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Vol. 6, No. 13 NEWS/ADVERTISING 606-225-1258 CARTER COUNTY, KENTUCKY WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2025 \$1.00 PER COPY

Stewart pleads guilty

Ordered to pay \$24,000 in restitution for tourism theft

By Jeremy D. Wells
Carter County Times

Helen Renee Stewart, the former Carter County Tourism treasurer, entered a plea of guilty to charges of theft by unlawful taking or disposition last Tuesday (March 18) and was ordered by Judge Rebecca Phillips to pay \$24,000 in restitution to the tourism commission. In addition to repaying the funds, Stewart – who will be formally sentenced in April – will have five years of supervised probation as a condi-

tion of her pretrial diversion deal. News of Stewart’s embezzlement first came to light last June, when then tourism president Chris Perry was made aware that the commission’s account had been overdrawn. Perry brought the issue to fiscal court’s attention in July, after turning the issue over to Kentucky State Police. Stewart was indicted in August on a Class C Felony charge of theft by unlawful taking of more than \$10,000.00, after which a full accounting of the misused funds was made available to the Carter County Times. Those documents showed that despite her initial claim to Perry that she “borrowed” no more than \$5,000 from the tourism account, Stewart’s misuse of

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Renee Stewart appears before Judge Rebecca Phillips. (Photo by Jeremy D. Wells, Carter County Times)

Board discusses school days

Last day could be May 31 if HB 241 is approved

By Charles Romans
Carter County Times

The Carter County School Board had a full agenda for its regularly scheduled meeting last Monday, March 17. The board heard reports concerning school safety, which included a potential weapon detection system, and options on how to protect students from unsafe drivers. Of particular concern to both school police and administration are drivers failing to yield right-of-way to school buses while students are both being picked up and dropped off. There was also an update on the construction of

the new high school, which is progressing on schedule. A central topic of discussion for the evening was a state bill that would allow an amendment to the school year. House Bill 241 (pending the governor’s signature) would allow the end of the school year to be set for May 30. Pending that passage, it would allow Carter County Schools to keep their Spring Break as scheduled and also schedule the balance of the 24-25 school year. The board voted unanimously to approve the schedule, pending the governor’s signature. West Carter will graduate on Friday, May 30, at 7 p.m. and East Carter will graduate on Saturday, May 31, at 10 a.m. The board voted on bids for

See SCHOOL on A-6



School bus safety was one topic of conversation, with concerns about drivers failing to yield right-of-way to buses when loading and unloading. (File photo by Jeremy D. Wells, Carter County Times)

Preparing for mowing season

Council approves mower lease, discusses grants and roadblocks

By: Charles Romans
Carter County Times

Get your spare change ready! Olive Hill City Council began their March 18 meeting by approving roadblock applications from local sports teams and charities. Among those applying for the applications were the high school softball and baseball teams and Cosmic Cheer. The approval of a

roadblock application gives the organizations permission to set up at stop lights and other locations in town on designated weekends, during set hours, to solicit donations from passing vehicles. The council also read a resolution for Kentucky Municipal Energy Agency (KYMEA) 225-02. The resolution read, in part, “a resolution of the City of Olive Hill appointing a Director and an alternate Designee to the Kentucky Municipal Energy Agency, otherwise known as KYMEA. Whereas the City of Olive Hill is a member of the Kentucky Municipal Energy Agency, and as part of the membership the city is required

to appoint a director to represent the city on the KYMEA Board...” The council appointed Stephanie Thomas as the director, and Eric Rayburn as the alternate designee to that board. The resolution was set to take effect immediately upon adoption. Council voted unanimously to adopt the resolution. A representative from Trail Town made the council aware that the organization will be receiving a grant for \$159,000 to be used in the Firebrick Lake area. Trail Town also received a grant from state tourism which is most likely to be used around the Depot. Work related to these

See MOWING on A-3

Weekly arrests report

The following individuals were arrested and booked into the Carter County Detention Center over the past week. This list includes local arrests only. It does not include federal inmates being housed at or transported through the detention center.

- Cassandra Hall, 29, of Olive Hill, arrested by Carter County Sheriff, on a charge of flagrant non-support, arrested and booked March 17.
- Patricia Baier-Carter, 54, of Grayson, arrested by Grayson PD, for failure to appear, arrested and booked March 18.
- David Richards, 63, of Olive Hill, arrested by Kentucky State Police, on charges of first degree possession of a controlled substance (methamphetamine), and non-payment of court costs, fees, or fines, arrested and booked March 18.
- Taylor Wiggand, 38, of Flat-

woods, arrested by Kentucky State Police, for failure to appear, arrested and booked March 18.

- Scotty Justice, 32, of Grayson, arrested by Grayson PD, for failure to appear, arrested and booked March 18.
- Roger Fisher, 26, of Olive Hill, arrested by Carter County Sheriff, on charges of speeding 26 MPH or more over the speed limit, careless driving, trafficking in synthetic drugs, and possession of drug paraphernalia, arrested and booked March 19.
- William Jarvis, 52, of Ashland, arrested by Kentucky State Police, for failure to appear, arrested and booked March 19.
- Shannon Spillman, 23, of Hitchens, arrested by Kentucky State Police, on charges of failure to produce an insurance card, endangering the welfare of a minor, operating a motor

vehicle under the influence of alcohol, and two counts of non-payment of court costs, fees, or fines, arrested and booked March 19.

- Harlee Estepp, 28, of Grayson, arrested by Kentucky State Police, on charges of first degree sexual abuse, and procuring or promoting the use of a minor by electronic means, arrested March 19, booked March 20.
- Isaiah Shepherd, 21, of West Liberty, arrested by Kentucky State Police, on charges of failure to wear seat belts, operating a motor vehicle on a suspended or revoked operator’s license, and failure to appear, arrested and booked March 20.
- Jacqueline Collins, 48, of Grayson, arrested by Grayson PD, for non-payment of court costs, fees, or fines, arrested and booked March 20.
- Patrick Young, 46, of Grayson, arrested by Kentucky State Police, on charges of oper-

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This Week’s Obituaries

Arbedella "Arbie" Gearhart, 87

Vernon Gilbert, 81

Glenda Merrell Roseberry Hargett, 90

Lisa Bradley Wagoner, 59

Carl Lee Webb, 78

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