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DANIEL WILLIAMS | P-I

Finger painting covers new dumpster for school

Daniel Rivera-Ocampo, 6, puts a painted hand on a new dumpster being decorated Tuesday afternoon just outside the Paris-Henry County Arts Council building on Fentress Street. Daniel was one of dozens of kids and community leaders who put a painted handprint on the dumpster, which is being deco-

rated to replace the dumpster at Rhea Elementary School. The project is a partnership between Leadership Henry County, The Levi Miles Foundation and the Arts Council. Painting was completed Tuesday and it'll be moved into place in time for a May 31 ribbon cutting scheduled for 11 a.m.

HCMC to interview CEO candidates

BY GLENN TANNER
POST-INTELLIGENCER

The Henry County Medical Center board of trustees plans to interview two candidates for chief executive officer Thursday.

The board agreed during its called meeting Monday to have videoconference interviews with the two candidates beginning at noon Thursday.

The two candidates were both submitted by B.E. Smith, a Kansas City, Kan.-based company specializing in medical leadership searches that has been helping with the job search.

The first of the 45-minute interviews will begin at noon, with the second starting at 1

p.m. Both interviews will take place in the hospital board room.

The board will ask each of the two candidates to present their case on how they would solve the hospital's current difficulties, including its financial problems. Each candidate will have 20 minutes for the presentation, with questions from the board to follow afterward.

Each board member, as well as interim CEO Brad Bloemer and interim Chief Nursing Officer Kim Bentley, will submit one question they feel is the most important for an incoming CEO to answer.

"I've only got one question," Bloemer said, "How are we going to turn things around financially? If they can't

answer that one, nothing else matters."

Prior to the vote, the board spoke remotely with River Meisinger from B.E. Smith, who discussed the available candidate pool from the national search.

As of Monday, 239 candidates had actively applied for the position. Of those, Meisinger explained, only 33 had met the criteria laid out by the board, including previous CEO experience.

Beyond that, the 33 candidates were deemed to be the right fit for the community, the right fit for timing and the right fit for family members.

The board had been set to review 10 resumé from that pool at Monday's meeting.

Instead, Meisinger explained, the company had culled the 33 candidates down to 9 through a multi-tier interview process.

"We find out whether the compensation was a good fit, their tenure and history," he said.

Of the nine candidates, only two were comfortable with being publicly identified as candidates. The remaining two, whom The Post-Intelligencer will not identify at this time, have both expressed enthusiasm for the post.

One candidate, based in the South, has a previous track record turning around facilities. The other, based in the Midwest, has a record of expanding hospital facilities.

Herman Jackson memorialized by commission

BY KEN WALKER
POST-INTELLIGENCER

The Henry County Commission took time Monday to remember former County Executive Herman Jackson, who died May 5 at age 92.

County Mayor John Penn Ridgeway read a proclamation honoring Jackson during the commission meeting and declared Monday as Herman Jackson Day in Henry County.

Ridgeway's father, Don, worked closely with Jackson when Don Ridgeway was a state representative.

'(He was) a consummate professional and a southern gentleman.'

John Penn Ridgeway
Henry County mayor

John Penn Ridgeway called Jackson "a consummate professional and a Southern gentleman."

"He probably never addressed this body (the commission) without having a tie on," said Ridgeway.

Jackson was county

executive (a position now known as county mayor) for 12 years, from 1986-98.

In other business Monday: Numerous budget amendments were approved, including the placement of a \$75,800 state grant for improvements to the Henry County Airport into the budget. The grant is specifically for a project involving development of the north hangar area.

The commission agreed to accept offers from the public on 10 different delinquent tax properties, ranging from \$500 to \$1,500. The parcels of property had been acquired by the county after taxes became delinquent on them. The county may then resell those properties so long as they are not sold "for an amount less than the total amount of the taxes, penalty, cost and interest accrued against such parcel."

Sheriff Josh Frey told the commissioners that the first graduation program for members of the Lifeskills class being taken by Henry County jail prisoners who have been in the work release program is set for Thursday.

Those inmates will graduate at 6 p.m. in the upstairs courtroom at the courthouse.

Man dies in local boating accident

A Gibson County man died Sunday while fishing in the Henry County portion of Kentucky Lake.

The body of Daniel E. Keeling, 60, was found Sunday afternoon, according to a statement by the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency.

According to the TWRA, officers responded to a call about an unoccupied boat on Kentucky Lake about 11:15 a.m. and found Keeling's bass boat near the West Sandy

portion of Kentucky Lake.

TWRA wildlife officials began a search for Keeling, and located the body a few hours later.

Keeling was not wearing a life jacket, the TWRA said. His death represents the 10th boating-related fatality on Tennessee waters this year.

Officers with the Henry County Sheriff's Department and the Paris-Henry County Rescue Squad assisted in the search.

Ray Lewis has enjoyed his musical 'hobby' since childhood

BY GLENN TANNER
POST-INTELLIGENCER

If you've been to the World's Biggest Fish Fry in the past few years, you've probably seen Ray Lewis.

By day, Lewis works for the water department for the Paris Board of Public Utilities. But on the weekends, he fronts the five-piece Ray Lewis Band.

The band has been a staple at numerous Henry County events in the past few years, including the Fish Fry's Kickoff Street Dance, Noon on the Square and the Tennessee River Jam.

Lewis, the band's guitarist

and lead vocalist, took time for a chat about how he got his start in the local music scene, and who inspired him as a young musician — starting with his father, Lloyd Lewis.

"He carried the mail down in Henry for almost 43 years," Ray Lewis said. "He's just like me, he did it on the side."

As Ray Lewis remembers it, there was always a guitar on a stand while he was growing up.

"My dad actually had a band before I was even born," he said. "I was kind of born into it, I guess."

The young Lewis tagged along while his father played, mostly at country dances and square dances in the early 1990s. Eventually, Lewis found his way into the band.

"I actually started playing drums when I was five years old," he said. "Then when I was 12, his drummer quit him. So I started playing drums with him. I was old enough then and I could keep up all night."

Lloyd Lewis took a break for a year or two. Then the younger Lewis formed his own band about 15 years ago. One of the first to sign up was his dad.

"When I was about 19, we started up the Ray Lewis Band and I started playing guitar," he said. "We did it three piece for a while — he played drums for me and then he went to a four-piece, and he moved over to guitar and keyboard."

Today the band consists of Ray Lewis on vocals and guitar; Lloyd Lewis on guitar, keyboards, banjo and mandolin; Steve Greer on drums; Betsy McClure on bass and her husband, Thomas McClure, on keyboard and organ.

"We're trying to play all we can but still have time for the family too. I've got an almost nine-year-old at the house and she still likes Dad," he said. "It's important to be home with the wife and the kids too, yeah."

When asked what his influences are, he lists his dad first, before going on to other artists like the Allman Brothers, Derek Trucks of the Tedeschi Trucks Band, Marcus King, Joe Bonamassa and Warren Hayes of Government Mule.

"Eric Clapton was always a big influence," he said. Lewis said he was lucky enough to see Clapton this winter in

Nashville. "He's still got it — it was a great show."

Lewis says he's happy with the balance he has between

work, family and music.

"The BPU pays the bills," he said. "They take care of me and my family. The music is a

hobby. It's a hobby that people hopefully won't ever get tired of, and I'm lucky to be able to do it."



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Ray Lewis of the Ray Lewis Band sings at the start of the 2022 World's Biggest Fish Fry

Kick-off Street Dance. More pictures of Lewis and the band appear on Page 12.

P-I FILE PHOTO

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