/67°	20%
MON SEPT 14		90°/67°	0%

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QUOTE

"There is nothing worse than a sharp image of a fuzzy concept."
— Ansel Adams

McKenzie Purchases Life-Saving Cardiac Equipment

BY JASON AND BRITTANY MARTIN
banner@mckenziebanner.com

McKENZIE (September 3) — When a person suffers a serious cardiac emergency, minutes — and sometimes seconds — can make the difference between life and death.

The City of McKenzie is working to make those minutes count with the purchase of a cardiac monitor and defibrillator that will allow local first responders to begin a higher

level of emergency cardiac care while waiting for an ambulance to arrive.

McKenzie Police and McKenzie Fire and Rescue have partnered to purchase a certified refurbished Zoll X-Series Defibrillator for \$19,526.60. The equipment will provide first responders with real-time information about a patient's condition and help bridge the critical gap between a 911 call, the arrival of an ambulance and treatment at Baptist Memorial

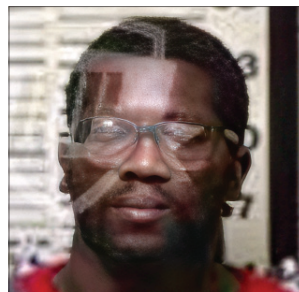
Hospital-Carroll County.

The purchase comes at no expense to McKenzie taxpayers. The city is using money from its Safe Street account, which consists of revenue generated by traffic cameras.

A new cardiac monitor would cost approximately \$48,868. By purchasing a certified refurbished unit, the city saved approximately \$29,341.40

See **CARDIAC** on Page 6

HUNTINGDON



Rodney Wright

Rodney Wright Arrested in Cash Saver Robbery

HUNTINGDON — Rodney Wright is in custody facing serious charges following a violent armed robbery at the local Cash Savers Grocery store late last month.

On August 26, 2026, at

See **ROBBERY** on Page 6

CENTRAL ELEMENTARY



Debra Robertson

Teacher Faces Assault Charge Involving Pre-K Student

BY JASON R. MARTIN
jmartin@mckenziebanner.com

BRUCETON (September 2) — A Pre-K teacher at Hol-low Rock-Bruceton Central Elementary School faces an assault charge following an

See **TEACHER** on Page 6

WEAKLEY COUNTY



Khristi Dawn Cunningham

Cunningham Indicted in Death of Deputy

Prosecutors Seek Death Penalty

DRESDEN (September 1) — A Weakley County Grand Jury has indicted Khristi Dawn Cunningham in connection with the January shooting death of

See **DEPUTY** on Page 6

GLEASON CONTINUES ANNUAL CELEBRATION



Miss Tater Town and Court. Photo by Joel Washburn/The Banner

Tater Town Special Marks 52nd Year

GLEASON — Gleason Gazelle's 52nd annual Tater Town Special concluded over the weekend following a week full of events during a very hot weather week.

Monday, August 31, began with a block party in downtown Gleason at

6 p.m. It included a costume contest at 7:30 p.m., children's chalk art, karaoke, food trucks, and music.

September 1 featured the annual Tater Town Special Car Show, which started at 7 p.m. in downtown Gleason. The day also included a Power

Wheel Fun Race at 6:30 p.m. at Snider Park, as well as a Youth Glow Run at 7 p.m. at Snider Park.

Youth Bingo took place on Wednesday, September 2, at the

See **TATER** on Page 6

Webb School Alumni Hold Annual Homecoming

McKENZIE — The Webb School Alumni Association hosted its annual homecoming and General Assembly over Labor Day weekend, a celebration of the historic institution that served African American students throughout Carroll County for decades.

Webb School's history began in the early 20th century as a one-room schoolhouse known as Booker T. Washington High School. In 1927, the name was changed to Webb School to honor John L. Webb, whose financial contributions significantly funded the facility. Following a devastating fire in 1936, the school community and McKenzie Mayor Glen King worked to acquire the vacated 30-acre Mc-Tyeire College grounds to relocate the campus.

See **WEBB** on Page 6



The Buffalo Soldier Riders were treated to a brief tour of the Webb School Historical Museum, where one of the riders from Oklahoma, Daniel Webb, saw a photo of his dad, Buford, who graduated in 1961.

Photo by Joel Washburn/The Banner

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Webb School's Class of 1966



Webb School's Class of 1966 was the last class to graduate from the African American school before integration took place in Carroll County. The class was recently honored on Monday, September 7 during Webb School's annual Homecoming Celebration. Picture (L to R): Priscilla Smith, Ike Gilbert Jr., Peggy Hillsman, Neal Williamson, Joyce Scates, Lindon McCollum and Myra Taylor.



The 2026 McKenzie School Board (L to R) Front Row: Misty Aird, Karen Fowler and Madelyn Morris. Back Row: Director of Schools Dr. Justin Barden, Matt Lane, Spiridon Rodits, Brian Stafford, Brian Winston and Chad Brown.

McKenzie School Board Installs New Members

BY JASON R. MARTIN
jmartin@mckenziebanner.com

MCKENZIE (September 1) — The McKenzie Special School District Board of Education installed four elected members, elected its officers and reviewed several policy and procedural changes during its Tuesday, September 1 meeting in the MSSD Board Room.

Matt Lane, Spiridon Rodits, Brian Stafford and Brian Winston, who were elected in the August election, were installed during the meeting.

Following the installation, the board elected Rodits as chairman, Winston as vice chairman and Karen Fowler as treasurer. Misty Aird was selected as the Tennessee Legislative Network representative, with Stafford serving as the alternate.

The board was presented with updated MSSD travel regulations covering mileage, lodging, meals and other reimbursable expenses. The regulations set the standard mileage reimbursement rate at 76 cents per mile and allow a maximum parking reimbursement of \$8 per day without a receipt.

Travel must be approved in advance by the building

principal, supervisor of instruction, food service director or director of schools. Receipts are required for lodging, conference registration and miscellaneous expenses claimed for reimbursement. Staff members must charge lodging reservations to the district credit card and provide hotels with the district's tax exemption certificate.

In-state lodging and meal reimbursements follow the federal CONUS rates for Tennessee, with a standard lodging rate of \$110 and a standard rate of \$68 for meals and incidental expenses.

The board also considered an MSSD Facility Use Agreement, with the primary focus centered on insurance requirements for outside organizations using district facilities.

Related changes to Policy 3.206, Community Use of School District Facilities, were considered on first reading. The proposed changes included three amendments. A Facility Use Agreement must be on file for requested use and signed by representatives of both the district and requesting organization.

The policy also states school facilities may not be

used for private profit, with an exception allowing unused facilities to be leased for private day-care centers providing educational and child care services to the community.

The third amendment addressed non-school-sponsored athletic organizations receiving permission to use district facilities. Those organizations must adhere to all Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association heat and lightning guidelines during practices and games.

The board also considered changes to Policy 4.600, Grading System, on first reading. Under the proposed change, Advanced Placement, Cambridge International, College Level Examination Program (CLEP), International Baccalaureate and Dual Enrollment courses would receive an additional five percentage points.

Director of Schools Justin Barden presented the director's report before adjournment.

The MSSD Board of Education consists of Misty Aird, Chad Brown, Karen Fowler, Matt Lane, Spiridon Rodits, Brian Stafford, Brian Winston and Madelyn Morris (student representative).



Photo courtesy of Joseph Jones Photography of Paris, Tenn.

Glow Over Paris Lights Up Eiffel Tower Park

PARIS (September 5) — Hot air balloons returned to the Paris skyline on Saturday as hundreds of visitors gathered at Eiffel Tower Park for Glow Over Paris.

The festival marked the return of a local tradition after an absence of approximately three decades. Parking areas surrounding the park filled as visitors arrived from across the region and neighboring states. Vehicles were directed to additional parking at Memorial Park Cemetery, Eiffel Tower Park Extended and the Paris Civic Center, while others parked at nearby businesses and along Jim Adams Drive.

Eight colorful hot air balloons participated in the event. Several offered tethered rides that lifted passengers above the park, while others remained anchored for the evening glow. As darkness settled over Paris, burners illuminated the balloons against the backdrop of the city's Eiffel Tower.

The festival ran from 5-10 p.m. and also featured food trucks and live entertainment. Saved by the Music performed hits from the 1990s from the Eiffel Tower stage.

High temperatures presented an additional challenge during the afternoon. With the heat index reaching approximately 106 degrees, the Eiffel Tower Splash Park remained open free of charge, giving



Photo courtesy of Joseph Jones Photography of Paris, Tenn.

children and adults a place to cool off throughout the event.

Glow Over Paris was presented by the Henry County Tourism Authority in partnership with the City of Paris. City employees and Paris Police officers assisted with traffic and parking as a steady stream of visitors entered the park.

Henry County Tourism

Authority Operations Manager Tara Wilson said organizers had worked for nearly a year to bring the balloon festival back to the community.

The evening concluded with the illuminated balloons glowing above the park, reviving a popular Paris tradition and giving a new generation of attendees an evening of great memories.

Judicial Status Change Among Items On Carroll County Legislative Agenda

HUNTINGDON — A proposed change concerning the compensation and full-time status of Carroll County's General Sessions Court judge will be among the key matters considered when the Carroll County Legislative Body meets September 14.

Resolution 9-03-2026 asks the Tennessee General Assembly to enact a private act concerning the "compensation and full-time status" of the General Sessions Court judge of Carroll County.

Carroll County is currently classified as a Class 4 county for purposes of General Sessions Court compensation, a classification in which the judge is considered part-time. Under changes to Tennessee's county classification system, Class 3 counties will be those with populations of more than 30,000, while Class 4 counties will remain in the part-time classification. The changes are scheduled to take effect September 1, 2030.

Carroll County's population was 28,440 in the 2020 Census, while the U.S. Census Bureau's latest estimate places the county's population at 29,200 as of July 1, 2025. That puts Carroll County within 800 residents of the 30,000 threshold that separates Class 3 and Class 4 under the new classification structure.

While the county remains below that threshold under the current population figures, the proposed change comes as Carroll County's population approaches the Class 3 level and as the General Sessions judge carries responsibilities beyond the traditional duties of General Sessions Court.

