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County schools will open as planned

BY RACHEL DOVE
CITIZEN STAFF

INEZ — Martin County students will be back in the classroom Aug. 4 for what administrators are hoping will be the start of a typical school year — with face-to-face instruction five days a week. However, the

Masks required on bus, recommended in schools

recent spike in COVID-19 cases and Gov. Andy Beshear's recommendations on face masks have raised questions. Martin County Schools Superintendent Larry James said

that Martin and neighboring districts would stick with their original plans regarding face masks. "We will require all students to wear a mask while riding the

bus to and from school. The reason for that is the inability to maintain a 3-foot distance because of limited seating," explained James. "As of now, unless the governor makes an

official ruling and mandates that masks must be worn while in school, we do not require them." James recommends that all unvaccinated students and fac-

ulty wear face masks while inside classrooms, cafeterias, gymnasiums and anywhere else that social distancing may not be possible.

"We encourage everyone to do their part to stay safe and to keep others safe as well," he

See COUNTY, page 2A

Vaccine clinic Aug. 11

BY RACHEL DOVE
CITIZEN STAFF

INEZ — Martin County Health Department will conduct a Pfizer vaccine clinic Aug. 11 for all residents over age 12.

Director Steve Ward encourages residents to call the health department to have their names added to the list for the vaccine clinic. The number is 606-298-7752.

"Pure and simple, COVID is not going away; it's not going to give up and call it done," said Ward. "It is our responsibility to take the shots to protect not only ourselves but our family. If you fail to take the vaccine, it's really only a matter of time until you're exposed. If we don't do our part, we may find ourselves in a repeat session of what occurred in 2020."

Ward noted a substantial increase in positive cases in the

See VACCINE, page 5A



(See the Martin County School District bus route schedule on page 12 of this week's newspaper.)

Twelve families without water for seventeen days



Abraham and Cora Moore of Big Branch Road on Route 1439 are one of several families that have been without water for over two weeks. The couple also talked about problems with electricity service in their community. (Citizen photo by Roger Smith)

Electrical "blips" may have contributed to pump problems

BY RACHEL DOVE
CITIZEN STAFF

MEATHOUSE — Several families at the head of Meathouse on Route 1439 have not had water service for more than two weeks.

Residents of Big Branch, who live just across the Pike County line at the head of Meathouse, lost water service late July 12. As of Tuesday service was not restored.

Some of these families are elderly and others have small children. Their community is in an outlying area serviced by the Martin County Water District, where issues with

utility services run deeper than the water.

Cora and Abraham Moore have lived on Big Branch for over 30 years but are at the point that they are considering relocating, even though it would break their hearts to do so.

"This is home," said Cora. "We are surrounded by family and friends — and the thought of not having that close circle is heartbreaking. But we aren't getting any younger — both of us have health issues and we are too old to haul water and struggle with electric outages."

Kirk said he is thankful for

See TWELVE, page 7A



An Alliance Water Resources employee worked on the pump that supplies water to Meathouse and Big Branch Road customers on Route 1439. (Citizen photo by Rachel Dove)

Residents could get \$1,500

BY RACHEL DOVE
CITIZEN STAFF

INEZ — Martin County Fiscal Court held a public hearing Thursday on the 2021 Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus Response program, which the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development established to assist residents with utility bills.

Counties and cities can receive up to \$200,000 to assist residents affected by the coronavirus pandemic.

Households are eligible for up to \$250 per month for six

See RESIDENTS, page 3A



Sister Brendan Conlon

Christian Help founder passes

Sister Brendan remembered for mission in Tug Valley

BY RACHEL DOVE
CITIZEN STAFF

KERMIT, W.Va. — The community mourns the passing of Sister Brendan Conlon, founder of Christian Help Inc. Sister Brendan had experienced declining health over the past year and died peacefully July 16 at the Nazarene Home in Louisville. She was 93.

Not only was she the founder of Christian Help, but she was a devout Ursuline Sister for 75 years.

See CHRISTIAN, page 2A

EDA introduces new director, elects officers

BY RACHEL DOVE
CITIZEN STAFF

INEZ — The Martin County Economic Development Authority Board met July 21 and introduced the new director, Colby Kirk.

"We are thrilled to finally

have a director in place," remarked Board Member Kayla Jude. "Colby is a Martin County native who brings with him a tremendous amount of experience from his leadership role in Harlan County. We are so happy he has come home." Kirk said he is thankful for

the opportunity to be back in his home county.

"I have spent the last three years serving as the economic director in Harlan County — and addressed a lot of issues down there," said Kirk. "I'm ready to get started doing the same here in Martin County. I

hope to be a source of assistance for this organization and if I can be of assistance to any of you, just let me know. I look forward to working with this group."

The board elected James Ayers as the new chairperson. Ayers thanked Jude for her

commitment and work for the EDA over the last couple of months, saying she did a fine job and her efforts were appreciated.

