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West Liberty, Kentucky 41472

Thursday, June 12, 2025

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SPEAKING OF AND FOR MORGAN, THE BLUEGRASS COUNTY OF THE MOUNTAINS

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## Schl. Dist. Announces Public Meetings

**Board of Education meeting slated for Tuesday, June 17th**

The Morgan County Board of Education will meet 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 17, at the Board of Education office located 155 University Dr., West Liberty, KY 41472. Board members are expected to hold the first reading of the District Facilities Plan. All meetings are open to the public.

**Morgan Schools public hearing on facilities plan slated June 19th**

Morgan County Schools will host a Public Hearing to present information and gather feedback on the District Facilities Plan on June 19th at 6 p.m. located at the Board of Education: 155 University Dr., West Liberty, KY 41472.

**Kiwanis Club car show is slated for Saturday, June 14**

The West Liberty Kiwanis Club car show will be Saturday, June 14, on Main Street in downtown West Liberty.

The event will run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and will include several trophies in various classes.

The first 100 entries will receive a T-shirt and dash plaque during registration from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Vehicle entry fee is \$15.

All makes and models are welcome!

There will also be a raffle for a 41" wide 8-drawer tool chest and 7-drawer rolling tool chest and 7-drawer rolling tool chest

See *SHOW*, Page 3

**MOVIE NIGHT AT HORSE PARK FRI., JUNE 13: MINECRAFT SEE PAGE NINE FOR DETAILS**




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LION CEO Steve Schwartz (center) recently accepted the Kentucky Association of Manufacturers' "Coolest Thing Made in Kentucky" award for V-Force turnout gear. He is pictured with Judge Executive Jim Gazay and State Rep. Richard White, and representatives of the Kentucky Association of Manufacturers and Kentucky Farm Bureau.

## Ky. Manufacturers' Assn. presents award to LION

*V-Force turnout gear manufactured in West Liberty, Hazel Green named "Coolest Thing Made in Kentucky" for 2025*

**PRESS RELEASE** – Last week, the Kentucky Association of Manufacturers had the absolute honor of presenting the Champion trophy to LION for their V-Force turnout gear, the well-deserved winner of the KAM 2025 Coolest Thing Made in Kentucky Tournament Presented by Kentucky Farm Bureau Insurance!

We were thrilled to visit all three of LION's Kentucky manufacturing plants in West Liberty, Hazel Green, and Beat-

tyville, where we were warmly welcomed by the incredible teams behind this life-saving gear. It was truly humbling to see the passion, precision, and pride that go into making every piece of this world-class product right here in Kentucky.

The energy and excitement were incredible, especially when we saw the employees across all three plants proudly wearing custom-made t-shirts to celebrate this huge win!

A special thank you to CEO Steve Schwartz and the entire LION team for their hospitality, dedication, and commitment to excellence. We were also honored to have state and local officials join us in recognizing this outstanding achievement.

Congratulations again to LION! Your hard work, innovation, and Kentucky pride are what make the V-Force turnout gear the 2025 Coolest Thing Made in Kentucky!

## Governor announces \$500,000 funding award for Gateway Area Dev. District

FRANKFORT, Ky. (June 5, 2025) – Today, Gov. Andy Beshear announced more than \$6 million to help Kentucky communities expand economic development and tourism opportunities through the restoration of previously blighted and unused property.

"This funding allows us to give new life to formerly aban-

doned properties with modern uses," said Gov. Beshear. "Through these projects we are making good on our promise for a better, stronger new Kentucky home."

Funding awards included the following:

• **Gateway Area Development District** – A \$500,000 Community-wide Assessment

Grant to inventory, assess and conduct cleanup planning and community engagement activities in the cities of Salt Lick, Frenchburg, Mount Sterling, West Liberty and Morehead. Priority sites include a vacant hotel, a 6.27-acre former elementary school, a train depot that has been vacant and unused

See *FUNDS* , Page 3

## School district planning cmte. approves draft of District Facilities Plan

*Citizens express concerns about potential closure of middle schl.; Supt. Dr. Ralph Hamilton discusses enrollment issues and other factors in proposal*

By **Miranda M. Cantrell**

The Morgan County Schools Local Planning Committee during a June 5 meeting approved the first draft of a District Facilities Plan for the proposed closure of Morgan County Middle School.

As per the consolidation plan, sixth grade students would remain in elementary schools – while seventh and eighth grade students would be placed at the high school.

Should the District Facilities Plan be approved by the school board and the Kentucky Department of Education, the above-mentioned changes would not occur until the 2026-2027 school year.

The following is an account of the Local Planning Committee meeting and subsequent held on June 5:

### Local Planning Committee Meeting & Timeline Update

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ralph Hamilton moderated the meeting, which was attended by 15 of the committee's 20 members:

• **PRESENT** – Dr. Ralph Hamilton, superintendent; Kellie Keeton and Steve Gunnell, parents; Jennifer Williams, Hope Phipps, Emily Montgomery and Julie Lewis, teachers; Amber Adams, Amber Standafer, Ashley Pelfrey and Kristen Wheeler, principals; Joseph Gamble, facilities director; Sarah Beth Legg, school district central office; Laken Ruth, community leader; and Ricky Pennington, school board member.

• **ABSENT** – Raina Helton and Tammi Jo Leach, parents; Aaron Hutchinson and Ashley Lykins, community leaders; and Leah LeMaster, local building/zoning official.

Following Dr. Hamilton's call to order and the approval of minutes from the committee's April 29 meeting, the superintendent discussed the proposed District Facilities Plan (DFP) and referred to a copy of the

document that was distributed to all attendees.

Teacher Jennifer Williams made a motion that was seconded by District Facilities Director Joe Gamble to approve the DFP draft with recommendations made by the Kentucky Department of Education.

Following the vote, Dr. Hamilton informed the audience that school board members will hold the first reading of the DFP during their regular meeting 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 17, and that a public hearing on the matter is scheduled for 6 p.m. Thursday, June 19.

Both the June 17 school board meeting and June 19 public forum will be at the Board of Education central office located at 155 University Dr., adjacent to Morgan County Public Library.

Additionally, the superintendent noted that the school board's final determination regarding the DFP will occur during a special meeting that is yet to be scheduled at press time.

On a motion made by School Board Member Ricky Pennington and seconded by Morgan Central Elementary School Principal Amber Standafer, the LPC meeting was adjourned

See *PLAN*, Page 3

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