

59 Students Graduate in Gatton Academy's 10th Class

On Saturday (May 13), 59 students representing 40 counties from across the Commonwealth of Kentucky, including one each from Estill and Jackson counties, were recognized during The Gatton Academy's 10th graduation ceremony in Van Meter Hall at Western Kentucky University.

Gatton Academy Executive Director and Mahurin Professor of Gifted Education Dr. Julia Roberts expressed that the graduation ceremony was a celebration for the entire Commonwealth.

Gatton Academy Director

Dr. Lynette Breedlove shared her praise for the graduating seniors and her gratitude for the WKU faculty and staff members in making The Gatton Academy both a rewarding and challenging educational experience for Kentucky.

Sixteen members of the class were selected as National Merit finalists, two seniors earned National Security Language Initiative for Youth (NSLI-Y) scholarships, and four students were recognized as semifinalists in the Siemens competition. Ninety-two percent of the class participated in faculty-spon-

sored research during their time at the Academy, and nine graduates completed the school's STEM + Critical Languages curriculum in either Arabic or Chinese; 88 percent of the senior class studied abroad while at The Gatton Academy; 66.1 percent of the graduating class completed 60 or more hours of service during their two years at The Gatton Academy. As a class, they completed 3,698.75 service hours.

In the fall of 2017, students from the graduating class will attend 22 colleges and universities across the United States.

Members of The Gatton Academy's Class of 2017 includes Estill County's Caleb Stickney (Estill County High School)* and Jackson County's Rhiannon Connor (Berea Community High School).

Stickney was also recognized as a Gatton Community Scholar for completing two semesters of research with a research outcome that is presented to a professional audience after being accepted through a vetted process OR four semesters of participation in STEM+Critical Languages, AND documenting 60 hours of service.



Caleb Stickney

KSP arrests couple after shots are fired

A couple was arrested after the report of shots being fired on Flinchum Ridge Road on May 9, just after 9 p.m. No one was injured during the nearly five hour long ordeal.

The citation states that David Stamper, 43, of Eades Drive, Irvine was found several miles down a ridge from where he had wrecked his vehicle and could not get back on the roadway.

Trooper Ty Robinson wrote in the citation that Stamper threatened to kill himself, his two brothers and his girlfriend.

The citation states that Stamper fired the rifle through the back windshield of his car as well as his girlfriend's vehicle.

Stamper allegedly handed the rifle to another person, believed to be his girlfriend, before surrendering to state police before 2 a.m.

Sonya Huff's citation states that Stamper dropped the gun, and Huff attempted to hide it across the road in a tree line. The rifle was located and confiscated by KSP.

Huff was arrested and placed in the back

of the jailer's car for transport when she advised that she had a baggie of methamphetamine in her private area. She retrieved the baggie and it was placed in evidence by KSP.

Stamper was charged with possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, wanton endangerment first degree, tampering with physical evidence, and alcohol intoxication in a public place.

Stamper's bail was set at \$20,000 cash.

Huff, 40, also of Eades drive, was charged with tampering with physical evidence and possession of a controlled substance, first degree and first offense.

Huff's bail was set at \$2,500 cash.

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Irvine Council Discusses Possible Occupational Tax

by CATHY DAWES
The Estill County Tribune

Members of the Irvine council discussed the possibility of an occupational tax for the second time in less than a month on May 8th. Mayor Noland reported that he had a better number on the amount of people employed within the city and to the best of his knowledge there are currently 782 people that work in Irvine. He said the average person makes approximately \$300 per week and with a one percent tax on each of those salaries would bring in \$121,992 per year for the city of Irvine.

"We are going to have to have some kind of revenue to get our employees' salaries up and comparable to others in the area," stated Noland.

O'Brene Richardson said he would like to see ordinances from surrounding counties and become further educated on the tax before making a decision.

Mayor Noland said that Stanton does a one percent tax on businesses and everything but he is not asking for that, he's just asking for a payroll tax.

"With something this serious I think it's a good idea to have a full council to discuss it and we have one missing tonight," said Tobo Bryant.

Bryant also added that the county had initiated a payroll tax back in the 80's and at that time it was supposed to be for a short amount of

time until they were able to get ahead on some of their bills. He said that the payroll tax is still in place for Estill County.

City Clerk Robin Powell reported that she had receive a letter from James Driver of the IRS. She said that she had been in contact with him and that the city of Irvine has been chosen for a random audit. Powell said that no one had called or written a letter to request the audit and that she was told that every five to six years the city is subject to a random audit. The audit is scheduled to begin on May 17th.

Powell also informed the council that no privilege license had been paid for any of the mobile home parks this year. She said that she had been reviewing documents and could not find anything stating how much was to be charged for each mobile home slot. She said that as long as she has been employed by the city they have always charged \$10 per trailer. She said she would review the ordinance pertaining to mobile homes and see what she could come up with.

Police Chief Brad Smith said that the red house located at 275 Main Street had become not only an eyesore but a community safety issue. Smith said that during the month of April the department had been to the home five times and had made several arrests, one being 3rd degree assault of a police officer. He said that

they are doing all they can as far as the law enforcement side of it but he feels like they need to look at the bigger picture.

Smith also reported that the home located on the corner of Laurel and Rice Street had not complied with the attempts that they had made to get them to clean the residence up. He said he was going to have the PVA pull information on the property and discuss the matter with the property owner.

