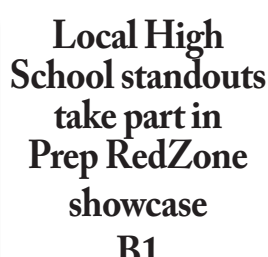
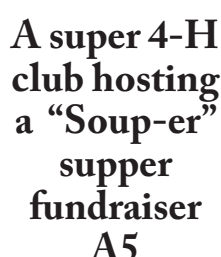




VOL. 145, NO. 08 | PAGES 12 | THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2025 www.meadecountyky.com • \$1.50

B3.....Obituaries B4.....Classified B5.....Entertainment



Doe Valley residents mourn the loss of friend and neighbor, Stuart Pepper



The Meade County Board of Education convened on Tuesday, Feb. 11, at David T. Wilson Elementary School. The meeting commenced at 6 pm with a prayer offered by Pastor Seth Miller from the Meade County Ministerial Association. This was followed by a reflection from Superintendent of Meade County Schools, Dr. Mark Martin, on the life and accolades of Meade County educational patriarch Stuart Pepper who passed away earlier in the week. Dr. Martin spoke with fondness and praise for all that Stuart Pepper had done to bring Meade County Schools to where they are today. Everything from a high school football team and high school chorus

to a stand-alone middle school were all from the vision and work of the late Mr. Pepper. Dr. Martin then asked for a moment of silence before moving on with the remainder of the meeting.

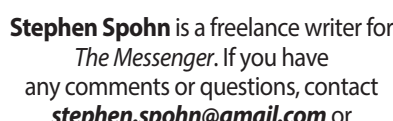
Working through financial statement approvals and routine agenda items such as employee payroll and construction payments, the meeting progressed rather quickly. One item of interest brought up by Dr. Martin was praise for the district's student accident insurance that comes at a cost of \$90,000. Dr. Martin said this was a great price that has not gone up since 2021 and offers the protection needed should a student receive an injury during school or while participating in a school-sanctioned event.

While moving to the

closure of the meeting, Dr. Martin highlighted to the board members the statistics of the Centegix Safety and Security System that has been in use in all Meade County Schools since the beginning of the school year. From August 2024 through January 2025, 293 staff alerts were activated through the badge system. Of these alerts, 49% were for behavior-related incidents, 32% were for routine drills, 11% were for elopement, 5% were for medical reasons, 2% were for suspicious behaviors, and 1% were for physical altercations. Dr. Martin said

that data shows the fidelity that school instructors and administrators have in the system to respond to incidents in a short amount of time with precise location accuracy.

The meeting adjourned with no public comment. Dr. Martin mentioned that subsequent meetings will be directed at the Meade County High School Construction Project. The next meeting is scheduled for March 11th, 6 pm at Stuart Pepper Middle School. A full video of the meeting can be viewed on The Messenger Facebook page under the video section.



Joe Hager
Messenger Staff

The City Council of Brandenburg held its regular February meeting Monday evening at City Hall. All Council members were there, and the meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer led by Bruce Fackler. The first item of business was the introduction of the new police academy graduate James House who became a full-fledged member of the Brandenburg Police Department, which is now fully staffed. Officer House has been attending academy training since August of 2024.

Certified Accountant, Sammie Lee, was next on the agenda to discuss the 2023-2024 audit of city accounts. Mr. Lee reported that the audit report from the state did not contain any non-compliances on the city's part. He commended the city staff for having the books in great shape and noted no deficiencies in any of the accounts audited. The city is in solid financial condition with great capital assets, most of that in land

infrastructure. Some available funds are in restricted accounts which can only be used for specific purposes. The water and sewer department has \$6.5 million in equity.

A bill has been introduced in Frankfort that would require all occupational taxes for cities to be collected by the state and then forwarded to the cities less any interest earned while in the state's hands. Brandenburg City Council members were unanimously opposed to this measure and passed a resolution to be sent to the legislature expressing opposition to the bill. Efforts will be made to get other cities in Kentucky to oppose the bill's passage. Councilperson Donna Brown, a former Frankfort lobbyist, pointed out the need to get our district State Senator and Representative to take the lead in preventing passage of the measure.

In other city businesses, there have been 94 service orders handled with 37 disconnects for water and sewer services. There have been some problems with water and sewer bills being delivered to customers on time. The bills are sent out on the last workday of the month, but the USPS sometimes took up to two weeks to get them processed and de-

livered. To avoid this, there are bank drafts available to make same day payments for users. Radio readers for the meters, which can be done from a moving vehicle, are beginning to be used in the process to speed it along. Check with City Hall if interested. It was also stated that city workers have been quite busy patching potholes in the streets.

