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# THE PIONEER NEWS

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## BCPS looks for new area technology site

By **THOMAS J. BARR**  
 THE PIONEER NEWS

**SHEPHERDSVILLE** – Over the years, the image and purpose of what many people traditionally called the vocational school in Bullitt County has changed.

As the world has changed, so has the importance of what is now called the Bullitt County Area Technology Center.

And with many students deciding that college is not their desire, the population in the local program has exploded.

In fact, over 200 students that applied to participate in the various programs were turned down this year due to space limitations.

The future of the ATC facility, as well as staffing concerns, were part of a lengthy discussion recently by the Bullitt County School Board.

### Facility needs for ATC program

Superintendent Dr. Jesse Bacon said that finding funds to

build a new facility for the ATC program is a top priority. The project has been placed on the district's facility plan the past couple of years.

Currently, the county is working on a grant. The problem is the grant is for funds to renovate existing ATC buildings.

Bacon said he isn't interested in using the funds to simply renovate the current facility next to Riverview Opportunity Center, behind Bullitt Central High. Instead, he would like to build

a new facility and renovate the existing building to expand the specialized programs, which are also crowded for space.

The superintendent is talking with a consultant who specializes in lobbying legislators. He is also talking with local legislators to determine what could be done to secure additional funding when the next state budget is discussed next year.

Not having the space to see **SCHOOL**/Page A-3

**Large number of applicants rejected due to space limitations currently**

## MW gets its bite at review of county's land use proposal

By **STEPHEN THOMAS**  
 THE PIONEER NEWS

**MOUNT WASHINGTON** — A first draft of Bullitt county's future comprehensive plan has been completed and copies have been making their way to each of the county's eight municipalities.

The Mount Washington City Council heard a first reading, presented by city attorney Scott Wantland, of a proposed ordinance to approve the goals and objectives listed within the plan, which was distributed by the Bullitt County Joint Planning and Zoning Commission.

City clerk Dawn Hardin alerted council members that Planning and Zoning director Charlie Spalding formed a steering committee to help develop the plan, with representatives from each city invited.

Hardin said planning meetings were held, along with public forums and surveys, to better determine what the commission should include within the plans. Mayor Stuart Owen added that public surveys were also collected.

Owen encouraged each council member to peruse the rough draft prior to the next city business meeting. The council could vote to approve the plan's goals and objectives following a second reading.

### In other business:

- The city's primary corridor may soon become a bit less residential and a bit more business.

The Mount Washington City Council heard first readings of ordinances proposing rezonings from R-3 Residential to B-2 Business

see **PLAN**/Page A-8

## New Age for Bernheim Middle School Bruins



## Bruin Nation pleased with school's first major makeover since inception

By **STEPHEN THOMAS**  
 THE PIONEER NEWS

**SHEPHERDSVILLE** — Students in the southern part of Bullitt County have found a new and positive pride in the form of an upgraded school building.

Bernheim Middle School is just a few punch items away from a complete \$30 million facility overall. However, students and staff members are already pleased with the many changes.

Major innovations, such as new flex rooms and a completely overhauled gymnasium, combined with smaller touches, like the addition of several windows, have all created a positive affect on the student body, according to principal Katie Stephens.

"You can sense it," Stephens said. "The kids at Bernheim really do believe they'll one the good in the world. I'm just proud of this beautiful space, and also that the entire Bernheim community is enjoying it."

Improvements include a renovated front entrance and upgrades to

administrative offices, one of the first things noticed when entering the building.

"I now have a window," Stephens laughed. "I used to have no idea of the weather. So now I'm also feeling the energy of the outdoors and nature."

Across the lobby, students enjoy lunches and breakfast in their remodeled cafeteria, compete with new paint and flooring, as well as new dining tables, including tall tables with stool seating.

Not to be outdone, an outdoor seating area was included next to the cafeteria, which doubles as a location for outdoor class time.

The gym is also located next to the lobby. While it's the same space, inside it looks completely different than two years prior, with a new floor, new bleachers, new lighting, a new scoreboard, and a new sound system. Locker rooms were also upgraded.

Down the hall, the school's library also looks completely different, with new furniture and new shelves, as well as upgraded media. Individual

group study areas are located in the hall outside of the library, adorned with high windows near the ceiling to provide sunlight.

The flex rooms are located at the end of the hallway, providing open spaces for a wide variety of various classroom learning styles. As with the library, there are many more windows surrounding the flex space.

Classrooms were also renovated, providing more space, new paint, and more emphasis on windows. Stephens said research showed that any connection to nature helped students with academics. Excitement from the students also proved it.

"The windows make me feel closer to nature," said eighth grader Calvin Runyon. "It makes me enjoy the environment more and I get to know and learn better."

Seventh grader Madilyn Rummage said she enjoyed her sixth period class in the flex area.

"It's less stressful and there's see **BMS**/Page A-8

## County to revise board to advise on parks, recreation

By **THOMAS J. BARR**  
 THE PIONEER NEWS

**SHEPHERDSVILLE** – Over the years, Bullitt County has hosted a board of citizens who would give suggestions on parks and recreation programs.

That board dissolved over five years ago.

Magistrate Brian Bleemel is interested in reviving some type of advisory board to help guide the county on its parks and recreation program.

Bleemel said the county operates the park in Pioneer Village behind Maryville Elementary, the old West

Bullitt Recreation complex behind Nichols Elementary and the property where the Belmont Furnace historical site is located.

He said there might be assistance in reviving programs such as youth leagues.

In its prime, the county operated a thriving basketball program for youth and adults, as well as soccer and baseball programs and three swimming pools.

When the county turned over its recreation program to the Bullitt County YMCA, the local offerings changed.

The Shepherdsville and Maryville pools have closed

and the Mount Washington pool is now owned and operated by the city of Mount Washington.

A splash pad was installed behind Lebanon Junction Elementary and remains in operation.

Discussions are underway to determine the fate of the Maryville pool.

At a recent meeting, two proposals were given on massive renovations to reopen the facility. It is located next to the disc golf course, a basketball court and a pavilion.

With the bids over two years old, it appears that the project might need to be put

out for contractor pricing.

Magistrate Karen Johnson has been a strong proponent on reopening the pool. Other options discussed have included permanently closing the facility and reopening the rest rooms and concession area for the park facilities. A splash pad has also been discussed.

Johnson said there is grant money to assist with the renovation of the pool. However, the cost has been estimated to be a multi-million dollar project.

The city of Shepherdsville is currently in the midst of constructing its \$25 million aquatic center, which should

open in the summer of 2026.

County Judge/Executive Jerry Summers said the various cities and organizations have established leagues for youth play. However, there would be no problem creating an advisory board to offer suggestions for the parks and recreation department.

### In other business:

\*The county approved the 2.4 cent tax rate proposed by the health board. The health tax rate has not been increased for decades.

\*The court approved a pol-

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