

 Game Planner	PIKEVIEW <i>vs.</i>	MONTCALM <i>vs.</i>	GRAHAM <i>vs.</i>	
	WYOMING E. <i>at Wyoming East, 7:30 p.m.</i>	RIVER VIEW <i>at River View, 7:30 p.m.</i>	GRAYSON <i>at Grayson, 7 p.m.</i>	

Familiar face
 Volunteer enjoys seeing teens put talents to good use ...A-5



Princeton Times



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On a mission to kick out breast cancer

Annual exam reveals fateful diagnosis for Athens native

By **TAMMIE TOLER**
Princeton Times

PRINCETON — There are times when Kristen Harrison feels as if she's been fighting breast cancer for a million

years, but when she thinks back on it, the Athens native realizes it's only been a few months since the fateful diagnosis arrived, thanks to an annual exam that turned out to be anything but routine.

"It actually started in July," Kristen said, seated at a comfy table inside Sister's Coffeehouse, where she gathers with friends to discuss life's triumphs and challenges weekly. "I went for my

regular annual physical. I am a patient at Dr. Ryan Runyon's practice, and I see the physician's assistant, Lindsey Mills. She was just beginning the breast exam and hadn't even touched my breast yet, when she looked at me and said, 'Oh. I don't like the way that looks. Has that nipple always looked like that?'"

Kristen said she had also noticed some visible changes in her breasts during her own self-exams, but there weren't any palpable changes, even

when Mills conducted her professional exam. But, the visible change weighed heavily enough on the PA's mind that she referred Kristen for an immediate round of diagnostic screening tests at Bluefield Radiology.

"It's amazing how quickly it kind of comes in and takes over. I always thought that I was fairly well educated about breast cancer. I've had many friends who have dealt with cancer treatment and cancer scares, so I kind of thought I knew a lot about

breast cancer," Kristen said. "I thought I was fairly well-equipped. What I found out was that I didn't know anything. I knew to get my testing, but that was it, really."

Kristen endured a rather restless night before the testing, all the while, trying to tell herself not to get worked up about the possibility of more health concerns. Medical treatment is nothing new to her. She survived a terrible auto accident as a

Cancer, A-8



Photo by Jackie Puglisi

Making a difference...

Make a Difference Students at Melrose Elementary planted flowers outside of the school Monday afternoon as part of beautification efforts. Make a Difference Students are selected by teachers and classmates as an individual who is respectful, responsible and kind. Principal Ernestine Battlo said a stone will be added among the flowers that reads, 'Home of the Melrose Cardinals.' Pictured, Rosa Williams and Jocelynn Sanders remove potted flowers to be planted at Melrose Elementary.

Concord pool closure sends waves through the community

By **TAMMIE TOLER**
Princeton Times

ATHENS — A frustrated community is concerned that a local university's seemingly quick, quiet decision may wind up washing children's dreams down the drain of an empty, Olympic-sized swimming pool.

A pump malfunction reportedly left Concord University's administration and Board of Governors little choice other than to either replace the pump completely or close the campus swimming pool — which hosts practices and meets for both the Concord C-Lions community swim team and for the PikeView High School West Virginia Secondary Schools Activities Commission swim team. In addition, it was once the site of several Concord classes, including physical education, lifeguarding and even scuba-diving classes, and in recent years, was used to teach learn-to-swim courses for community children just learning how to stay safe in the water.

The pool, which was drained this week amid protests from community members and alumni who literally grew up in and around the facility, also served as a source of employment for approximately 12 Concord University students who

previously served as lifeguards at the pool and are now out of a job.

Brianna Farley was one of those lifeguards, who appreciated the fact that she could make a little money doing something she loved, without having to leave the campus where she studied.

"Around a dozen students who worked at the pool are just out of a job now," she said. "We didn't hardly get any forewarning. We're just kind of being left to fend for ourselves."

While emotional appeals pleading with Concord President Dr. Kendra Boggess and the Board of Governors to reconsider the decision to close and drain the pool have abounded this week, Boggess said the reasoning behind the decision was really quite sound and simple.

"In recent days, the pool has experienced some maintenance issues requiring the temporary closure of the facility," Boggess wrote in a media release issued late last week. "During these challenging budgetary times, we have also considered the ongoing operational costs, as well as the significant deferred maintenance associated with the continued operation of the

Pool, A-7

Elgood water project in final design stage

By **JACKIE PUGLISI**
Princeton Times

ELGOOD — An ongoing project that will bring public water service to the Elgood area is reaching the final design stage, and officials will soon focus on obtaining the remainder of the funds need to complete the project.

Project Manager/GIS Specialist of Region I Planning and Development Eric Combs said Wednesday that the project — totaling more than \$5 million — has received a

Small Cities Block Grant, a West Virginia Water contribution and a district contribution. Combs said they are still waiting on a loan and grant from the Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council, which is a state agency.

