

More than 100 children than planned for went to the 40th Elizabeth Witt Christmas party

More children than expected went to Saturday's Elizabeth Witt Christmas Party held at the Estill County Fairgrounds.

Francine Bonny said the committee had planned for 460 children. There were about 400 children at the party in the two previous years.

"It has been decades since we've had that many (578) to come," Bonny stated.

A lack of other activities going on during this pandemic may have been the reason for a larger turnout on Saturday.

"We could not have had (the party) if we had done it like we have done it in the past," said Bonny. "We had to re-invent the wheel."

Bonny said the committee which plans the party began in September making alternate plans to host this year's party. They followed the health department guidelines on what they

could do safely.

All of Saturday's volunteers wore masks. Santa and Mrs. Santa had on clear plastic shields. Santa waved, and the children seemed to be okay with that.

The gifts were carried out in blue tote bags, one for each child in the vehicles as they lined up around the fairgrounds. The volunteers were not allowed to touch the vehicles. The driver was asked to pop open the trunk or get out and open a door.

Bonny said the committee had stored extra gifts in two storage locations.

"We made a fast dash out to both places," she said when more children than expected showed up.

Some of the last children through the line did not receive candy, milk, or kettle corn.

The committee has kept the party going since the death of Mrs. Witt, who

held it at her house on Main Street for all children 12 and under, regardless of income.

After Mrs. Witt's death, the party was moved to the Irvine First Christian Church.

Bonny said many people think Mrs. Witt left money for the parties each year in her will, but that was not so. The party depends upon contributions.

Some of the donations come from the Kiwanis Club, the Christian Church and from a concert organized by Rodney Davis.

White House Clinic donated the fruit and toothbrushes given out on Saturday.

Bonny said Prairie Farms had donated the milk, which was picked up at Estill Springs Elementary.

The kettle corn was popped by Flynn's in Estill County.

Bonny said all of the toys are bought

locally.

Bonny said she buys the toys year round during sales, such as Buy 1, Get 1 or Buy 1, Get 1 75% off. The toys are placed in the storage buildings until they are needed.

"We wouldn't have enough money if we didn't get toys on sale," she stated.

Bonny said that toys usually go on sale on Christmas Eve, and she expects to buy some that day.

In the past, the toys were wrapped in the meeting room of Citizens Guaranty Bank, but it was closed to the committee during the pandemic.

Bonny said committee members picked up toys to take home to wrap, starting in October. They returned the wrapped toys and picked up more toys to wrap until they were all done.

She thanked the Estill County Fair Barn for the use of their facility for this year's party.

Fatal Fire in Irvine

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Flames were shooting through the roof when the fire department arrived at Jodi Lane.

Muncie added that because of the size of the fire, White Hall and Waco fire departments provided mutual aid with tankers.

He said there is a fire hydrant at the end of Jodi Lane, but it was a mile and a half from the burning home.

Muncie said the cause of the fire appeared to be electrical.

The Hargett Fire Department also assisted.

A third fire was reported Friday evening on Timberline Trail, off Dry Branch Road.

The Hargett Fire Department responded to this fire, which also totally destroyed the home.



The Body of Christ honors local law enforcement annually. Because of the pandemic, this year's recognition was on a smaller scale. Those present for Saturday's recognition include front row: Irvine Capt.

John Sturniolo and Detective Sam Hensley. Back row: Trooper Bowman, Ravenna Chief Ken White, Officer Stewart Morris, Officer Jason Conrad, and Chaplain Bill Wesley.

Irvine to hire 2 full time police officers

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Councilman Farmer said that the city had a line of credit that needed to be paid and had issues with the garbage trucks that needed attention and that employees would be getting a raise at the first of the year like they always do. Mayor James Gross added that the city had received CARES money and it could only be used for the fire department, police department, or for supplies such as hand sanitizer and cleaning supplies.

Mayor Gross asked the council to approve a resolution that would allow him to apply for more funds through the CARES act. He said he was requesting \$51,738 at this time but of course there was no guarantee that the city would receive that much.

Estill Co.
Covid-19 #s
Total Cases
 537
Active -- 45
Recovered
 487
Deaths 10
 (As of 12/07/20)



Some of the gifts donated to show appreciation to the officers were Carhart vests and jackets. Chief John Sturniolo, left, is modeling a vest, and Det. Sam Hensley is sporting a jacket. Chaplain Bill Wesley is pictured in the middle.

Dear Santa,

Letters to Santa Claus will be accepted by email or regular mail until Friday, Dec. 11.

Please send Santa letters by email to news@estilltribune.com or mail to:

The Estill Co. Tribune
 6135 Winchester Road
 Irvine, KY 40336

Thank you!



IPD charges one with possession of meth

Anthony Arvin, 38, of Webb Road, Irvine was arrested Sunday night by Irvine Officer Jason Conrad.

The citation states that Conrad came in contact with Arvin as Arvin was walking on Mack Street. The officer asked Arvin if he had anything illegal, and he replied No.

Conrad reportedly asked if Arvin minded if he checked. He said Arvin stated, "Go ahead," and began emptying his pockets onto his cruiser.

The citation states

there was a plastic baggie among the items which contained a clear/white crystal-like substance. Conrad suspects it is methamphetamine.

He said he asked Arvin what it was, and Arvin replied, "dope."

He charged Arvin with possession of a controlled substance, first degree and first offense. Arvin was lodged in Three Forks Regional Jail.

Arvin was assisted by Deputy Sheriff Josh King and IPD Detective Sam Hensley.

The Garden Bug
 Road salt damage
 Source: water.greenventure.ca
 - Brenda Weaver

Salt is commonly used to de-ice roads in winter, but its long-term effects are a problem. It corrodes metal finishes on vehicles and damages concrete structures. It contaminates roadside waterways, raising the salinity of the water. It harms vegetation, organisms in the soil, wildlife and domestic pets. Safer alternatives are sand, ashes, kitty litter or commercial products such as EcoTraction.

Surge may be slowing

By Al Cross, Kentucky Health News

Nine months to the day after Kentucky found its first case of the novel coronavirus, its total number of cases surpassed 200,000. That was the thrust of Gov. Andy Beshear's daily press release. What it didn't say is that the last 100,000 cases were found in the past month and a half.

But, as Beshear noted, the recent surge of virus cases, Covid-19 hospitalizations and deaths seems to be abating. The seven-day rolling average of new cases dropped for the first time in almost a week, to 3,406, with Sunday's addition of 2,567 new cases -- 8.4 percent less than last Sunday's 2,803. (Sunday and Monday numbers tend to be low because of limited testing.)

Other, more stable, daily indicators were down. Covid-19 hospital cases fell 3.35%, to 1,673, and 401 of them were in intensive-care units, the same as Saturday; the number of ICU patients on ventilators fell by 12, to 214. Beshear reported 10 deaths from covid-19, the lowest number in more than a week.

The share of Kentuckians testing positive for the virus in the last seven days fell for the third day, to 9.75%. Still, that's almost double the percentage that public-health experts say is a warning sign; it's been above 5% since Oct. 22.

"These are difficult numbers, having passed 200,000 cases and earlier this week passing 2,000 deaths. And now this is our highest week to date," Beshear said in the release. "Our increase from the last couple of weeks is less than what we have been seeing. Certainly, our hope is that we are slowing down this train and are moving at least to a new plateau. We'll have to watch in the coming week if we do have that Thanksgiving surge, or if the majority of our families kept it small this year."