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DANIEL BOONE DAYS CELEBRATION
2025 JULY 5 - 10AM-10PM
FIREWORKS STARTS AT 10PM
JOIN US IN THE TOWN SQUARE @ 20 MAIN STREET - BOONEVILLE, KY!!

Backroads of Appalachia Awarded Prestigious ARC ARISE Grant to Fuel Economic Growth Through Adventure Tourism in Owsley County

Backroads of Appalachia has been awarded a highly competitive ARC ARISE (Appalachian Regional Initiative for Stronger Economies) grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission, recognizing the organization's pioneering work in leveraging motorsports tourism to drive sustainable economic revitalization across Eastern Kentucky and Central Appalachia.

The \$3,809,250 grant will support the expansion of Backroads of Appalachia's adventure tourism corridor—known for its scenic routes, motorsports trails, and heritage-rich communities—connecting rural towns across Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia. This funding will be used to develop infrastructure, launch regional workforce training programs, and further promote Appalachia as a premier motorsports and outdoor recreation destination, with a headquarters located on Sturgeon Creek in Owsley County, Kentucky.

"This is more than a grant—it's a vote of confidence in the people and potential of Appalachia," said

Erik Hubbard, Founder and Executive Director of Backroads of Appalachia. "We are proud to showcase what happens when grit meets opportunity. With ARC's support, we'll build stronger roads—not just asphalt, but pathways to prosperity."

The ARISE grant positions Backroads of Appalachia to deepen its impact through partnerships with local governments, small businesses, and workforce development agencies. Among its initiatives are:

The build-out of a 199-acre site as a training facility for overland, off-road motocross, and rally car testing and design. Over 2,000 square feet of renovated space for training facilities and administrative uses. Additional square footage for maintenance workshops and storage. Support for RV parking and overnight stays. Water and wastewater infrastructure, along with 2,500 linear feet of access roads for emergency services.

"We're thrilled to see the Appalachian Regional Commission recognize the



ingenuity and passion of the people of Owsley County," said Owsley County Judge Executive Zeke Little. "The funding of this project by the ARC shows the reward for collaborative, regional approaches that translate into jobs, investment, and pride."

Backroads of Appalachia has become a driving force—lit-

erally and figuratively—in transforming former coal towns into destinations for riders, racers, and tourists. In just a few years, it has brought over 100,000 visitors to the region, added millions in economic impact, and created a new Appalachian narrative rooted in beauty, grit, and gear.

For more information, visit www.backroadsofappalachia.org

The School Board Commends Debbie Smith for her Contribution to the Owsley County School District During June Meeting

The Owsley County Board of Education met in regular session on Tuesday, June 10, 2025. Board Chairperson Joyce Campbell called the meeting to order. Betty Jo Neeley, Board Secretary, had the names of all in attendance. A motion was made and carried to approve the agenda as presented. A motion was made and carried to approve the Board Meeting minutes from the May 13, 2025 meeting. A Special Board Meeting was scheduled for the Superintendent's Summative Evaluation (pursuant to KRS 61.810 (1)). The meeting was scheduled for Thursday, June 12, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.

Superintendent Gary Cornett said the Board would like to recognize Debbie Smith. "Debbie has been here for four years. She started out with the Literacy Grant and has made her NTSS Plan and has kind of adopted all that stuff. She has helped with principals, she has helped a lot with Robert and mentored him in his first year with his assistant principal. She retired from Lee County as principal. Her grant is running out but we are keeping her on the sub list and hopefully she comes back. You don't have to worry about anything, whatever she did, she did right and you did not have to follow up behind her. The staff respected her a whole lot, the kids like her and we appreciate all that

she has done. She came to us at the end of every year and said if me being here is going to cost someone their job, I will go to the house. You don't find that kind of character anymore. We are proud of everything that she has done. She has helped us out a lot over the years. With her work through this grant, there have been a lot of books that have gone home with a lot of kids in the last four years. We appreciate all that you have done. When we get your plaque in, we will come and take pictures and get you in the paper." She stated, "I have come full circle - I started when I was in high school. I worked during the summers with the Head Start teachers when I was about 14 - 15 years old."