Carroll County General Sessions and Juvenile Court Judge Michael King presides over both General Sessions Court and Juvenile Court. Carroll Academy, an adolescent intensive day treatment program operated by the Carroll County Juvenile Court, lists King as the Carroll County General Sessions/Juvenile Court judge.

In addition to those judicial responsibilities, King serves as administrator of Carroll Academy, giving the position responsibilities that extend beyond the courtroom.

The General Sessions Court resolution is one of six resolutions listed for consideration by the legislative body.

Also on the agenda are two resolutions concerning fire protection services.

Resolution 9-01-2026 would approve a memorandum of understanding concerning fire protection services in the community of Buena Vista, accept the transfer of the Buena Vista Fire Station property to

Carroll County and authorize the station's integration into the Carroll County Fire Department.

Resolution 9-02-2026 concerns fire protection services in McLemoresville. The measure would establish an agreement between Carroll County and the Town of McLemoresville, incorporate those fire protection services into the Carroll County Fire Department, accept the transfer of fire department equipment and apparatus, and authorize the Carroll County Fire Department to operate the McLemoresville Fire Station.

The Carroll County Legislative Body also is scheduled to consider Resolution 9-04-2026, which would amend the General Fund budget for Circuit Court, along with proposed budget amendments involving the library and grant fund.

Other business includes the election of chairman and chairman pro tempore of the Carroll County Legislative Body, approval of legislative body committees, a presentation by Heather Pardue concerning Northwood Drive development, citizens forum, elections of notaries and monthly reports.

The meeting is scheduled to begin at 7 p.m. September 14 at the Carroll County Office Complex.



First responders and community members await the 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb on Saturday. Photo courtesy of Discovery Park of America

Stair Climbers Honor 9/11 Fallen at Discovery Park

UNION CITY (September 5) — First responders and community members gathered at Discovery Park of America Saturday morning for the annual 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb, commemorating the upcoming 25th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

The Union City Fire Department partnered with Discovery Park to host the observance at Cooper Tower. Organizers announced before the event that a record 72 climbers had registered to participate.

Each participant climbed the tower's staircase 10 times, representing the 110 stories of the World Trade Center. The climb was held as a me-

morial rather than a timed race.

Climbers carried identification badges bearing photographs of first responders who died during the attacks. Posters and encouraging messages created by local students lined the tower's stairwell as participants completed the tribute.

The event began with a memorial ceremony honoring those who lost their lives and those who responded when the nation was attacked. Participants included active and retired firefighters, law enforcement officers, military personnel, emergency medical workers and other first responders. Members of the public also

participated in memory of loved ones who served in those roles.

The Discovery Park climb was part of a larger tradition of memorial stair climbs held throughout the country. According to the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation, the events honor the 343 New York City firefighters who died on Sept. 11 as well as firefighters who later died from illnesses connected to their service at the attack sites.

The annual Union City event provided participants and spectators an opportunity to remember the lives lost while recognizing the courage and sacrifice of those who answered the call.



Fiery I-40 Crash Near Mile Marker 73. Photo Courtesy Action News 5

Fiery I-40 Crash Claims One Life, Injures Three

JACKSON (September 1) — One person was killed and three others were injured Tuesday in a fiery four-vehicle crash on Interstate 40 near mile marker 73 west of Jackson that shut down the interstate's east-bound lanes for an extended period.

According to preliminary information released by the Tennessee Highway Patrol, the crash occurred at approximately 11:47 a.m. on I-40 in Madison County. The collision involved two commercial trucks, a Nissan Quest and a Honda Accord. THP identified the deceased driver as Farahov Fhsvaisov, 35, of New York. Fhsvaisov was driving one of the commercial trucks

involved in the collision. Three other individuals were injured in the crash. Emergency officials reported two of the injured were airlifted from the scene to regional hospitals for treatment. Additional information concerning the identities and conditions of the injured had not been released.

The collision resulted in a large fire involving one of the semi-trucks. Images from the scene showed the commercial vehicle engulfed in flames and extensive damage to other vehicles involved in the crash. Madison County Fire Department personnel described the wreck as an extremely serious and dif-

ficult scene as firefighters, emergency medical personnel, law enforcement officers, dispatchers and other responders worked for an extended period in extreme heat.

The cause of the crash remains under investigation by the Tennessee Highway Patrol.

THP's preliminary findings released following the crash did not provide a detailed sequence of events leading to the collision or indicate whether charges are expected.

A complete THP crash report is generally available approximately seven days following a collision investigated by the agency.

Two Men Bound Over to Grand Jury In Alleged Murder-for-Hire Plot

HENRY COUNTY — A preliminary hearing concluded with two men held without bond and bound over to the next grand jury following a murder-for-hire investigation into the death of Henry County resident Angela Claxton.

Henry County General Sessions Judge Chad Cox presided over the preliminary hearing.

Kenneth Eugene Claxton, the victim's husband, and Travis Ryan, Jr. both faced Judge Cox following an investigation that law enforcement says unraveled an alleged plot within five days of the crime.

According to investigators, Kenneth Claxton allegedly promised Ryan \$80,000 in life insurance proceeds to carry out the murder of his wife.

The investigation began on June 5, when Henry County deputies responded to a scene at 425 Cay Lawrence Road in Buchanan. Upon arrival, officers discovered the body of Angela Claxton, who had been stabbed more than 20 times.

Crucial evidence came directly from the victim's wearable tech. Digital forensics from Angela Claxton's smart watch indicated her estimated time of death was approximately 2:07 a.m. on June 4, with only ten steps logged on the device during that timeframe. Combining smart watch movement metrics with local surveillance video, investigators from the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI) and local law enforcement pieced together the sequence of events.

During court proceedings, a new charge was officially filed against Kenneth Claxton by TBI Special Agent Joe Hudgins: Criminal Responsibility to Commit 1st Degree Murder (a Class A Felony under TCA 39-11-402 and 39-13-202).

Prosecution efforts are being led by Assistant District Attorney Morgan Greer. Ryan is being represented by the Public Defender's Office, while Claxton has retained private counsel with the Memphis-based firm of William Massey & Mariah McCallister.

Both defendants remain held without bond. Their cases are scheduled to go before the next Henry County grand jury on November 2, 2026.

High-Speed Chase Ends in Head-On Collision on Huntingdon Court Square

HUNTINGDON — A dramatic multi-agency police pursuit spanning several law enforcement jurisdictions ended Wednesday night after a suspect vehicle sped through Huntingdon at over 120 mph and slammed head-on into a civilian motorist on the town's Court Square.

Kristopher Isabell, 25, evaded law enforcement in a high-speed chase that netted him criminal charges of Reckless Driving, Felony Possession of Schedule II, VI Drugs, Driving While in Possession of Meth, Possession of Drug Paraphernalia.

According to a report filed by Huntingdon Police Officer Daniel Inman, the incident began around 8:54 p.m. on Aug. 19, when local authorities were alerted that a black 2026 Nissan Pathfinder with temporary tags was fleeing law enforcement. The driver, identified as Kristopher Isabell, had previously evaded both the Tennessee Highway Patrol and Carroll County Sheriff's deputies while speeding toward Huntingdon along Highway 70/West Main



Kristopher Isabell

Street.

Carroll County deputies attempted a spike-strip roadblock near the gas station in the Leach community in an attempt to stop the fleeing vehicle, but the deployment failed. Officers then fell into pursuit as Isabell continued toward town, weaving past traffic at extreme speeds.

As the chase neared the Huntingdon city limits near Sunny Slope Hill, radar clocked the Pathfinder at 125 mph. Isabell continued to rocket down West Main Street, blowing through the Veterans Drive intersection at roughly 115 mph. Shortly after passing the intersection, Isabell momentarily

lost control of the vehicle, but regained traction and drove directly into the Huntingdon Court Square.

Upon reaching the square, Isabell turned left into the roundabout—driving against the designated one-way traffic—and struck an oncoming civilian vehicle driven by Katherine White head-on.

Following the crash, officers from the Huntingdon Police Department drew their duty weapons and ordered the occupants out. When attempts to shatter the Pathfinder's windows failed, officers moved in as the passenger door opened. Inman attempted to apprehend Isabell, who actively fought and resisted officers. The struggle ended after a Huntingdon officer deployed a Taser, striking Isabell in the back with four probes and allowing officers to place him in handcuffs.

Despite the extreme speeds and the head-on crash, emergency responders reported no injuries at the scene among Isabell, his passenger, or White.

Henry County Inmate Captured After Leaving Work Detail

PARIS (September 2) — A Henry County Jail inmate was returned to custody Wednesday morning after authorities said he walked away from an assigned work detail, prompting a search and request for assistance from the public.

Kodie Hensley reportedly left his work detail at approximately 7 a.m. in the area of County Home Road and

the Highway 218 Bypass in Henry County. At the time he left, Hensley was reportedly wearing a long-sleeve blue T-shirt and jeans.

The Henry County Sheriff's Office alerted the public and requested assistance locating Hensley.

Authorities later announced Hensley had been captured and returned to

custody. The Sheriff's Office thanked members of the public for their assistance in the search.

Hensley was serving time in the Henry County Jail for violation of probation stemming from drug charges.

Following Wednesday's incident, Hensley was charged with escape and is being held without bond.

Dresden Senior Honored for Military Commitment

DRESDEN (September 4) — Dresden High School senior and football player Ignacio Becerra was recognized before Friday's game against

West Carroll for enlisting in the Army National Guard. Recruiters joined Becerra on the field for a ceremonial swearing-in. Head Coach

Justin Cruse praised Becerra's character and willingness to serve others, saying the senior has represented the Dresden football program well.

McKenzie Council to Consider Planning Commission Appointments

MCKENZIE — The McKenzie City Council will meet Thursday, September 10, at 6 p.m. with a Tennessee Volunteer Firefighter Equipment and Training Grant and two appointments to the McKenzie Planning Commission among the

items on the agenda.

Under new business, the council will discuss and consider approval of the Tennessee Volunteer Firefighter Equipment and Training Grant.

The council will also consider appointing Al Ev-

erett and Brennan Smith to a three-year term on the McKenzie Planning Commission.

