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Need for new buses drives Pulaski BOE purchase approval

CHRISTOPHER HARRIS
COMMONWEALTH JOURNAL

The need for a bus goes ‘round and ‘round — and as such, Pulaski County Schools are buying six more of them. The Pulaski County Board of Education approved the purchase of a half dozen school buses at Tuesday’s October meeting, for a total cost of \$1,007,000. “Buses continue to get

higher and higher (in cost) and more expensive,” said Superintendent Patrick Richardson during the meeting. “When I first came to Central Office and was over transportation, we were spending about a million dollars and we were purchasing anywhere from 10 to 12 buses.” Two of the buses to be acquired would be “the big, rear-engine” options that can carry 84 passengers,

said Richardson. He said that when he started overseeing transportation as assistant superintendent 15 years ago before assuming the superintendent’s office, those were available for about \$95,000 each; now they’re \$203,000 each. The “snub-nosed” buses that carry 72 passengers go for \$150,000 each (they were about \$78,000 15 years ago), and the district looks to buy

four of those. “Now, they’re a tank,” said Richardson. “Occasionally, from time to time, we have accidents, but we have been very fortunate ... in the last 15 years that we’ve not had any injuries in our accidents. So our buses are the safest vehicles that you can have, but they are expensive, and when you travel 7,000 miles a day, See **BOE** on 5



Christopher Harris | CJ

Present at the Tuesday Pulaski County School Board meeting to receive certificates for participating in the Rogers Scholars program werem from left, Madelyn Braun, Madeline Frye, and Katie Glover, and William Heffelfinger was a part in the Entrepreneurial Leadership Institute. The group stands with Superintendent Patrick Richardson (on right end).

GLORY GARDENS BRINGS BACK ENCHANTED PUMPKIN WALK NEXT WEEK

CARLA SLAVEY
COMMONWEALTH JOURNAL

When one visits a greenhouse, they wouldn’t normally expect to encounter Nemo or Buzz Lightyear. This year’s Enchanted Pumpkin Walk at Glory Gardens & Greenhouse would be the exception. Glory Gardens, located at 2015 Old Bull Road in Eubank, is hosting its third annual Enchanted Pumpkin Walk next week: Thursday, Friday and Saturday, October 23 through 25. And this year, to go along with the pumpkin theme, Glory Gardens Owner Ashley DeBord said the business decided on a Pixar theme as well, with each night dedicated to a different Pixar classic. Thursday’s events start at 6 p.m. with Tow Mater’s Tractor Show, named after “Cars” lovable Mater the tow truck. DeBord said that night will also feature live bluegrass music courtesy of local Future Farmers of America (FFA) students. Friday night (7 p.m. to 10 p.m.) is Buzz’s Galactic Party, where “the greenhouse will be all neon glow-in-the-dark (lights), and kids can come in and

See **WALK** on 5



Submitted

An example of one of the pumpkins that could be found at last year’s Enchanted Pumpkin Walk at Glory Gardens.

Arrests made in connection with January home invasion

COMMONWEALTH
JOURNAL

The Pulaski County Sheriff’s Office announced arrests of two suspects in connection to a home invasion robbery that occurred on January 26 of this year in the Bronston area of Pulaski County. The information concerning both arrests was not previously released due to efforts to apprehend the second suspect in this investigation. On January 26, deputies responded to a call that two male suspects entered the victim’s home, robbed and assaulted the victim of that residence at gunpoint, and then restrained the victim in the basement before fleeing from the residence. Due to the suspects taking the victim’s phone, the victim,

who was able to work free from his restraints, went to a neighbor’s residence, who then contacted 911 for the victim, according to the sheriff’s office. During the initial investigation, the Pulaski County Sheriff’s Office Criminal Investigation Division was contacted, and Detective Branson Patterson responded to the scene. Following the initial scene investigation, Detective Branson Patterson collected information and evidence that led to the arrests of two men. Following up on this information and evidence, Det. Patterson obtained an arrest warrant for Jarren Duke, 28, of Strunk, Ky., charging him with Robbery in the First Degree, Kidnapping, and See **INVASION** on 5

Two arrested on drug charges as result of eastern Pulaski traffic stop

COMMONWEALTH
JOURNAL

Two Bronston men are in custody following a traffic stop in the Shopville community on Saturday night that resulted in multiple drug-related charges. The incident began when Deputy Grant Bryant was on Ky. 461 conducting his normal duties when he observed a black Dodge Challenger, with expired registration. The vehicle turned on Old Mount Vernon Road, where Deputy Bryant conducted a traffic stop, according to the Pulaski County Sheriff’s Office. After stopping the vehicle, Deputy Bryant witnessed a Dodge Caliber stop behind him. Bryant observed the driver of the Caliber, Johnathon Welty, 34, of Bronston, change positions with a passenger, Shane Deffenbaugh, 27, of Bronston, according to the sheriff’s office. Deputy Bryant was familiar with Welty and knew he had a suspended driver’s

license. Bryant detained that vehicle as well. Deputy Caleb Wesley arrived on scene to assist, along with Deputy Dylan West and his K-9 Rocky. Deputy West deployed Rocky to conduct a free air sniff of both vehicles. Following the free air sniff, Deputy West determined that K-9 Rocky indicated the presence of illegal substances in both vehicles, according to the sheriff’s office. Deputies conducted a search of both vehicles. Inside of the Caliber, Deputies located approximately 205.2 grams of methamphetamine, and inside of the Challenger, Deputies located marijuana and a syringe inside of a purse, according to the sheriff’s office. The driver of the Challenger, Caitlyn Fragos, age 31, of London, claimed the items in the purse belonged to her, according to the sheriff’s office. See **ARRESTS** on 5

Pulaski man arrested on federal drug charges

COMMONWEALTH JOURNAL

A Pulaski County man is in custody following the execution of a United States District Court Federal Warrant on Tuesday, according to the Pulaski County Sheriff’s Office. The indictment stems from an investigation that in Pulaski County when detectives from the Pulaski County Sheriff’s Office Nar-

cotics Division began an investigation into illegal narcotics being sold from a residence on Elihu Drive. During the course of the investigation, Detectives discovered Nelson Lee West, 54, of Somerset, was trafficking in methamphetamine, according to the sheriff’s office. On March 31, 2025, detectives executed a search warrant at West’s residence. During the search of the

residence, detectives located approximately 131.7 grams of methamphetamine in three separate baggies, marijuana, glass pipes, and over \$1,000.00 in cash, according to the sheriff’s office, which added that part of the methamphetamine was located inside of a hidden compartment in the bathroom. On Tuesday, the Pulaski County Sheriff’s Office Narcotics Division located West,

who was was arrested and transported to the FBI in London on the following charges: — Distribution of Methamphetamine; — Possession With the Intent to Distribute 50 grams or more of a methamphetamine mixture. Readers are reminded that a charge is an accusation only, and that all suspects are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.