

# Fiscal Court considers three requests for opioid funds

By Jim Thaxton

FALMOUTH — Pendleton County Champions Coalition Coordinator Stephanie Green presented three projects for funding to the county Fiscal Court during its April 14 meeting. Magistrates questioned one of them.

The Fiscal Court funds up to \$35,000 in grants from the Opioid Settlement Fund to local organizations dedicated to reducing drug addiction in the county.

Green began by explaining that the Champions Advisory Board reviewed eight grant applications and removed three that failed to meet minimum qualifications.

Of the remaining five, the advisory board selected three that they believed met the criteria for funding.

Pendleton County Drug Free Club requested \$15,000 to produce two professional assemblies in all four schools at appropriate grade levels, addressing the benefits of living a drug-free lifestyle.

professional general assembly with "quality speakers" costs up to \$8,000.

Pendleton County Extension Foundation requested \$10,000 for literacy training, including "early childhood development and purchasing books for their preschool readiness camp."

The Court took issue with the third request by St. Elizabeth Hospital for \$2,500 to provide gas cards to patients in rehabilitation treatment to assist with transportation.

Green said that this is essentially the same grant request that St. E's sent in last year and stated that transportation was a major barrier for county residents in treatment.

Magistrate Josh Plummer asked if St. Elizabeth would verify residency. Green assured him that it was included in their application.

Still, magistrates raised concern the cards could be abused.

Fields suggested looking into Owen Transit and connecting them with St. E's patients once

that program is up and running. The total request was \$27,500, well below the recommended annual limit set by the court.

Green provided the court with copies of the grant applications and reminded them that the funding decisions were their responsibility.

The court will make the awards later this summer.

Green reminded the court that she does not influence the advisory board's decision.

Green went on to give updates on grant applications she has made and reminded the Court that the Federal Grant that funds her program expires on Sept. 29.

She and County Attorney Stacey Sanning are looking into using state mental health funding to help make up some of the loss from the federal grant.

According to the data on a one-page, colorful Champions Coalition Summary of Work handout, the Pendleton County Champions Coalition has been tremendously successful in reducing substance abuse among our youth in the county. The

magistrates were clearly impressed and expressed appreciation for Green's work.

Green requested that the Court include Pendleton County Champions as a line item in their 2026-27 budget and said, "Our job is to make sure people don't become statistic numbers."

### OTHER BUSINESS

In other business:

• County Economic and Tourism Director Tami Vater provided the court with an update on the \$53,000 flood mitigation green sinks study.

She reminded the Court that the cities of Butler and Falmouth committed \$11,000 each. She asked the court to give the judge the authority to cover the county's contribution on April 20.

A motion for approval was made and passed.

• The Court accepted Gregg's Landscaping Service bid for upkeep of the Judicial Center.

• Magistrates accepted the sheriff's excess fees adjustment and closeout, along with the reviews of the sheriff's and county

clerks' quarterly reports.

• The court approved the appointment of Ray Beetem to the Tax Appeal Board and Pam Harper to the Pendleton County Extension District Board.

• The court conducted the Second Reading of the Open Burn Ordinance 341.1, which becomes law when published in The Outlook on April 21. Among changes, it will no longer be necessary to report recreational and cooking fires contained in a commercial or fire pit three feet or less in diameter.

• The court approved the annual donation to the Tourist Council.

• Magistrates approved the appointment of Pamela Harper to the Pendleton County Extension.

• Plummer suggested adding the replacement of some county trucks in the new budget.

• Magistrate Darrin Gregg asked about grants to remove old fuel tanks and about the funds for the recreational grant.

• There was also discussion about the bids to broadcast court meetings. No action was taken.

## Doc Continued from Page 1

Charlotte Whaley, who was an administrative assistant in the central office, said, "He and Mrs. Collins were very inviting, generous and considerate. If something was going on with your family, he would try to help you out. We were like one big family."

Whaley laughingly told how Collins would eat a can of cold pork and beans for lunch, then close the door to his office afterward and take a short nap.

Nila Harris, a teacher who served under Collins' tenure, remembers her former boss being generous to the teachers as well.

"We had a team of teacher representatives, two from each school, and went to Dr. Collins about a raise in salaries. Soon after, he informed us that he would make it happen. We were surprised, happy and felt valued by this superintendent."

Fellow Rotarian Mary Woodhead Hillenmeyer said of Doc, "I have seen him handle so many things with grace, kindness, faith, humor and wisdom."

She told how he loved debates and discussions, and was always striving to learn more.

He loved playing golf and often golfed with his good friend, county Judge Executive David Pribble.

"(Doc) started the first Rotary golf scramble and has been instrumental with this event ever since," Hillenmeyer said. "He was the epitome of a Southern gentleman and scholar who loved people and learning."

Through the Falmouth Rotary Club, Dr. Owen and Janice Collins started and awarded several educational scholarships, including one in the name of their deceased son, Kevin Todd Collins.

Each year, recipients are invited to attend a Rotary meeting to explain how the scholarship would be used. Hillenmeyer said that Doc was always interested in the beneficiary and asked questions about their educational goals.