The meeting concludes with reports from city department heads and comments from members of the McKenzie City Council.

Terry Community Rallies to Restore Water Access to Terry Community Park

Residents and supporters of Terry Community Park are coming together to solve a critical issue that has left local recreation grounds without running water. After the park's primary water source was cut off, organizers launched a fundraising campaign aimed at funding the installation of a new well on the premises.

To help meet their goal, the community will host a Fundraiser Day on Saturday, September 12, 2026, directly at Terry Community Park. The family-friendly event will feature a wide range of

activities, including a giant water slide, a bounce house, live music performance, and interactive games. Concession offerings will include barbecue, barbecue bologna, hamburgers, and hot dogs.

Park supporters emphasize that restoring water service is essential to maintaining basic amenities for children utilizing the playground, baseball fields, and soccer areas.

How to Support the Cause

For individuals interested in contributing to the well installation project, organiz-

ers have established several donation channels:

In Person / Direct Deposit: Cash or check donations can be dropped off directly at Carroll Bank & Trust.

Venmo: Digital contributions can be sent via Venmo to @Wanda-Tidwell-5 (verification phone digits: 0610).

Mail / Check: Checks should be made payable to The Terry Community Park (In Care of Wanda Tidwell) and mailed to:

Wanda Tidwell, 1445 Little Grove Road, Lavinia, TN 38348

Drummond Sentenced to Nine Years in 2023 Prison Attack Case

TIPTONVILLE (August 31) — Austin Drummond was sentenced Monday to an effective nine years in prison following his July conviction on charges stemming from a 2023 altercation at Northwest Correctional Complex in Lake County.



Austin Drummond

Circuit Court Judge Mark Hayes sentenced Drummond to nine years for attempted voluntary manslaughter and nine years for possession of a weapon in a penal facility. Both are Class C felonies. The sentences will be served concurrently, giving Drummond an effective nine-year sentence.

The sentencing hearing was held in Lake County Circuit Court.

Drummond was originally charged with attempted first-degree murder in connection with the August 2023 prison incident. His two-day trial was moved from Lake County to Carroll County because of extensive publicity surrounding Drummond.

A Carroll County jury returned its verdict July 24 after approximately two hours of deliberation. Jurors did not convict Drummond of attempted first-degree murder, instead finding him guilty of the lesser-included offense of attempted voluntary manslaughter. He was also convicted of possessing contraband in a penal facility.

The state's case centered on an altercation involving Drummond, co-defendant Andre Brown and fellow inmate Timothy Singleton at Northwest Correctional Complex.

During the trial, Singleton testified that he was talking on the telephone when the altercation began and that he was stabbed approximately 17 times. Medical testimony presented to the jury documented injuries including wounds to his hand, arm, shoulder, scalp and back. Singleton received treatment outside the correctional fa-

cility before returning to the prison.

Surveillance video from inside the facility was also introduced as evidence.

Drummond testified in his own defense and maintained that he acted out of fear for his safety. He said he believed Singleton intended to attack him and disputed the state's characterization of the incident. The defense also questioned the number and severity of the wounds described during testimony.

Drummond continued to maintain his self-defense position during Monday's sentencing hearing. After receiving permission to address the court, he read a prepared statement describing his view of the conditions and violence within the prison system and again said he believed he was in danger at the time of the 2023 incident.

The state sought a substantially longer sentence. Prosecutors asked Hayes to sentence Drummond as a Range III offender and sought 14 years on the attempted voluntary manslaughter conviction and 10 years on the weapons conviction.

Defense attorney Drew Farmer argued Drummond should be sentenced as a Range II offender and sought an eight-year sentence.

Hayes ultimately classified Drummond as a Range II offender and imposed nine years on each conviction, with the sentences running concurrently.

During the hearing, Hayes

addressed the prevalence and seriousness of violence inside correctional facilities and its effect on both inmates and correctional employees.

The court also imposed a \$1,000 fine on each conviction. According to reporting from the sentencing hearing, the fines were suspended.

Following the hearing, Farmer said the defense continues to disagree with the jury's finding of guilt but considered the sentence imposed by the court reasonable under the circumstances.

The defense plans to file a motion for a new trial. A hearing is scheduled for November 23 in Lake County Circuit Court. Such a motion is a procedural step necessary to preserve issues for a potential appeal.

Brown was also sentenced Monday for his involvement in the 2023 incident. A Carroll County jury found him guilty in July of facilitation of attempted voluntary manslaughter and acquitted him of possessing contraband in a penal facility.

Hayes sentenced Brown to six-and-a-half years. His sentence will run consecutively to the prison sentence he was already serving.

The prison case is separate from the pending criminal prosecution against Drummond involving the July 29, 2025 deaths of four people in Lake County.

Drummond is charged with first-degree murder in the deaths of James Wilson, 21; Adrianna Williams, 20; Cortney Rose, 38; and Braydon Williams, 15. Those charges remain pending, and Drummond is presumed innocent of the charges unless and until proven guilty in court.

Prosecutors have filed notice that they intend to seek the death penalty in the quadruple-homicide case. A trial date has not been set.

Things In My Head with Charles Manfredi



THE WIT AND WISDOM OF DAVID JOHNSON
Over The River and Through the Woods

“Over the river and through the woods” — it’s a phrase that makes me sing the song, a song that reminds me of the coming holidays. But it’s also a phrase full of dramatic symbolism. Have you ever been on the other side of the river and lost in the woods? A river so wide it seemed impossible to cross, and woods so thick no light could penetrate it? Are you there at this moment? Don’t feel bad. It’s easy to get lost. Divorce, death of a loved one, drugs, alcohol, betrayal, cancer, losing a job, financial crisis, family trouble, trauma. I could go on, but you get my point—there are lots of circumstances that cause us to lose our way. The funny thing about that is you don’t realize you’re getting lost until you are lost. So, how are you supposed to get un-lost? Simply put, you must travel “over the river and through the woods.” Easy to say.

Hard to do. In the song the thing that makes it worth the effort to travel “over the river and through the woods” is the destination: “to grandmother’s house we go.” For you the “grandmother’s house” might literally be rejoining your grandmother, or it might be other loved ones who are waiting and looking for you. Maybe your destination is a life of sobriety and wholeness, or a better job, or a healthy, loving relationship with someone. Or perhaps your focus is on an other-worldly destination—heaven. Whatever it is, keeping focused on the destination reminds you that whatever it takes to get there will be worth it in the end. Instead of despairing about how hard the journey is, be thankful for the destination that’s awaiting you. * Taken from The Wit and Wisdom of David Johnson, Volume III: A Harrowing Halloween Tale

HUNKER DOWN WITH KES
Come Watch the Parade with Me

For some, it might be the long-gone City Café. Or the Polar Bar. Or Freeman’s Menswear. Or maybe you remember buying some chocolate-covered peanuts at the Ben Franklin 5 & 10 Cent Store. Or a spiral notebook for going back to school from the Golden Rule. Or shopping for a Christmas toy in the basement of J. A. Abernathy’s Hardware.... We all enjoyed these hallowed, hallmark spots, and that is only the tip of the iceberg. I haven’t mentioned the Dixie Coffee Cup, Robert Hall’s Western Auto, Pate’s Jewelry, or Dr. Holmes’s small office on Main Street where so many of us were born. We each have our sacred places. My favorite spot in the whole town was a park bench on the square, facing Cedar Street. You could watch all the people hurrying in and out of the U-Tote-Em Grocery Store. You could clearly see the traffic obeying the light down where Cedar intersected with Main. And you got to wave to every passing car. The Park Theatre was just across the street to my right. Me, and Hoppy, Gene, and Roy chased bad guys plumb off that silver screen every Saturday afternoon. That magical place brought excitement, drama, fear, laughter, love...and life, into my televisionless world. But the building that really brought us all together was the McKenzie High School. Good merciful Heavens, the hours we all toiled fighting the educational wars in that old three-story edifice! Miss Polly was an institution. Mr. Paschall would be asking one of the Doyle brothers if he “just came to school today to be entertained?”. Arlie (Chuck) Berry and his rocking amoebas would have us lighting up those Bunsen burners. Mrs. Carter actually knew the difference between sine and cosine. I was sitting in the library on that fateful day in November when Coach Smith came over the loudspeaker, as solemnly as a man ever spoke, telling us that the President of the United States had been shot. I can still hear the silence when he finished. I fell in love for the first time in that revered building. I was a plain-looking, struggling sophomore. She was a beautiful, nice, popular, friendly, wonderful, gorgeous senior. And yet, she turned aside to notice me. Wow! You don’t ever forget times like that.... And we are all in luck because Brad Camp and the McKenzie High School Alumni Association are inviting us back HOME to relive those wonderful days of yesterday all over again. Miss Poly would quickly tell us that “all over again” is redundant but this is so important, I’m telling you twice! It is OUR high school reunion. It’s going to take place the weekend of September 24-26. I went last year and had the time of my life. It is like being 18 all over again! And that is never a bad thing. If you attended McKenzie High School at any time, moment, year, decade, century, you are invited. We don’t want anyone to miss this! There are class reunions, the parade, a golf tournament, videos of things that you will remember, and an unbelievable McKenzie High School Historical Exhibit that you might even be in. The exhibit features old uniforms, programs, letters, pictures, stories from different eras, and other priceless memorabilia. It is a highlight for sure. But the whole weekend is just one wonderful memory after another. Plus, I want to see you. I want to tell you the story about Leon putting one of Mr. Archie Moore’s cows into the high school auditorium. I want to tell you how Coach Scott EXPECTED me to tackle Bob Cassidy every day at football practice! I want to explain to you how the light normally atop the police car managed to get hooked up to the jukebox out at Frank’s Dairy Bar. I want to hear your stories! I will be easy to find. I’ll be the guy having the most fun. And if I can still fit into my old football jersey, I will have it on. I will definitely be at the tailgate party on Friday night before the game. That is another highlight, just having us all together in one spot. I am trying to talk Brad into letting me lead a “walking tour” of McKenzie like we are all back in 1964. You can’t miss that! And I need your help in persuading Brad and the Alumni Committee into showing a Saturday afternoon double feature at the Park Theatre—we could open the box office at 12:30 p.m. and charge 15 cents, just like the glory days. Any western will do. But I wouldn’t mind watching the original Parent Trap with Hayley Mills and Hayley Mills. Another instant love for me the first time (1961) she appeared in OUR movie house. If you have any questions about the reunion, call Brad. He’s got all the answers! But I can tell you for sure, Wesley Beal will be there. And Martin Paschall. Ann Carol McCaleb, Susie Branon, Joyce Moore, LaRenda Bradfield, and the Joyner sisters. Any one of them is worth making the trip back just to spend a few moments with. And I will be at my favorite place in the park when the parade starts. Please come and sit with me. We will talk about fast times at McKenzie High when Levi’s, ducktails, fender skirts, bobby socks, and hula hoops reigned supreme. And listen, here is the best thing about the whole weekend: they will give you a name tag at most every event...so you won’t forget who you are.... I Love This Town,Kes (Class of 65) kesley45@aol.com



