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The Newport Plain Talk

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COCKE COUNTY'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER SINCE 1900

CCSO investigating two deadly animal attacks

STAFF REPORTS

NEWPORT—The Cocke County Sheriff's Office is currently investigating two deadly animal attacks that occurred on Jimtown Road in Newport.

Reports show the first attack occurred on April 1 and resulted in the death of Tony Ahrens. A second attack occurred on July 12, which resulted in the death of Amber Miller.

An autopsy has been ordered for the most recent attack victim, but results are still pending.

"An autopsy is scheduled for Miller, but as of now,

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MATT WINTER

A ribbon cutting was held to celebrate the new StoryWalk in downtown Newport. The event also served as the kick off to the 100 Days of Summer Reading. Newport Mayor Roland "Trey" Dykes and County Mayor Crystal Ottinger presented a joint proclamation in honor the event. The StoryWalk will feature a different book each month, and parents and children can visit downtown businesses as they read the various pages.

Caitlyn Strange crowned Fairest of the Fair



MATT WINTER

The 2021 Fairest of the Fair pageant was held Saturday night at Southside Baptist Church in Newport. Caitlyn Strange was crowned Fairest of the Fair and received a \$1,000 scholarship sponsored by Newport Federal Bank. Strange is the daughter of Chad Strange and Charles and Jennifer Ruth.

Downtown StoryWalk encourages literacy and learning

BY **MATT WINTER**
NPT ASSISTANT EDITOR

NEWPORT—As you drive or walk through downtown Newport you may notice wooden story boards lining the sidewalk. These boards are part of the down-

town StoryWalk that hopes to create a fun learning activity for families.

The StoryWalk is a project created by Unify Cocke County. Each box contains specific pages of a book

SEE **STORYWALK**, PAGE 4A

CLB approves new contract with Friends Animal Shelter

BY **MATT WINTER**
NPT ASSISTANT EDITOR

COCKE COUNTY—The county has a new contract with the Friends Animal Shelter after operating on a month to month basis for the past year.

The new contract, which was

approved at Monday night's County Legislative Body meeting, will take effect immediately and run until June 30, 2021. Commissioners David Veridal and Forest Clevenger serve on the shelter board and acted as liaisons between the entity and county commission.

The new contract stipulates that

the shelter must take all animals from the county's Animal Control Officer (ACO). Shelter officials have asked for 24-hour notice from the AOC when possible, especially when delivering multiple animals.

Commissioner Norman Smith was

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Grant opportunities could bring new sidewalks, bicycle path to Parrottsville

BY **MATT WINTER**
NPT ASSISTANT EDITOR

PARROTTSVILLE—Commissioners for the town of Parrottsville recently met to discuss a plan that could bring new sidewalks, safer crosswalks and a bicycle path to the community.

Mayor Dewayne Daniel has been in discussions with Gresham Smith civil engineering company on the details of the plan. Commissioners heard from Drew Gaskins, planner with Gresham Smith, on what the new infrastructure could look like, and how it could be implemented in phases.

"The community response rate was good for our online survey and recommendations," Gaskins said. "We found recreation and leisure to be the top responses when asked about walking and biking. The three reasons people aren't doing that in the area involve concerns over traffic volume, dangerous road crossings

and lack of facilities."

Gaskins said that Parrott-Larue-Myers Park is seen as the center of the town by most Parrottsville residents. Gresham Smith's plans would revolve around connecting the park to other town destinations.

"The four key issues or opportunities to address would be enhanced connection to the elementary school and town, reinforcement of the park as the community center, create connections to local businesses like Dollar General, and improve bike and pedestrian crossings at North Ridge Estates, Dollar General, and Pizza Plus."

The plan would see new sections of sidewalk/mixed use path be constructed along State Route 35 (Old Highway 321) to connect downtown to the entrance of Parrottsville Elementary. The backside of the school would be connected to the park by a mixed use path for walking and bik-

ing. From the park, individuals could also walk or bike to Dollar General on the path.

The downtown area would see new bike lanes constructed along the existing sidewalk, and new sidewalk would be built along 340 to the Dollar General store.

The major intersections in the town would be improved as part of the overall plan to make things safer for pedestrians and cyclist. Commissioners hope to improve the intersection of 340 and 321 due to traffic volume. They are exploring the option of a traffic light with TDOT representatives.

Funding is always an issue for projects of this type, but Gaskins said grants are available through TDOT, the TN Department of Health and East Tennessee Development District.

Gresham Smith's three tier project

SEE **GRANT**, PAGE 4A



FILE PHOTO

Mayor Dewayne Daniel and town commissioners are applying for grants that could bring new infrastructure to Parrottsville. News sidewalks and mixed use paths could connect Parrottsville Elementary to downtown, as well as Parrott-Larue-Myers Park.

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