



Band director Jason Bowles directed the band to play the Estill High "Fight Song" at both the high school graduation on June 4 and the 8th grade graduation of the middle school on June 5. The band is made up of students from both schools.

## Constable withdraws after moving outside county to Richmond

Constable Danny Conrad from the first district has withdrawn his name as a candidate for re-election.

The first district includes the Courthouse, Schoolhouse, West Lawn, Estill Springs, Ravenna, and West Irvine precincts.

County Clerk Sherry L. Fox confirmed Monday that Conrad has withdrawn because he and his family moved to Richmond.

She added that Ronnie Means, a republican candidate in the May primary for constable of district 1, has filed to run as a write-in candidate for that office.

Apparently, Conrad has not resigned as constable for the remainder of his unserved term.

Conrad defeated Means, 266 to 226, in the May Republican primary.

Now, instead of Conrad, will face the dem-

ocratic winner, Ricky L. Williams, in the November election.

A similar, but not so similar, situation in the May primary election eight years ago, involving then constable Denny Glenn Young and challenger JP Barnes.

Barnes moved out of the district and withdrew as a candidate before the election. It was too late to remove his name from the ballot, but signs were posted in all the precincts involved stated that votes for Barnes would not be counted.

Nevertheless, Barnes received more votes than Young anyway.

Barnes moved back into the district before the next primary election for county offices and ran for constable again. He was again the top vote getter. He is seeking re-election to his second term.



Hannah Patrick waited in line at the middle school graduation on June 5. Behind her was James Patrick.

## KSP arrests woman over forging checks

An Estill County woman was arrested Thursday on a 26-count warrant for forgery and criminal possession of a forged instrument.

Brenda E. Riddell, 52, of Hoys Fork Road, Irvine was arrested Thursday on 13 counts of forgery, second degree, and 13 counts of criminal possession of a forged instrument, second degree.

KSP Trooper Ty Robinson stated that between April 10, 2014 and May 3, 2014, Riddell stole 13 checks with the intent to defraud the victim, Robert Riddell. The relationship between the accused

and the victim is not known.

The arrest warrant states that B. Riddell, knowing that each check was forged, cashed the checks. They were made payable to Dollar Deals for a face value of \$1,435.75.

Each charge against B. Riddell is a Class D felony, punishable by one to five years in prison and/or a fine.

B. Riddell was arraigned in Estill District Court on Monday. She pleaded not-guilty to all 26 charges.

She will return to district court on June 23 for a preliminary hearing.

## Road condition is blamed for wreck that injured two

Two passengers received non-life threatening injuries when a Jeep left Noland's Creek Road on Thursday evening.

Deputy Randy Farthing said that Anne Stamper of Stephenson Road, Irvine was traveling down a step grade on Noland Creek Road when she apparently lost control of the 2001 Jeep Cherokee that she was driving.

The deputy said the Jeep left the road on the right side around 6:15 p.m. and struck an earth embankment.

He added that Stamper told him that she lost control of the vehicle because of the road conditions. The report states the road is black-topped but it is broken up. It also states that a thick layer of gravel covers the black-top.

The two passengers were transported to Marcum & Wallace Memorial Hospital for treatment of their injuries. They were identified as Brian Lickliter of Stephenson Road, Irvine and Rebecca Flinchum of Winchester Road, Irvine.

## Pressure washer stolen

A break-in of a South Irvine outbuilding is being investigated by the Estill County Sheriff's Department.

Donald Ross of South Irvine Road told Deputy Josh Rison that around 5 p.m. on June 7, he discovered that someone had

broken off the lock of his outbuilding.

A Troy-bilt pressure washer was reported missing.

Anyone with information may contact the sheriff's office at 723-2323 during business hours or 723-2201 after hours.

## Whistleblowers face retaliation

by Freddy Groves

I've said it before: When there's a bonus tied to performance, those who are to get the bonuses will go to no end of mischief to make sure it happens.

On the heels of the ever-expanding story about cooking the books of patient wait lists at Department of Veterans Affairs hospitals (during which it appears that some veterans died while awaiting care), it now appears those who stepped forward are being punished. Office of Special Counsel investigators are looking into allegations of retaliation against nearly 40 employees who spoke up. OSC is an independent agency whose job it is to guard against prohibited personnel practices, and more.