Autumn Herald, Finance Director/Treasurer, gave the monthly Finance Report. The report includes Payrolls, Claims, Monthly Financial Report, Head Start/Early Head Start Financial Report and the Food Service Financial Report. A motion was made and carried to approve the Financial Report. A motion was made and carried to approve the 2025-2026 Performance Bond Treasurer. A motion was made and carried to approve the 2025-2026 Depository Bond. A motion was made and carried to approve Advertisement for Depository & Banking Services Quote. A motion was made and car-

ried to approve Certified & Classified Salary Schedules for 2025-2026 SY - very little changes with no raises. A motion was made and carried to approve the Superintendent's Travel for May & June, 2025. A motion was made and carried to approve to Create Job Position/Description for JAG KY Specialist (Jobs for America's Graduates). A motion was made and carried to approve Certified Evaluation Plan for 2025-2026 SY. The law has changed to say that non-tenured teachers are still to be evaluated every year but tenured teachers are evaluated every five instead of three. A motion was made and carried to review the Gifted Program Summative Evaluation Report.

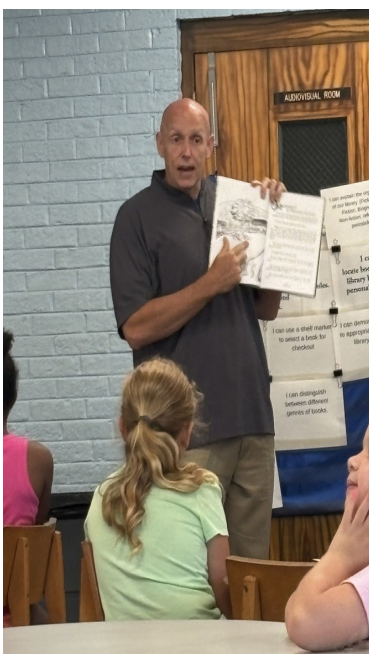
A motion was made and carried to approve the following list of Consent Items: review SBDM Reports (OCES & OCHS); review Activity Fund Budgets (OCES & OCHS); approve KSBA Annual Policy Updates 1st Reading; approve 2025-2026 KEDC Membership Agreement; approve 2025 Planet Youth Contract (KRDHD); approve/amend Contract with/ Life Center (Booneville United Methodist Church); approve Contract with/ Ramsey Smart Dollar for Employee Financial Benefits Plan; approve Extended Employment Report & Plan for Agricultural Education (Shelbi Taylor); approve

Advertisement for Bids (Asphalt Sealing & Blacktop Striping (parking lots); Low Bid for Lighting (pending funds available)); approve Facility use Request (Carly Smith Basketball Lessons - OCES/OCHS June, July and August, 2025; Randy Gabbard Celebration of Life - Farmers Market June 21, 2025 1:45 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.); approve Over Night/Out of State Trip (Literacy & Math Retreat with/Dr. Amy Hood - Pigeon Forge, TN July 16-18, 2025); approve/award bids (Security/Fire Protection Services/Monitoring, Custodial/Shop Supplies, Transportation/Bus Parts & Material, Diesel Fuel, Propane, Pest Control, Oil Removal, Drug Testing, Tires, Camera System Monitoring & Repair, Asbestos Management, Soft Drink, Juice & Water Vending, Kyle Wilson Program); approve/award School Nutrition Program Bids (Borden's/ New Dairy as new Milk Vendor for 2025-2026 SY, Bimbo Bakeries as Bread Vendor for 2025-2026 SY, Southfork Farms as Local Produce Vendor for 2025-2026 SY, Continue GFS as Primary Vendor as per HPS Contract); reports from each department were given. The Board acknowledged the Personnel Action Report by Superintendent. A motion was made and carried to adjourn the meeting.

OCHS Varsity Cheer got the opportunity to complete UCA Camp



OCHS Varsity Cheer got the opportunity to complete UCA Camp. It was a chance for the team to perfect stunts, motions, jumps, learn new material, and most of all bond.



(Left) Carter County Superintendent Dr. Paul Green (Owsley County Alumni) reading "Grandma Nell's Secret, An Appalachian Fairytale" to summer school students at OCES. This book was written by Dr. Green's mother Sharon Green over 30 years ago.