

Shriners from A-1

traditions. This year, the festival’s 34th, was no exception, with the Olive Hill Welcome Center reporting visitors from Tennessee, Virginia, and Ohio over the weekend of the bluegrass festival, and their first visitors to sign the log book from Nebraska.

But while the show – which this year featured performances from Southridge, Tommy Webb, Dave Adkins, Lacy Creek, Hammertowne, the Lonesome River Band, Edgar Loudermilk, Kevin Prater, David Parmley, and Ralph Stanley II & the Clinch

Mountain Boys, among others – was a lot of good music, a lot of good fellowship, and a lot of good fun, the main reason for the festival is to do what the Shriners always do; support the medical needs of children in our communities.

Because while the show brings a lot of folks to town to support local businesses while appreciating our musical heritage, it’s also a fundraiser. And this year, according to Carter County Shrine Club President Harry Justice, it looks like the show brought

in more than \$6,000 to support the Shriners Children’s Hospitals. While that number isn’t final, and could potentially go up after all the income and late donations are tallied, and costs associated with the festival are calculated, Justice said the Shrine Club is happy for any support they can provide the hospitals.

“Everything that the Carter County Shrine Club does is in support of the Shriners Hospitals for Children,” Justice said, emphasizing that this is what the weekend is about for the organization.

“Our annual bluegrass festival is one of our biggest events, which promotes good fellowship, fun and entertainment for all,” he continued. “But, most of all, to collect money that we send to our two hospitals to help children in need.”

It takes a lot of work from the club to pull off the festival each year as well, but Justice said everyone considers it time well spent.

“It requires a lot of long hours and hard work from our members and ladies to accomplish all of this,”

Justice said. “But there is no better feeling than to know the purpose of all the tireless effort we in is in support for the countless children (the hospital serves) and knowing that all our work has a great impact for them and their families.”

It’s something that every member of the club – and the community that supports them – should be proud of, he said.

“The Carter County Shrine Club makes a big difference in those kids lives,” Justice said, “and we take a lot of pride in the

work we do.”

To make a donation to the club, or to get on the list as a sponsor for next year’s show, you can visit the Shriners Bluegrass Festival page online at shrinersbluegrassfestival.com/ and click on the contact tab for more information. Or visit them on Facebook at [facebook.com/ TheShrinersBluegrassFestival](https://facebook.com/TheShrinersBluegrassFestival).

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State gets \$14.4 million more in opioid settlement with 8 manufacturers

By Melissa Patrick
Kentucky Health News

Attorney General Russell Coleman announced July 14 that his office had secured \$14.4 million in additional settlement dollars from opioid manufacturers.

“These companies preyed on the people of Kentucky and profited off our pain. On behalf of the

families we serve, our office will continue holding them accountable,” Coleman said in a news release. “While these resources won’t fill the empty seats at Kentucky dinner tables, they will help fuel prevention, treatment and recovery efforts across our commonwealth and help save lives from the scourge of addiction.”

As part of the agree-

ment, the release says seven of the companies, Alygoen, Amneal, Apotex, Hikma, Mylan, Sun and Zydus are prohibited from promoting or marketing opioids and opioid products and making or selling any product that contains more than 40mg of oxycodone per pill. Those companies also will be required to create a monitoring and reporting

system that would flag suspicious orders.

In addition, an eighth company, Indivior, has agreed not to manufacture or sell opioid products for the next 10 years, but it will be able to continue marketing and selling medications to treat opioid use disorder.

Last month, Coleman announced that Kentucky surpassed more than

\$1 billion in settlement dollars, thanks to a \$73.1 million settlement with Purdue Pharma and the Sackler family. Earlier this year, Coleman also reached a \$110 million settlement with Kroger, according to the release.

The latest settlement of \$14.4 million is part of a larger, \$720 million nationwide settlement involving multiple attorneys’ general

offices.

In Kentucky, half the settlement money is being distributed among cities and counties, and the other half is controlled by the Opioid Abatement Advisory Commission, staffed by Coleman’s office.

Ambulance board discusses new hires, building, and vehicles

By Charles Romans
Carter County Times

The Carter County Ambulance Board met in a regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, July 21. Items discussed were monthly expenses, vehicle replacement, and the purchase of a new storage building.

“We have hired some people to cover some shifts,” Executive Director Tim Woods told the board in his report. Woods reported that employees were positive and appreciative of their recent pay raise

and longevity incentive.

