

Several lodged in Pike County Detention Center

A News-Express Staff Report

Several individuals were recently arrested and lodged in the Pike County Detention Center. Those arrested, according to the booking log at the jail, included:

Monday, July 28

Reford K. Norman, 59, Biggs Branch Road, Pikeville, fourth-degree assault (domestic violence, minor injury),

DUI and traffic violations.

Alona C. Hamilton, 46, Salem Church Road, Harold, probation violation (technical violation).

James Tucker, 32, Ivy Fork Road, Pikeville, traffic violations.

Shane J. Diamond, 19, Tug Fork Drive, Turkey Creek, DUI (first offense) and traffic violations.

Walter C. Petot, 49, Hon-
eysuckle Drive, Pikeville, second-degree stalking and a traf-

fic violation.

James Barrett, 54, Reed Street, Williamson, W.Va., possession of marijuana, first-degree possession of a controlled substance (drug unspecified, first offense) and first-degree possession of a controlled substance (methamphetamine, first offense).

Christopher L. Cunningham, 42, Riverview Drive, Pikeville, violation of a Kentucky emergency protective order.

Tommy Slone, 53, Yates Hollow, Pikeville, failure to appear, contempt of court and non-payment of fines.

Tuesday, July 29

Anthony J. Puett, 41, Booker Branch, Jenkins, DUI, second-degree possession of a controlled substance, contempt of court and traffic violations.

Teresa Ann Hamilton, 57, Right Fork of Island Creek, theft

Shannon A. Bryant, 51,

Elkhorn Creek Road, Ash-camp, probation violation.

Travis D. Coulter, 44, Old Ferrells Creek Road, Belcher, parole violation, first-degree possession of a controlled substance (methamphetamine, first offense), flagrant non-support, third-degree fleeing or evading police, persistent felony offender and traffic violations.

Darla Yates, 36, Ky. 1426,

SEE LODGED, PAGE 9A

CONCERN

Continued from Page 1A

based on a risk of harm anymore; there has to be substantiated harm. That's the best standard I can get currently."

Campbell said the shift from preventing harm to responding to it is at the core of the issue.

"So now we're not acting to prevent harm, we're acting to address harm," he said. "I think that's a terrible way to do business. I don't mean to say that the cabinet is doing nothing. The policy isn't to do anything, I just think it's become a tepid response to a volatile situation. My understanding of the cabinet's response is what's now called alternative response."

Under the current framework, Campbell said, children are sometimes left in homes where they would have previously been removed due to risk of harm — but now, without immediate and substantiated evidence of injury, no case is opened.

"The ultimate goal is always reunification," he said. "We don't want people to lose their children. We want to help families build more holistic units. But what we're doing now, though, whereas a case is open, you are mandated to work those plans in order to regain custody of your children. We're leaving children in place in conditions as is, which would have warranted a case being opened before with a temporary removal. Now we're leaving those children there and we're making those resources available to parents, but we're not mandating that they do them. They are voluntary. There are no surprise visits. There's no one forcing anyone to do anything."

Campbell said the result is dangerous.

"It's dangerous and it's already hurting a lot of kids and I've done everything in my power to make sure it didn't happen," he said. "Most

people don't know about it right now, they're still used to a system where they make these reports to the cabinet and they trust that the cabinet will take, what is in their minds, appropriate action. Now, social workers' hands are tied. They don't have the ability to exercise professional discretion anymore. They are adherent to whatever chapter the Kentucky administration says it is."

Family Court Judge Kent Varney of the 35th Judicial District in Pike County also expressed concerns, pointing to how Kentucky revised its criteria for child removal cases.

"Kentucky revised criteria for removal," said Varney. "Risk of harm and immediate safety are always two very important aspects and they are written throughout the statute, but it is not written in those exact words or language in the cabinet's Standards of Protocol

(SOP).

"They will tell you that it's embedded throughout but it is not specifically stated," he said. "Risk of harm and danger to the child are vague and wide-open terms. They have narrowed the statute."

During a June 12 legislative oversight and investigations committee meeting, Varney addressed what he sees as a growing divide between state law and the cabinet's internal procedures.

