

BOOKS: Officers learn about e-poll books

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sheriff and two judges.

Burnett said e-poll books will be used at all precincts during the General Election. “We have to ... we can’t put it off any longer,” she said. Pulaski County Board of Elections decided not to use e-poll books during the May primaries because the board was concerned about malfunctions. The county has only 82 e-poll books and the board wants two at each precinct; at total of 112 is needed.

The State Board of Elections is scheduled to meet at 10 a.m. August 20 and one of the items on the agenda is to consider Pulaski County’s request for additional e-poll books. The State Finance and Administration Cabinet awarded a contract for electronic poll books to Tenex Software Solutions, a Tampa, Florida-based company, for up to 5,500 e-poll books for the state’s 3,732 voting precincts.

E-poll books replace traditional roster

books, the book a voter signs when he or she enters a precinct to vote. Burnett assured a traditional roster book will still be at each precinct in case of a malfunction of the electronic devices.

Instead of signing a traditional roster book prior to voting, an electronic polling book will optically scan the code on the back of a voter’s driver’s license. From this identification, the e-poll book will search the more than 46,000 registered voters in the county and access voter-related information about the potential voter. It will show if the potential voter is properly registered, the precinct where registered to vote and if the voter is at the wrong precinct it will direct he or she to the proper voting place. It will also alert precinct officers if the voter has already voted at another precinct or by absentee ballot.

If a potential voter does not have a driver’s license, the precinct clerk will type the person’s name into

the e-poll book and it will scan the county’s voter registration list to determine if the potential voter is properly registered to vote.

E-poll books have been used at the Price and Somerset 3B precincts as tests during the last two elections and reports indicate voters like the equipment. “A lot of people have told me they love it,” Burnett said. The county clerk indicated she is not aware of any voter resistance to e-poll books.

“I hope Tenex (Software Solutions) sends some people down here to assist us during the General Election,” the county clerk remarked.

E-poll books do not affect how you vote with paper ballots and the electronic scanner into which you insert the ballot. E-poll books do not count votes. The new equipment only puts voter information at the precinct level, saving time normally spent by precinct officers calling the county clerk’s office to inquire about voters’ eligibility.

CHICKEN: Chick-fil-A coming to town

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Chick-fil-A, with more than 2,300 restaurants across the United States, is one of the most unique restaurant chains on the landscape, with a devoted following due not just to the actual food but for their way of doing business. Founded in 1946 in Atlanta, Ga., by S. Truett Cathy, a Southern Baptist (the name Chick-fil-A didn’t come about until 1967; it was originally called the Dwarf Grill, then Dwarf House), Chick-fil-A restaurants put an emphasis on friendly service and are closed on Sundays. They’ve also donated money to many youth-based and

charitable causes, some of which have made headlines for their political implications. The stated corporate purpose on the company’s website, www.chick-fil-a.com, reads, “To glorify God by being a faithful steward of all that is entrusted to us and to have a positive influence on all who come into contact with Chick-fil-A.”

Gulock, of Alton Blakley Honda, and the Somerset Independent Schools Board of Education, has working with a company called ATS Properties to bring something new to the empty space just south of The Center, originally 4.67 acres waiting to be developed.

Gulock said that there’s still “close to an acre-and-a-half” on the other side of where Chick-fil-A is being built that’s still available for sale. There’s not a buyer lined up yet — “Nobody close right now,” said Gulock, but the presence of Chick-fil-A next door may change that in a hurry.

“Now that that sign is up, it should be more attractive,” he said.

As for the sale that’s already been made, however, Gulock is pleased with the results.

“We’re tickled to death to have (Chick-fil-A) come to our community,” he said. “It’s a great restaurant to have here.”

HENDRICKS: Next court date is September 19

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Judge Jeffrey Burdette to reduce Hendricks’ bond from \$300,000 to \$5,000.

Assistant Commonwealth’s Attorney David Dalton argued against the reduction, pointing out that the three separate cases had “strikingly similar facts” in that the charges indicated someone who repeatedly terrorized women.

Simpson countered that the victims in the cases all had criminal charges in their backgrounds and may have used Hendricks as a way of appearing to be victims.

In the end, Judge Burdette decided against lowering the bond before setting

Hendricks’ next court appearance for September 19.

Of the three cases, those stemming from the February and May incidents came from a different active investigation currently underway by the Major Crimes Task Force, according to Lt. Bobby Jones, commander of the Pulaski County Sheriff’s Office’s Criminal Investigation Division.