Woods also reported that Engine 11 was back in service after being out of commission due to an accident involving a large rock at a local off-road park. The engine drove over a large rock in the entryway to the park causing damage to the undercarriage including the oil pan, transmission pan, steering link, catalytic converter, and exhaust. Insurance covered the repairs, and the vehicle will be sent to the alignment shop on Tuesday.

In the financial report,

income for the month of June was reported at \$305,569.47. That income was \$56,466.47 more than the budgeted income for the month and \$12,349.39 more than the same month of the previous year.

Expenses for the month of June 2025 were \$310,083.96. Those expenses were \$24,078.04 less than budgeted for the month and \$2,691.06 more than the same month the previous year. Payroll expenses consumed 71 percent of the income year to date.

Payroll expenses for

the month of June 2025 were \$245,977.31. Those expenses were \$4,022.69 less than budgeted for the month and \$20,930.88 more than the same month the previous year.

For the month of June 2025 unscheduled overtime was 1.86 percent, which was an increase from the previous month of 0.7 percent. The year to date percentage was 3.92 percent.

The board also discussed the cost of a proposed storage building and the concrete pad where it will be built. The cost of

the concrete was estimated at \$6,335 dollars, and the company Rocky Branch provided an estimate for the building itself. The estimate for a 12 by 36 building, with insulated floors, walls, and ceiling with a mini-split ac/heater came in at \$24,393. This included delivery.

The board did not decide to approve the estimates, but rather to open up a bidding process and choose a company at a later date.

The board did receive two sealed bids for the purchase of a new truck. One

bid was from Crestline, a company the board had purchased from previously, and a new company, Atlantic Emergency Solutions. Atlantic Emergency Solutions bid was for \$288,735 with a 15-month delivery date and the Crestline bid was for \$238,000 with a delivery date of January 2026. The board voted to approve the Crestline bid.

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Taking care of our elders

FIVCO guest speaker addresses senior concerns

By Charles Romans
Carter County Times

The FIVCO Area Development District met on Monday, July 21, and welcomed guest speaker Victoria Eldridge, Director of the Kentucky Department of Aging and Independent Living. Eldridge said that over the past five and a half years there have been a lot of opportunities to build partnerships that benefit people all over the Commonwealth.

“I’m very grateful for that opportunity and the great work we have been able to do,” Eldridge said.

“There was a lot of great conversations about a program called Grandparents raising Grandchild-

dren,” Eldridge said to FIVCO members. “It was a program that we were exploring bring back,” she continued. “The previous administration had some difficult budget decisions to make. And they made the decision to do away with that program.”

“What we recognize as part of Team Kentucky is that when we say y’all, we mean all y’all and we realize that many grandparents are stepping up to be parents again,” Eldridge said. “And we know how valuable this program is in this community. And so, I am happy to say that since this discussion here that program is back and is spreading all across our Commonwealth.”

Eldridge brought information with her, facts and figures that members could take with them, that were county based.

“What you will see is a county-by-county impact as far as the work that is going on in the Cabinet for Health and Human Ser-

vices. How many grandparents are being supported in your county. How many meals are going out in your county, how many participants are receiving SNAP services, and how many are receiving money through SNAP and how much of that is going into your local grocery stores.”

Eldridge said that was in addition to how many are receiving Medicaid and lots of other information.

“We can’t talk about Grandparents raising Grandchildren without discussing Pre-K on,” Eldridge said. “And we really appreciate the support you can provide by supporting Free Pre-K for All.”

“What we know is not only is the healthy youth the future,” she said, “but we also know that there are tremendous economic incentives, as well as workforce incentives, in ensuring that our youth have a place to go to receive Free Pre-K.”

Eldridge mentioned a wide variety of programs



Victoria Eldridge addresses FIVCO about programs to support senior citizens and children. (Photo by Charles Romans, Carter County Times)

and potential funding sources, and urged collaboration in taking advantage of what these programs had to offer each county and community. She also urged examining how the current programs are being administered for maximum effect. “How do you know the programs you are operating are operating well?” she asked.

“The department is taking a look at that from a quality perspective,” she said. “And from what I understand HHS (Health and Human Services) is

also looking at all the programs they are offering and asking states that question. How do we know that we are doing well with Grandparents raising Grandchildren and how do we know we are doing well with Senior Community Services?”

“So, I just ask you to ask yourself so that we can do the best with our federal and state tax dollars. And do the best to support our communities.”

Anyone interested in knowing more about what programs are available can

reach out to FIVCO on their website fivco.org.

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