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Stave company breaks ground on 220-job cooperage

By BRAD STACY
The Morehead News

Nearly 100 people gathered on KY 801 North Tuesday morning to witness the Independent Stave Company break ground for their Commonwealth Cooperage, expected to create 220 jobs with a \$66.5 million investment.

The groundbreaking celebrated the onset of the new cooperage's construction near the Morehead-Rowan County Airport at 201 Rodney Hitch Boulevard.

Using locally manufactured staves, Commonwealth Cooperage will produce white oak barrels for the bourbon and whiskey industries.

With construction complete, the cooperage will become the company's third in the state, joining its 500-employee Kentucky Cooperage in Lebanon and a used barrel cooperage in Louisville, which refurbishes and provides freshly dumped whiskey barrels to breweries and wineries.



Nearly every local official and statewide office holder was on hand Tuesday morning as the Independent Stave Company broke ground on a new cooperage with an expected investment of \$66 million that will produce about 220 jobs. (Photo by Brad Stacy)

In the last four years, ISC has opened two stave mills within the

state, Benton Wood Products in Marshall County and Morehead Wood Products off Cranston Road, a

See STAVE on A-10

Traffic stop leads to \$160,000 drug bust

By BRAD STACY
The Morehead News

Five men are facing drug charges after \$160,000 in illicit substances were seized in a multi-agency drug bust last Thursday.

Kentucky State Police (KSP) have reported that Trooper Kyler Wright made a traffic stop along I-64 and with help from Morehead Police's (MPD) K-9 unit were alerted that there might be illicit substances in the vehicle, state police reported.

Wright searched the vehicle and seized \$7,043, a gun and 95 grams of suspected heroin.

See BUST on A-10

Vicki Blakeman enters retirement

By DANEYL TACKETT
The Morehead News

The Citizens Bank celebrated the retirement of Vicki Blakeman, a customer representative of 29 years.

Blakeman started working at The Citizens Bank at 114 Main Street in 1990, where she stayed after feeling like she became part of a family there.

"Every new customer I've had, we started a new friendship," said Blakeman. "I wanted them to think of me as a friend, someone who would be there if they needed help."

From international students at Morehead State to lifelong residents of Rowan County, Blakeman treasured her job at the bank for being able to meet new people and grow close to other colleagues.

"You're just a number at a bigger bank," said Blakeman.

Blakeman said at The Citizens Bank, she felt like an individual with people she cared about and who cared about her.

Blakeman grew up in Morehead where she and her family are widely known. She attended MSU where she was a cheerleader and homecoming queen.

Her brother Scott Collins is Rowan County Senior High School baseball coach, and her late husband JB Blakeman was known around the community for always



Vicki Blakeman poses for photos for friends and family at her retirement party Friday at The Citizens Bank. (Photo by Daneyl Tackett)

wanting to give back.

In retirement, she plans to take things day by day, to enjoy the time she will get to spend reading and working out and to plan her youngest daughter Kennedy's wedding to Herold Chapman.

"I am so blessed to get to grow up

and get to stay and live in such a wonderful community," said Blakeman.

Daneyl Tackett can be reached at dtackett@themoreheadnews.com or by telephone at 784-4116.

Rowan school staff to get 1% raise

The Rowan County Board of Education unanimously approved a 1% pay increase for all teachers and staff members.

The salary increase will be effective July 1. The school board met May 21 to approve the budget for

the 2019-2020 school year. Supt. John Maxey noted that due to a strong budget, money was available to give staff members a raise.

"I want to personally thank each of our employees for their commitment to excellence and hard work,"

said Maxey.

Maxey also thanked the board members who supported his recommendation to implement a pay raise, saying that they have always been supportive of the staff members and recognize how hard they work.

See SOUP on A-10



TODAY'S OBITUARIES

Talmadge Barker, 51
Wyatt J. Slone, infant
Rhonda Stiddom, 64

Loren Gilbert, 64
Lewis Simmons, 87

Gladys Humphries, 96
Estill Harris, 86
Bethel Ison, 82

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