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MONROE COUNTY



THE CITIZEN

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Vetter announces candidacy

Special to the MONROE COUNTY CITIZEN

Hello Monroe County! My name is Branden Jon Vetter and I want to be your next Monroe County Circuit Court Clerk. I filed on the Republican ticket in December 2017 after receiving notice that I had passed the State required test to hold the Circuit Clerk position.



I came to Monroe County in 1974 when my mother, Carol Vetter, married Terry Dwain Hurt. We settled in the Persimmon community and I was raised on Kessler Ridge with my brother, Joshua Dwain Hurt. I attended Joe Harrison Carter Elementary and Tompkinsville High School before the Gamaliel Tigers and Tompkinsville Bears became the Monroe County Falcons in 1985. After graduating in May 1987 I entered the U.S. Navy in August of that same year.

See **VETTER** continued on page 8

Tigers purr about their success

By ANNE PYBURN CRAIG
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February's Monroe County Board of Education meeting was hosted by Gamaliel Elementary School, and young Tigers and their relatives turned out in droves to celebrate their successes and welcome their guests.

With colorful murals around every corner, just walking into the building is enough to lift one's mood, whether one is 8 or 88 -- as if one's mood weren't lifted already by the fresh country beauty of the drive from Tompkinsville to Gamaliel. And the beauty here is far more than skin deep.

See **TIGERS** continued on page 2



Students lined up to affirm their goals and collect their K-PREP trophies

Fiscal Court Commodities program taken over by court

By ANNE PYBURN CRAIG
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At a special called meeting of Monroe County Fiscal Court on Tuesday, February 6, magistrates voted swiftly and unanimously to assume control of the Commodities Supplemental Food Program, which had been managed for the past 16 years by Community OutReach. The program distributes USDA food products to income-qualified elders, pregnant women and young children in the community.

"I got a call from Melissa French of Feeding America/Kentucky's Heartland yesterday, and she was very adamant about Monroe County needing to take on oversight of and accountability for the program," County Judge Executive Tommy Willett told the court.

"We can't afford to lose that program," said Magistrate Mitchell Page. "Too many people rely on that food."

"I remember being out there helping unload on a bitter-cold snowy day," said Willett, "and thinking, 'Well, I guess today we'll see who really needs this.' They had 1007 orders on the truck, and only seven were left. If you run up on anyone saying we don't need this, they're wrong."

"I know some who struggle day to day, some old-

See **COMMODITIES** continued on page 5

Preparing students for the future

By ANNE PYBURN CRAIG
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If you're young and starting out, or the parent of someone who is, the question is huge: How do I make an independent and fulfilling life, keeping gas in the tank and food on the table doing something I can stand? How do I help my child get onto a productive and satisfying path?

For officials and educators in South Central Kentucky and beyond, the question is how to make that possible. Workforce development impacts everything from our local economies to our broader quality of life, health and environment. And students can't just be turned loose with a piece of paper in hand; there has to be a clear pathway to the world of work and

income.

"The big problem," says Butler County Judge Executive David Fields, "is that jobs and the required skill levels have changed and are still changing. A lot of what used to be available for entry-level workers has gone to other places. We are working with SOKY Jobs, an online organization that connects employers to people who need work. And our technology center does a wonderful job of getting students prepared."

Area technology centers located in Barren, Butler and Monroe counties offer students hands-on training in construction trades, health care and business starting in ninth grade and reach out to the community to give students a taste of the real thing.



KENTUCKY SECRETARY OF LABOR Derrick Ramsey has been proactive in his efforts to boost workforce development efforts. In recent months the former UK basketball player has spoken to high school students, industry leaders, and educators throughout the region. *Jobe Publishing file photo.*

"Any on-the-job or in-the-field training that students get prepares them to become a better employee," says Monroe Area Technology Center Principal Jerri Rowland, whose school serves Monroe and Metcalfe Counties.

"We have a donated Toyota in the auto shop and venipuncture arms for phlebotomy, but nothing compares to a real life setting that lets them see how things

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