



Hayes: College football is a mess – and untouchable

SPORTS, 11A

News Journal

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Football player treated for burns

Injury reportedly from doing bear crawls on track during practice

Mark Caudill
Mansfield News Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

LEXINGTON — A Lexington High School football player was treated at a local hospital June 11 after reportedly suffering burns on his hands caused by doing bear crawls on the track.

A nurse practitioner from Avita Health System in Ontario contacted police at 1:45 p.m. Thursday, according to a general offense report obtained by the News Journal through a public records request.

She told police that she was treating a juvenile who had been injured during conditioning. She reported the player

had "significant burns on his hands."

Bear crawls are bodyweight exercises that mimic the crawling movement of a quadruped.

Police made arrangements to get photos of the reported injuries and talk to the juvenile. Sgt. Eric Wendling has been assigned to the case.

Lt. Brett Neuenschwander said there

would no comment, citing the ongoing investigation.

Lexington Football Coach Andrew Saris did not respond to a request for comment.

In August 2024, similar allegations were made against Jim Steele, who then was a health and physical education teacher at Lexington High School, as well as an assistant football coach.

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Love Furnishings celebrates grand opening

Lou Whitmire
Mansfield News Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Love Furnishings, an enterprise of the Furniture Bank of Ohio, celebrated its grand opening at 113 W. Fourth St. on Jan. 11. Local leaders and members of the Richland County Area Chamber & Economic Development joined a crowd at the furniture thrift store.

Earlier, the News Journal reported that Pam Milligan, founder and executive director of the Furniture Bank at 775 Springmill St., told a crowded room that furniture is something that is always needed by people who have experienced crises, such as the homeless, people with mental illness, veterans in need and people leaving domestic violence situations.

Milligan's inspiration for the new thrift store came from What Goes 'Round Thrift Shoppe at 115 N. Main St., where all proceeds benefit Hospice of North Central Ohio. The new store at 113 W. Fourth St. is open to the public from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

Milligan said she plans to expand those hours and will have volunteers help staff the new store.

Milligan's first endeavor to help the community, the Furniture Bank of North Central Ohio, 775 Springmill St., offers gently used furniture and household items to people in need who are referred to them. It opened in 2024.

Milligan said the bank is not open to the public and its clients are referred by

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Love Furnishings, 113 W. Fourth St., opened Thursday, June 11, as a used furniture thrift store open to the public 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. LOU WHITMIRE/NEWS JOURNAL

Property tax cut extended

Zach Tuggle
Mansfield News Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Richland County commissioners have extended a 2.5% property tax exemption "indefinitely."

The tax exemption for owner-occupied homes affects 30,000 parcels throughout the county and equates to \$1.7 million in annual savings to taxpayers.

Commissioners first voted on the exemption in October 2025. It went into effect Jan. 1, 2026.

"We wanted to try it to see how it would work," Commissioner Cliff Mears said.

During a regular meeting June 11, county commissioners passed a resolution to continue the exemption "until further resolution of the board."

"This is a continuation," Commissioner Tony Very said. "Indefinite, we'll call it. Ongoing. It could be repealed at some point. I'm not saying it will or won't."

During their October meeting, commissioners approved the owner-occupied exemption allowing owners who live on their property to receive a 2.5% credit on qualified levies and property taxes for their primary residence.

The exemption was made legal through Ohio House Bill 96, the state operating budget, which "gave county commissioners the ability to provide

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