

THE NEWS-ENTERPRISE



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Local community pays tribute to Parrett at Cecilia Days

BY GREG THOMPSON
THE NEWS-ENTERPRISE

The Cecilia community that Dennis Parrett loved and supported for numerous years concluded Cecilia Days on Saturday with a special tribute in his honor. The former three-term Kentucky state senator, co-owner and manager of Cecilia Farm Service and a former Extension agent passed away June 7 at the age of 66 after a battle with Alzheimer's. Parrett had always been a big part of Cecilia, a supporter of the quaint country community as a business owner and even more so as he loved to be involved as much as possible. Before the tribute began, Den-

nis' mother, Carol Parrett, brother and sister-in-law, Danny and Elaine and sister, Denise, wondered what emotions the tribute would churn up. "You don't get ready for something like that," Carol said. "You don't know what's going to be said, so there's not a whole lot you can prepare for." Carol added that there have been good days and there have been bad days since her son's passing. For youngest brother, Danny, it still seems unreal. "I have not processed what happened yet," he said. "I really haven't. I still haven't processed that he's not here." Sitting in a white fold-out chair

in front of the stage, Danny recalled that he was in middle school when Dennis went away to college at the University of Kentucky. Whenever Dennis was home from college, Danny said there was work to be done on the farm. This memory called forth a tremendous amount of laughter from Carol. "That's a whole different story," Carol said. "Dennis took to the farm like a duck to water. Danny? Not so much." She recalls that Dennis initially wanted to be a sports writer. Six months after the family moved to a farm, that desire evaporated like

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GREG THOMPSON/The News-Enterprise

Dennis Parrett had to intervene many times over the years in scuffles involving Ernest T. Bass during Cecilia's Almost Talent Show. Parrett, who passed away on June 7, was honored Saturday evening at the end of Cecilia Days.

Cecilia Days event continues to thrive at 55

BY GREG THOMPSON
THE NEWS-ENTERPRISE

Nick Gerwitz and his daughter, Brooklynn Underwood, brought an umbrella to watch the Cecilia Days Parade Saturday morning. Skies were partly sunny as the two picked a place to set up a folding chair at the end of a gravel driveway on Main Street. There was only a minimal chance of showers for the 55th annual festival, but with the sun beating down, it was becoming sticky outside. Gerwitz placed his open umbrella upside down on the gravel. "I never would have thought to do that," Gerwitz said. "This was my boss's idea, John Marshall. It's a great idea." With the umbrella open and upside down, there was a good likelihood candy tossed during the parade would land in it. Families lined up along the parade route from the South Hardin Ballpark to Cecilia Valley Elementary to see the fire trucks, about 50 tractors, Central Hardin High School Bruins Marching Band, elected officials hoping to keep their seats in November and candidates running against the incumbents. Cayden Henderson missed the entire parade. The 6-week-old slept against his grandmother, Shannon Atchley, through every honk of a horn, every engine revved up and the pounding drums of the band. Nearby on the Denver H. Woodring Pavilion stage, John Langley did a soundcheck a half-hour before he was to perform. "David! David! We're over here," Robert Raizor shouted from beneath a shade-covered pavilion to his brother standing near the Cecilia Ruritan Club tent, who began to bobble a just-purchased funnel

cake. David was able to regain his balance and keep the funnel cake from plummeting onto the pavement despite the roaring laughter and applause of Robert and a few others who happened to witness the spectacle. Sitting on one side of a picnic table under the same shade were Mary, Holly and Jesse Smallwood. They were waiting for the Chicken BBQ Dinners to begin being served. The three came over from Custer and Hardinsburg in Breckinridge County for the festival. "I can't count that many," Mary said, trying to remember how many Cecilia Days they have attended over the years. "I couldn't guess, can you?" Jesse said, looking over at Holly. Between the three of them, they began recollecting – was it more than 20? Yes, they were pretty certain more than that. What about 25? More than that. The three came to the consensus it must be between 25 and 30 years. Jesse said that "friends, neighbors, the singing, stuff like that, and to see what all they got," is what keeps the trio coming back year after year. One of the highlights of the annual community festival is the choosing of the Honorary Mayor of Cecilia. Five individuals had been nominated – Casey Goodman, Tiffani Tucker, Doug Yates, Lisa Thomas and Greg Thomas. "Some well-meaning personality of our community decided to pit a husband and wife against each other," Lisa Thomas said, who had been thrown into the fray with her husband, Greg. Lisa was well aware of who instigated the plot to break up her marital harmony – Carl Cox. "He may not be with us after today," Lisa said

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GREG THOMPSON/The News-Enterprise

With his tractor barely moving, Randall Ray looks over at the other competitors during the Tractor Slow Reverse Race on Saturday. The Tractor Games is a unique part of Cecilia Days.



GREG THOMPSON/The News-Enterprise

Jonathan French tries approaching from the side while taking a big bite out of a mustard-dripping hot dog during this portion of the Tractor Games at Cecilia Days on Saturday.

EIS looking at 1.6 cent school tax increase

BY GREG THOMPSON
THE NEWS-ENTERPRISE

A special called meeting was for the Elizabethtown Independent Schools Board of Education took place Friday in order to approve a proposal for a tax levy for the 2026-27 Fiscal Year. "One of our responsibilities is to set the school tax rate for the next year," said EIS Superintendent Paul Mullins. The rate is incurring a 1.6 cent increase from 85.7 cents per \$100 of assessed property value to 87.3 cents, which comes out to about \$16 more in the coming year for a homeowner living in a home valued at \$100,000 in the boundaries of the school district. The afternoon meeting was to go over the increase and the procedure set forth by the Kentucky Department of Education, as well as present the proposed tax rate to school board members "because of the changes this year in legislation," according to EIS Chief Financial Officer Adam Hinton. The local equivalent tax effort required for participation in the Support Education Excellence in Kentucky state education funding formula can be raised by local school districts with any combination of ad valorem property and motor vehicle taxes, which are levies based on the assessed value of property or assets, occupational license tax, utility gross receipts tax and excise tax. Hinton added the

meeting held on Friday is only the first on this subject. Next, the EIS Board of Education has to publicize the proposed increase on the district's website for two consecutive weeks as well as run a legal notice in the local newspaper. EIS will then have to hold another meeting to adopt the proposed tax rate. "It turned into a two-meeting process this year," Hinton said. Once approved, he added, the tax increase will go into effect for the current tax year and out on this year's property tax bills. "We're meeting the requirements of a procedural process outlined by the state, and now the clock starts ticking," Mullins said. "The board will make it final after a period of time." After the Board of Education votes to approve the tax increase, it is sent to the Hardin County Clerk's Office. Mullins added that the increased tax is nothing new. The money from the tax increase will go to the school district as it does with any other district. In fiscal year 2020-21, the school tax rate was 86.4%. So, within the past six years, the tax rate has actually dropped before it was increased to the new rate. "Even though we're increasing this year," Hinton said, "it is a smoothed-out rate." The only other item on the meeting's agenda was approval of the Cafeteria Plan with Houchens Industries Group for district employees.



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OBITUARIES

No new death notices were reported today by area funeral homes.

SINCE YOU ASKED

Results of The News-Enterprise online poll as of 5 p.m. Sunday. Do you think Mitch McConnell will ever vote again in the U.S. Senate?
Yes: 36.1% • No: 63.9%
TODAY'S QUESTION: Have you tried the BBQ Chicken Dinner at the Cecilia Days event before?

NEWS

1,020 students attend Governor's Scholars Program

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