

**Estill youth bag deer Page 3**



**Hunter Orange & Tree Stands Page 14**

**Wildcats should have been in Top 5 Page 15**

**50¢**  
INC 3¢ TAX IN KY  
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# The Estill County Tribune

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## Virus cases keep Estill County in the red zone

Estill County is approaching 100 cases of the corona virus this month and November is just a little over half over.

There were 107 cases diagnosed in September and 112 in October.

In-person classes have been postponed until at least after Thanksgiving because the county remains in the red zone.

As of Monday, a total of 386 Estill Countians have been diagnosed with Co-

vid-19 since May 30.

There were 31 active cases on Monday while 345 patients had recovered.

Ten people have died including nine residents at Irvine Nursing and Rehabilitation Center.

Two weeks ago, the nursing home became covid free and was able to shut down its covid unit.

This came after many patients and staff members were diagnosed with

the dreaded disease.

While virtually attending the fiscal court meeting on Monday, Dr. Steven Stack talked about the corona virus.

He said that it kills .7 to 1 percent of all patients who are diagnosed with it.

Population members considered at risk are those 65 and over and those with underlying conditions, such as cancer, diabetes, being over-

weight, or smokers.

"Statistics say we should have done a lot worse," he stated.



Dr. Steven Stack

He added that Kentucky is one of the 15 best states as far as corona is concerned.

Dr. Stack spoke about hospitals filling up with Covid-19 patients.

He said health care workers are exhausted. Patients cannot see their families because of visitation restrictions.

He added that another 10 to 20 percent of the virus patients have long term symptoms the med-

ical community does not yet understand.

Jimmie Wise, director of Estill EMS, addressed the corona virus from the ambulance service viewpoint.

The service's training has been moved to online only, and Wise said they cannot have their annual Christmas dinner.

"We're making sure we're safe, and the public is safe," he stated.

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## KY medical commissioner talks of problems caused without needle exchanges

A special guest at Monday's fiscal court meeting was Dr. Steven J. Stack, Commissioner of the Ky. Department of Public Health.

Dr. Stack appeared virtually to discuss the status of the needle exchange program with the fiscal court.

The program was suspended by the Estill County Health Department after the City of Irvine withdrew their support, due to the number of needles found in public places.

Dr. Stack said the goal of the needle exchange program was to reduce the number of HIV and Hepatitis C cases.

During 2018, he said Estill County had 55 new hepatitis cases. It dropped to 47 in 2019, and 17 in 2020.

He added that in 2017 and 2019, Estill County was number one for drug overdoses.

Dr. Stack said the state

can spend \$250 million on those drug users who get other diseases.

If a drug user gets on public assistance, they will receive \$1 million in government benefits during the course of a lifetime.

"We can pretend that it doesn't exist," he stated.

The doctor stated he worked at St. Joseph Hospital before becoming the medical commissioner.

He saw drug users with abscesses and boils in their arms as big as a tennis ball. The infections spread to other tissues and gets into the drug user's blood stream.

Eventually, doctors have to crack open their chests to replace heart valves.

He added that addiction is not the primary focus of the needle exchange program.

When Irvine withdrew their support, the local health department was in the process of putting in collection buckets for used needles and helping to pick up used syringes in the community.

"The drug problem in Estill County existed be-

fore this program," Dr. Stack stated.

Judge/Executive Donnie Watson said that he understood the program a little better after Dr. Stack's presentation.

"I see it in a little different light," Watson stated.

Dr. Stack encouraged the fiscal court to talk to Irvine Mayor James Gross about reinstating the needle exchange program.

Mayor Gross has invited Dr. Stack to a council meeting when the city resumes in-person meetings.

The fiscal court has not withdrawn their support for the needle exchange program, but both the fiscal court and the city of Irvine must support it.

Later in the fiscal court meeting, Jimmie Wise, director of Estill County EMS commented on the needle situation.

He said the county is having five to six drug overdoses on some days.

"We're dealing with a drug epidemic," he stated.

Wise stated the ambulance service supports the needle exchange program.

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The American Legion Honor Guard performed a gun salute during this year's Veterans Day Ceremony. The honor guard performs at the funerals of veterans throughout the year. The ceremony was held at Ravenna Veterans Memorial Park where train cars have been parked for several years.

## Fiscal court actions take place via teleconference

The Estill Fiscal Court met Monday for their regular session, again virtually. The meeting opened in prayer with newly elected 91st state representative Bill Wesley.

Wesley later asked the fiscal court to make a list of things they would like to have from the state.

The first item of business was the first and final reading of the budget

amendment. The budget is amended by \$929,256 to include a federal CARES grant of \$480,256 and CSEPP funds of \$449,000.

The court agreed to advertise for a new roof on the jail building after specs were drawn up. Although prisoners are now housed at Beattyville, the jail is still used to book inmates and to hold them on court days.

Ronnie Riddell, director of Estill County Emergency Management Agency, recommended three CESPP contracts to the court.

Two of those contracts were to maintain recorder and radio equipment used by 911.

The third contract was for the construction of the saferoom at the 911 center. That construction is

projected to be completed by the end of May.

Riddell asked the fiscal court to bid on an enhancement project at the Chestnut Stand tower. He said it is the county's oldest tower.

"If you lose Chestnut Stand, the community is in trouble for a few days," he said.

He added they are now hoping to use the Happy Top tower for a back-up.

Judge/Executive Donnie Watson recommended a grant on broadband study by Blue Grass Area Development District. He said the county's portion is \$1,400.

"We see our school kids studying from home," Watson stated. "They don't have access to wireless in all areas of the county."

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## Obituaries

Cleveland Adams, 65

Tamera Green, 63

Garet Horn, 72

Alma Kelly, 78

Jay Mansfield, 89

Douglas Miller, 55

Danny Powell, 58

Jake Rose, 89

Nettie Stone, 73

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See Updated Obits

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Train cars have been parked on spare tracks all over Estill County for the last several years. The train cars above are near the bridge over the railroad at Cressy.

**Early Deadline Next Week**  
Due to the Thanksgiving Holiday, please submit all news items and ads by noon on Monday. Thank you.  
**Happy Thanksgiving!**