"All grant and public loan dollars have to go through them," Combs said.

He added the project is still in the stage of going through environmental clearance.

The project will bring public water to approximately 154

Elgood, A-3

Dark Carnival set to fright, entertain

By **JACKIE PUGLISI**
Princeton Times

ROCK — An abandoned amusement park rich in history is hosting guests every weekend in October for tours and spooky entertainment for the Dark Carnival event at Lake Shawnee.

This year's Dark Carnival will feature Lake Nightmare, a haunted house experience meant to "make nightmares a reality." The attraction includes a winding tour through dark corridors and a corn maze, complete with performers to add some fright.

Owner Chris White said each weekend the haunted

house will be a little different, so guests may come more than once and have a different experience.

Guests may also participate in a photo history tour that will include a walk through the property and storytelling about the abandoned amusement park. The tour is appropriate for all ages with no frightening elements involved. There is no age limit for the haunted house or photo history tour. White said he leaves it up to parents' discretion.

The attractions will take place every Friday and Saturday night in the

Carnival, A-7



Photo by Jackie Puglisi

Lake nightmare...
 Lake Shawnee's Dark Carnival attractions this month include a haunted house with the theme of taking nightmares and making them a reality.



Video online at ponline.net

1. Chick-fil-A ground breaking ceremony
2. Head Start 50 year celebration
3. All Together Arts grand finale
4. Music in the Square
5. Demolition on Mercer Street
6. Easter egg hunt at city park



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Pool...

Continued from A-1

pool. Therefore, until further notice, the Concord University Pool will be closed. During this time, we will be exploring additional opportunities to utilize the space to best serve our students, faculty and staff while staying true to the core mission of the university. Thank you in advance for your understanding and flexibility as we attempt to minimize the effect that this closure may have on our community.”

During a phone conversation Tuesday, Boggess confirmed that the pump problems were, indeed, the final break in the pool's prognosis, for now. She also confirmed that multiple private parties in the community had stepped forward over the weekend and offered to fund and/or install a new pump to get the pool functioning again.

But, from her perspective, the biggest problem with the pool is that it is 45 years old, requires significant upkeep and maintenance and has the potential to be a drain on an ever-shrinking state budget when student enrollment is not on an upswing.

She could not itemize the number of projects needed, or estimate their costs to bring the pool up to par.

“I probably can't give you a list. I'm not an expert in pools. I know for sure that we need a new deck. We need a lot of things. It's a 45-year-old pool, and any facility that age begins to have maintenance issues. There have been

issues with the whole building, because the pool sits there,” Boggess said.

She emphasized that the media release indicated the closure is “temporary.” “We are temporarily closing it, and we've closed it in the past, when we've had problems in the past,” Boggess said.

Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin has cut spending for state agencies each of the last two fiscal years, and Boggess said that since Concord is a state school, it also loses the same amount of funding as all other state agencies when the governor trims his budget. Recently, Tomblin announced another 4 percent cut, meaning that Concord must balance its budget with 4 percent less funding than it received last fiscal year and fewer students.

While the media release indicated that the school administrators and leaders would seek other uses for the pool space, Boggess said it's still too soon to look into those or even discuss the options.

“We really haven't looked at it, and we'd want to have a study at some point to determine that, but I really feel that it'll be used as a pool again at some point in the future,” she said. “Right now, we're concerned about other things here. The other things are things like roofs that leak. We're like every other school in the state. Our deferred maintenance issues are huge.”

While one of the biggest goals this week has been to “Save the C-Lions,” which is

the local USA Swimming Team and would serve as the training grounds for any Olympic hopeful in the area, the C-Lions and PVHS swim teams aren't the only athletes displaced by the closure of the CU pool. Anyone in the community who made use of the facility individually is also out in the cold, with fall in season and outdoor pools closed until at least Memorial Day.

Beth Sizemore is one of the swimmers who loved the CU pool as a student in the 1980s and came back to swim laps a couple of years ago when a serious talk with her doctor scared her back into the water.

“I was a competitive swimmer my whole life and stopped swimming when I was 19. In the next 20 years or so, I gained a lot of weight,” Sizemore said. “I have a thyroid condition, so I sort of had myself convinced I couldn't lose the weight.”

Then, in March 2013, when her lab work came back with some frightening results, her doctor sat her down for a serious one-on-one.

“My blood pressure was high. My blood sugar was borderline. My cholesterol was high,” Sizemore recalled. “She had told me this stuff before, but this time, it was different. I took her seriously.”

She met with a dietitian and started eating more healthfully. And, she got back into a swimming schedule at Concord, which had a pool right in her back yard.