"You have shown an impressive level of work ethics and

See EDA, page 3A

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DOCKET

FROM PAGE 4A

Operating on suspended/revo-
ked operator's license; li-
cense to be in possession; fail-
ure of non-owner operator to
maintain required insurance,
first: Failure to appear.

James R. Maynard (pretrial) —
Careless driving; no/expired
registration plate; no/expired
Kentucky registration receipt;
driving on DUI-suspended li-
cense, first offense: Failure to
appear.

Shawn Steven McGinnis
(pretrial) — Failure to wear seat
belt: Dismissed.

Jennifer E. Miller (pretrial) —
No/expired registration
plate; no/expired Kentucky re-
gistration receipt; failure to re-
gister transfer of motor vehicle;
failure of owner to maintain
required insurance/security,
first; no operator's/moped li-
cense: Reset 9/14/21 at 9 a.m.

Ike Montgomery (pretrial) —
Violations of Kentucky EPO/
DVO: Twelve months probated
two years, no new violations,
no direct or third-party contact
with Karen Montgomery, cost
waived due to jail service.

Jacquelyn R. Osborne (pre-
trial) — Public intoxication
controlled substance (excludes
alcohol): Set for jury trial 11/8/
21 at 10 a.m.

Jacquelyn R. Osborne (pre-
trial) — Operating motor ve-

hicle under influence of alco-
hol/substance, second; driving
on DUI-suspended license, first
offense: Set for jury trial 11/8/
21 at 10 a.m.

Clyde Emery Pack (pretrial) —
Drug paraphernalia-buy/
possession: Bench warrant
\$500 cash.

Christopher W. Ratliff (pre-
trial) — Operating on sus-
pended/revo- ked operator's li-
cense; failure to produce insur-
ance card; no/expired Kentucky
registration receipt; no/expired
registration plate; improper re-
gistration plate; failure to re-
gister transfer of motor vehicle:
Failure to appear.

Frank Rice (pretrial) — Oper-
ating motor vehicle sub-
stance, first; operating motor
vehicle under influence of alco-
hol, second: Reset 9/14/21 at
9 a.m.

Desiree Scott (pretrial) —
Operating on suspended/re-
vo- ked operator's license: Fail-
ure to appear.

Desiree Scott (pretrial) —
Operating on suspended/re-
vo- ked operator's license; no/
expired registration plate; no/
expired Kentucky registration
receipt; improper display of
registration plate; failure to pro-
duce insurance card; failure of
owner to maintain required in-
surance/security, first: Failure
to appear.

Kristin Stone (pretrial) —

Operating on suspended/re-
vo- ked operator's license: Reset
9/14/21 at 9 a.m.

Charles F. Stacy (pretrial) —
Public intoxication controlled
substance (excludes alcohol):
Pleaded guilty, one day to
serve, credit time served, cost
waived; 19-T-166 — 1. Dis-
missed; 2. \$200 fine, cost, loss
of license 30 days, defendant
has a South Carolina operator's
license, show cause 7/5/22.

Charles Franklin Stacy (pre-
trial) — Public intoxication
controlled substance (excludes
alcohol): Pleaded guilty, one
day to serve, credit time served
one day, cost waived.

Timothy Stacy (pretrial) —
Assault, fourth degree (minor
injury): Bench warrant \$5,000
cash, blanket bond with 21-F-
66.

James R. Ward (pretrial) —
1. \$25 fine; 2. \$500 fine, sus-
pended \$450, cost, show cause
1/4/22; 3. Dismissed.

James Ward (pretrial) — 1.
\$25 fine; 2. Dismissed; 3. \$50
fine cost, show cause 1/4/22;
4-5. Dismissed.

Minnie F. Huhn (other hear-
ing) — Operating motor ve-
hicle under influence of alco-
hol/drugs etc., 0.08, first of-
fense; failure to wear seat belt:
Court to take under advisement
and issue an order within 10
days.

Albert Joshua Deskins (other
hearing-wells hearing) — Oper-
ating motor vehicle under in-
fluence of alcohol/drugs etc.,
0.08, first offense; operating
motor vehicle under influence
of alcohol, 0.08, second of-
fense: Court to take under ad-
visement and issue an order
within 10 days.

Rodrick Caitlin Mollette (pre-
liminary hearing) — Tamper-
ing with physical evidence;
resisting arrest: Commonwealth
to proceed with Rocket Docket.

Cody R. Gullett (motion to
revoke probation) — Motion
granted, bench warrant, no
bond, must see judge.

Ike Montgomery (prelimi-
nary hearing) — 1. Stalking,
first degree; 2. Stalking, second
degree; 1. Amended to stalking,
second degree, pleaded guilty,
12 months, probated two years,
no contact with Karen Mont-
gomery or her co-workers, not
to be on victim's property; 2.
Pleaded guilty, 12 months pro-
bated two years, no contact
with Karen Montgomery or her
co-workers, not to be on
victim's property, concurrent.