Bath & Body Works to Open at Paris Crossing

PARIS — Bath & Body Works will open its new Paris location Saturday, September 12, at the Paris Crossing retail center. Crews are completing work inside the store while newly hired employees prepare for the opening. The store is located at 1929 Mineral Wells Avenue near the intersection of Mineral Wells Avenue and the Highway 218 Bypass. The retailer offers body lotions, fragrances, candles, hand soaps, sanitizers and other personal-care and home-fragrance products. Bath & Body Works joins a growing list of businesses operating at Paris Crossing, including Hobby Lobby, PetSmart, Burlington, T.J. Maxx, Ulta Beauty, Rack Room Shoes and Five Below. Construction is continuing on the center’s Aldi grocery store. A larger grand-opening celebration for Paris Crossing is expected after all the businesses at the retail development are operating.

We do the legwork to keep you informed.
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Paris Landing Arts and Crafts Festival is September 12-13

The 26th annual Paris Lakeway Kiwanis Club Arts and Crafts Festival at Paris Landing State Park features over 115 local and regional crafters displaying and selling their handmade and hand-crafted items. The setting at Paris Landing State Park provides visitors with great views while shopping. There will also be food and beverage vendors, as well as a petting zoo. Admission and parking are free. The following are the food trucks that will be there: Perry’s BBQ, Handheld Food Truck, Cash’s Wood-Fired Pizza, Carmack’s Food Trailer, Amaz-

ing Eats and Carnival Treats, Lemonades and More, Nana’s Treats, Krazy Kones, and Smoochies Lemonade. Hours for the Festival are: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and 10 to 4 p.m. Sunday. For more information, call Paris Landing State Park at 731-333-7786.

Wallace and Company Delights Crowd at Park Theatre



MCKENZIE (September 3) — The Nights on Broadway concert series relocated inside the historic Park Theatre to beat the heat on Thursday. Wallace and Company delighted the crowd with a mix of classic rock and country music on the McKenzie Banking Company stage. Audience members danced and enjoyed concessions. The band 24/7 will take the stage on September 17 at 7 p.m. Photo by Brittany Washburn Martin/The Banner

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Cardiac

...From Front Page

while obtaining the capabilities needed by McKenzie's emergency responders.

McKenzie Fire Chief Brian Tucker said the refurbished designation should not be confused with simply purchasing used equipment. The unit must pass inspection and certification requirements and essentially combines an existing exterior housing with replaced or renewed internal components. While there is no guaranteed lifespan for the device, it can remain in service as long as it continues to meet required inspections and certifications.

The Zoll X-Series is also compatible with the automated external defibrillators already used by McKenzie's first responders and is the same type of equipment used aboard Baptist Priority ambulances. That compatibility means information gathered by McKenzie responders can follow the patient through the next stages of emergency care.

For McKenzie Fire and Rescue's paramedic-level responders, the monitor provides information they can interpret immediately to determine the appropriate course of treatment. EMT-level responders can use the information to communicate with a physician at the hospital and provide critical care under medical direction while awaiting ambulance transport.

Among the device's most important capabilities is a 12-lead electrocardiogram, or ECG, which can help responders rapidly identify an ST-elevation myocardial infarction, commonly known as a STEMI or serious heart attack. Identifying a STEMI in the field can give hospital personnel valuable advance notice and reduce the time between the onset of an emergency and definitive



treatment.

The monitor also provides real-time feedback during CPR, including information about the depth and rate of chest compressions. Its See-Thru CPR technology filters out interference caused by chest compressions, allowing responders to better observe the patient's underlying heart rhythm without unnecessarily interrupting CPR.

A single responder can carry the monitor along with a primary medical bag, making it easier to rapidly deploy the equipment during routine emergencies as well as incidents involving multiple patients.

The capability is particularly significant considering the volume of medical calls handled by McKenzie's first responders. Approximately 67 percent of McKenzie Fire and Rescue's calls are medical emergencies. The department currently has 11 EMS- and paramedic-level personnel.

The need for local first responders to provide immediate medical intervention became even more critical following the closure of McKenzie's hospital in 2018. The loss of the hospital left the city without a local emergency room and reflects a growing problem across rural America, where hospital closures and declining access to emergency and specialized care are creating medical deserts — communities where residents must travel greater distances or wait longer to receive critical medical treatment.

For McKenzie, the absence

of a hospital and limited ambulance resources add a layer of uncertainty to each medical emergency.

Ambulance service for the area is provided by Priority Ambulance Service, which is contracted by Baptist Memorial Hospital-Carroll County. Depending on ambulance availability and location at the time of a call, McKenzie Police and Fire and Rescue personnel are regularly the first medical responders to reach a patient.

The new cardiac monitor is intended to help bridge that gap. Rather than simply waiting with a patient for transport, properly trained McKenzie responders will have access to technology capable of assessing a patient's heart, assisting with CPR and providing information that can be communicated to medical personnel before the patient reaches the hospital.

"I am truly proud that the police and fire department work so well together," said McKenzie Police Chief Ryan White. "We are grateful to be able to provide a higher level of care for McKenzie citizens." Three companies — Master Medical, Bound Tree Medical and Discount Medical — submitted bids for the equipment. Each provided a bid with the necessary features, but Bound Tree Medical offered the required capabilities at the best price.

Tucker said the department should not have to wait long before putting its newest life-saving tool into service.

"Bound Tree Medical is generally very prompt," Tucker said. "We could have it as early as the end of next week."

For a rural community facing the realities of a medical desert, without its own hospital and with limited ambulance resources, the equipment gives McKenzie's first responders another way to bring a higher level of emergency care directly to the patient — during the minutes when that care can matter most.



Above, Gleason Cheerleaders continued the tradition of carrying the parade banner. Below, McKenzie Marching Rebels performed during the Grand Parade. Photos by Joel Washburn/The Banner



Tater

...From Front Page

Gazelle Grounds, beginning at 6 p.m.

Adult Bingo and the Cake Walk were held on Thursday, September 3, at the Gazelle Grounds.

Friday, September 3, was

the Community BBQ Cook-Off at 5 p.m. at \$10 per plate. The Flashback Band provided live music.

The Tater Town Special Parade and Vendor Fair closed out Tater Week on Saturday, September 5.

The JC Carey Memorial 5K Run began at 7 a.m. in front of the school.

The Jr. Parade was followed by the Grand Parade.

An alumni co-ed softball tournament was held at Snider Park at 2 p.m.

The finale event ran from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Gazelle Grounds.

The annual event honored Mrs. Debbie Robbins as the Tater Town Treasure.

The grand marshal of the annual grand parade was the Gleason Rotary Club.

Robbery

...From Front Page

approximately 9:01 p.m., a masked gunman entered the Cash Savers Grocery store shortly before closing. The suspect walked directly to the store office, assaulted an employee by striking them twice, and stole over \$2,500 in cash from both the register and the store safe.

Following the incident, Chief Jason L. Oliver of the Huntingdon Police Department mobilized a multi-agency task force. The collaborative operation included special agents from the 24th Drug Task Force under the direction of District

Attorney Neil Thompson, the FBI, Carroll County Sheriff Eric Savyers, and local investigators.

Through round-the-clock efforts—utilizing video surveillance, cell tower data, search warrants, grid searches, and processed physical evidence—investigators identified Wright, who lives in the immediate vicinity of the grocery store, as the primary suspect. Authorities noted that Wright allegedly plotted the robbery while facing an impending court appearance the following day regarding child support matters. He was initially taken into custody on the child support warrant while officers finalized evidence in the robbery investigation.

The investigation ultimately led to a full confession from Wright.

"We don't get the luxury of thinking—we have to know and then prove who did this," Chief Oliver said. "Be warned, we would like to send a message to Huntingdon and Carroll County: we like our jobs and have no problem doing them, so think about that unless you like jail."

Chief Oliver praised the support of the city board and the mayor for ensuring the rapid, thorough investigation, noting that while full details remain undisclosed pending upcoming court proceedings, the evidence gathered by the joint law enforcement team was overwhelming.

Teacher

...From Front Page

August 28 classroom incident involving a 4-year-old student.

Debra Robertson was arrested Wednesday, September 2, and booked into the Carroll County Jail. She is charged with assault under Tennessee Code Annotated §39-13-101. Her bond was set at \$2,500.

The charge stems from an incident that reportedly occurred at approximately 8:30 a.m. Friday, August 28.

According to the affidavit of complaint, Robertson is accused of holding the child

around the neck and head while attempting to make him eat a biscuit. Authorities reported the child suffered an injury to his lip and was visibly upset following the incident.

Carroll County Sheriff's Office School Resource Officer Chris Cole filed the affidavit of complaint in the case.

A judicial commissioner determined September 1 that probable cause existed to issue an arrest warrant. According to court information, Robertson had not entered a plea as of September 2.

Hollow Rock-Bruceton Special School District Director of Schools David Duncan confirmed Robertson was removed from the classroom

following the incident.

"On Wednesday, September 2, 2026, the Hollow Rock-Bruceton Special School District received notice that a teacher, Debra Robertson, was in the process of being charged with assault," Duncan said in a statement released by the district. "The charge involves allegations of mistreatment of a student who was in her classroom."

