

-CAVERNA CONTINUED FROM PAGE TWO



▲ PHOTO | KATRINA ENGLAND
The Barren River District Health Department received the Community Partner of the Month award.

Hatcher and district leaders also addressed public questions about a newly purchased vehicle. Some thought the district bought a luxury Escalade, but leaders clarified it is actually a Chevy Suburban bought with expiring COVID-relief money. They explained the vehicle is used to haul small groups of kids or staff without having to utilize a full-size school bus or pay personal mileage.

Superintendent Abell explained that new state guidelines require school boards to officially vote on a proposed tax rate first, put it in the paper, and hold a public hearing

before taking a final vote next month.

The district is facing real financial strain due to lower student enrollment. Attendance is down to 501 students, compared to well over 600 in recent years. While a large graduating class of 61 seniors accounted for part of the drop, fewer kids in desks means less state funding coming in.

Board members Jennifer Briggs and Vice Chair Gina Lyon pointed out that fixed district bills, staff raises, and building loan payments don't go down just because enrollment does.



▲ PHOTO | KATRINA ENGLAND
Jessica Hampton received the Educator of the Month award.

“With the enrollment we have, we have to make sure we pay for these commitments,” Briggs said, noting that proposing a higher rate gives the board room to work.

“(the proposed rate is) not saying we’re taking the 4%,” board member Allison Dennison added. “We’re wanting to give a high estimate so we can go down from it if needed.”

Under Kentucky law, the board can vote to lower the tax rate at their final meeting in September, but they can’t set it any higher than what they advertise to the public.

A vote to propose

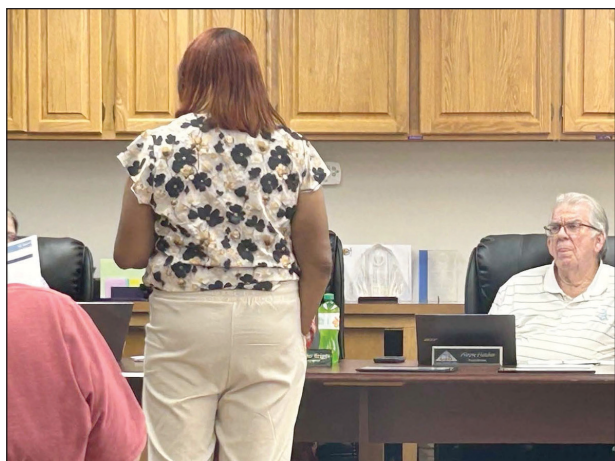
a 4% increase plus exonerations failed in a 2-2 split, and received votes of no from Wayne Hatcher and Allison Dennison and yes votes from Jennifer Briggs and Gina Lyon.

“I ask that you continue discussion,” said Abell. “I don’t want to deceive the public.”

Jennifer Briggs suggested a 1% rate with exonerations, but the motion died without a second.

Allison Dennison proposed 4% with no exonerations, which was unanimously approved, setting the high-end estimate for the upcoming public notice.

During the public



▲ PHOTO | KATRINA ENGLAND
Mareika Tisdale approached the Board and addressed them directly regarding what she described as a hiring process marked by changing information.

comment portion of the meeting, Mareika Tisdale also addressed the Board regarding what she described as a hiring process marked by changing information.

Tisdale explained that after accepting a position in good faith, getting her onboarding paperwork done, and arranging housing for her family, district human resources told her not to report to work on June 1 while waiting to speak with Superintendent Amanda Abell, who was out of town. Shortly after, the job offer was pulled.

“I am not asking the board to reverse

the hiring decision. I’m asking that my character be judged by the truth and not by rumors,” Tisdale said, asking the district to look into its hiring process so future applicants get clear communication.

The Board thanked her for informing them of the situation.

The board announced a public tax hearing in September from 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM, right before the regular 5:00 PM board meeting. Community members will have that full hour to ask questions and voice their thoughts before the board votes on the final tax rate for the year.

-PRAYER CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE



▲ PHOTO | SUBMITTED
New Munfordville Elementary School Principal Will Compton, center, read scripture from the Bible during Sunday’s community prayer service at the school. Pictured, from left, are Don Green, Sue Ann Compton, former MES Principal Vyetta Reynolds, Will Compton, and Munfordville Baptist Church Pastor Billy Compton.

the students, teachers, and staff preparing to begin another school year.

Hart County Board of Education member Tina Rutledge was among those who gathered at Munfordville Elementary School (MES), where Munfordville Baptist Church Pastor Billy Compton led the prayer service and new MES principal Will Compton shared a Bible verse.

Those in attendance also offered specific prayers for the safety and well-being of students both inside and outside the classroom, as well as for school leadership, teachers, and support staff. Prayers also focused on keeping students at the forefront of decisions

made throughout the school year.

For Rutledge, the prayer service was a representation of freedom.

“We are very blessed to live in a community and a country where we are free to pray over our schools, and we pray that we can make a lasting impact on children’s lives inside and outside of the classroom,” Rutledge said.

Rebecca Dennis, whose daughter Haizlee attends MES, stated that seeing Principal Compton at the gathering was especially meaningful.

“Seeing our new principal holding the Bible gives me hope,” Dennis said. “I love seeing that our children

have the freedom to express their religious beliefs and not feel like they can’t.”

Paul Grider, Pastor of The Way Church in Horse Cave, led the prayer service at Hart County High School. His wife, Angela, led the service at Caverna High School.

“We prayed for God to bless, guide, protect, empower, and move in the lives of the administrators, teachers, coaches, staff, volunteers, and especially the students,” Grider said. “One of the most beautiful parts was the people who were gathered, including current and past teachers, administrators, students, and pastors. It was a wonderful showing of unity

and solidarity in our community as we cried out to God with one voice for our young people.”

The prayer services across the county served as a reminder that a school year is about more than lessons, grades, and activities. Behind every student who walks through the doors of their school is a family hoping for a safe year, and behind every classroom is a teacher carrying the responsibility of helping students learn and grow. And as those classroom doors opened this week, students and educators across Hart County and Caverna will begin the year surrounded by faith and hope for the journey ahead.

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also announced that two semi hitches will be available for competitors to use and swap onto semi trucks. Those interested in hooking their semi who do not have a hitch will be able to use one of the available hitches.

Rules for the 8,500-pound Street Stock Diesel Truck class require trucks to be licensed and insured, have no solid suspension or hanging weights, and pull from the receiver hitch only. Maximum hitch height is 26 inches, and the hitch opening must be

a minimum of three inches wide and 3.75 inches long.

Nitrous and propane are not permitted. Stock-style suspension is required, while traction bars are permitted. Trucks must also retain factory frame rails.

The hook fee is \$40, and classes with more than six entries will receive an 80 percent payback.

General admission is \$10, while children

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of the 524 and 531 exchanges, serving the Munfordville and Bonnieville areas.

Ballots are scheduled to be mailed to members on September 4 and must be returned postmarked by September 19.

According to the SCRTC website, incumbent Thompson has spent most of his life in Cub Run with his wife, Reva, whom he married in 1963. With a background as an operating engineer, Thompson spent 20 years with Hall Contracting, working on numerous projects across Kentucky. He also has extensive

experience in local heavy equipment and dozer work. Today, Thompson continues to farm and tend to his cattle. He also serves as a deacon and moderator at Cub Run Missionary Baptist Church.

Gardner, a lifelong farmer and logger, is seeking the trustee seat and asking District 1 members for their support in the upcoming election. In a statement to the Hart County News-Herald, Gardner said it is his background in farming and logging has given him practical experience

TRUSTEE
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