"There is a feeling among the family court judges that there is a disconnect between the Kentucky Revised Statutes and the standard of policies and procedures the cabinet are enacting, especially with central intake," he said. "I'm not saying that I disagree with central intake, I think it can provide a wonderful tool, especially for rural counties that might not be able to supply a direct line or office. I think central intake has some really good

purposes. It's the policies and procedures that central intake implements that I think is where the disconnect in the judiciary and the cabinet."

Varney said those changes may be contributing to fewer abuse and neglect cases being filed — but not necessarily because there are fewer incidents occurring.

"We feel like there are too many children falling through the cracks, resulting in near-death fatalities or the increase of child abuse and neglect," he said. "In 2020, in Pike County, during the height of COVID-19, we had 374 j-cases filed in Pike County. That was when we were all shut down; we couldn't go to the dentist, we had to wear a mask. The world had stopped. In 2022, we

saw a vast decrease to 290 cases, followed by 310, 316 and this year 160 cases."

Despite recognizing the need for constant improvement, Varney said the system must stay aligned with the law.

"I have spoken with many family court judges from across the state who feel the same," he said. "The problem is that the system needs to be worked on. It always has to be worked on. It always has to be tinkered on. We're never going to create a perfect system. Perfection is something you strive for but understand you might not ever be able to achieve. I think the system needs to be worked on and needs to be compliant with Kentucky Revised Statutes and tinkered on from there."

SYSTEM

Continued from Page 1A

with ParentSquare for the district's unified communications platform during its last meeting. The board also approved ParentSquare and Canvas as the official and traceable methods of communicating with students.

The switch to a specified system rather than general social media avenues such as Facebook, Messenger, SnapChat and Instagram, among others, stems from a new law in Kentucky known as HB 181. This legislation requires all communication between any adult within the school systems and their students to be in a format that allows all records to be traced and tracked. This includes teachers to students con-

cerning classwork and coaches to athletes about games or practices.

Waivers to this policy are allowed on the school level; however, Bowling said the Pike County School District does not plan to promote exemptions.

"We have been looking at different options and kind of test drove some apps," Pike County Schools Superintendent Freddie Bowling said. "ParentSquare was one of those and we saw some really good things from it that would help us meet HB 181.

"It is a mandate," he continued. "We have to have to be able to track communications between adults in our schools and our kids. This will fulfill that requirement."

ParentSquare will work on iPhones and Android phones, as well as other electronic devices such as tablets, laptops and desktop computers, Bowling said. In addition, it will provide administrators with many districtwide communication features and eliminate redundancies.

Bowling said the new requirement is a good idea and needed; however, he said legislators enacted HB 181 without taking into account the consequences it could have on individual school districts.

"The intent was good," Bowling told the News-Express. "But, number one, it is unfunded. The districts each have to figure out a way to fund it."

In the case of the Pike

County School District, the cost of ParentSquare came with a \$40,000 price tag that the district had to incorporate into its budget, according to Bowling.

In addition to the cost, the superintendent said that school districts would have to educate their staff, student body and parents on the workings of a new system and have to formulate some sort of roll-out plan in compliance with the legislation.

HB 181 requires the new traceable system to be in place by the 10th day of the academic year, Bowling said.

"It will be a process, but we will make sure everybody involved knows about it and how to use it," he said. "Will take it step by step."

ANSWERS SUDOKU #1

1	9	6	4	7	5	3	2	8
3	4	2	8	9	6	1	5	7
8	7	5	2	3	1	4	6	9
4	5	9	1	6	2	8	7	3
6	1	3	5	8	7	9	4	2
7	2	8	3	4	9	6	1	5
5	3	7	9	1	4	2	8	6
2	8	1	6	5	3	7	9	4
9	6	4	7	2	8	5	3	1

SUDOKU #2

3	4	6	2	9	8	5	1	7
5	8	9	1	7	3	4	6	2
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9	3	8	4	5	2	1	7	6
7	1	4	6	3	9	2	8	5
6	2	5	8	1	7	9	3	4
8	6	1	3	4	5	7	2	9
2	5	7	9	8	6	3	4	1
4	9	3	7	2	1	6	5	8

CROSSWORD

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