

ECMS Spring Fling



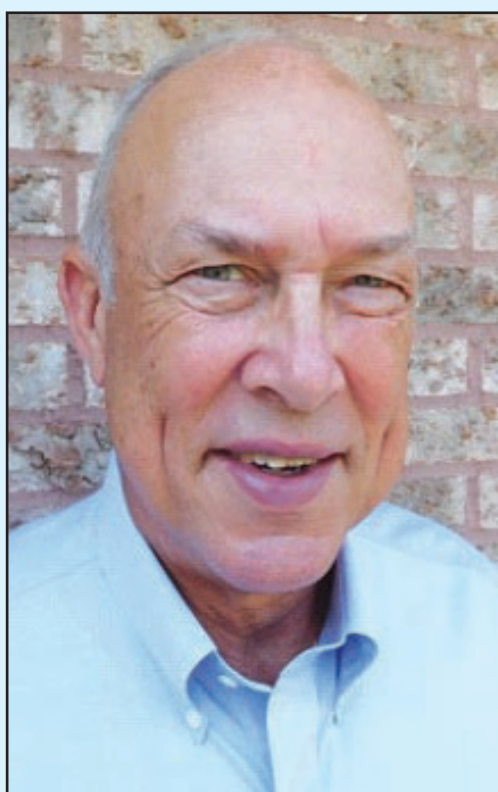
Members of the student council at the Estill County Middle School hosted the annual Spring Fling on Friday night.



Cameron Friend and Carlie Plowman stopped for a photo before heading into the Spring Fling.



Chelsea Hardy was chauffeured to the Spring Fling by her dad Steve Hardy on Saturday night.



VOTE Thomas Hart County Judge Executive

To begin, I cannot say that my primary qualification for the position of County Judge Executive of our county is that I was born and raised in Estill County and have lived here all my life. I was not, and I have not. Nevertheless, considering the steady decline of the population and fortunes of Estill County over the last 20+ years, perhaps it is time for someone with a broader vision and skill set to effectively lead and manage a turnaround in the county's future. I am seeking the Republican nomination in the May 22 primary.

I am a retired U.S. Air Force Colonel with over 30 years commissioned service. In addition to assignments in aircraft maintenance, teaching ROTC, explosives and nuclear safety, Department of Defense level environmental programs oversight, and as Chief of Staff and Director of Operations for the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, I spent 6 years as a squadron commander of a 185-person Civil Engineer Squadron, gaining experience in leading and managing men and women performing duties directly akin to the oversight responsibilities of the County Judge Executive, including road building and repairs, maintenance and repair of utility systems, fire department supervision,

and budgeting and financial controls. I hold a Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Science from the University of Kentucky (1974), a Master of Science in Management from Troy State University (1979), a Master of Engineering in Industrial Engineering from Iowa State University (1984), and a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies from Eastern Kentucky University (2015). Complementing my military experience and educational background I spent 9 years in private industry as a Quality Assurance Manager, Manufacturing Manager, and Program Manager.

My wife, Sarah, and I moved to Estill County in 2005 on my retirement from the Air Force and her retirement from the Coast Guard Reserve and the Environmental Protection Agency. Since then I have been actively engaged in the community through the education system, Boy Scouts, church activities, Past Master of the Irvine Masonic Lodge, Estill County Cattlemen's Association and as Vice Chair and Chair of the Concerned Citizens of Estill County. Though not a County native, I am well known and well respected across the County. It greatly saddens me to see the county's continuing decline: businesses closing, no new businesses moving here, an aging population, lack of jobs, and the best and brightest of our children leaving the county when they come of age because of lack opportunity here. Those young people that do stay work in Berea, Richmond, Lexington, Georgetown, Winchester, Mt. Sterling – driving hours each day traveling to and from work. It does not have to be that way. Estill County needs to do those things necessary to make it attractive to both businesses and families, or the County's population and economic well-being will continue to wither. I know how to build a strategic plan and how to manage the execution of the plan. I also know how to ask for assistance from outside agencies in developing and financing a viable plan. I am a team builder and a proven and successful hands-on leader. I ask that you allow me the privilege of serving Estill County as its Judge Executive and leading its journey of economic revitalization.

Paid by Thomas Hart