Mayor Noland said he had visited a residence on High Street that is located to a property that had been on fire. He said he couldn't stand the smell coming from the property next door. Noland said the man that lives next door said he would tear the burnt structure down and haul it off if he would be able to acquire the property that it sits on. The council suggested that the health department and fire marshal be called to see if it could be condemned.

Tobo Bryant said he felt like the city needed a building inspector and suggested that they contact Phillip Hurt who had been the city inspector for Berea in previous years. Bryant said that the city needed someone to enforce zoning issues and that they were supposed to have one.

One privilege license was granted during the meeting to Gary Powell to operate Powell's Auto and Tire Service located behind the Twin on River Drive.

Lesa Ledford joins staff of Estill County Library

The Estill County Public Library has a new employee.

For the past two years, Lesa Ledford has worked at the Powell County Library. "It was a good opportunity to expand and learn," she said of accepting the Estill job.

Ledford replaces Phyllis Dennis who had started a successful recipe swap. Ledford plans to continue those recipe swaps.

At the Powell library, she started a summer reading program for adults. For each program, she picked a theme, such as barn dancing or adult coloring. Then she introduced books which went along with the them.

She added the adult coloring was very successful and they continued meeting.

"It's just something for the adults to come and re-

lax," she stated.

Ledford may be starting new programs at the local library, but first she wants to get settled in. She will also be assisting with children's storytime this summer until a new children's librarian is hired.

Ledford likes reading in almost all genres, as long as it has clean language and actions.

She and her husband of 14 years, Jason, are youth leaders at their church, West Bend First Church of God.

They are the parents of a 12 year old daughter, Angela, and a four year old son, Matthew.

Ledford received her associate degree in Art History from Morehead State University.

Before working at the library, she worked for 12 years at Whitaker Bank in Powell County.

Jason has been employed at Infiltrators in Winchester for nearly 21 years.

They reside on Furnace Mountain. It will depend on Jason's work schedule on which direction that Ledford comes to work.

On the days that Jason works, she will be going through Stanton to drop her son off at Day Care.



Lesa Ledford

School board accepts \$5.7 million grant for vo-tech

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The superintendent said his former district, Bell County School district, receive SEEK funds of about \$100,000 annually from students in two other districts who attend the Bell County Career and Technical Center.

Powell County has committed to send their students to the Estill County Career and Technical Center, and Saylor said one other county may also.

He told the board that Powell County cannot legally contribute financially, but Estill County would receive state funds for their students who come here. He said that \$100,000 from Powell students is enough to make the payment in the second option.

Saylor said Senator Al Robinson has

made a commitment the school will be state operated.

The board hesitated on voting to make sure their decision was not contingent upon the recallable nickel.

"What if that doesn't pass?" Isfort stated.

Saylor said the board could handle the second option.

The bonds won't be sold until the spring of 2018, and construction will also begin then.

The Career and Technical Center will open in the fall of 2019.

The construction bonds will be paid back in the year 2038.

The board will be going into closed session at Thursday's meeting to purchase property, a minimum of a ten acre tract.

We applaud an action plan to make dreams come true

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I already knew and expected there would be a bill. He sat down and I could hear there were several entries, and with each pause, my heart beat faster and faster. The total turned out to be more that my yesterday price ideas, for sure, but I politely and carefully listened to his words. Was I prepared? No! Did I try to figure out where I could switch tactics with the home budget to come up with the money? You bet! Am I thrilled that it will be "beans and rice" rather often for the next few months? No!

This service call also didn't take into considerations that our water tank had to be replaced within the last year, and that I had to put new tires on my older model car. I have to have hot water and my car is very important to me. Somehow, I find a way to maintain and keep up with things that are important to me. I take responsibility for taking care of our "stuff" as best I can.

In a similar, more serious application, the children of this community and their

educational needs are even more important to me because I am still involved with them as a volunteer, as a grandparent, and friend. They are even more important to me than my HVAC unit, the water heater, the tires, and some painting I need to do. Our children need safe study buildings and grounds, transportation, and all the things that accompany their education. I have personally found that proper upkeep and maintenance of the physical facilities and equipment, and is by far the best and most economical way of operating rather than allowing neglect and decay to attack and destroy. I long for and am so happy to see these needs be addressed efficiently both in the school system, in the county and city governments, as well as in our personal lives.

Our superintendent, the school board, and others have untiringly assessed, prepared, and proposed a plan to build/rescue our facilities and learning efforts at today's costs. I believe they are an efficient, dedicated, and thoughtful

group in their planning. (I mentioned I found surprising costs in my small project.) They have found challenges that need to be restored, remodeled, added, changed and even discarded to accomplish the education goals for our children. These costs for their education, though surprising, are necessary for our children and their future, and also affect us. I will just need to figure out a way to pay my share of the expense because they and their future are ours. We all do.

Please! Let's all climb into the rescue boat and look for ways we can help not only with our nickel and other taxes, but in our attitude, our interest, our encouragement to our students, our teachers, and our leaders. We all have dreams of matching our school system with our needs for the sake of all of us. We all want to be proud of our best efforts. We applaud an action plan to help make these dreams come true. Like Nike says, "Just Do It."

Nelle Williams
Retired teacher

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May 22-26, 2017

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