Duncan said the district acted before the criminal charge was formally filed.

"On the date of the incident, Ms. Robertson was immediately placed on suspension, and she remains on suspension without pay pending the outcome of the case," Duncan said.

The child's mother, Anna Townsend, later spoke publicly about the incident. Townsend said school officials contacted her the afternoon of August 28 and that she and the child's father were permitted to view classroom surveillance footage.

Townsend said the incident began after her son did not want to eat breakfast. She reported that her son had a cut lip and scratch on his face following the encounter.

The case remains pending. The allegations contained in the affidavit have not been proven in court, and Robertson is presumed innocent unless proven guilty.

Webb

...From Front Page

The school facility was constructed in 1958 in the Modern Movement style. However, following the signing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the desegregation of southern schools, Webb School closed its doors in 1966. To preserve its enduring legacy, Professor James L. Seets spearheaded the formation of the Webb Alumni Association in 1969. The association successfully purchased the campus in 1976 and later secured the school's listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

The building on Walnut Avenue serves as a community center and housed the Webb School Historical Museum, archiving memorabilia from the faculty and students who shaped the institution.

The festivities began Friday, September 4, from 6–8

p.m., featuring a youth block party, line dancing, card games, and hospitality.

On Saturday, September 5, the General Assembly of Webb School Alumni held its annual meeting with guest speaker Gloria Harris of Milwaukee. A parade followed at 1:30 p.m., concluding with a dinner and dance from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m.

One of the highlights of the parade was seven riders of a motorcycle group that memorializes the Buffalo Soldiers. They came from Nashville, Clarksville and Oklahoma. One of the riders was Daniel Webb, whose father Buford Webb, Sr. graduated from Webb School in 1961.

They were given a brief tour of the historical library at the former African-American School in McKenzie.

The Webb Alumni also announced its officers for the year. They included Ike Gilbert, national president; Michael Tate, first vice-president; John Williams, second vice-president; Priscilla Smith, national secretary;

Scottie Clark, treasurer; and Kim Bell-Webb, secretary.

They ride to memorialize the service and sacrifice of the Buffalo Soldiers, all-Black troops, who were segregated in the military from other troops. They ride to educate people about Buffalo Soldiers and about rider safety.

Sunday, September 6, featured the "Unforgettable" fashion show at 5 p.m., honoring Tranquilla Pate.

The celebration concluded Monday, September 7, with a picnic day from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The picnic included food, games, and door prizes for attendees.

At noon, the Webb High School Class of 1966—the institution's final graduating class—was honored.

A special ceremony at 1:30 p.m. recognized the Trezevant High School Blue Devil Women's Basketball Teams of 1974 and 1976.

The homecoming wrapped up at 3 p.m. with a Soul Train Line and performances by various artists.

Deputy

...From Front Page

Weakley County Sheriff's Deputy Derrick Bonham, and prosecutors have filed notice that they intend to seek the death penalty if she is convicted of first-degree murder.

The grand jury returned a true bill against Cunningham on September 1 in Weakley County. According to the 27th Judicial District Attorney General's Office, the indictment contains four felony counts: first-degree murder, reckless endangerment involving a deadly weapon, aggravated assault and false reports. Prosecutors also filed a Notice of Intent to Seek the Death Penalty.

Cunningham previously waived her right to a preliminary hearing and requested that the case be presented directly to the Weakley County Grand Jury. At the

time, prosecutors said the decision followed discussions with Cunningham's defense attorneys after they were provided the evidence that would have been presented at a preliminary hearing.

Cunningham is scheduled to appear for arraignment Tuesday, September 8, in Weakley County Circuit Court before Judge Jeff Parham. She remains held without bond.

Cunningham is accused in the January 30 death of Bonham, who was responding to a report of possible shots fired at a Days Inn in Martin. According to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, Weakley County deputies were assisting Martin police with the call when Bonham went to a nearby gas station to check for possible witnesses. Bonham encountered Cunningham shortly after 3 a.m. and was shot. He was transported to a local hospital, where he later died from his injuries.

According to the arrest warrant, investigators allege Cunningham shot Bonham four times — once initially and three additional times after the deputy had fallen to the ground.

Investigators also allege Cunningham fired additional shots in the direction of Martin police officers following the shooting. The allegations are contained in investigative materials and have not been proven in court.

The death-penalty notice does not mean Cunningham has been found guilty. It formally notifies the court and defense that prosecutors intend to pursue capital punishment if the case proceeds to a conviction and the legal requirements for a death sentence are met.

Cunningham is presumed innocent unless and until she is proven guilty in court.

The Tuesday, September 8 arraignment is the next court proceeding in the case.

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A non-mandatory walk thru will be at the location on September 10 at 1 p.m. Bid packages and requirements will be able to be picked up at Barger Construction, 23134 Hwy 22N, Yuma, TN 38390 or by email at lisat@bargerconstructionco.com by September 4.

Any questions contact Lisa at 731-535-3374 ext 4.

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Judge Bradberry Speaks About Recovery Court

MCKENZIE (September 1) — Keeping non-violent, drug-dependent offenders out of state prison and holding them accountable in their own communities is saving taxpayer dollars while rebuilding local families, Circuit Judge Brent Bradberry told the McKenzie Rotary Club on Tuesday.

Bradberry, who was initially appointed to the 24th Judicial District bench by Gov. Bill Lee in 2021, and then elected to an eight-year term, spoke about the costs and early results of the district's Recovery Court program.

"The state simply lacks the physical capacity to incarcerate every individual fitting a 'do the time' mindset," Bradberry said, pointing out that housing an inmate in a Tennessee prison costs around \$111 a day—nearly \$40,000 a year—compared to \$30 to \$60 a day in local county jails.

Launched locally in 2023, Recovery Court acts as a rigorous, 18-month alternative to prison. To get in, participants must be convicted felons who agree to plead guilty and accept a suspended prison sentence. If they drop out or get kicked out, that prison time kicks in immediately. Violent offenders aren't allowed in the program.

Once enrolled, the workload on participants is heavy: **Constant drug testing:** At least twice a week during the first year, tapering off only after a long streak of clean screens.

Supervision: Four to five support meetings (like AA or NA) every week, plus twice-weekly check-ins with a probation officer.

Work and obligations: Holding down a full-time job, staying current on child support and court fees, and performing community service.

Education: Earning a GED is required to graduate if the participant doesn't already have a high school diploma.

A team that includes prosecutors, public defenders, law enforcement officers, and addiction counselors meets regularly to monitor each person's progress. Bradberry also meets one-on-one with participants at least once a month—a brief interaction he says makes a massive difference. Citing data shared at national judicial conferences, Bradberry noted that just three minutes of direct, constructive face time with a judge each month can cut an offender's chances of re-offending by more than half.

Across the 24th District—which includes Carroll, Henry, Benton, Decatur, and



Rotary President Armand Hebert and 24th Judicial District Circuit Judge Brent Bradberry.

Hardin counties—69 people have entered the program since 2023.

So far, 15 participants have graduated, 13 have earned their GEDs, and 15 have successfully gotten their driver's licenses back. Another four participants were provided laptops through the court to take online college courses through Jackson State.

Participants across the district have paid back more than \$50,000 in court fines and fees, including roughly \$10,000 collected right here in Carroll County.

Currently, 39 people are actively going through the program, including 13 in Carroll County.

Out of 15 people who left the program without graduating, 12 were voluntary dropouts in the first 90 days—people who essentially decided the strict schedule and constant testing were harder than serving their jail time. Only three were removed for cause and sent to prison.

Bradberry spent significant time addressing how the court responds when a participant slips up. In Recovery Court, a failed drug test is treated as a symptom of a disease that needs tighter medical treatment, not an automatic ticket to prison.

"Incarcerating an individual solely for a relapse can actually lower their long-term odds of success compared to intensifying their treatment plan," Bradberry explained. Responses usually involve extra meetings, earlier curfews, or daily drug screenings.

He shared two recent local examples:

Carroll County: A participant who was doing well—passing screens and paying off court costs—relapsed on methamphetamine after running into old acquaintances. Instead of sending him straight to prison, the court

routed him into an intensive nine-month residential treatment program in Memphis.

Henry County: A 20-year-old woman from Paris with a severe fentanyl addiction relapsed despite having a strong, supportive family. Bradberry talked about the scary reality of local "Narc parties," where group users intentionally overdose knowing someone in the room has the overdose-reversing drug nearby. She is currently in the county jail waiting on an opening at an inpatient facility.

One of the biggest hurdles facing the program right now is a simple lack of physical beds for care in the northern part of the district.

Right now, almost all 90-day inpatient treatment happens south of Interstate 40 in Savannah, where recovery infrastructure is well established. Because judges cannot legally order participants into faith-based programs, secular treatment options in Carroll, Henry, and Benton counties are virtually non-existent.

Efforts to fix the gap have hit snags. Talks with Aspell Recovery to open a 12-to-15-bed inpatient center in the area stalled after their top leadership retired. Buffalo Valley is currently looking into setting up an outpatient clinic in Huntingdon, but an inpatient facility is still nowhere in sight.

Bradberry noted that state and federal grant funding is out there, but finding experienced healthcare operators willing to set up shop locally remains the sticking point.

Despite the administrative headaches and the extra hours added to his normal court docket, Bradberry told Rotarians the payoff—getting local workers back on the job, child support checks back in the mail, and parents back to their kids—is well worth the work.

Bethel Chaplain Promoted to Lt. Commander in the Navy

BY JOEL WASHBURN
washburn@mckenziebanner.com

MCKENZIE (August 27) — The Vera Low Center at Bethel University served as the backdrop for a significant milestone on August 27, 2026, as Chaplain Garrett Allen Burns was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Commander in the United States Navy Reserve.

The ceremony, which drew family members, university colleagues, and community supporters, was presided over by Captain Tim Foster, Chaplain of the Fourth Marine Logistics Group. Both officers stood in crisp white uniforms as they honored a career defined by service to both the military, God, and the local community.