Hendricks was arrested in June on a warrant connected to one of the incidents. According to the complaint filed by PCSO Sergeant John Hutchinson, Hendricks was at a residence on Cave Hill Road when an individual who lived there told Hendricks to kill

two women who were also at the residence at that time.

Hendricks is accused of driving the women to Rock Lick Creek Road, before forcing one woman to remove her clothing to check her and her property for a “wire.”

That woman was then allowed to leave the area on foot, while Hendricks reportedly took the other woman to his home on Shady Grove Church Road. While there, Hendricks is said to have forced her to have sexual intercourse.

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.

SPEDA: Partnership will prepare inmates for re-entering work force

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read field manual that includes models and battle-tested wisdom while teaching important interpersonal skills — communication, team-building, problem-solving, leadership and work ethic — vital to successful collaboration in the workplace. Most chapters include questions for consideration and suggestions for action.

Any inmate who completes the program is eligible to receive 30 days off his or her sentence. The hope is inmates are better equipped to re-enter the workforce and prosper, Girdler said.

Coker says his re-entry curriculum is built off a common theme: People who buy on emotion and justify with facts.

“Ex-offenders are not going to be hired based on the facts,” Coker said. “Employers are naturally and historically apprehensive about hiring someone with a criminal background. But, if an ex-offender can connect emotion-

ally and in a deep and visceral way, employers will find a way to make employment a possibility. We make these connections a reality.”

McCollum believes this re-entry program will serve as a model for other communities.

“People will look at Pulaski County and say, ‘They have it going in the right direction,’” McCollum said. “The Pulaski County Detention Center is honored to be a partner in this endeavor. We are committed to improving the workforce in Pulaski County and the lives of inmates.”

Girdler said SPEDA is actively looking for ways to integrate technical training and job search opportunities to inmates as well. Somerset Community College’s workforce development program will be involved in implementing these programs at the detention center in the future.

“I’m proud Somerset Community College is collaborating with SPEDA, the Pulaski County Detention Center and Greg Coker

Development to create a program in Pulaski County that helps minimize recidivism, provides both soft and technical skills training to incarcerated residents, and provides a new workforce source for our local community, business and industry,” said Carey Castle, president and CEO of SCC. “Education can be a gateway to social and economic mobility and education can improve outcomes from one generation to the next.”

Supporting programs like these is crucial to supporting the community, Girdler said.

“We owe it to society to help with inmate re-entry and helping to turn around the lives of our fellow citizens,” he said.

For more information about this or other workforce development initiatives in Somerset and Pulaski County, contact Girdler at chris@speda.org. For information about Coker’s Soft Skills Boot Camp, visit <https://gregcokerdevelopment.com/reentry/>.

GTL: Proposed plant would be located on historic Ferguson site

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after Edward Ferguson, a Cincinnati attorney instrumental in bringing the railroad’s main line through this area

Steam-powered train engines had limited range and needed complete servicing in a fully equipped rail yard. Every steam engine on the railroad was brought to the Shops for inspection and repair after 100,000 miles.

Two trends led to the decline of Ferguson Shops. First, the automobile replaced the passenger train as the favorite means of transportation. Even more impacting, diesel engines replaced big steam engines. Diesels could run from Cincinnati to Chattanooga without servicing, so Ferguson Shops was obsolete. Six hundred jobs fell to 400, then 200, then 100, then 50 and finally the yard

closed altogether in the late 1940s.

Light at the end of the tunnel was Lake Cumberland, impounded in late 1950 shortly after the Shops closed. The lake, a mecca for tourism, changed the economic climate of the area. Though demise of the Shops was an economic doomsday at the time, Norfolk Southern’s main line through Somerset remains, and long freight trains still haul much of the nation’s goods from north to south. Norfolk Southern a few years ago moved its crew-switching station from Danville to Pulaski County, constructing a hotel and restaurant to accommodate engineers and assistants.

The late James A. “Onion” Eastham, a former Somerset city councilor, worked at the Shops and talked several years ago about his experiences with

the railroad. Most former employees of the Shops would be at least in their late 80s or 90s, and none, if still around, is available for information.

The now-retired Martin Shearer, executive director of the former Somerset-Pulaski County Development Foundation, led excavation of the former Crane site to fill underground tunnels and walkways beneath the ground where the Shops was formerly located. The cavities had to be filled to create a solid foundation for possible new industrial complexes after Crane ceased operations. Crane Company manufactured domestic vitreous china.

Extiel-Advantage Somerset would be an appropriate tenant. The now-filled tunnels of the Shops is a solid foundation that would hold the new plant’s feet to the ground.



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