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Fiscal Court passes budget amidst mixed reactions

BY MATT CIZEK

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At the Clark County Fiscal Court meeting of Thursday, June 26, one of the items on the agenda was a vote on the second reading of the 2026 fiscal year (FY) budget.

After some discussion, the vote was approved 4-2 with Magistrates Ernest Pasley and Steve Craycraft and Ernest Pasley serv-

ing as 'nay' votes.

However, it was not without contention.

"We've got to quit spending. I don't know how else I can say it...I was very reluctant to vote for it [previously]. I'm even more reluctant tonight, but I'm going to vote for it tonight. That way it's going to be four to two as opposed to three to three," said Magistrate Robert Blanton, seeking to avoid deadlock. "My opin-

ion [is] even though the budget could be a lot better...we can fix it if we quit spending [and] we look at revenue sources."

Magistrate Chris Davis responded.

"I agree in principle with virtually everything Robert said with regard to budget and having to have a budget," he said. "I don't like this budget either...it

See **COURT**, on 2



The Clark County Fiscal Court approved the second reading of the FY 2026 budget on Thursday, June 26. (Photo by Matt Cizek)



Many gathered outdoors at Lykins Park for Winchester's July 4th celebration. (Photo by Matt Cizek)

Winchester celebrates Independence Day

BY MATT CIZEK

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American flags and long lines of cars could be seen near the entrance to Lykins Park on Mt. Sterling Road during the evening of Thursday, July 3.

Once again, attendees from Winchester and other areas gathered at the location for the annual 4th of July celebration to recognize the 249th anniversary of the United States.

"We come every year," said Rachel Chambers, who attended the event with her husband Matt and two young sons.

Long before the night concluded with a showing of fireworks to the delight of many, American flags - as is typical - could be seen lining the walkway as individuals entered the park.

Several sponsors, including Sterling HealthCare and Kentucky American Water, made their pres-



Kids took an opportunity to meet a dinosaur, courtesy of Mark Comley Magic Show. (Photo by Matt Cizek)

ence known with signs or booths on display.

Before long, on the theatre stage just in front of a grassy hill, disc jockeys Lynn and Cody Toler began playing as hundreds if not more gathered to attend the event.

Songs included the well-known hit "Electric Boogie (The Electric Boogie)" and - while youth took part in a hula hoop contest - classics such as "Hakuna Matata" and "Lollipop" by The Chordettes were played.

See **INDEPENDENCE**, on 2

Winchester lacrosse official honored by KHSAA

BY MATT CIZEK

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In the Kentucky High School Athletic Association's (KHSAA) first full season recognizing the sport of lacrosse, Winchester has reason to be proud.

Local citizen Andy Cecil has been recognized as the 2024-25 Boys' Lacrosse Official of the Year.

In a press release, KHSAA elaborated on the honor - which is given to officials in ten different sports.

"Each year, the Kentucky High School Athletic Association honors the top officials for the sports in which it licenses officials. Finalists in each sport are selected through a combination of not only on-field performance but also local association activity and leadership, training efforts and the mentoring of newer officials.

One official in each sport is named Outstanding Official of the Year in appreciation of their dedication and service to schools and student-athletes across the state. Winners are selected following consultation with local assigning secretaries, veteran officials' observers and coaches throughout the state, as well as additional staff review.

See **LACROSSE**, on 2

Mental health awareness cookout welcomes local restaurants

BY MATT CIZEK

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A number of nonprofit and other local organizations throughout Clark County have dedicated themselves to providing mental health and other resources.

On Monday, June 30, they came together for such a common cause.

The mental health awareness cookout - a yearly event in Clark County - took place just outside the Clark County District Court on Cleveland Avenue.

"It's usually in May, but this year it's in June," said Lindsay Horseman, who consulted with Clark County Community Services. "We have resources...and, of course, food. Lunch is free."

Several prominent citizens from the county and surrounding area showed up to support local organizations, including former Winchester Mayor Ed Burtner, Clark County Circuit Court Clerk Tony Kirk, Clark County Judge-Executive Les Yates, 25th Judicial Circuit Court Judge David Ward, and more.

See **HEALTHCARE**, on 2

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