The promotion marks a major step in a journey that began for Burns long before his time at Bethel. During the ceremony, Burns reflected on his calling, which he traced back to his eighth-grade year in 2001. Inspired by the events of September 11, he later became the first chaplain for the Navy Junior ROTC unit at Camden Fairview High School in 2002. After years of discernment, ministry scholarship at Bethel, and service in the chaplain candidate program, Burns officially commissioned as a Navy chaplain in 2019.

Captain Foster, who first met Burns during a rigorous 2022 training



Jessica Burns assists in the promotion ceremony of her husband, Garrett Burns.

exercise in the desert of Twentynine Palms, California, praised the newly promoted officer as a "hard charger" who approaches every task with dedication. The two discovered a providential connection during that training: both were Presbyterians with roots in West Tennessee.

"Do everything you do with all your heart, all of it as if you are doing it for the Lord," Foster said, quoting Colossians as he commended Burns's character and reputation.

The ceremony included the traditional administration of the oath of office, with veterans and active-duty personnel in attendance standing in solidarity. A poignant moment followed as Jessica Burns, the chaplain's

wife, stepped forward to pin the new rank insignia onto her husband's uniform.

The event was framed by the spiritual leadership of Reverend Anne Hames, Dean of the Chapel at Bethel University, who provided both the opening invocation and the closing prayer. Burns expressed deep gratitude for Hames's mentorship, noting that her guidance had been instrumental in shaping his development as a counselor, preacher, and advocate.

As he assumes the rank of Lieutenant Commander, Burns continues to balance his dual roles, serving both the sailors and Marines of the Navy Reserve and the students and staff at Bethel University.



Pictured (L to R): Mrs. Mallory Smith, Easton Barnes and Ridgelynn.

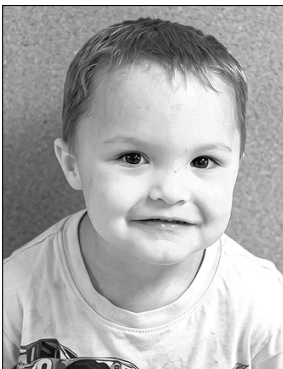
West Carroll Faculty, Student Spotlight

Mrs. Mallory Smith, Pre-K Teacher, West Carroll Primary School is a dedicated Pre-K teacher who brings creativity, and plenty of laughter to her classroom every day. Known for her comical personality and sense of humor, she has a special way of making learning fun and engaging for her young students. Her ability to connect with children through laughter and encouragement helps create a welcoming environment where students feel excited to learn. We appreciate the joy, positivity, and enthusiasm Ms. Smith brings to our

school community each day.

Students of the Week — Wyatt Voyles is always in a good mood! He listens to others, shows he cares, and makes sure we all know how much we mean to him. He demonstrates what it means to be a star student every day! -Ms. Katy Johnsonius

Student of the Week — Ridgelynn is a wonderful friend to all of her classmates. She comes into preschool every day in a great mood and ready to learn. She is kind and loving and always tries her best on her schoolwork. -Mrs. Mallory Smith



Wyatt Voyles

Student of the Week — Easton Barnes works extremely hard in my class every day and has a constant smile while doing so. -Coach Nicolas Cobb

Matt Aird Named Paul Harris Fellow

MCKENZIE — Matt Aird was recently recognized as a Paul Harris Fellow, the highest recognition bestowed by a Rotarian.

The recognition was given in Aird's honor by his wife, Misty Aird, who also had the honor of pinning her husband during the presentation. Club vice president and Foundation Chairman Jason R. Martin presented Aird with the Paul Harris Fellow certificate.

Named for Rotary founder Paul Harris, the Paul Harris Fellow recognition was established in 1957 to recognize substantial support of The Rotary Foundation. A person becomes a Paul Harris Fellow when \$1,000 or more is contributed to the Foundation's Annual Fund, PolioPlus or an approved Foundation grant. The contribution may be made personally or by another individual in the recipient's honor.

The recognition rep-



Matt and Misty Aird share a moment following Matt's Paul Harris Fellow recognition.

resents support for Rotary's humanitarian mission around the world. Through The Rotary Foundation, contributions help fund projects focused on disease prevention, education, clean water, economic development, peace and other efforts aimed at improving communities and lives.

Being named a Paul Harris Fellow is therefore more than receiving a pin and certificate. It signifies a meaningful financial commitment to the work of The Rotary Foundation and honors the legacy of Harris, who founded Rotary in 1905 with an emphasis on fellowship and service.

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HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

Dresden Defeats West Carroll, 43-6

DRESDEN (Sept 4) — West Carroll struggled to generate offense against Dresden as the Lions handed the War Eagles a 43-6 loss.

West Carroll finished the game with 150 yards of total offense, with the bulk of its production coming on the ground.

Chris Pruitt led the War Eagles with 82 rushing yards on eight carries, averaging more than 10 yards per attempt. Parker Newman carried 13 times for 43 yards and scored West Carroll's lone touchdown. Newman also completed 1 of 4 passes for two yards.

Kegan Mealer added 10 yards on one carry, while Alex Cavness rushed twice for 13 yards. Jaden Rodgers had one carry and caught West Carroll's lone completion for two yards.

Caleb Vermillion had eight rushing attempts for minus-one yard and was credited with an interception and a fumble in the offensive statistics.

Defensively, Cole Mueller



Chris Pruitt led the War Eagles with 82 rushing. File Photo

led the War Eagles with seven solo tackles and two assists, including a sack. Vermillion recorded four solo tackles, four assists and a sack.

Cavness finished with five solo tackles and two assists, while Pruitt recorded five solo stops and one assist. Kegan Mealer contributed one solo tackle and six assists.

Skylar Wilson had two solo tackles and three assists. Chance Long recorded three assists and

broke up a pass, while RQ Thompson had two solo tackles and an assist.

Newman provided one of West Carroll's biggest defensive plays with an interception. He also broke up a pass. Sawyer Jackson was credited with another pass breakup.

Landon Wilson recorded a solo tackle and an assist, Rylen had one solo tackle and one assist, Noah Cecchini contributed two assists and David added an assist.

On special teams, Rodgers totaled 28 yards on three returns. RQ Thompson had 13 yards on two returns, Skylar Wilson returned one kick for 10 yards and Newman totaled 31 yards on two returns.

Newman also handled the punting duties, averaging 37 yards on four punts.

The War Eagles were unable to overcome Dresden's offensive production as the Lions pulled away for the 43-6 victory.

HIGH SCHOOL VOLLEYBALL



Huntingdon's Wylie Kee goes for a kill shot. Photo by Russell Bush/The Banner

Huntingdon Defeats McKenzie 3-0

BY RUSSELL BUSH

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Huntingdon (September 1) — Huntingdon and McKenzie meet on the volleyball court at Huntingdon High School with the Fillies earning a three set to zero win over the visiting Lady Rebels. The JV teams from both schools meet to start the night with Huntingdon winning both sets. The Fil-

lies won the first set 25-20 and the second set 25-14.

In the varsity segment of the night the Fillies won over the Lady Rebels 3-0. The Fillies got off to a fast start in the first set as they scored the first seven points of the match to take a 7-0 lead behind the serves of Taylor Canovan.

The Lady Rebels broke the streak with a point, but the Fillies scored the next

six points to take a 13-1 lead and went on the win the set 25-10.

The second set started with a much closer score as the Fillies led 10-7 early but would outscore the Lady Rebels 15-4 for the remainder of the set to take the second set 25-11.

The Fillies also dominated the third set as well, winning 25-14 to win the match.

MIDDLE SCHOOL FOOTBALL

Rebels Shut Out Stewart County

McKENZIE (September 3) — McKenzie Middle School's defense forced multiple turnovers and kept Stewart County off the scoreboard Thursday as the Rebels rolled to a 32-0 victory.

McKenzie grabbed momentum early after Stewart County went three-and-out on its opening possession and followed with a poor snap on fourth down. Navadius Owens capitalized with a touchdown run to give MMS the early lead.

Following another defensive stop, McKenzie marched down the field before Da'Von Webb broke free for a 41-yard touchdown run, extending the lead to 12-0.

Makhyn Gilbert then intercepted a Stewart County pass, setting up another McKenzie score. Colin Yelley caught a touchdown pass from quarterback Cord Wall, who replaced starting quarterback Kenden Coleman during the first quarter, to push the lead to 18-0.

McKenzie's defense continued to shut down Stewart County, and Wall connected with Thomas Howard for a 53-yard touchdown pass to make it 24-0.

Gilbert later added to his interception with a 2-yard touchdown run, extending McKenzie's advantage to 30-0.

Special teams proved to be one of the few trouble spots for McKenzie, but



McKenzie's Navadius Owens sacks the Stewart County quarterback.

a bad snap on an extra-point attempt turned into a successful 2-point conversion, giving the Rebels their final 32-0 margin.

Kash Shaw helped seal the shutout with another interception as the McKenzie defense completed a dominant night.

The Rebels return home Thursday, September 10, to face the Huntingdon Middle School Mustangs.

TSWA Rank Rebels Fourth, Mustangs First

NASHVILLE (September 7) — The Tennessee Sports Writers Association announced its prep football rankings following week 3 competition on Monday. The top 10 teams in each of the six Division I classifications and the top 5 in three Division II classes were selected by TSWA members, with first-place votes in parentheses and total points for Division I classifications based on 10 points for a first-place vote through one point for a 10th-place vote (with votes ranging from five points to one point for Division II classifications).

Class 1A

1. South Pittsburg (2-1) -- 169 points. Last week: No. 1; 2. Coalfield (2-1) -- 145 points. Last week: No. 3.; 3. Hampton (3-0) -- 131 points. (1). Last week: No. 4.; 4. McKenzie (1-2) -- 118 points. Last week: No. 2.; 5. Humboldt (3-0) -- 113 points. Last week: No. 5.;

6. Sale Creek (2-0) -- 88 points. Last week: No. 6.; 7. Greenback (3-0) -- 64 points. Last week: No. 8.; tied 8. Cornersville (3-0) -- 32 points. Last week: Not ranked.; Tied 8. Jo Byrns (2-1) -- 32 points. Last week: No. 10.; 10. Memphis Middle College (1-1) -- 24 points. Last week: Not ranked.

Others receiving 10 or more points: Richland (13).

