

# First responders honored for service to community



Irvine Mayor W.J. Noland speaks during the ceremony for police officers on Saturday. Also pictured are Ravenna Mayor Estine Tipton and Pastor Bill Wesley. The mayors and former mayors were also honored by the Body of Christ where Wesley is the pastor.

## Police Activity Log

An Estill County man was arrested for possession of a drug on November 30. According to the citation, troopers went to the residence of Thomas Raider, 28, on JR Furniture Road to serve a warrant.

The citation adds that upon arrival, Trooper Robinson saw someone run back inside the house and heard the door slam.

Trooper Z. Pennington walked to the back door where he saw Raider coming down the stairs. He said he told Raider to stop and come straight to the door. However, the citation states that Raider did not stop and started into a bedroom. Trooper Pennington said he opened the door and apprehended Raider.

During the search, Trooper Pennington said he found a straw used to ingest illegal drugs and a small baggie of a clear crystal substance, methamphetamine.

Raider was charged with possession of a controlled substance, first degree and first offense (methamphetamine) and drug paraphernalia buy/possess.

His bail was set at \$10,000 cash.

- An arrest warrant was served on a former Estill County resident by the Madison County Sheriff's Dept. on Nov. 26.

Inga Weddington, 46, formerly of Trotting Ridge Road, is now living in Berea.

Weddington was arrested on a warrant obtained by Emma Wireman of the Kentucky Division of Unemployment.

The warrant claims that Weddington drew unemployment benefits while working between Nov. 24, 2012 and Dec. 29, 2012. The amount of the benefits allegedly overpaid is \$1,122.00.

The offense is a Class D felony, punishable by one to five years in prison.

Weddington was released on a \$5,000 surety bond.

- An Irvine man turned himself in December 1 after allegedly leaving the scene of a two vehicle collision at the intersection of Richmond and Dark Hollow Roads.

Deputy Daniel Smith said he was told at the

wreck scene, one of the vehicles was driven through a ditch line and parked at Wendy's parking lot. Two occupants ran from the scene.

Later that day, Deputy Smith said that Christopher L. Stone, 31, of Noland Court, Irvine went to Estill Dispatch and requested to speak to an officer. Stone reportedly told the deputy that he was the driver of the car.

Stone was charged with leaving the scene of an accident (failing to render aid), driving on a suspended license, and possession of an open alcohol container in a vehicle.

- On November 30, Donald Fields, 55, of Sugar Hollow Road was arrested for his third or greater offense of public intoxication.

Deputy Smith was dispatched to Sugar Hollow in reference to a man yelling, throwing things, knocking on peoples' doors, and screaming.

When he arrived, he found Fields wearing a tank top and shorts. He said Field was asleep and difficult to wake up.

**Continued from Page 1**

"There's a bear! There's a bear!" Brooks told the lady.

When he finally got up his courage to see if the bear was still behind the house, he ran into one of the prettiest calves he had ever seen. He added the lady didn't call him anymore to investigate a burglary.

"We all have good stories," Brooks added.

Gov. Matt Bevin was invited to speak at Saturday's event, but was unable to attend. Instead, Jessica Gross Lee, an administrative assistant with the Department of Local Governments, read a letter of Best Wishes sent by Gov. Bevin to the first responders.

"From the Governor's office, thank you to every one of you," Lee stated.

Her father, James Gross, retired from the Ravenna Police Department as a School Resource Officer this past summer after 38 years of police work. He was a former Irvine office and police chief. He also worked for the sheriff's office.

Lee's husband, Joseph, is a former Irvine Police officer, and her brother, Michael Gross, resigned from the Irvine Police Department to fill his father's shoes as a School Resource Officer.

"I always considered myself their biggest cheerleader, but I could not do what they do," said former Irvine Mayor Ernest Lee Farmer.

Gifts were presented to the first responders after they were served a meal. Fazoli's had donated spaghetti, salads and bread sticks. Ale-8 and Pepsi donated soft drinks. There were also pizzas available.

Wesley said officers had to have their donuts, which they all joked about. Some loaded down their plates with donuts iced in bright colors while others avoided them entirely.

After lunch, the first responders were presented with gifts which had been donated. Many of them received vacation packages to the Smokey Mountains and Gatlinburg.

Names were placed in a drawing for a weapon, and it went to Trooper Nick Brumback, who just started his career here in Estill County. His parents once lived in Ravenna. His father, Randy, was a fish and wildlife officer, and his mother served on the Ravenna City Council.

Trooper Brumback had received a smaller prize earlier, and he donated it back to go to someone else.



The youth from Bethel Christian Church had a float in the Irvine Ravenna Kiwanis Club Parade on Saturday. They showed "The Reason for the Season."



Girl Scout Troop #7182 had a float in the parade on Saturday morning.

# EKU Regents Approve Changes in Academic Programs

In a strategic move designed to focus on key student success initiatives and better position the institution for future success in a rapidly changing higher education landscape, the Eastern Kentucky University Board of Regents has approved several changes in academic programs.

