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Breaking news at harlanenterprise.net

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Man charged with child exploitation offenses

BY JOE ASHER
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A Harlan County man is facing charges including promoting a minor in a sex performance after a Kentucky State Police investigation. Dustin Scott Murphy, 33, of Coldiron, was arrested by Kentucky State Police Trooper Piereson on March 13.

According to a press release, the Kentucky State Police (KSP) Electronics Crime Branch arrested Murphy on charges related to child sexual abuse material. A KSP Internet Crimes Against Children investigation resulted in the arrest of Murphy. The investigation began after the discovery of an individual sharing images online of child sexual exploitation. Investigation led to an interview at a residence in the Coldiron community. While at

the residence, equipment used to facilitate the crime was seized and transported to the KSP forensic laboratory for examination. The investigation is ongoing. Murphy was charged with third-degree sodomy and promoting a minor (under 16) in a sex performance. Murphy was lodged in the Harlan County Detention Center on a \$1,000,000 full cash bond.

Promoting a minor in a sex performance is a Class B felony punishable by 10 to 20 years in prison. Third-degree sodomy is punishable by one to five years in prison. **IN OTHER POLICE ACTIVITY:** ■ Arcoma King, 54, of Wallins, was arrested by Harlan County Sheriff's Deputy Jacob Rich on March 12.

According to a press release, Rich conducted a traffic stop on KY 1137. King was arrested on an indictment warrant. A search incident to arrest located suspected controlled substances, drug paraphernalia and cash. King was charged with first-degree possession of a controlled substance, possession of drug paraphernalia, and second-degree trafficking a controlled substance. She was lodged in the Harlan County Detention Center;

See **CRIME**, on 2



Spring hunting season draws near. (Photo submitted)

Woods ready for spring hunting

SPECIAL TO THE ENTERPRISE

Kentucky's spring hunting seasons kick off with the youth-only turkey season April 5-6, followed by the general season for turkeys April 12-May 4. Spring squirrel season, a popular activity for both novice and experienced hunters, commences May 17 and continues for nearly a month, concluding June 15. Surveys foreshadow a great turkey season ahead. "During our winter netting and leg banding research, we caught an unusually high number of jakes, or younger birds," said Zak Danks, Wild Turkey Program coordinator for the Kentucky Department of

Fish and Wildlife Resources. "This aligns with the productive poult hatch in 2024, so I expect hunters will see more jakes this spring." Danks suggests this should be an especially good season for youth and new hunters looking to bag a bird for the first time. Younger birds are easier for hunters to fool than older birds that have been hunted previously. Hunters would do well to have a good turkey call and know how to use it. The online Learn to Hunt Turkey webpage on the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife website is a great place to start for tips and resources. While most turkeys are harvested the opening weekend of the spring season, hunters should remember

they still have three more weeks to take their bird. Weather plays an important role. "In general, turkey hunting is more difficult on windy or rainy days, although I still hunt whenever I can," Danks said. No more than two legal turkeys may be taken per spring season. A legal turkey is defined as a wild turkey that is male or has a visible beard. Hunters may only harvest one bearded turkey per wildlife management area (WMA), and no more than one bird may be taken per day. Turkeys taken by youths during the youth-only season count toward their spring turkey bag limit.

See **SPRING**, on 2

Harlan County School Board approves school calendar

BY JOE ASHER
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The Harlan County Schools Board of Education held a special called meeting Monday, March 10, discussing items including the school calendar for the 2025-2026 school year and bids for lawn-care at district schools. The board tackled the school calendar immediately after the meeting was called to order. Three options for the 2025-26 school calendar were presented, with option one setting the first day of school for 2025-26 on August 6. Option two puts the first day of school on August 13, and option three also begins classes on August 6. Board Chairman Gary Farmer reminded the panel they had preferred option three during a previous meeting. Following some discussion, Superintendent Brent Roark recommended option three. Board member Keri Stevens made a motion to approve option three for the 2025-26 school year, seconded by board member Scott Sherman. The motion passed with no opposition. Farmer then moved to bids for cutting the district's grass, which is divided into three separate packages. "It looks like D&R Lawn-care Service is for package one and two, and Jonathan Andrew Teague would be option three," Farmer said. "Option three covers Cawood, Green Hills, Rosspoint and Wallins. Options one and two cover Cumberland, Black Mountain, Evarts, and Brookside field." Farmer noted the bid from D&R Lawn-care for package one was \$11,200, and \$23,200 for package two, while Teague placed a bid of \$26,600 for package three. "Let me point out that on bids like this, it's lowest/best," Roark said. "If we've had issues in the past...we don't necessarily have to go with the lowest." Sherman made a motion to accept the bids from D&R Lawn-care for packages one and two and Teague's bid for package three. The motion was seconded by Board member Hiram Fields. The motion was passed unanimously. **IN OTHER BOARD ACTIVITY:** * The board approved bids for school food service lines; * After the meeting adjourned, the board took part in KSBA training on conducting a search for a new Superintendent.

April Fools Ride at Black Mountain

BY JOE ASHER
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The Black Mountain Offroad Adventure Area is getting in gear for the warmer weather to come, kicking the party off with the April Fools Ride slated for March 29-31. The park's website at <https://www.blackmountainoffroad.com> states the April Fools Ride is the beginning of a busy schedule for 2025, with more than ten events already scheduled throughout the year. "Get ready for an adrenaline-fueled weekend of off-roading fun!" states the

Harlan Tourism's Visit Harlan County Facebook page. Black Mountain Offroad Adventure Area Manager Trevor Pryor provided some details on the event and the park. "A pretty good crowd usually comes out to the first event of the spring," Pryor said. "Everybody's ready to get back out. They've been cooped up all winter and they're ready to get out and ride." Pryor mentioned the staff of the park use the winter months to work on the trails preparing for the larger crowds which visit the park in warmer weather. "Everybody comes out looking for new

trails we've put in or trails that have been repaired," Pryor said. He pointed out the folks visiting the area include everyone from expert riders with high dollar equipment to those just beginning their offroad enthusiast journey. "There will be everything from dirt bikes all the way up to very expensive rock bouncers," Pryor said. The park features trails ranging in difficulty from easy trails for beginners to extremely difficult trails for the very experienced off-roader.

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"In the mountains, storytelling is truly an art form, and as much recreation as communication."

— Maxine Cheshire

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