THE NDEPENDE

Babz Bites: Eggplant

A variety of eggplant species can be found in the Ohio River Valley

PAGE B1



Chuck Hamilton

Aging not so gracefully (and some baseball notes)

PAGE A5

STORMY 89 • 74 FORECAST

Wednesday, July 16, 2025

maysville-online.com

To access our online products, subscribers must activate their digital account, call (606) 564-9091. Find breaking news updates on our website, as well as a daily replica of our paper in our eEdition for both printed and digital days.

> TO START YOUR SUBSCRIPTION Visit us at maysville-online.com/subscribe or call (606) 564-9091 x1243

Torilena Fields makes second court appearance

Staff Report

MOUNT OLIVET - Torilena Fields may be found competent to stand trial in the first of two competency evaluations.

Fields was present at the Robertson County Judicial Center for the second pretrial conference pertaining to her case.

Fields is facing the following charges: murder, abuse of a corpse, tampering with physical evidence, torturing of a dog with serious physical injury or death and tal operations.

She was arrested by Kentucky State Police

Post 6 on Monday, Oct. 9, 2024, around 11 p.m. Earlier that day, it was reported that KSP Post 6 received a call around 12:25 p.m. concerning a Fields deceased female on

Brierly Ridge Road. Fields was indicted on Monday, Oct. 14, 2024, for allegedly murdering her mother.

Previously, on Monday, March 10, 2025, Fields was present for the first

obstructing governmen- pretrial conference in her case. The judge granted a motion for an in-person competency evalua-

week's pretrial of Fields was deemed

competent. A second evaluation by an expert was granted for the side of the defense and has yet to be completed.

On Monday, July 14, Commonwealth's the attorney described

aspects of the case in court. He noted that cads and calls including those from KSP Post 6 were requested. He further stated that information was also requested for the weeks leading up to the alleged murder. There was no objection

from the Commonwealth on the defense receiving the requested information.

James Blevins, who had allegedly discovered Trudy Fields's dismembered body, was mentioned at this week's pre-

See FIELDS | 2A

Maysville City Commission adopts budget

Peyton Dunaway

pdunaway@cmpapers.com

On July 14, a special meeting was held by the Maysville City Council to discuss several proposals and ordinances pertaining to the city's upcoming 2025-2026 fiscal year.

Most of the meeting's discussion concerned a proposal to raise the current property tax rate by four percent. As of the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the property tax rate is 0.152. The original compensating rate for the upcoming fiscal year is 0.148; however, should the four percent raise be accepted, the rate will rise to 0.153. This will cost property owners an extra \$1 per \$100,000 on their city taxes.

Maysville City Manager Matt Wallingford estimated that this would bring in roughly \$30,000 for the tax shift. Should this motion be accepted, it would require a public hearing. City Commissioner Ann Brammer questioned the impact this motion would have on the city's income, as well as the pay of city employees and non-elected officials. Wallingford responded by saying that he was not sure what the ultimate cost of the motion would be, as it is currently in the proposal stage, but that he will be able to provide further information next month.

Brammer proposed that the discussion on the subject be postponed until this information could be provided and City Commissioner McKay agreed, stating that he would be interested to see if there were any other, better options before committing to the raise.

The motion to table the discussion was passed. The meeting also included the second reading of the budget proposal for the upcoming fiscal year of 2025-2026. Under this budget, \$14 million in resources are available under general fund and \$33,117,162 is available for appropriations. The total estimated amount of revenues is \$19,170,162.

Under the local government economic fund, the total resources available for appropriations is \$11,624,221 and estimated revenues equal \$9,931,550.

The motion was seconded and adopted with no dis-

Federal grant freeze causes uncertainty for AIS

Ray Schaefer—Contributing columnist

AUGUSTA — A pause in two federal grants may cost the Augusta Independent School District nearly \$21.000.

Tim Litteral, the Augusta Independent School District's Assistant Superintendent and Chief Financial Officer, said Thursday that a potential loss of the U.S. Department of Education funds could affect the salaries of two staff members: district mental health therapist Trish Caudill, and Alison Bach, an assistant principal and digital learning coach.

"I don't want people to think these people are getting cut," Litteral said.

Augusta's grants are part of the Trump administration's \$87 million freeze on Kentucky funding. Commissioner of Education Robbie Fletcher told the Lexington Herald-Leader the pause would put many districts "in bad situations."

Fletcher also told the Herald-Leader that he would contact lawmakers and the Kentucky Attorney General to ask if they can unfreeze the funds, which school districts have said are essential to operations.

"Any time there's a cut in funding, it's worrisome only because it means we're probably going to have to cut from somewhere else, most likely," Litteral said. "It would not be at this time; it would not be cutting a position or anything like that. But you know, if something is taken, if some revenue's taken away, typically something somewhere has to go."

Litteral said Congress approved the \$87 million earlier this year. The pause was part of a \$6 billion nationwide freeze.

"It's something that we're monitoring, and hopefully they'll get that review done and release those funds to the state of Kentucky," Litteral said.



cussion.

Further discussion on the proposal concerning the salary schedule will be postponed until next week's meeting.

Reappointments for the Board of Adjustments were Susie Wallingford and William Bolden; the Joint Planning at Zoning was John Hutchings; and Linda Fray Thomas and Whitley Morgan of the Arts Commission.

Finally, Wendy Reed was appointed to the position of City Treasurer.

In other action, the board appointed Matt McCane as the newest board member to fill out the term of former member Jodie Tackett, who moved to Pendleton County.

"I hope all the other candidates ... please run, and thank you very much for being interested in the board position," board president Laura Bach said. "It's a very important job here in our school."

McCane (who is not related to superintendent Lisa

See AUGUSTA | 2A





Photos by Byron Parker



Lauren Tatman

Itatman@cmpapers.com

dent is publishing a 50/50

series featuring 50 things

over 50 weeks. During

this series, readers can expect to see different "Local Talents/Artisans" The Ledger Indepeneach week.

Some of the "Local Talents/Artisans" that may be featured will include

With the help of our readers, we're bringing you 50 Area Artisans/Talents that You Might Not Know. Take a look at some of our area talents as we reveal 50 Area Artisans/Talents Over 50 Weeks.

artists, authors, songwriters and more.

ay 47: Byron Parker

The general definition of "artisans" refers to a worker in a skilled trade, according to the Oxford Dictionary.

Please enjoy Day 47 of the series.

Byron Parker, a resident of Maysville, specializes in both digital and physical painting.

always "I've been drawn to different forms of art, but painting has held a special place for the freedom it allows my creativity. I started making beaded jewelry as a teenager and got into wire wrapping in 2016. Somewhere around that time, I sold my first watercolor painting. This encouraged me to put my artwork out into the world," said Parker.

Inspiring others and exploring their creativity is something Parker has always wanted.

"I enjoy sharing techniques and shortcuts that make the process more accessible and fun," Parker stated.

He noted that he has taught more than 100 classes, paints murals,



Pet painting by Byron Parker.

creates custom pet portraits and designs handmade jewelry.

"My professional art journey started in 2017

See PARKER | 2A



Ponto the office dog says: You don't find willpower, you create it.

DISCOVER DIGITAL

Follow the culinary guidance of Chef Babz.

AT MAYSVILLE-ONLINE.COM





\$1.50 • VOLUME 57, ISSUE 141 • A CHAMPION MEDIA LLC NEWSPAPER • COPYRIGHT 2025

FOLLOW US ONLINE: FACEBOOK.COM/LEDGERINDEPENDENT 💓 TWITTER.COM/LEDGERNEWSROOM 🕅 INSTAGRAM.COM/INDEPENDENT_INSIDERS