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COCKE COUNTY'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER SINCE 1900

Cocke County man indicted on First Degree Murder charge

STAFF REPORTS

COCKE COUNTY—A Cocke County man has been indicted on charges of First Degree Murder and Aggravated Assault.

Charles Lucas Jenkins faces the charges in the alleged murder of James Spence.

The incident that led to Spence's death occurred in late November 2020.

Documents show that a Cocke County Grand Jury found that Jenkins "did unlawfully, intentionally and with premeditation" kill Spence, and found that he "unlawfully, feloniously and knowingly caused serious bodily injury" resulting in Spence's death.

The Cocke County Sheriff's Office received a call from a "friend" of Spence who stated that Jenkins had allegedly struck Spence over the head with a steel pry bar during a physical altercation on November 23, 2020.

SEE INDICTED, PAGE 4A

Grand Jury hands down indictments

STAFF REPORTS

COCKE COUNTY—Members of the Cocke County Grand Jury reported a number of criminal charges at the end of June.

Arraignments for those accused by the Grand Jury will be held before Cocke County Circuit Court and Honorable Judge Carter Moore.

Here is a listing of those indicted by the grand jury. Court records do not identify persons by age, address or occupation and there may be other people

with the same or similar names.

Clinton Lee Baker, Jr., charged with one county of Vandalism over \$2,500 and one count of Theft over \$2,500.

Joseph James Barrett, charged with one count of Possession of Schedule I with intent to sell, one count of Sale of Schedule II, one count of Possession of Drug Paraphernalia, one count Driving on a Suspended License and Violation of Financial Responsibility Law. Jeremy Blagg,

charged with one count Simple Possession, one count of Unlawful Possession of a Weapon, one county Criminal Impersonation and one count of Possession of a Weapon with Altered Serial Number.

Billy Wayne Frazier, charged with one count of Kidnapping, Evading Arrest, Reckless Endangerment, Possession of Schedule I, Possession of Drug Paraphernalia, Driving on a Revoked License, Failure to Maintain Lane, Possession of Cocaine and Simple

Possession of Marijuana.

Matthew McKenzie Hart, charged with one county Driving Under the Influence, one count Driving on Revoked License, one county Reckless Driving and one count of Speeding.

Charles Timothy Hayes, one count of Violation of Sex Offender Registry.

Branden Lee James, charged with one count Driving on Suspended/Canceled/Revoked

SEE JURY, PAGE 4A

Small uptick in COVID cases as vaccine rates climb

STAFF REPORTS

COCKE COUNTY—After multiple weeks with under five active COVID cases, Cocke County is now reporting 13 cases as of July 12. Four new cases were reported for the day, bringing the county's total to 4,558.

One new fatality was reported, bringing the total to 101 COVID-related deaths in the county.

There have been 124 hospitalizations reported.

The county's vaccination rates are still slowly climbing, with 360 more doses of the vaccine administered over the last week. Those doses bring the county total to 27,288 doses administered, and push the county population above the 40% mark as far as residents with at least one dose.

Nearly 36.9% of the county is fully vaccinated.

The following is a list of surrounding counties showing their total COVID-19 count compared to active cases, as well as their population percentage that has received at least one dose versus percent fully

SEE COVID, PAGE 4A

WSCC to offer Kids College at Newport Center

NEWPORT—Walters State's Newport Center will offer the college's popular Kids College at the Newport Center. Classes will be held from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. July 19-21.



These classes are designed for rising fifth through eighth graders. For information, contact Dr. Nicole Cardwell-Hampton at Nicole.Cardwell-Hampton@ws.edu or 423-585-6756.

Kids College will be held from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. for fifth-eighth graders. The cost is

\$90 and includes three classes.

• 3-D, Nature, Cartoon and Animation will give students the chance to express themselves with new art techniques. Young artists will learn how shading and shadows expand an artist's capability. Students will try their hand at drawing animals and people. Students will also learn how to do cartoon, animation,

SEE WSCC, PAGE 4A

Five more contestants enter Fairest of the Fair competition

STAFF REPORTS

COCKE COUNTY—Five more young ladies have entered the Fairest of the Fair pageant that will be held Saturday, July 17 at 8 p.m.

Adison Russell, Kourtney Clevenger, Caroline Brawley, Emma Mullen and Carly Wines have joined Caitlyn Strange, each looking to take home the crown.

Each contestant will be vying for the title as well as a \$1,000 scholarship sponsored by Newport Federal Bank.

Adison Russell is the daughter of April Jenkins. She is 18-years-old and currently a freshman at Walters State Community College. Jenkins is pursuing a degree in occupational therapy.



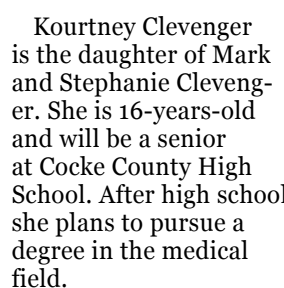
Adison Russell



Kourtney Clevenger



Caroline Brawley



Emma Mullen



Carly Wines

SEE CONTESTANTS, PAGE 4A

County to partner with Rulo Strategies to facilitate TN ROCS program

BY MATT WINTER
NPT ASSISTANT EDITOR

COCKE COUNTY—The Cocke County Budget Committee met Monday afternoon where they voted to approve a service operation agreement with Rulo Strategies.

The company will help facilitate the TN ROCS program developed by Judge Duane Slone.

The Tennessee Recovery Oriented Compliance Strategy

(TN-ROCS) Program is a court diversion strategy that serves justice-involved adults who have serious mental illness (SMI), mental illness (MI), co-occurring disorders (COD) or substance abuse disorders and who have low to medium risk factors for re-offending and medium to high needs for substance abuse and mental health services.

The TN ROCS project serves Tennessee's 4th Judicial District,

which includes Cocke, Sevier, Jefferson, and Grainger Counties. The program provides individuals with a high risk of overdose to appropriate, evidence based behavioral health treatment and recovery support.

Rulo Strategies will assist with the implementation of the TN ROCS evaluation and grant program, develop an evaluation

SEE ROCS, PAGE 4A

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INSIDE:

WEATHER

Obituaries.....2A
Records.....4A
Religion.....7A
Sports.....1B
Comics.....4B
Classifieds.....5B



TODAY

Partly Sunny
High 90, Low 68

3-Day Forecast, Page 4A