Doc was a member of Christ Church Eastside Park, where he was a "faithful servant of God," said interim pastor Adam McElfresh. He described Doc's generosity and that he attended three church services each week: the first Sunday service at Plum Creek Christian Church, then Christ Church Eastside Park, and finally Sunday evening worship at Violet Ridge Church of Christ in Crittenden.

McElfresh told how Doc often encouraged members of the church. "When I first started speaking (several years ago), Doc would tell me, 'I like this' and told me things I could improve on."

McElfresh said that Doc was a big Cincinnati Reds fan and told him that going to a Reds game was on his bucket list. McElfresh was able to secure Reds tickets with good seats and an all-you-can-eat meal.

He said that Doc was like "one of those free-style skiers. He was on a cane but moved so fast I could hardly keep up with him. He was so excited."

McElfresh recounted a humorous story Doc had told him about taking Janice on top of a mountain in Eastern Kentucky to ask her to marry him. "It was so pretty. If she had been a dog, I would have asked it to marry me!"

Mike Flynn, pastor of Grassy Creek Christian Church, has been friends with the Collins family for several years. They served as Rotarians together; in fact, it was Doc who encouraged Flynn to join the service-minded organization.

He also asserted that Doc wanted Flynn to go to the Holy Land with him. "I can't go there. I can't afford that," Flynn told Collins. Unbeknownst to Flynn, Doc arranged for the elders of Grassy Creek to give him a nearly 20-year anniversary gift: a trip to the Holy Land.

The two went on a five-mile trek up Mount Sinai. Doc pushed himself and even made it up to the top of a flight of steps.

On that trip, Doc was always writing and taking notes. The trip wasn't going to be just what he saw with his eyes; Doc informed, Flynn said.

Flynn reiterated what McElfresh described about Doc's encouragement, adding that Doc also encouraged churches and individuals to give to scholarship funds.

Doc Collins strove to make a difference in the community for the past 30-plus years as an educator, giver, encourager and helper. His friends said he worked to the end, "skidding in sideways, totally worn out" and surely

even if they are involved with other distributions in the county. Participants should bring their own bags or boxes.

modities are distributed 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. the second Monday of the month at 200 W. Shelby St.

People may participate

## Council Continued from Page 1

### OTHER BUSINESS

In other business:

• Council accepted the New Life Wesleyan Church parking lot agreements. The church at 420 Monument St. sought permission to encroach on the city's right-of-way in order to expand and pave its parking.

• The city attorney conducted the first reading of an ordinance to repeal and replace an ordinance to allow for adjustments to the city's occupational tax, business license fees and payroll tax.

• The mayor explained the need for a city auditor and suggested creating a request for proposal to solicit one.

• The mayor pointed out that the entire Code Enforcement Board was about to expire and said the new board will be created so that terms will not expire at the same time and will be staggered over three

years. Board members will be appointed at the next meeting.

• Council discussed the Headstart building and recognized the need to get it open, even if all the parking and access roads weren't completed.

• Due to vacation and travel issues, the regular council meeting that would take place May 21 is changed to May 28, and the meeting scheduled for June 4 is changed to June 8.

• A citizen addressed her concerns about dogs running free on Fourth Street. The mayor promised to look into it.

### NKADD

• Representatives from the Northern Kentucky Area Development District reviewed completed, current and future infrastructure projects along with potential funding sources.

**Completed projects with active loans include:**

Regional sewer system project

PCHS sewer extension

Oak Haven pump station

Separate water and sewer rehabilitations

**Current projects with full or current funding:**

Transmission line, applied for \$7,415,626, \$3.5 million funded by the state

Lagoons, \$800,000

Scripps Grant

Water plant repairs, \$1.2 Scripps Loan

**Current projects with applied for or still seeking funding:**

Inflow and Infiltration, estimated \$6,287,320

Galvanized line replacement, \$667,200

Wall around the electrical substation

Raising pump stations higher

Streets and sidewalks improvements

Downtown plaza

Headstart project

NKADD also provided Council with a list of potential funding sources.

## Fabulous Cookie Monsters



For this month's community service project, Fabulous Friends — a grassroots group of friends and neighbors — baked cookies and made candies for the staffs of all four county schools, the bus garage and administrative offices. "We hope they enjoy them and know how thankful we are for all of them," member Darlene Simpson, who hosted the meeting, said. Pictured with the goodies are, from left, Bridgette Sorrell, Sandy Godman, Simpson, Dinah Shelley, Denise Fisher, Amy Whitaker and Faye Godman. Photo courtesy of Fabulous Friends.

## Pianist Continued from Page 1

It's been an awful long time."

Colvin grew up in Mason County, but met her husband in Brooksville and ended up in Falmouth after marrying Pendleton Countian Edwin Colvin.

They raised their family in the county and made the Blanket Creek area their

home.

Many people may recognize Colvin from her 20-year career at Falmouth McDonald's, where she diligently kept the tables, floors and restrooms clean.

Although she no longer works there, you can catch her Sunday mornings playing at Blanket Creek Baptist, 5080 Broadford Road. She continues to enjoy the piano, with "The Old Rugged Cross" being her favorite piece to play.

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