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16 PAGES

Jail, courthouse closed by bed bugs

by DELORES ROWLAND
Estill Tribune Staff

The Estill County Courthouse is expected to reopen Wednesday, July 29 after being closed for bed bug infestation.

Judge/Executive Wallace Taylor closed the county jail last Tuesday after hearing it possibly had bed bugs. The 15 inmates were transferred to Three Forks Regional Jail in Beattyville.

The jail has 11 staff members who also lost their jobs temporarily. One male and one female deputy jailer have been assisting Jailer Bo Morris with transporting inmates to Lee County.

“Until today I didn't know what a bed bug looked like,”

Judge Wallace Taylor

When a person was arrested, the arresting officer contacted Morris who met them and transferred the inmate to the regional jail.

Judge Taylor said that last Tuesday morning, Jailer Morris went to the Estill County Health Department and discussed the bed bugs with Kenny Cole, a health environmentalist.

Taylor said that Cole then called him and told him about the possibility of bed bugs in the jail. After that conversation, Taylor said he decided to close the jail and

have it examined for bed bugs.

The judge said that he was told that jail employees had been spraying the jail with over-the-counter bed bug sprays. Most insecticides come with a warning for people not to be in the area for at least four hours after spraying.

Taylor contacted a couple of bed bug exterminating companies and decided to go with the one based in Irvine.

This company is licensed and insured. They sprayed Monday night and will spray again in two weeks for \$2,000 total. They will also furnish written reports. The company will return in four weeks for another inspection.

The company was booked up and was unable to examine the jail (and the courthouse) until this past Monday morning.

“We have found bed bugs in the jail, and in the courthouse,” Taylor said Monday morning.

“Until today, I didn't know what a bed bug looked like,” Taylor stated.

Because jail inmates are in the courtrooms for hearings, it was determined that bed bugs may have also spread to the courthouse.

The courthouse had remained open last Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

On Friday, Circuit Judge Michael Dean postponed motion day until this



The Estill County Jail was closed last Tuesday because of the possibility of bed bugs. Fifteen inmates were transferred to Three Forks Regional Jail in Beattyville. The courthouse is attached to the courthouse, where inmates go for hearings on their cases. As a precautionary measure, the courthouse was closed Friday through Tuesday. An inspection found bed bugs in the jail and first floor of the courthouse. The bugs were found in the district court room and one office. The two bottom windows at far right in this photo are in the district court room.

Wednesday. It has again been postponed.

On Friday, it was decided to close the courthouse until after the inspection and spraying. This left both county and state employees without employment.

When the exterminator inspected the jail, Taylor said he found several pockets of bed bugs inside the jail.

Luckily, no bed bugs were found in the upstairs

of the courthouse, including the large courtroom.

However, the downstairs did not get as good a report. Bed bugs were found in the little courtroom. This courtroom was used for a fiscal court meeting the night before the jail was closed.

Bed bugs were found in a brown leather chair that an attorney had sat in. It is one of four matching chairs used by attorneys during hearings held in the little court room.

Taylor said that bed bugs were also found in one of the offices on the first floor of the courthouse.

By late afternoon, at least one bed bug infested chair had made its way to the landfill.

Taylor said the spray used by the exterminator has the same active ingredients as the over the counter sprays, but the ingredients are much stronger.

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Adult bed bugs are about a quarter-inch long. They are oval in shape and are flat. Color changes after molting and feeding on blood.

New owner of Pizza Palace building has applied for a full liquor license

by CATHY DAWES
Estill Tribune Staff

Tonya Noll, a resident of Irvine, informed members of the Irvine city council that she has purchased the building on River Drive that was formerly known as Pizza Palace. Noll said that she and her husband own 62 acres in Estill County, reside on Broadway, and have now invested in commercial property in which they plan on operating a pizza place in the near future.

She said that they had applied for a full liquor license through the state of Kentucky. Along with pizza, the Nolls plan to have wings, appetizers, and a variety of other items on the menu. Noll added that the new business would also bring at least ten new jobs to the city.

Auditor Artie White from

White and Associates told the council that four years of the audit had been completed. He said that he couldn't release his findings to the council until he got some information from IMU. He explained that even though IMU has its own auditor that it is still a component of the city. The city carries the debt of IMU and also signs grant agreements for the utility company.

White said he had disclosed his findings with Mayor Noland and he would be able to inform the council within the next few weeks. He added that he would be at the next council meeting to answer any questions that council members may have in regards to those findings.

Councilman Tobo Bryant asked if the Housing Authority is also a component of the city's audit. White

replied that although it is a component of the city there is no financial accountability with it like there is with Irvine Municipal Utilities.

With advice from city attorney Rodney Davis, the council agreed to have Attorney Linda Aine negotiate with Windstream regarding a franchise agreement. The cost to the city to hire Aine would be somewhere between \$3,000 and \$5,000 with the possibility of receiving a portion of that money back at the end of the agreement. Davis said he felt like it was in the best interest of the city to allow her to negotiate on behalf of the city because she deals with these type of agreements on a daily basis.

Tobo Bryant questioned Fire Chief Tony Murphy about the regulations of burning within city limits.

Murphy said that residents were only allowed to burn debris and brush from their yards. He said most people were unaware of the rules about outdoor burning and the fire department responds to fires and puts them out when items are being burnt that shouldn't be. Murphy added that he tries to discourage people from burning leaves in the fall because they smoke and smoulder and bother other residents.

Murphy said that the fire department is currently awaiting a new shipment of smoke detectors to install in homes. He said that there are several people on the waiting list and encourages anyone that would like to have detectors professionally installed in their homes to contact the fire department and be added to the list.

By Order Of

Circuit Judge Michael Dean

Circuit Court For Today July 24, Has
Been Canceled

And

Rescheduled For Wednesday
July 29, 2015 At 9:30 AM

The Circuit Clerks Office Will Be
Closed Until Further Notice

Sorry For Any Convenience

Closure notices from judges were plastered on the doors of the courthouse to notify patrons the courthouse was closed for business.

Obituaries

Cleta Allen, 84
Blanche Birchfield, 90
Maggie Fouch, 78
Shirley Hicks, 70
Virida Pelfrey, 82
Ray D. Snowden, 80
Tracy Warner, 88
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The first event, a sponsorship ride, was held Saturday at Hollerwood Park, an off road park that includes Estill, Lee, Wolfe, and Powell counties. Those who bought permits Saturday were taken on guided tours of the trail rides. Food and musical entertainment was available. For more information, go to hollerwood-park.com. The park is expected to open this fall. (Photo by Shurla Cooper)



Butterflies did not care Friday if the jail and courthouse were closed for bed bugs. The creatures sucked nectar from the dianthus plants in the flower beds.