

## Fiscal Court holds April meeting

**Joe Hager**  
*Messenger Staff*

The April 8 meeting was called to order by Judge Executive Troy Kok, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and prayer led by Esquire Gary Chapman.

Since Magistrates serve on other committees in the county, reports were given concerning some of those committee meetings. Esquire Webb attended the Otter Creek Advisory meeting and that group's meeting with the Department of Fish and Wildlife. All is ready for Meade County to have Otter Creek deeded to us in June 2025. Esquire Dix stated that the cleanup day for Buttermilk Falls, scheduled for early April, would be rescheduled for a later date due to the presence of flood waters and drift trash. He also attended the Extension Service meetings. Esquire Goddard announced that Animal Control would be holding a fundraiser in June.

Ordinance 2025-02 was voted back from being tabled. The ordinance will regulate signs and outdoor advertising and was given its first reading of the amended version at this meeting. The Court then approved the Consent Agenda where minutes of the previous meeting, the monthly financial statement, and claims and

transfers were approved. Monthly department reports and matters relating to hires, resignations, and terminations were also approved in a single motion. Judge Kok also announced a courthouse closure for April 18, Good Friday.

The Court then voted to employ Patrick and Associates to conduct this year's audit of County accounts. The state of Kentucky has been performing the audit and charging \$52,000 for the service but Patrick and Associates will conduct the process for \$18,000. The firm is state approved.

The week of April 13-19 will be National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week in Meade County as declared by vote of the Court. The 911 Center pledged to cooperate with fire, police, and emergency medical services to strive for the safety of our people. Dispatch reported that 87 calls had been received during the tornado event last week. As many as 4 dispatchers were working at the same time to respond and report the events.

Brad Waters from the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet addressed the Court. He stated that the 22.2% gasoline tax provided \$648,000 for

**Fiscal Court**  
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## From the Blocks to the Pit: Inside Meade County's Track & Field Team



Photos by Lucinda Ayres

Track coaches LtoR: Larry Garner, Jeff Shaw, Tim Vessels, Ashley Stull (Not pictured: Mike Ford)

**Lucinda Ayres**  
*Messenger Staff*

Every spring, track is one of the biggest sports in Meade County, with meets being covered in the paper and a lot of the community going out to watch them. What goes unseen is how huge of a program the Track and Field team is and all the work and love that goes into making it happen. The Track Program is one of the biggest, if not the biggest, sports programs at MCHS, with over 140 team members. It is also a sport that uniquely appeals to all types of athletes and embraces individuality. The number of events varies, but at most meets, there are typically around 24 events for students to take part in. Almost everyone has a skill that can be recognized, grown, and challenged in track with events in of course, sprinting, but also long-distance running, throwing, and jumping.

The track team practices every day of the

week after school, even on breaks and inevitable NTI days, with practices starting around late February or early March. The intensity of practices varies based on the day and the athlete's training schedule. Outdoor meets begin in March and keep up until the end of May. Whether athletes attend every meet is up to the coaches, and what events they either decide to do or get assigned to.

Sprinting and short-distance running are one of the most vital parts of the Track & Field team, with most athletes doing at least one short-distance event. Sprinter Thomas Saylor says, "There's nothing like the feeling of going all out, it's a great feeling to be honest". Sprinters must learn a special type of discipline and get extremely conditioned to continuously push their bodies towards the finish line. As Grayson Heiner says, "it's hard but it's a challenge".

Long-distance runners

also hold an important part on the team, running up to 3200 meters (2 miles) competitively. Distance runners are more independent and have a different practice experience than other track athletes. Arianna Garcia, a distance runner, says, "We're more independent than the sprinters are, so we usually just get our paces and then we have our warmup and then we just kind of do it!". Since their workouts take longer and are so different from the other athletes, they have a special role on the team.

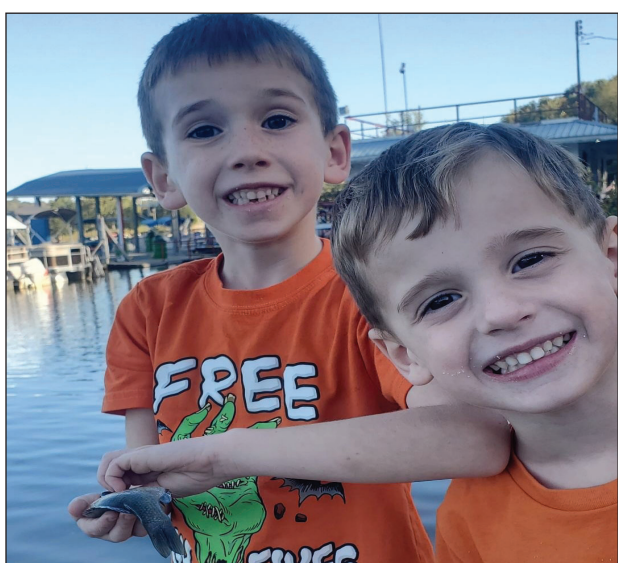
Two of the most underdiscussed events, but arguably some of the hardest, fall in the throwing category. Athletes participate in either the shot put, or the Discus throw. Shotput competitors compete to push a heavy, spherical metal ball (the shot) as far as possible from a designated circle. The athlete holds the shot against them and "puts" (pushes) it out into the air. For dis-

