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Jail inmate escapes after court hearing

A woman fled from law enforcement after her court hearing in Estill District Court last Wednesday.

Deputy Chris Coffey said that Marie Stepp, 40, of Stacy Lane, was being escorted to the transport van when she took off on foot. She went around the corner of the building and headed toward Broadway.

He said that two CT units hollered for her to stop multiple times.

Deputy Coffey stated that Stepp crossed Broadway and continued down Court Street. A CT unit caught up with her approximately 75 to 100 yards on the back side of the former BB&T Building.

The citation states that she had one side of her handcuffs off.

It adds that the CT unit took Stepp to the ground and deployed pepper spray.

Coffey charged Stepp with second degree escape and resisting arrest.

Stepp had been in Estill District Court for a hearing on a charge of theft by unlawful taking or disposition shoplifting \$500 or more but under \$10,000 that Deputy James Marshall had charged her with on Sept. 7.

According to that citation, Stepp took merchandise from Rite Aid on Richmond Road in Irvine and was pushing it down Richmond Road in a shopping buggy. The merchandise was totaled at \$3,152.91.

On the day of her first arrest, Deputy Marshall also served a Madison County arrest warrant on Stepp with the same charge.

That warrant says she had shoplifted over \$500 in makeup from a business on Lantern Ridge Drive in Richmond.



Toot! Toot!

The Harlan County Shriners gave free train rides through a residential area of Ravenna on Saturday during the annual Railroad Festival. The little train tooted its horn as it went up one street and down another one.



Bill Lynch sported a Railroad Festival T-shirt while trying to sell a bourbon barrel lid with the "Estill Engineers" on it.



The sign at the Railroad Festival on Saturday said free face painting, but this young man wanted his arm painted instead.

Deputy arrests 2 with over 5 lbs. of leafy substance

Two men were charged with trafficking in marijuana, over eight ounces but less than five ounces on Sept. 9 by Deputy Chris Coffey.

The charge is a Class D felony, punishable by one to five years in state prison.

The deputy said he was at the Dollar General on Richmond Road, next to Advance Auto Parts, when a customer asked him to check on some individuals at the side of the building.

Deputy Coffey said he talked with Jeffrey Hacker, 22, of Richmond, the driver of the vehicle. Hacker reportedly told the deputy that he was good, and the deputy could run his plate if he wanted to.

As he walked around the vehicle to get the plate number, Coffey said he noticed a leafy substance in a plastic tub that you soak feet in.

He asked Hacker what the leafy substance was. Hacker allegedly replied, "It's pot and it's mine."

While Coffey was talking to Hacker, he said Jimmy Dees, 31, of Lily, Ky. came to the car.

He added that Dees gave him the name and birth date

of an inmate lodged in the Madison County Detention Center.

A third individual in the same car told Coffey that the marijuana in the car was Dees'.

When Coffey found out that Dees wasn't who he said he was, he located him at the nearby BP.

He then took Dees to the jail. He and Officer Conrad identified him through a picture on NCIC.

Coffey said that Dees told him that he would admit to the pot if he would give him a cigarette.

Hacker was charged with trafficking in marijuana (8 oz. to 5 lbs.) first offense.

Dees was charged with giving an officer false identifying information and trafficking in marijuana (8 oz. to 5 lbs.) first offense.

Hacker and Dees were arraigned in Estill District Court on Friday, Sept. 13.

Bail for Hacker and Dees was set at \$5,000 cash for each. Hacker can be released on 10% of that amount.

Deputy Coffey also served a bench warrant from Jackson Circuit Court on Dees. Information on that charge was not available.

Obituaries

- Dalton Adams, 24
- Gary Collett II, 46
- Paul Collins, 49
- Lyndale Hall, 57
- Gordon Phillips, 79
- Ollie Roberts, 77
- Alfred Rogers, 90
- Bobby Thomas, 64
- Christine Wiseman, 93
- Lloyd Wiseman, 69
- Harold Witt, 81
- See Page 6
- Daw Miller, 72
- See Page 14

Some county employees to get raises & back pay

Some county employees will soon be getting raises and back-pay as well, according to action taken at Monday's court meeting.

Judge/Executive Donnie Watson said the previous fiscal court had approved raises to go in effect August 20, 2018.

"The raises were never put in place," he stated. "This has been a nightmare."

"We're not through working on it," Watson added. "It has consumed our time."

The fiscal court approved the raises for CSEPP employees, including some 911 dispatchers.

Watson said they had worked on the raises for CSEPP employees first so the county could get reimbursed.

County treasurer Freida Lancaster said some of the CSEPP dispatchers' salaries were even charged to the General Fund. She added the General Fund will be reimbursed out of the CSEPP monies for those salaries.

"The county was flat broke at the time," Watson stated.

He told the magistrates that if the county didn't pay the raises, it would be court ordered.

Only three workers at the county road department were not within the range on their salary scale.

The magistrates voted to give a \$1.00 an hour raise to the three full time transport officers, upping their wage to \$12.50 an hour.

"They are in a hazardous situation," Watson stated.

He mentioned their risk of contacting hepatitis. An inmate at Three Forks Regional Jail also died this summer from another disease.

County Attorney Jason Riley said he wanted to research the Kentucky Statutes on the transport officers' salary.

"I think this will allow for a retroactive raise," he added.

He said that it was illegal to change the raise of an elected officer. The transport officers are not elected. They made more money per hour as deputy jailers before their titles were changed to transport officers.

Jailer Bo Morris said the court is now being reimbursed 41 cents a mile to transport certain inmates to court hearings, the doctor or rehabilitation.

The raise situation will not affect employees of the county clerk or sheriff's department.

Minnie Friend and her sister-in-law, Samantha Friend, addressed the fiscal court about the dogs belonging to Samantha's children on Crowe Hollow Road off Highway 213.

"Boy" Durbin was not present at Monday's meeting, but he has been at several previous meetings to complain about the Friends' barking dogs.

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Following the opening Kids Parade, children 12 and under were invited to paint pumpkins, sponsored by the Ravenna Greenhouses.