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Celebrating FFA Week in KENTUCKY
FEBRUARY 21-28, 2026
Stories, Photos | PAGES B6-B8

HART COUNTY'S NEWSPAPER

NEWS-HERALD

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Young Blazer Burns Bright on National Stage



▲ PHOTO | SUBMITTED
With a championship ring, All-American honors, and big goals ahead, Eli Paul is setting the pace for a promising track and field journey.

By **Mary Beth Sallee**
Managing Editor
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In his second year with the Vette City Blazers Track Club, Eli Paul returned home last week from the AAU Indoor Championships in

While most six-year-olds are mastering reading and spelling, Eli Paul just mastered a national championship.

PAUL
CONTINUED ON PAGE A2

A Fight for a Healthy Start



▲ PHOTO | SUBMITTED
Chandler Bowman is pictured here in 2022 just a few days after his heart surgery.

By **Mary Beth Sallee**
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newborn Chandler Bowman, sending his family on an unexpected journey through intensive care, emergency

What began as a routine delivery quickly turned into a medical emergency for

FIGHT
CONTINUED ON PAGE A2

Fiscal Court Audit Finds Procedural Discrepancies

OFFICIALS SAY NO FUNDS WERE MISUSED

By **Mary Beth Sallee**
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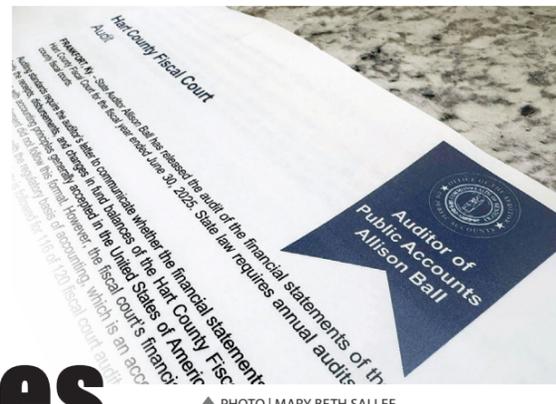
An audit of the Hart County Fiscal Court's financial statements for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025 identified discrepancies involving procedures, documentation, and internal controls. County officials said the findings reflect clerical and timing issues rather than misuse of public funds.



▲ PHOTO | JOBE PUBLISHING FILE PHOTO
After the audit report of the Hart County Fiscal Court was released, county officials said the findings reflect clerical and timing issues rather than misuse of public funds.

The audit, released by the office of State Auditor Allison

FISCAL | CONTINUED ON PAGE A2



▲ PHOTO | MARY BETH SALLEE
The audit, released by the office of State Auditor Allison Ball, reviewed cash transfers, disbursement practices, payroll oversight, and budget reporting.

Le'Braun Cares Inc. Nonprofit Founded in Memory of Young Marine Serves Others in Need



▲ PHOTO | SUBMITTED
Lance Corporal Le'Braun Hamilton, a Caverna graduate and United States Marine, passed away in November of 2024. Today, his legacy is honored through the nonprofit organization, Le'Braun Cares Inc.



▲ PHOTO | SUBMITTED
Le'Braun Cares Inc. hosts various fundraising events throughout the year to help others in need within the community. The Le'Braun Cares Inc. Committee includes, from left: Colisha, Liz, Jaime, and LeeAnn.

By **Mary Beth Sallee**
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A family's grief after an unthinkable loss has grown into a mission focused on meeting the needs of others in the community. Le'Braun Cares Inc., a nonprofit founded in

memory of U.S. Marine LCPL Le'Braun Hamilton, is working to provide help, emotional support, and awareness around mental health and substance abuse, all while honoring the life that inspired it.

Liz Hamilton, Le'Braun's stepmother, is the president

and founder of Le'Braun Cares Inc. She described Le'Braun as someone whose quiet actions spoke louder than words. Those closest to him remember not only his discipline and service, but also the steady kindness he showed in everyday moments.

LE'BRAUN | CONTINUED ON PAGE A10

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