Timothy Scott Stacy (pre-
liminary hearing) — Posses-
sion of controlled substance,
first degree, first offense (meth-
amphetamine); Bench warrant
\$5,000 cash, blanket bond in
both cases.

TWELVE

FROM FRONT PAGE

The Moores had to connect
to the public water system af-
ter a coal company ruined their
water well and those of their
neighbors.

"In a single day, our entire
community lost their water
wells," said Abraham Moore.
"In the blink of an eye, every-
thing changed."

The retired strip mine worker
said following the depletion of
their water supply, county and
coal company executives met
and agreed to install water lines
in their community. Abraham
said residents were told at that
time that the coal company
agreed to pay for the water line
installation and taps, and they
would receive free water for 10
years to compensate them for
the loss.

"They did pay for the tap and
the lines, but we have paid for
our water from day one," he
said. "It was more like they
were saying 'sorry about your
luck, you're on your own.' We
received no compensation for
losing our well."

Cora Moore said water is the
most essential utility, and she
struggles with the frequent out-
ages in her area.

"We have to depend on fam-
ily that live in other locations
to bring us water way more of-
ten than anyone realizes," she
said. "We have to keep a sup-
ply on hand because we don't
know from one day to the next
if we will have water."

Tony Sneed, director of op-
erations for Alliance Water
Resources, which manages the
Martin County Water District,
said the water outage started
with a power blip.

According to Sneed, work-
ers reset the pump and started
it, but the pump could not get
water over the hill to the Big
Branch area.

"The blow-off valve at the
top of the hill is broken," he
said.

Alliance ordered parts for the
pump and installed those last
week, but that did not solve the
issue.

On Friday, the company or-
dered a new pump and ex-
pected it to be delivered Tues-
day.

Sneed said Alliance had de-
livered several cases of water
to the residents multiple times
during the outage and would
continue to do so until service
is restored.

Big Branch resident Michael
Maynard said Tuesday that
he called the water depart-
ment for an update and the
pump did not arrive.

"They told me their manager
had been in touch with the
company where they ordered
the new pump and was told
they have shipped it, but the
delivery date has been pushed
back another day," said
Maynard.

Maynard said he doesn't
drink the water or use it for
cooking. The main uses for the
water from Martin County are
doing dishes, flushing the toi-
let and bathing.

As the water outage contin-
ues into week 3, so does the
frustration.

"Every day since it's been

off, we've been told it's in the
process of being fixed," Cora
Moore said. "They'll tell us
'later today,' or 'it will be to-
morrow,' but tomorrow never
happened. We could have
driven to California and picked
the new pump up that they or-
dered, and made the trip home
faster than they apparently can
have it shipped."

Cora Moore and her neigh-
bors are carrying water to flush
toilets, heating water to bathe
and wash dishes, taking laun-
dry to other locations, and de-
pending on donations of
bottled water for drinking and
cooking.

"I feel like I'm living back
in pioneer days instead of in the
year 2021," Cora Moore said.

As if dealing with frequent
water outages were not
enough, all residents of Route
1439, in both Martin and Pike
counties, are affected by elec-
tricity outages that, according
to Cora Moore, occur 8-10
times a month.

"We have a lot of issues with
our electricity. Every time we
get a good rain or the wind
picks up a little, we lose power.
When that happens, it kicks the
water pump and we also lose
water. Once the electricity is
back on, the water department
has to send someone up to re-
set the pump. It takes a while
for the pressure to build up be-

fore we ever see a drop. I was
told that the frequent blips
could be what burned the water
pump up, or at least dam-
aged it," she said. "A lot of
these blips aren't classified as
an outage because it comes
back on, but it's off just enough
to mess the pump up."

The Mountain Citizen
reached out Monday to Pike
County Judge-Executive Ray
Jones about the issues affect-
ing residents on Big Branch.

"First of all, I have not been
approached about these issues,
and I'm sorry to hear they are
deal with this. Next, I would
encourage them to reach out to
the utility companies to see if
they would address the situa-
tion and hopefully resolve it if
possible. If they get no satis-
faction from going that route,
they would need to file a for-
mal complaint with the PSC,"
said Jones.

These families also say they
have no option for internet/Wi-
Fi or cable service. Satellite
companies such as Direct TV
and DISH offer television for
those who can afford the ser-
vice. Cellphone service is
patchy at best.

Jones said that although it's
far from a measure of comfort,
this community is one of many
in outlying areas throughout
Pike County dealing with in-
ferior utility services.

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Flash Back

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Ed Daniels
is the winner of last
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He identified
Hubert
Presley, Jr.

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