Class 2A

1. Huntingdon (3-0) -- 170 points (17). Last week: No. 1.; 2. Marion County (3-0) -- 148 points. Last week: No. 2.; 3. East Nashville (2-1) -- 138 points. Last week: No. 3.; 4. East Robertson (3-0) -- 118 points. Last week: No. 4.; 5. Gordonsville (3-0) -- 99 points. Last week: No. 6.; 6. Milan (2-1) -- 83 points. Last week: No. 5.; 7. Happy Valley (3-0) -- 56 points. Last week: No. 9.; 8. Bledsoe County (2-1) -- 47 points. Last week: No.8.; 9. Memphis Acad-

emy of Science & Engineering (1-2) -- 25 points. Last week: No. 10.; 10. Mt. Pleasant (2-1) -- 16 points. Last week: No. 7. Others receiving 10 or more points: Fairley (12); Grundy County (12).

Class 3A

1. Westview (3-0) -- 170 points (17). Last week: No. 1.; 2. Tyner Academy (3-0) -- 153 points. Last week: No. 2.; 3. Meigs County (3-0) -- 135 points. Last week: No. 3.; 4. Forrest (3-0) -- 113 points. Last week: No. 4.; 5. Giles County (2-1) -- 104 points. Last week: No. 5.; 6. Covington (2-1) -- 79 points. Last week: No. 7.; 7. Whites Creek (2-0) -- 58 points. Last week: No. 8.; 8. Fairview (3-0) -- 46 points. Last week: No. 9.; 9. Sequatchie County (2-1) -- 36 points. Last week: No. 6.; 10. Unicoi County (2-1) -- 28 points. Last week: No. 10.

Others receiving 10 or more points: Kingston (10).

Rebels Volleyball Falls to Waverly in Three

McKENZIE (August 31) — The McKenzie Lady Rebels volleyball team fell to Waverly in three sets Monday, August 31, dropping its overall record to 4-3. McKenzie remains 3-0 in district play.

Waverly took the opening set 25-14 before McKenzie battled to a close 25-22 loss in the second set. Waverly closed the match with a 25-9 victory in the third.

Jaycee Stafford led

McKenzie offensively with five kills while adding six digs and one ace. Braylin Auvenshine recorded four kills, three blocks and one ace.

Kynadie Brown led the Rebels with 10 digs and eight assists while adding two aces and one kill. Addison Milam finished with three blocks, two kills, two assists and one ace. Charlie Cassidy added eight digs, one kill, one block and one ace.

The McKenzie junior varsity team also fell to Waverly in two sets, 25-13 and 25-23, dropping its record to 4-3.

Kynlee Barden led the JV squad with 11 digs and four aces while adding two kills. Sami Mathis recorded eight digs, and Willow Stenberg added six digs and two kills. Charlie Cassidy contributed three aces and two blocks.

Rebels Volleyball Sweeps Madison

McKENZIE (September 3) — The McKenzie Lady Rebels bounced back with a three-set district victory over Madison on Thursday, improving to 5-4 overall and 4-1 in district play.

McKenzie battled to a 27-25 victory in the opening set before taking control of the match with consecutive 25-19 wins to complete the sweep.

Jaycee Stafford led the

Rebels with 12 kills and seven digs. Addison Milam and Braylin Auvenshine each recorded nine kills, with Auvenshine adding three blocks and four aces.

Kynadie Brown directed the McKenzie offense with 21 assists while adding three kills and two aces. Charlie Cassidy recorded four aces, three kills and three digs. Madilyn Milam added three aces and two

kills, while Maggie Hall finished with five digs.

The McKenzie junior varsity team also swept Madison, winning both sets 25-21 to improve to 5-4.

Madilyn Milam led the JV team with six kills. Charlie Cassidy, Willow Stenberg and Kynlee Barden each recorded five kills. Abby Carroll finished with 12 assists and five aces, while Aubrey Hoffman added five assists.



Lady Wildcats Make Surge at Eagle's Open

COURTESY BETHEL SID

MARIETTA, Ga. (September 1) — The Bethel University women's golf team delivered an impressive final-round performance Tuesday, climbing one position to finish second in the 2026 Eagle's Open at City Club Marietta.

Bethel fired a final-round 306—its best score of the tournament by 21 strokes—to pass Midway and secure runner-up honors behind tournament champion Dalton State.

The Lady Wildcats finished the 54-hole event with rounds of 327, 332 and 306 for a total of 965. Dalton State captured the championship with 918, while Midway finished third at 978.

Every counting score for Bethel during Tuesday's final round was in the 70s.

Freshman Charli Weatherford completed an im-

pressive collegiate debut with a 75. After opening with rounds of 78 and 81, Weatherford finished with a three-round total of 234 to lead the Lady Wildcats.

Skylar Waller also carded a 75 Tuesday and completed the tournament at 240 following opening rounds of 81 and 84.

Ruby Savage produced Bethel's third counting score with a final-round 77. Savage improved throughout the event, following rounds of 92 and 83 with Tuesday's strong performance to finish at 252.

Martina Gonzalez rounded out Bethel's team score with a 79. She recorded rounds of 83, 84 and 79 for a 246 total.

Merle Chacon shot an 82 in the final round and finished the tournament at 253 after posting rounds of 85 and 86 Monday.

Competing as individu-

als, Allijah Griffith finished with rounds of 89, 92 and 84 for a 265 total, while Enzley Denton recorded rounds of 96, 93 and 87 for a 276.

Bethel began the final round in third place, five strokes behind Midway. The Lady Wildcats outshot Midway by 18 strokes Tuesday to move comfortably into second place.

Bethel Coach Larry Joe Smith was extremely pleased and happy for his squad. "Our young ladies played so well today, and I am so happy for them. This was a strong field and to finish second behind No. 2 Dalton State is impressive. We will continue to work hard as shoot for that top spot."

The runner-up finish provided an outstanding start to the fall season for the Lady Wildcats, who showed significant improvement over the final 18

Bethel Shooters Shine Across Divisions in Rimfire Nationals

COURTESY BETHEL SID

OLIVER SPRINGS, Tenn. — The Rimfire Nation Nationals brought together some of the top competitors in the country, and Bethel athletes delivered standout performances across multiple divisions in both the Limited and the Open categories. The event was held at the Windrock Shooting Range and Training Center in Oliver Springs, Tennessee.

Men's Limited Division

The Men's Limited division saw intense competition, with Kaleb Klein taking home the 1st place finish. Tanner secured the

Ladies Limited Division

The Ladies Limited division featured remarkable performances as well. Ella Tryon captured 2nd place, Olivia Albertson claimed 4th, and Alyson Battreal earned 6th, highlighting skill among the female competitors.

Men's Open Division

In the Men's Open division, Kaleb once again took, clinching 1st place.

Brice earned a hard-fought 2nd place, Tanner Gibson finished in 4th, and James secured 7th, showcasing consistency across both events.

Ladies Open Division

In the Ladies Open division, Olivia stole the spotlight with a 1st place victory. Ella fought her way to 5th, and Alyson achieved 7th, proving their capability to compete at the highest level.

The Rimfire Nation Nationals once again demonstrated the dedication, training, and talent of Bethel Action Shooting Team. With all top ten finishes and several podium placements, these competitors continue to elevate the reputation of their shooting community on the national stage.

HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL



Left, Cole Brown looks for yardage against Christian County. Right, Lelan Gordon hunts down Christian County Ball Carrier. Photos by Mark Bowlin/The Banner

Christian County Adds 20 Fourth-Quarter Points to Defeat McKenzie Rebels, 47-28

MCKENZIE (September 4) — In a wild, back-and-forth Friday night thriller, Christian County rode an explosive fourth-quarter performance to pull away from McKenzie for a 47-28 victory on Sept. 4.

After McKenzie took a tight 28-27 lead early in the final quarter, Christian County responded with 20 unanswered points—capped by a game-sealing 80-yard interception return touchdown—to seal the high-scoring affair.

Both teams entered the non-conference battle sitting at 1-1, but it was Christian County that found its rhythm late behind the arm of quarterback Jasiah McCarley and the dynamic play-making of wide-out Jaylen Ray.

McKenzie set the tone early in the first quarter when quarterback Cole Brown connected with receiver Avery Brown for a stunning 65-yard touchdown pass to make it 7-0. Christian County answered back in the second period, as Deasian Harris punched in a 6-yard touchdown run to cut the deficit to 7-6.

The Rebels padded their lead briefly when Parker Ross intercepted a McCarley pass and returned it 55 yards to the house. However, Christian County fought right back before halftime, using a 5-yard touchdown run and an extra point to knot the score at 13-13 heading into the locker room.

The action escalated in a chaotic third quarter. Cole Brown and Avery Brown hooked up once more for a 19-yard touchdown strike, regaining a 20-13 edge for McKenzie. Christian County stormed right back, claiming its first lead of the night at 21-20 behind a 3-yard touchdown run from Harris and a successful two-point conversion. Jeremiah Smith then added to the momentum, breaking free for a 50-yard touchdown sprint to push Christian

McKenzie showed plenty of fight to open the final stanza. Cole Brown orchestrated a drive that ended with a 17-yard touchdown pass to Jayden Callis, followed by a successful two-point conversion that nudged the Rebels back on top, 28-27.

From there, it was all Christian County.

McCarley connected with Jaylen Ray for a pair of back-to-breaking deep touchdown passes—first from 44 yards out, followed shortly by a breathtaking 74-yard score—stretching the lead to 40-28. Minutes later, the Christian County defense provided the final exclamation point, picking off Brown and returning it 80 yards to put the game out of reach at 47-28.

Despite the loss, McKenzie put up impressive offensive numbers, racking up 434 total yards across 72 plays. Cole Brown finished 24-of-37 passing for 286 yards,

three touchdowns, and an interception, while adding 61 yards on the ground. Avery Brown was dynamic in the passing attack, hauling in 7 catches for 138 yards and two scores. Jayden Callis paced the ground game with 87 rushing yards on 17 carries. Defensively, Alton Carrington and Drew Reeder spearheaded the Rebels' effort, tallying 12 and 14 total tackles, respectively.