“To make a long story short, I've lost 70 pounds, and I'm in better physical shape than

I've been since I've been an adult. Swimming has also done so much for me mentally. I'm an alumnus of Concord, and I'm a community member who used the pool. I was really impressed with them when they opened up the fitness center and the pool to the community and made it really like a community center. It was like a true partnership between the college and the community — sort of like they were throwing open the doors and saying they wanted to be true partners with us all. It meant a lot, and now we have this ... That pool is an incredibly valuable resource, and it just kills me to think of it not being there anymore.”

It was at the Concord pool and with the C-Lions where Debbie Croy finally found an activity that her little girl, troubled with asthma, could enjoy and use to strengthen her lungs.

“Finally, a sport in which my daughter could participate. She went from last place to often first place and competed on a national scale. While swimming, she no longer needed her inhalers or medications. This boosts a child's self-esteem to be able to participate in a team sport and set personal goals. Swimming promotes friendship as well as self-discipline,” Croy, a local nurse practitioner, wrote in an e-mail to the *Princeton Times* and to the Concord Board of Governors. “These children excelled in school as well.”

Croy pursued much of her education at Concord and has always taken the opportunity

to direct other students to “her” school.

Likewise, Mercer County Commissioner and Community Connections Executive Director Greg Puckett has acted similarly, finding much of his fate with the C-Lions.

“What can I say? The Concord [swim] team directed my entire life. When I first started swimming back in the late '70s, we couldn't swim outside yet with the Princeton Sharks, so we spent a month at Concord,” Puckett said. “Then, when the weather was better, we

migrated outside. When the team moved to Concord full-time, it truly gave me the direction my life should take. We had summer meets, winter meets, and more laps in that pool than I could count. When life was hard, my time in that pool let me think. I won there. I lost there. I decided to go to Concord BECAUSE of my time there.”

“This pool. This team. This university. This community. It is part of me.”

He urged the administration to rethink the decision to close the pool.

Carnival...

Continued from A-1

month of October. Gates open at 6 p.m. and the storytelling and haunted house attractions begin at 8 p.m. Gates will close at 11:45 p.m. Tickets are \$10 for Lake Nightmare and \$20 for the photo history tour. Combo tickets for both attractions are \$27. Tickets can be purchased at the gate or online at www.eventbrite.com/e/lake-shawnees-dark-carnival-2015-tickets-18584066443.

Along with spooky fun and storytelling, concessions and games will also entertain. White said a few non-profit organizations are set to offer Dark Carnival-themed games, but he is looking for more organizations to participate.

Also, the PikeView wrestling team will be selling hot apple cider.

For the weekend of Oct. 23-24 packaged tickets to Lake Shawnee's Dark Carnival and the Annual Ghost Walk of Historic Bramwell will be available for purchase at www.eventbrite.com/e/haunted-weekend-in-mercer-county-tickets-18577842828?aff=es2. The tickets will include admission to Lake Shawnee's Dark Carnival haunted house and photo history tour on Oct. 23 and the Bramwell Ghost Walk on Oct. 24. A portion of the ticket sales will benefit the Children's Home Society of West Virginia.

This is the second year for Lake Shawnee's Dark Carnival. Last year the park saw about 1,500 guests, some traveling from all across the country and as far as London and South

Africa. This year White has already seen a great turnout for opening weekend, which took place Oct. 2 and 3.

White said his favorite part about guests coming to the park is meeting travelers and locals who are experiencing Lake Shawnee for the first time. As for paranormal experiences, White said he doesn't often share his stories.

“I want to hear about what happens to [the guests] at Lake Shawnee,” he said.

White has been familiar with the Lake Shawnee property since his parents, Jewell and Gaylord White Sr., purchased the land in 1985. The family lived a mile from the property and spent a lot of time there fishing as well as clearing out the land that had become overgrown. In 1986 the family hosted their first event at Lake Shawnee, a Fourth of July celebration with bands and activities around the lake. They later held fishing

tournaments and mud bog events for four-wheelers.

While preparing for the first mud bog event, White said the family uncovered what they believed to be Indian burial grounds.

“We uncovered arrowheads and pottery and we stopped,” he said.

Archeological teams from Marshall University and Concord College were invited to the site and found skeletal remains and other artifacts.

White also shared the story of the Clay family, the first settlers of Mercer County. The family lived on the land that would later be known as Lake Shawnee. In 1785 while Mitchell Clay was hunting his children, Bartley, 17, and Tabitha, 8, were attacked and killed by Shawnee Indians. They abducted Mitchell's son Ezekiel, 16, and took him to an encampment near Chillicothe in the Ohio Territory. When Mitchell

found his son he had been burned at the stake. Ezekiel's body was retrieved and all three children were buried on the same land the park rests upon. A gravestone sits on the property where the children are believed to be buried.

Stories of tragic deaths are also part of Lake Shawnee's history. According to the park's website, more than six deaths are associated with the park, including those of several children.

For more information about Lake Shawnee or the Dark Carnival, visit their Facebook page, www.lake-shawneeevents.com or call 304-921-1580.

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