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Thursday, June 19, 2025





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Vol. 117 — No. 14

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

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Schl. Dist. Announces Public Meetings

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.

Calendar for 2025-2026 schl. year is released

Morgan County school district officials have released a tentative calendar for the 2025-2026 school year:

- Aug. 13 – First day of school.
- Sept. 1 – Labor Day. (No school.)
- Sept. 26-29 – Sorghum Festival. (No school.)
- Oct. 17 – Break. (No school.)
- Nov. 24-28 – Thanksgiving break. (No school.)
- Dec. 22 to Jan. 2 – Winter break. (No school.)
- Jan. 5 – Return after winter break.
- Jan. 19 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day. (No school.)
- March 30 to April 3 – Spring break. (No school.)
- May 19 – Tentative last day for students.

For additional information See *CALENDAR* , Page 4

DEADLINE NOTICE

All news items and advertisements that require publication the week of Thursday, July 3, must be submitted early for the Thursday, June 26, edition of the Courier.

There will be no paper the week of Thursday, July 3, as Courier staff will be vacation beginning Monday, June 30, through Friday, July 5.

The Courier's publication deadline remains Monday at 12 p.m.

– Editor



Mural design for City Hall building by artist Lacy Hale.

City Council green lights mural project for City Hall

Members also approve budget ordinance on second reading

By Miranda M. Cantrell

The West Liberty City Council during a special June 9 meeting approved the design for a mural to be placed on an exterior wall of City Hall.

According to meeting minutes, West Liberty Tourism Commission member Julie Ferguson discussed the proposed artwork, which was designed by noted artist Lacy Hale, an Eastern Kentucky native whose work has been exhibited to throughout Kentucky and New York City.

The 40' by 20' mural depicts a rustic Appalachian foothills scene and pays tribute to the Morgan County Sorghum Festival with sorghum cane framing the words "Welcome To West Liberty."

Ferguson told the Courier that the scene will be painted on a large mural cloth that will be applied to the surface of the building.

The building will undergo a washing and priming process ahead of the mural's installation.

Ferguson told the Courier

that the mural cloth painting will last for 30 to 40 years.

"I am incredibly proud to be involved in this project," Ferguson said. "The mural not only will beautify the space, but also tells a story that I hope will inspire connection, reflection and pride for years to come. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve and help bring this to life."

On a motion made by Councilman Mark Walter and seconded by Councilman Tony Smith, the council unanimously

See *COUNCIL* , Page 3

Crase announces candidacy; county clerk shares election filing dates

Candidates can begin officially filing for local offices on Nov. 5

By Miranda M. Cantrell

Local business owner Walker Crase has declared his intent to seek the office of county judge executive in next year's primary election.

Crase, proprietor of Giovanni's Pizza of West Liberty, announced his candidacy via a Facebook post last week.

Additionally, Crase stated in the post's comment section that he plans to file as a Democratic candidate.

As of this writing, no other potential candidates for lo-

cal offices have publicly announced campaign plans for next year's election.

County Clerk Randy Williams said that persons seeking local offices can begin filing to run for those positions on Wednesday, Nov. 5, at his office in the county government building located at 450 Prestonsburg St.

The candidate filing deadline for the primary election is Friday, Jan. 9, 2026.

All official candidate filings will be noted in the Courier as they become available after

Nov. 5.

The primary election is slated for Tuesday, May 19, 2026, with winners advancing to the general election on Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2026.

Candidates for local, state and federal offices will appear on the both ballots.

For additional information regarding the 2026 election calendar and requirements for candidates, visit the Kentucky State Board of Elections website at elect.ky.gov and the Kentucky Secretary of State website at sos.ky.gov.

Independence Day festivities planned for July 3 and 4

Taylor Swift tribute show, Taylor Austin Dye, fireworks at Old Mill Pk.; Kiwanis Club Main Street activities on tap

By Miranda M. Cantrell

The West Liberty Tourism Commission will host a Taylor Swift tribute group and a rising country star on Thursday, July 3, at Old Mill Park ahead of the annual Independence Day fireworks display.

The event – which is part of the free admission Live on the Licking concert series – will begin at 7 p.m. with a performance by opener Taylor Austin Dye, a Nashville recording artist who has released two albums including *Out Of These Hills* (2023) and *Sick Of Me* (2024).

Dye's most popular songs on Spotify include "Rest In Peace," "Bible Belt" and "Damage Control."

A video for her latest single, "Echo" was recently released on YouTube and is also receiving airplay on CMT.

Following Dye's performance, the Illinois-based group Taylor Made will present "Live Long: The Journey Of Taylor Swift," a tribute to the global pop superstar.

A promotional video on the Taylor Made website shows band members performing Swift's songs live while wearing costumes inspired by the music icon.

Swift debuted as a country artist in 2006 with the single "Tim McGraw" and charted several other country hits including "Teardrops On My Guitar", "Love Story" and "You Belong With Me."

Since 2006, Swift has released 11 original studio albums containing numerous #1 Billboard Hot 100 singles including "We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together",

See *EVENTS* , Page 3

From The Salyersville Independent

Two are charged following Magoffin County shooting

Jonathan Keeton, 42, of West Liberty, was arrested in connection w/incident

By Heather Oney

SALYERSVILLE – Two people were arrested and one flown out after a shooting incident in Magoffin County last Thursday.

According to the police reports, Kentucky State Police Post 9 received a call from Magoffin County Dispatch requesting assistance on a shooting incident on June 6 at approximately 6 p.m.

According to the citation, KSP was informed that the victim who had been shot was being transported via helicopter and all of the witnesses were

standing by at the Salyersville Fire Department on East Maple Street in Salyersville.

KSP Trooper M. Smith arrived at the fire department and took statements from the witnesses, inevitably arresting two of them.

According to the citation, Jonathan Keeton, 42, of West Liberty, reportedly told police, "I done something bad and messed up."

Keeton told KSP he went to an old friend's house on Middle Fork and stole a gun off of another person, stating he had no

See *CHARGED* , Page 3



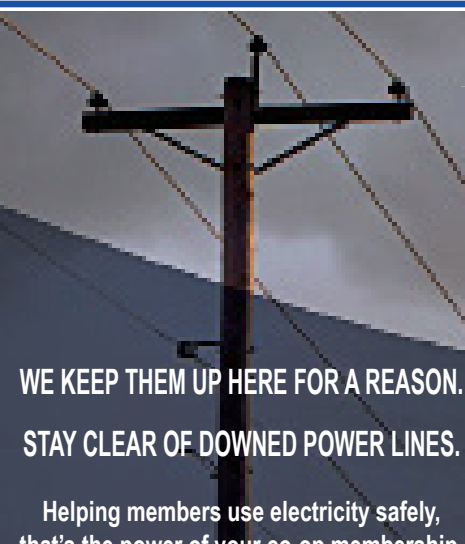
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