

Inside: Boys, girls basketball players of the week announced. **Page B1**

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Working together for a healthy community

Grant connects towns along U.S. Hwy 40

By TRAVIS WEIK

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Healthy Communities of Henry County continues to grow local trails, connecting towns the way the interurban lines did 100 years ago.

This summer, Healthy Communities of Henry County cleared the way for and constructed a quarter-mile crushed stone addition to the National Road Heritage Trail (NRHT) east of Dunreith.

Healthy Communities of Henry County (HCHC) has been a local nonprofit since 1993. The National Road Heritage Trail (NRHT) is rustic and tree lined with open fields and connects the three towns of Raysville, Dunreith and Lewisville.

"A gap in the NRHT has been filled and allows area citizens to use the trail instead of the highway shoulder, increased safety for trail users and users in nature



Photos provided

Healthy Communities of Henry County volunteers clear overgrowth to make way for a new section of trail in southern Henry County.

instead of US 40," said HCHC Trail Director Jeff Ray.

Since the National Road Heritage Trail opened in August 2009, HCHC has added parcels and developed rustic portions. Each section is now four miles long. The new quarter-mile addition fills a gap and connects to the open four miles

of the NRHT from County Road 225W to Lewisville.

"Dunreith citizens had been reluctant to use the NRHT going east or west since there was a one-mile gap between CR 225W and State Road 3 along U.S. 40," Ray said. "Trail users will now be able to use the NRHT off road, instead of detouring to US 40 and

CR 225 W for this quarter-mile."

In June, local contractor Evan Taylor, who had worked for the Raintree Trails System in the past, completed a 400-foot section of crushed stone trail east of Railroad Street in Dunreith.

See **HEALTHY**, page A9

Teen charged in relation to New Castle murder released from prison

Remainder of 8-year sentence suspended to formal probation

By COURIER-TIMES STAFF REPORT

A New Castle teenager charged in relation to a local murder case served about 19 months of his 8-year prison sentence before being released and placed on formal probation.

Adrian James Dukes, 17, was arrested Nov. 30, 2023 and originally charged with murder and unlawful transfer of a handgun as a weapon used to commit murder, documents filed in Henry Circuit Court 1 indicate.

The charges stem from a May 2, 2023 incident in which New Castle resident Ernest D. Thornsberry, Jr., 47, was shot and killed near the intersection of S. 21st Street and A Avenue.

Dukes' case was waived to adult court and a plea agreement was filed on his behalf April 16, 2024. Dukes pleaded guilty to unlawful transfer

of a handgun as a weapon used to commit murder, a Level 3 Felony. Per the terms of the plea agreement, the murder charge was dismissed. He was sentenced May 17, 2024, to 12 years in a Department of Correction juvenile facility, court records state. Four years of the sentence were suspended in place of formal probation.

Appeals court decision

On June 10, 2024, Dukes filed an appeal of his sentence with the Court of Appeals of Indiana.

The Court of Appeals affirmed the sentence imposed in Henry Circuit Court 1 in a memorandum decision issued Aug. 15.

"Turning to Dukes' character, we note that '[a] defendant's life and conduct are illustrative of his or her character,'" the memorandum said, noting that a pre-sentence investigation report revealed Dukes has had "significant contacts with law enforcement and the juvenile system."

See **UPDATE**, page A9

FIRST DAY HIKE



Photo provided by Hannah Burke

Sulphur Springs residents Hannah Burke (center) and her children, Ella, 14, and Hudson, 11, went on a "First Day Hike" Jan. 1 at Summit Lake State Park in New Castle. During the event, a variety of activity stations were available including New Year's resolution and coloring pages, along with button making and sock snowman building. Park goers could also hike the snowmen and friends scavenger hunt trail. For more information about Summit Lake and upcoming events, visit on.IN.gov/summitlakesp.

Henry County Amateur Radio Club participating in Winter Field Day

30-hour broadcast scheduled Jan. 24-25

By KATIE CLONTZ

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The Winter Field Day Association is hosting a 30-hour amateur radio broadcast at the Henry County Veterans Museum in Memorial Park. Members of the Henry County Amateur Radio Club will participate in the annual Winter Field Day event, which begins at 11 a.m. Jan. 24 and ends at 5 p.m. Jan. 25.

"This event is to practice emergency procedures and equipment and antenna setup including operation from a location other than our home stations," said Dave Peters, secretary/treasurer of the Henry County Amateur Radio Club. "We will be using a variety of commercial transceivers owned by separate club members. We will also be using a number of antennas

built by our members." Peters also serves as the Winter Field Day event coordinator.

"As part of the exercise, we will be exchanging our station call sign (W9OB in our case) as well as our location and class of operation," he said. "Our typical exchange would be, 'This is W9OB, 31, IN.' Our class is 3 Indoor because we will operate three simultaneous transmitters and be indoors. Our location is simply Indiana."

Peters said the Henry County club has been using the W9OB call sign since 2011, though the club itself was formed many years prior to being assigned the club call.

There are about 20 amateur radio operators who are Henry County club members. A few other individuals who don't belong to the club also participate in such events such as Winter Field Day.

See **RADIO**, page A9

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