The Board, meeting in special session on Monday, Dec. 5, earmarked several academic programs for redesign to be more efficient and marketable, and other programs for suspension. In all cases, the decisions were based on enrollment and graduation numbers, among other factors, and followed almost a year of discussions and review.

The EKU Vision for 2020 Strategic Plan specifically outlines strategies to strengthen academic programs, including ongoing academic review. As outlined in the Strategic Plan, program review seeks to:

- ensure relevance of all academic programs.
- financially invest in and promote nationally recognized programs that attract students to EKU.
- increase capacity in existing programs identified as having high demand.

"It is a fact that the changes to state funding (cuts in

appropriations and yet-to-be-finalized performance-based metrics) brought new urgency to the need for the program review," said Craig Turner, chair of the Board of Regents. "If we cannot recruit, retain and graduate students from our programs and offer needed support, we will not survive under the new performance-based funding."

In his remarks, EKU President Michael Benson said the University's "deliberative and participatory" review process focused on the "four fundamental pillars" of EKU's Strategic Plan: academic distinction and excellence, student success and student experience, service to the region and campus revitalization.

"All of this was to be accomplished with an unrelenting commitment to sound financial management and being responsible stewards of the state's investment in us as a public institution. We have endeavored to be transparent and communicative throughout and will continue to do so as we move forward. I thank the Board for its trust in us as a leadership team and thank my colleagues for their willingness to make hard decisions in an effort to move the University forward and to place us in

a position where we can be successful now and into the future."

Although the University will continue to offer courses in the following disciplines, the Board approved suspension of these degree programs:

- B.A. and minor in Comparative Humanities
- B.A. in English/Theatre Concentration (The theatre minor will be retained, and two theatre certificates established. EKU Theatre public performances will continue, though maybe fewer in number.)
- B.A. in English, Theatre Teaching
- B.A. and minor in French
- B.A. in French Teaching
- MBA Concentration in Accounting
- MBA Concentration in Integrated Communication
- Associate of Applied Science, Science for Engineering

The approximately 160 students now enrolled in those degree programs will be able to complete their degrees.

"Our curriculum is dynamic, based on student demand and market demand," said Provost Dr. Janna Vice. "It is not uncommon for the University to suspend pro-

grams, as a result of continual review. We want to be able to continue investing in successful programs for which we know there is a demand."

The Board also approved a redesign of the following programs in order to help them become more marketable:

- B.S. and minor in Horticulture (degree to become a Concentration in Agriculture)
- B.A. and minor in Journalism (degree to become a Concentration in Broadcast and Electronic Media). The Eastern Progress, a student-produced weekly campus newspaper, will continue to be published.
- B.A. and minor in Geography (degree to be converted to a degree in Geographic Information Systems)

The Regents said the following programs would be retained, but with a cost reduction by Spring 2017:

- Minor in Religion
- Minor in Social Intelligence and Leadership Studies
- B.A., Technical Writing Concentration in English

Also, a minor in Applied Ethics will be retained and re-evaluated in 2018.

In all, the changes will result in a savings of approximately \$615,000, but

will not result in the loss of any tenured faculty. When possible, faculty from suspended programs will be re-assigned.

Dr. Tom Oteino, interim dean of the College of Science, said he was "struck by the willingness of all the players at the department, college and university levels to work collaboratively. We talked candidly and shared ideas and information, we were patient with one another, we considered each other's perspective thoughtfully, and we worked hard together. Consequently, we were able to arrive at creative solutions to very challenging issues. For example, rather than close the Geography program, the department has the opportunity to redesign the program and offer a degree in Geographic Information Systems instead, an area with demonstrable demand."

The University is facing a \$11.1 million budget shortfall for 2017-18, which includes a 4.5 percent (\$3.1 million) cut in state appropriations, as well as a \$2.7 million increase in contributions to the Kentucky Employees Retirement System, an increase of \$1 million due to changes in the federal Fair Labor Standards Act, \$2.8 million increase

in scholarships, and a \$1.5 million increase in fixed and unavoidable costs. The Board also approved a \$2 million reserve for strategic investment in response to performance-based funding measures, bringing the total to \$13.1 million.

Already, the administration has taken actions touching every area of the University to reduce the total recurring budget impact to approximately \$9 million. An Enhanced Retirement Transition Program (ERTP), announced earlier this fall, will continue through the Spring 2017 semester. The ERTP, along with other retirements and attrition, is expected to generate savings of \$2.4 million. Additionally, the Board approved an operational savings goal of \$1.5 million and an increased revenue goal of \$2.6 million. In total, actions approved today reduced the total remaining budget impact to \$2 million.

"We have to be good stewards of the investments in EKU," Turner said. "Whether it is state funding, tuition dollars or a donor's gift, all deserve a return on their investment."

Eastern continues to provide the second largest number of program offerings among all Kentucky regional universities.