Here are some samples from its press release:

• A VA employee spoke up when "inappropriate and continuous use of patient restraints" were being used on veteran patients. The whistleblower was a 20-year employee who'd never had any disciplinary problems ... and was suddenly given a 30-day suspension for speaking up.

• A VA employee spoke up about improper schedul-

ing. The employee's performance evaluation took a hit, and the employee was reassigned.

• A VA employee spoke up about the mishandling of patient-care funds. The employee was reassigned and faced a demotion.

The OSC is investigating these cases, and the actions against the employees have been halted. The OSC has the authority to investigate the 13 Prohibited Personnel Practices, one of which is retaliation for whistleblowing.

If you're a VA employee with a story to tell, you have options:

Go online to the OSC website ([www.osc.gov](http://www.osc.gov)) and click on Whistleblower Disclosures. Or call the Disclosure Hotline at 800-572-2249.

Go online to VA Oversight at [www.vaoversight.org](http://www.vaoversight.org) and file your complaint. TIP: If you decide to step up and reveal the wrongdoings you've seen, don't use a government computer or telephone.

Freddy Groves regrets that he cannot personally answer reader questions, but will incorporate them into his column whenever possible. Send email to [columreply2@gmail.com](mailto:columreply2@gmail.com).

## Judge and Magistrate disagree over discipline of county employee

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The employee has to request the hearing, which is usually held in closed session. Some employees choose to open up their hearings.

Earlier in the meeting, Taylor announced the county has received a bid for this winter's salt through what is known as a Reverse Salt Auction conducted by KaCo, Kentucky Association of Counties. KaCo lumps many counties together to get a better price on bids.

Taylor asked the fiscal court to accept the bid from Detroit Salt of \$99.50 a ton. The county paid \$68.00 a ton last year.

"It's better than we were priced back when we needed it, but it's still high," Taylor stated. "Hopefully, we won't use it."

Taylor said the county has room for 1,000 tons which is what they are purchasing. It will be paid for out of the county's road fund, which is funded through gasoline taxes.

No bids were received for blacktopping, which Taylor called a good thing. The county can now purchase blacktop at state bid price or lower.

He anticipates getting a lower price than state bid contract, because the contractors are not mandated to pay federal wage rates.

A discussion was held over bidding to advertise for additional grounding at tower sites.

Fred Rogers, DES coordinator, said the work is going to be paid for through state CSEPP monies, with so much money allotted for each county.

He added that most of the work will be done on the Chestnut Stand tower which was erected in 2004. The county has two other radio towers and a fourth one under construction.

Taylor said he would like to have costs, because there was a recent issue with a low bidder.

The county will pay for the work and be refunded by the state.

It was agreed to advertise for bids.

The fiscal court is expected to meet again on Monday, June 30 to close out the fiscal year.

## Women are charged with trafficking after traffic stop in Ravenna

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Officer Rifenbark also stated that he found one pack rolling papers, one cut straw, and a small pair of scissors in the purse. Webb reportedly had \$44, one \$20, two \$10, and four \$1.

Rifenbark charged Webb with public intoxication, drug paraphernalia, trafficking in a controlled substance, third degree, and trafficking in a controlled substance second degree.

Hydrocodone is a schedule 3 narcotic and clonazepam is a schedule 4 narcotic. Promethazine is not-controlled but is a prescription drug.

The officer said that all the pills were identified by the Poison Control Center, and marijuana was identified through a field test kit.

Bonds for White and Webb were set at \$2,500 surety for each. The suretor for White was Luke Dees. Webb's bond was signed by rebecca Collett.

The women will be arraigned in Estill District Court on July 16.

## School Board Meeting

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An out of state request was approved for the Jump Rope Team. Expenses were approved for the ECHS girls softball team while participating in the state tournament.

Resignations were announced from Bryan Covey, sixth grade boys basketball coach; Traci Covey, assistant cheerleading coach at the middle school; and Alma Click, substitute teacher.

Sherrie Freeman is retiring as a South Irvine kindergarten teacher. Tim Freeman is retiring as a middle school teacher.

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