Christian County generated 430 total yards on just 49 plays, leaning heavily on big chunk plays. McCarley completed 7 of 15 passes for 172 yards, two touchdowns, and two interceptions, with Ray catching three passes for a game-high 145 yards and two scores. The home team added 258 rushing yards, led by Smith's 150 yards and a score on 24 carries.

With the loss, McKenzie drops to 1-2 on the season, while Christian County improves to 2-1.

Rushing: J. Callis 17 att. 87yds; C. Brown 9 att. 61 yds. Passing: C. Brown 24-36 286 yds, 3 tds 1 int. Receiving: A. Brown 7 rec 138 yds 2 tds; L. Gordon 5 rec. 39 yds; J. Callis 4 rec 42yds 1 td; A. Carrington 3 rec 27yds; J. Melton 2 rec 21yds; J. Blanton 1 rec 15yds; M. Campbell 1 rec 4 yds. Defense: D. Reeder 9 tkls, A. Carrington 9 tkls, C. Brown 7 tkls, C. Gordon 6 tkls. Defense Turnovers: P. Ross 1 INT, A. Brown 1 INT.



Rebel Soccer Celebrates Senior Night

MCKENZIE (September 1) — McKenzie High School girls' soccer celebrated Senior Night with a dominant 10-0 win over Haywood on Tuesday.

The Lady Rebels spread the scoring across the lineup, with nine different players finding the back of the net.

Stephanie Padilla led McKenzie with two goals. Kaydynce Barksdale scored

one goal and added one assist.

Alleigh Britt, Bella Batton, Sophie Dameron, Hannah Prince, Alyssabella Sass, Millie Brigham and Lauren Burlison each scored one goal.

Brigham also recorded an assist, while Ava Hastings finished with two assists.

The shutout capped off Senior Night with a

convincing home victory for McKenzie.

McKenzie scoring: Stephanie Padilla 2 goals; Kaydynce Barksdale 1 goal, 1 assist; Alleigh Britt 1 goal; Bella Batton 1 goal; Sophie Dameron 1 goal; Hannah Prince 1 goal; Alyssabella Sass 1 goal; Millie Brigham 1 goal, 1 assist; Lauren Burlison 1 goal; Ava Hastings 2 assists.



MMS Eighth Grade Soccer Players Honored

Number 30, Layla Arnold is the daughter of Jason and Holly Arnold. She plays striker and defender and has been a member of the team for 4 years.

She thanked her coaches for helping her grow and improve and learn more about soccer. She also thanks her teammates for being there and helping her become a better teammate.

Number 12, Madi Laws is the daughter of Chris and Erin Laws. She plays center striker and has been a member of the team for 2 years. Her favorite soccer memory is being able to

participate together as a team and win.

Number 13, Madison Nelson. She is the daughter of Caitlyn Nelson and Clinton Clark. She plays defense and has been a member of the team for 2 years. She says she thanks the Lord, because He gave her courage.

Number 23, Macie Searatt is the daughter of Diana Searatt and Jeter Vowell and the late Andrew Maxwell. She plays goalie and defender and has been a member of the team for 2 years. She thanks her teammates and coaches for help-

ing her through this season.

Number 25, Olivia Shank. She is the daughter of Samantha and John. She plays center midfield and has been a member for 2 years, and serves as captain. She thanks her coaches, teammates and parents for believing in her when she didn't even believe in herself.

Number 14, Anna Summers, the daughter of Joel and Jamie Summers.

She plays goalie and striker and has been a member of the team for 4 years, and serves as captain. She thanks the Lord for letting her be here.

HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

Mustangs Defeat Milan to Take Region Lead

BY RUSSELL BUSH
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HUNTINGDON (September 4) – Kenton Smith put on a masterclass performance, accounting for 331 total yards and four touchdowns to propel the Mustangs to a 34-14 victory over archrival Milan in their region opener. Smith bested the Bulldogs' defense on the ground with 181 rushing yards on 32 carries while adding 150 yards through the air on 9-of-13 passing. Behind a dominant offensive line, the Mustangs compiled 228 total rushing yards. K'Shun Carter hauled in two touchdown receptions, Zayden Connelly added another scoring catch, and Hayes Eubanks chipped in with a rushing touchdown to round out the offensive effort.



Above, Zayden Connelly finds running room. Below, Kenton Smith finds a hole to gain yardage. Photos by Russell Bush/The Banner

After falling behind 14-13 late in the first half, the Mustangs seized complete control of the contest, unleashing 20 unanswered points. After entering halftime ahead 21-14, the Mustang defense completely locked down the Bulldogs in the second half, surrendering just 80 total yards after allowing 189 in the first two quarters.



Milan won the coin toss and deferred to the second half, giving the Mustangs the opening kickoff. Starting at their own 29 yard line, the Mustangs struck immediately. On the first play from scrimmage, Smith found a seam on the outside and sprinted 50 yards down to the Bulldog 21. Despite a penalty briefly stalling the drive, Smith capped it off by connecting with Connelly for a 13-yard touchdown pass with 7:23 left in the opening quarter. Greyson Anderson drilled the PAT to put the Mustangs up 7-0.

Milan responded with a methodical 10-play, 80-yard scoring drive. The big strike came when Zak Summers hooked up with Nick Graves on a 64-yard pass play to set up first-and-goal at the Mustang 3. Ty Hollingsworth punched it in on the next snap, and Aidan Pennington's extra point tied the score at 7-7.

Moments later, the Mustang defense came up big after a fumble handed Milan deep field position at the Bulldog 47. Although Milan advanced to the Mustang 25, the defense stiffened, forcing back-to-back incomplete passes to force a turnover on downs.

Taking over at their

own 25, the Mustangs launched a 12-play scoring march. Facing a crucial 4th-and-6 at their own 44, the Mustangs lined up in punt formation before shifting rapidly to the line of scrimmage, drawing Milan offside. With the converted first down, Smith capped the drive with a 30-yard touchdown strike to Carter. The point-after attempt was blocked, leaving the Mustangs ahead 13-7.

Milan quickly recaptured the momentum on the very next play from scrimmage. Summers connected with Graves once again, this time for a stunning 77-yard touchdown pass. Pennington's successful PAT edged Milan back into the lead, 14-13, with 1:32 remaining in the half.

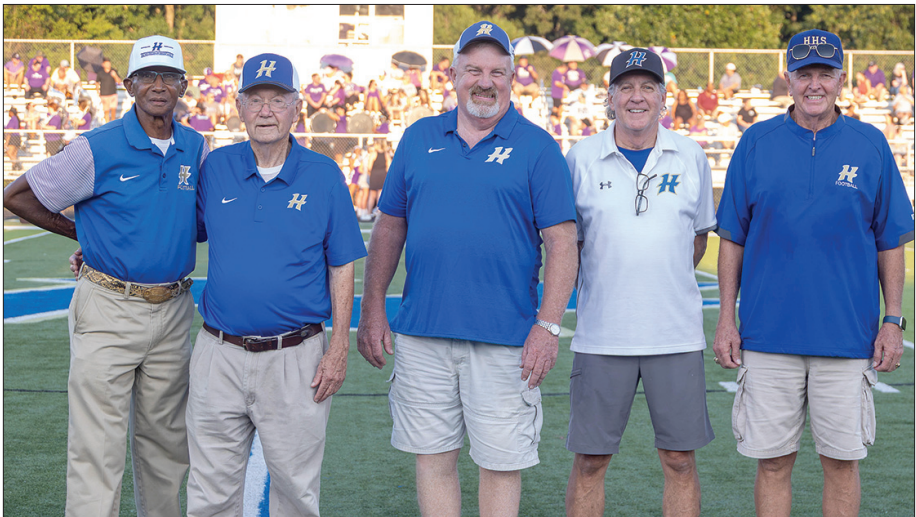
Starting from their own 37 with 1:26 on the clock, the Mustangs—traditionally a run-heavy squad—surprised Milan by orchestrating a thrilling two-minute drill. They covered 63 yards in eight plays, five of which came through the air. Smith finished the drive with an 8-yard touchdown pass to Carter with just sev-

en seconds left before halftime, then rushed in the two-point conversion himself to send the Mustangs to the locker room with a 21-14 lead.

The Mustang defense forced a key stop on downs to start the second half, pinning Milan deep at their own 14-yard line. The offense then rewarded the defensive effort with a grueling 18-play drive, culminating in a 2-yard touchdown plunge by Eubanks with 8:51 remaining in the game. Anderson converted the PAT, widening the advantage to 28-14.

After a short 9-yard punt by Milan set up the Mustangs at the Bulldog 21-yard line, Smith capped off a 6-play drive with a 4-yard touchdown run. Though the extra point missed, the Mustangs shut down Milan for the remainder of the contest to seal the 34-14 victory.

With the win, the Mustangs improve to 3-0 overall and 1-0 in region play. They will host region rival Halls this Friday for Homecoming at Paul Ward Stadium, with kickoff scheduled for 7 p.m.



Huntingdon High School recognized individuals for their long term service to Huntingdon Athletics (L to R): George Russell Holder, Lynn Compton, Greg Mann, Mike Henson, and Roy "Gino" Dill. Photo by Russell Bush

Huntingdon Faithful Recognized for Support

BY RUSSELL BUSH
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Huntingdon High School recognized five special people prior to the Mustangs game with Milan for over collectively 200 years supporting Mustang football in various roles.

Roy "Gino" Dill has served as the team's statistician for 50 years. He is currently starting his 51st year and continues to serve a vital role for the Mustang coaches, as well as preserving moments in

Mustang history that will never be forgotten.

Mike Henson served Huntingdon High School for 35 years as principal, athletic director, and girls basketball coach where he made several state tournament appearances. For the last eight years he has served as the clock keeper.

Greg Mann began serving on the chain crew in 1986. For 40 years he has been a fixture on the sidelines running the chains and serving an important role every Friday.

Lynn Compton has also served on the chain crew for 32 years. He has been a staple on the sidelines, serving the Mustang nation for three decades.

George Russell Holder has been with Mustangs for almost 50 years serving on the chain crew, and has accompanied the Mustangs for every road game. He encourages the student athletes and Mustangs for generations and has exuded a positive sense of pride and energy on the sideline.