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The Estill County Tribune EstillTribune.Com

VOLUME 34, NUMBER 26 WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2015 IRVINE & RAVENNA, KENTUCKY 40336 14 PAGES

House fire stops trains, considered suspicious

Two Estill County houses were destroyed by fires just before Christmas.

The second fire was a train-stopper on Tuesday, December 22, around 6:50 a.m.

Estill County Fire Chief Derrick Muncie said the house was located on Millers Creek Road. A driver has to cross the railroad tracks and make a sharp left turn and go down a little narrow road.

He added the road was too narrow for the county fire trucks to go down. This meant parking the trucks on Millers Creek Road and stretching the fire hoses across the railroad tracks. Muncie said the fire department contacted CSX Railroad and asked them to stop trains while they were fighting the fire.

"The house fought us all with the metal roof, siding, and interior ceiling," the fire department's face book page says.

No firefighters were injured.

Muncie said this home was unoccupied and had no utilities connected. The homeowner was in the process of selling the home.

Because there were no utilities connected, this makes the cause of the fire suspicious.

The fire department had been called to another home fire around 1:15 p.m. on Monday, December 21 to a residence on



The road to a burning home off Millers Creek Road was too narrow for fire trucks to access it to fight the fire on December 22. The firemen had trains stopped on Millers Creek and crossed the tracks with hoses.

Photo courtesy of The Estill County Fire Department

West Cedar Grove.

Muncie said that one room of the house was completely damaged by the fire, and the rest of the house received smoke and

water damage. He said it is possible the home will be a total loss.

The home was occupied and the family has been assisted by the Red Cross.

Chief Muncie said the fire department was on the scene of both fires around three hours each. The causes of both fires remain under investigation.

Rice Station man arrested same day by IPD and deputy

A Rice Station man was arrested on misdemeanor charges around 7:10 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 27 by the Irvine Police Department. He was soon charged with felony charges by Deputy Russell "Doc" Morris.

IPD Chief Brad Smith said he responded to Noland Court in Irvine in reference to someone being in violation of an EPO/DVO.

He stated that William Matthew Johnson, 32, of Rice Station Road, was walking in front of 222 Noland Court. He added that Johnson had been ordered to stay 500 feet away, but was within 50 feet when Chief Smith arrived.

The police chief stated that a search of Johnson turned up 20 un-used needles and two used ones. Smith said he located one-half of a suspected suboxone pill in a cigarette pack.

Smith said that Johnson stated he was aware of the

EPO/DVO.

He charged Johnson with violation of a KY EPO/DVO, possession of a controlled substance third degree -- drug unspecified and drug paraphernalia - buy/possess.

About 20 minutes after being arrested and taken to the Estill County Detention Center by Chief Smith, Deputy Russell "Doc" Morris charged him with three felonies. They were theft of a weapon and possession of firearms by a convicted felon.

The citation states that Johnson sold a shotgun and a rifle to Bert Phillips for \$50.00 on December 12. The sale of the firearms allegedly occurred on Rice Station Road.

Deputy Morris said the firearms had been reported stolen by Kathy Lafferty, one of Johnson's neighbors.

Bail for Johnson has been set at \$20,000 cash in Estill District Court.

Filing deadline for May primary is January 26

A new president will be elected in 2016, and local candidates can have their names on the November ballot with the presidential candidates.

County Clerk Sherry L. Fox said on Monday that no one has yet filed to be a local candidate. The filing deadline ends on Tuesday, January 26.

Persons wishing to be candidates for Irvine Council

must observe this filing deadline.

Six persons will be elected to the Irvine Council to serve a two year term. The Irvine Council is partisan, so the candidate must state a political party.

A new Ravenna Council will also take office in January 2017. Because the Ravenna Council is non-partisan, the filing deadline for seats on the Ravenna Council is not until August.

Three non-partisan seats will be up for re-election to the Estill County Board of Education. The August filing deadline will also be observed for board of education seats.

Ms. Fox said the school board seats in Districts 1, 2 and 4 are up for re-election. Those seats are currently held respectively by Robbie Starling, Patty Hood, and Amy Thomas.

District 1 includes Barnes Mountain, South Irvine, and Red Lick precincts.

Distict 2 is comprised of Estill Springs, Courthouse, and White Oak precincts.

Forks and Cedar Grove precincts make up District 4.

Voters will also be electing a U.S. senator, a 6th district U.S. representative, a 21st district state senator, and a 91st district state representative.

The current U.S. senator Rand Paul (R) has filed for re-election. Jeff Kinder (D), Phelps, Tom Recktenwald (D), Louisville, and James R. Gould (R), Lexington have also filed for U.S. Senator in the secretary of state's office.

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FRIDAY
New Year's Day
January 1
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Zoe Deaton signed a letter of intent to play softball for Kentucky Christian University on December 17th. Pictured left to right, back, are KCU coaches Mike Travis and Dave Miller, ECHS coach Danny Wood, principal Chris Winkler, superintendent Jeff Saylor, athletic director Arthur Ballard, head coach Shirley Beard, Zoe Deaton, and Missy Deaton. See full story on Page 2. (Photo by Cathy Dawes)

Obituaries
Ruby Scott Allen, 57
Michael L. Barnes, 52
Allen Crowe Jr., 86
Shelia Darlene Henry, 61
Dale Stevens, 54
Charles Walton Sr., 82
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Students and staff at the Estill County High School participated in 'Ugly Sweater Day' before school was dismissed for Winter Break. (Photo by Cathy Dawes)