

‘IT’S IMPORTANT TO SHINE A LIGHT’



CHARLES WILBORN, REGISTER & BEE

Ryan Leaf, a former NFL player, laughs after a woman requested a selfie with him on stage Wednesday afternoon in Danville.

Ryan Leaf, former NFL star, brings story of downfall, recovery to Danville event

CHARLES WILBORN
Danville Register & Bee

When he was 22 years old, Ryan Leaf thought he was on top of the world. After all, he was the only person from Montana to be tapped in the first round of the NFL draft.

Growing up, no one thought he had a chance of landing in professional football. He proved them wrong. But in a sense, that later led to his downfall.

After personal struggles spilled over into his professional play, he bowed out.

Developing an addiction to pain medicine, he turned to stealing to get his hands on his pills. It eventually landed him in

prison for about three years.

Now he openly talks about his life. On Wednesday, he was in Danville as the keynote speaker for the Regional Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention’s annual summer conference.

The Danville-based group — simply branded as RASAP — hosted the event with a theme of “Support Over Stigma: Advancing Drug Misuse Prevention Together” at the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research.

Other speakers touched on topics like the cannabis market in Virginia, the link of addiction and the brain, and a coalition for harm reduction, which sets guiding safety

practices when it’s not always possible to curtail drug use.

But Leaf was the main attraction.

When introducing him, Bryan Price, the vice president of RASAP, admitted he was in “geek mode.”

As a football fan, Price remembers the 1998 draft and the talk about which player was better: Leaf or Peyton Manning, another NFL star who played for 18 years.

“So to have the person they were asking that question about standing right over there, I’m geeking out just a little bit,” Price said.

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PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY

Vendor to detail process of comprehensive plan

CHARLES WILBORN
Danville Register & Bee

CHATHAM — The process to revamp Pittsylvania County’s comprehensive plan hit a small scheduling detour earlier this month but will get back on track in September.

It was initially anticipated that the county’s board of supervisors would vote on awarding a contract for a vendor to put together the new document, which is a 20-year vision for a locality, at last week’s meeting.

However, before that Aug. 19 session, leaders announced the issue wouldn’t be discussed this month, citing a “high level of interest” from residents.

Instead, a public hearing is scheduled for the Sept. 16 meeting. That’s when the vendor — Line and Grade — is scheduled to give a presentation of what’s involved in developing a comprehensive plan.

That’s when residents will be able to weigh in with their thoughts. The board is expected to award the contract later in September or early October.

Pittsylvania County has budgeted about \$300,000 for a consulting firm to craft a new comprehensive plan over an 18-month period, Dave Arnold, deputy county administrator, told the Register & Bee in a July interview.

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CHARLES WILBORN, REGISTER & BEE

Tracy Love addresses the Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors on Aug. 19. Love suggested more town hall meetings to better engage residents.