cus throw, athletes throw a heavy, metal disc for distance. The objective is to throw the discus as far as possible, while remaining within a designated circle, and with the discus landing within a marked sector on the ground. Like distance runners, throwers have a level of independence that comes with their practice. As Madi Fields says, "throwing is a very free-range sport, we have a lot of freedom when we come out here." Throwing and discus throw alike give students more equipped with upper body strength than lower body strength an opportunity to participate and succeed. Kinley Wiley, a sophomore thrower, said, "With running, I'm not as good at it as I am throwing, so I get to this!"

Lastly, but certainly not least, there are three jumping events. There is long jump (where athletes

**Track and Field**  
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## Trailblazing the outdoors: the importance and JOY of playing outside



The Cecil boys are happiest when spending time playing outside.



The Ostheimer kids added rocks to Roxie the rock snake on Buttermilk Falls trail.



Photo Submitted by Earlene Bohannon | The Messenger  
Lincoln and Annalise Ostheimer went sledding near Doe Valley Lake over the winter snowstorms.

**Earlene Bohannon**  
*Editor*

National Play Outside Day, a day that was founded by Aaron Wiggins and Rhonda Abeyta in 2011, is celebrated across the United States on the first Saturday of every month. It is a day that encourages children (and people of all ages) to put down their gaming devices, smartphones, and tablets and to step away from all screens to enjoy outdoor activities. This is an excellent opportunity to promote physical activity, fresh air, and interaction with nature.

Two local moms with a combined total of five children between the two of them said that playing outside is so important to their family and lifestyles that it has become a way of life and an integral part of their everyday lives regardless of the season

of the year.

Alison Beyer Ostheimer, mother of two children under the age of ten years, said, "at first, our biggest hurdle in getting the kids outside was the weather. We managed to handle it by making sure they have the right clothing and gear for any kind of weather. There is a saying that goes, "there is no such thing as bad weather; just poor clothing choices", and that is true! Another challenge has been parenting fatigue. Some days, I'm just so tired and it'd be easier to just let them watch TV. But I know I need to set the right example, so on those days, even if we just sit outside and read a book, I consider that a win!"

Megan Cecil, the mom of three boys between ages three and seven years, said, "I have never had a problem getting my boys to

be outside. They love to be outside. If the weather is nice, they are always outside. My children are more peaceful and happiest in nature. They seem to be calmer and more grounded when they are outdoors, especially in the woods or near the creeks; they also get very creative in their play when they are outdoors."

Ostheimer said, "We decided to take a bold approach to get our kids to spend more time outdoors. We took away their tablets, reserving them only for long road trips, and we began to limit their TV time—including what they are allowed to watch. The best choice we made for our children was having TV-free Summers. We thought it would be a struggle, but it turned out to be much easier than we expected. Last year they had an amazing summer and every

morning they were eager to get outside and play!"

Both Cecil and Ostheimer reported better sleeping habits for their children after spending a day outdoors, "both of my kids are great sleepers now," said Ostheimer, "they're also in much better moods. We've found that when they had spent too much time on their tablets, they would get cranky. We've noticed a significant improvement in their health and wellbeing. Even in the winter, we get outside for at least an hour each day; the fresh air and vitamin D seem to have helped them avoid getting sick as much."

Hiking, playing in the woods, catching "critters" (lizards, bugs, worms...), sledding during the winter and gardening during the summer are favorite outdoor activities for

the Cecil and Ostheimer families.

Encouraging families to engage in outdoor activities together can be enjoyable and beneficial. Being present in the moment and being free from phones and social media fosters deeper connections with spouses and children. Cecil said, "it has been proven that connections with nature itself is so good for anxiety and depression, they build their confidence outdoors, they get creative, they can build their gross motor skills. The limits are endless outside."

When asked how to create more opportunities for children to play outside, both moms had firm ideas. Ostheimer said, "Limit screen time; allow boredom; create family challenges; establish routines and explore new places." Cecil suggested, "create events like kids

hiking groups (this can be as simple as grabbing a bunch of neighborhood kids and exploring the wooded or creeking areas nearby), being a part of an outdoor sport like baseball or soccer, outdoor survival skills training like in scouts and developing kids fishing and hunting teams." Cecil's husband, Zach, sometimes takes her two older boys fishing at one of the many creeks or off the marina dock at Doe Valley.

The Cecil and Ostheimer families both agree that there are potential dangers in too much screen time for children. Both strive to find a balance in their commitments to outdoor play yet still allow room for some screen time.

Cecil shared, "there are potential dangers of

**Trailblazing**  
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