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County to adopt millage increase

Hike expected to generate \$2 million of \$4.2 million deficit in 2026 budget

By CONNER GOETZ
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HOLLIDAYSBURG — All three Blair County commissioners agreed on Friday morning to include a 0.25-mill increase in the 2026 budget to generate about \$2 million in new revenue to cover almost half of the projected \$4.2 million deficit.

After weeks of budget work sessions to trim down the initial deficit of about \$6.9 million, the commissioners cut about \$2.7 million in expense requests, including new uniforms for prison staff, ammunition for sheriff's deputies and building maintenance projects.

Finance Director Lindsay Dempsie projected the county will have about \$54.5 million in expenses and \$52.3 million in revenue in 2026, leaving a remaining deficit of \$2.2 million.

According to Dempsie, this shortfall will be filled using capital from the unassigned general fund balance of about \$16.5 million, not including further cost-cutting measures which may be imposed pending further discussion.

The additional 0.25 mills in property tax will raise the effective millage to 5.133, or \$513 for a property assessed at \$100,000.

That represents an additional tax burden of about \$24 per year, not counting millage imposed by local municipalities or school districts.

All three commissioners — Laura Burke, David Kessling and Amy Webster — were hesitant to raise taxes while potential areas of savings remain.

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Mirror photos by Patrick Waksmunski
Bishop Guilfoyle soccer players Kiera Ronan, Jenna Geishauser and Gabby Earnest (from left) take turns signing a poster to be carried during the team's send-off on Friday to the state final in Manchester.

Writing their own history

Bishop Guilfoyle Academy girls soccer team makes first ever state title appearance

By MICHAEL BOYTIM
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Regardless of the result of Saturday's PIAA Class 1A girls soccer championship game, Bishop Guilfoyle Academy has already made school and District 6 history by making it to the final for the first time.

"It's a tremendous achievement for us," Bishop Guilfoyle coach Joe DeLeo said. "We felt over the last couple years that we have had the teams to get this far. Whether it was a bad break or just not executing when we needed to, we had not been able to do it until this year. We're really happy for this opportunity."

Winning the championship against District 1 champion Faith Christian Academy might be harder than all the challenges it took to make it this far combined. The two squads will face off at Bobcat Stadium on the campus of Northeastern High School at 7 p.m.

Faith Christian has several top-tier players, including several international



Bishop Guilfoyle Academy girls soccer goalkeeper CeCe Rumfola (right) gets a squeeze from her mother, Stacy LoCastro, during the team's send-off on Friday to the state final in Manchester.

transfers from Spain. One of those, Paula Marti-Font, scored the only goal in a 1-0 victory over Dock Mennonite in the District 1 championship game. Dock had been the two-time defending PIAA champion and the blockade Faith Christian had struggled to get past.

"We had hoped to beat Dock last season, but fell short," Faith Christian coach Ben Sauers said. "It was absolutely

heartbreaking for us, but not defining for us. Sometimes our timeline is not God's timeline and our wants are not what is best for us in that moment — it requires faith and patience. This season, I believe God used the challenging games to build an unshakable belief in these girls that they can win."

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Unexpected phone call leads to lifelong friendship

Outdoor writer Shirley Grenoble remembered as 'pioneer for women'

By TERESA PATTERSON
For the Mirror

When I heard my friend Shirley Grenoble passed away, I cried. I cried in grief for the love I had for her, the memories shared but also, I cried in relief and happiness that she is now healed in the arms of our Lord and reunited with her son Mark.

When I was growing up, the only women I knew who hunted at the time were my mom, myself and this fascinating woman named Shirley Grenoble, who

wrote these amazing hunting stories. Back then, few women hunted. We used to joke and say, "we hunted before it was cool for women to hunt." Shirley was a true pioneer for women in the outdoor industry.

I met Shirley many years ago. One day, I got a call and on the other end of the line was Shirley Grenoble. I will not lie; I was a little star struck ... "Shirley Grenoble was calling ME?" She wanted to do a story on women who taught hunter education for the Pennsylvania Game Commission and she was told I was one of those women. I was, and of course, obliged. We met and talked and she got her story. But something more happened that day. We had a connection. Shirley stayed in con-

tact with me, and I did with her as well. We became friends.

We met one evening for dinner at a local restaurant, right before turkey season started that year. Shirley and I told many hunting and adventure stories and then began talking about our faith. We sat and talked about Jesus for hours. In fact, the waitress had to kindly ask us to leave because they needed to close. We laughed and, as we said our goodbyes, Shirley said that she could not hunt on opening day, but if I got a gobbler, I was to stop by her bookstore and show her. Lord willing, I did get a big ol' gobbler opening day and I did stop by in camo to her little bookstore in Hollidaysburg, The Booktique.

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Courtesy photo

Award-winning outdoor writer Shirley Grenoble was not only a pioneer in the outdoor industry for women, but for the sport of turkey hunting and hunting in general.

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