Police Chief Brian Haag reported that there had been 341 calls for service this month. He also announced that calls to Meade County Dispatch can be made by texting 911. There were several such text calls made this past year. Chief Haag is also concerned about traffic signals and accidents on the Bypass and wants the state to evaluate them. The terms round-a-bouts and J Turns were mentioned during the discussion.

For anyone wishing to know their snow route snow removal standing, two large maps are available at City Hall and on their website to check to determine priority routes.

If the cost of the mowing contract for downtown remains the same for the coming season Mayor Pace feels the contract can stay with the current operator. Any price increase would mandate them seeking a

new bid for the service

Brandenburg is about to erect a new water storage tower to improve water pressure to the east end of the Bypass and Nucor. A grant has been approved to get this accomplished on Moremen Road. Bids will be accepted at City Hall for the project.

The mayor suggested having another study session with the Council concerning the food and occupational taxes for the city. He hopes to bring the proposed ordinances for a vote in March. Two businesses were approved for a license to operate in the city, one for Nine fifteen Photo LLC, a photography business located at 326 Homeview Drive and Shirley's Way, a consignment and thrift shop near Home Plate.

A brief memorial was held for Stuart Pepper at the meeting, commending his work in the county as a high school principal, superintendent of schools and a magistrate on the Fiscal Court. Aside from overseeing an excellent school system, Stuart played a part in getting the county planning and zoning in operation, securing the Jewish Health Care Center, upgrading our ambulance service, and getting Highway 313 completed.

Photo Submitted by The Pepper Family | *The Messenger*
Stuart Pepper was a beloved member of the Doe Valley Community.

Earlene Bohannon
Editor

Meade County lost a true icon this past week. Stuart Pepper was a huge presence in this community and paved the way for many improvements, not just within the school system, but throughout the entire Meade County area. He touched many lives. His example of leadership within school administration challenged those who stood upon his shoulders to strive to achieve the same level of quality of exceptional leadership that he portrayed. There will never be an equal to his legacy.

The Doe Valley Association is keenly aware of the loss of the man they have looked up to, socialized with, and counted on, for more than 30 years. Pepper was a constant in their lives. Pepper had a long tenure as a member of the Board of Directors, and it was through his guidance and suggestions that many of the improvements were made to better the community.

The Pepper's called the Doe Valley neighborhood home for many years, since the late 1980's. Whether having a meal at the Swim and Tennis Club, joining in on a community event or swinging a golf club on the course, Pepper was a treasured neighbor to everyone.

Mike Barbieri, former General Manager of Doe Valley and a friend to Pepper, shared these insights. "Mr. Pepper was genuinely a good man, and I feel blessed to have gotten to work with him. He worked his entire life to contribute to making his community and its members better. He succeeded. In recent years in his role as a board member of Doe Valley, he was always an advocate for the employees and for making the community better. He unfairly caught the blame for lack of progress largely due to the perception that his age made him not want it. That was

very far from the truth. Mr. Pepper was always a willing participant in conversations about progress and change, as long as they made sense. Even as age took its toll physically, he remained mentally as sharp as a tack. I don't think the man ever forgot anything--ever. He was an amazing resource for the community (and me) because of this. He was Meade County history in the flesh and his loss is a large one. Too many people to name are better off for having known him, many included."

Pepper's close friend Kevin Blake, who also resides in Doe Valley, said, "He was a pillar in Meade County; held most jobs in the school system including Principal and Superintendent. He enjoyed golf and the Meade County Rotary, where he loved helping others. He loved his weekly poker game. He and Anne, until her passing, were regulars at the S&T Club and we enjoyed seeing them regularly."

Joe Hager, former principal of several Meade County schools, former Meade County Judge Executive and regular golfing buddy of Pepper is sad at the passing of his colleague and friend. "Stuart's basic philosophy was to always be truthful when dealing with people and you would never be caught in an untruth. The truth is easy to remember if you are called upon to verify what was said and done. He lived by that philosophy."

Current General Manager, Eddie Bohannon, wrapped up the sentiments regarding Peppel with this, "Stuart Peppel was a longtime resident and supporter of Doe Valley. We are grateful for his leadership as a Board Member and a valued community member. His legacy will be honored for many generations to come. He will be missed in ways that we cannot begin to understand yet."

