



RYNE is FLYING
Rowan junior fifth-leading scorer in region at 19 per game / PAGE B1

ASHLAND JR. GUARD ROBINSON MAKES VERBAL COMMITMENT TO COLORADO SPORTS, PAGE B1

Former principal, coach sues

Action against Carter district alleges wrongful termination

By **KENNETH HART**
The Independent

GRAYSON A former Carter County high school principal and basketball coach has filed a lawsuit

against the school system in which he alleges he was wrongfully terminated.

In the suit, filed Monday in Carter Circuit Court, Jim Webb claims he was let go from his posi-

tion as the district's maintenance director last spring because of age discrimination, and that his firing was done in violation of the Kentucky Civil Rights Act.

The suit names as defendant

Carter School Superintendent Ronnie Dotson and the board of education. It seeks unspecified compensatory and punitive damages, court costs and attorney fees, a jury trial and a court order di-

recting the district to reinstate Webb.

According to the suit, Webb — a former principal and boys' bas-

See **WEBB** / Page A10

Water main break causes problems

Much of Ashland, Westwood dry



TOM WORDEN / FOR THE INDEPENDENT

Crews were working on a major water main break on 25th Street and Carter Avenue Monday evening.

By **MARK MAYNARD**
The Independent

ASHLAND Word began spreading rather quickly on social media about 6:30 on Monday night about a lack

of water in Ashland.

A major water main break on 25th Street and Carter Avenue was the culprit, leaving much of South Ashland and the downtown areas, along with

some in Westwood, without even a drip of water.

Roads were closed at the 2500 block of Winchester Avenue, Greenup Avenue and Carter Avenue because of the ice on the roads.

Crews were working through the night on the problem, according to public works director Ryan Eastwood.

See **WATER** / Page A10

Holy Family planning high school

Operation would be strictly college prep; ACTC dual-credit options discussed

By **MIKE JAMES**
The Independent

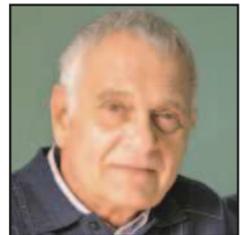
ASHLAND Holy Family School is planning to go back into the high school business 28 years after its last class graduated.

The school will be a strictly college-preparatory operation, and Holy Family is in preliminary talks with Ashland Community and Technical College to offer dual-credit classes.

Students would take their freshman and sophomore classes at Holy Family and then spend their junior and senior years on the ACTC campus taking regular college courses.

Upon completion, they would be eligible for both high school graduation from Holy Family, and two-year associates' degrees from ACTC.

The Ashland Catholic school's board has been



GOWIN



ANDERSON

planning the school since last fall, and hopes to be ready to enroll the first high school students this fall, said interim principal

See **SCHOOL** / Page A10

Whitlatch pledges greater health care cooperation

New KDMC CEO: Partnerships part of maximizing services to community



WHITLATCH

By **KENNETH HART**
The Independent

ASHLAND King's Daughters Medical Center's new president and CEO on Monday said she intended for the hospital to work more cooperatively with other area health care providers than it had for the previous few years.

"They're still our competitors," Kristie Whitlatch said in a speech to the Ashland Rotary Club. "But, when we can help make it possible for people to stay in the community for treatment, I think we should. One way we can do this is by creating partnerships so that we can maximize services to our community."

To that end, the hospital announced several hours after Whitlatch's speech that it was withdrawing its opposition to a certificate of need for angioplasty at Our Lady of Bellefonte Hospital.

The CON application for emergency and elective angioplasty was submitted to

See **WHITLATCH** / Page A10

Cold closes bridge again

Ironton-Russell span shut down for second time in less than month

Staff report

IRONTON With another polar vortex bringing sub-zero temperatures to the area, the Ironton-Russell Bridge will be closed to traffic for the second time this month.

Monday's forecast was

calling for an overnight low temperature in Ironton between one and five degrees below zero. As such, crews from the Ohio Department of Transportation's Lawrence County highway maintenance

See **BRIDGE** / Page A10

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TODAY'S WEATHER
 HIGH 15
 LOW 2
 FULL FORECAST, PAGE A10



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KENTUCKY'S POWERBALL \$171 MILLION

DRAWINGS WED & SAT

AccuWeather.com Weather Report for Ashland

FIVE-DAY FORECAST FOR ASHLAND

TODAY	TONIGHT	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
COLD 15° Frigid with partial sunshine	COLD 2° A star-studded sky and very cold	COLD 22° / 10° Mostly sunny and quite cold	COLD 39° / 25° Some sun, then clouds; not as cold	COLD 42° / 30° Mostly cloudy	COLD 47° / 31° Cloudy with a shower possible
RealFeel: 21°	RealFeel: 5°	RealFeel: 27° / 10°	RealFeel: 38° / 20°	RealFeel: 42° / 30°	RealFeel: 44° / 32°

The patented **AccuWeather.com RealFeel Temperature** is an exclusive index that combines the effects of temperature, wind, humidity, sunshine intensity, cloudiness, precipitation, pressure and elevation on the human body — everything that affects how warm or cold a person feels. Shown are the highest and lowest values for each day.

ALMANAC

Huntington, WV through 4 p.m. yesterday

Temperature

High/Low yesterday 48° / 19°
Normal high/low 43° / 25°
Record high 71° (1999)
Record low -5° (1936)

Precipitation

24 hours ending 4 p.m. Trace
Month to date 2.30"
Normal month to date 2.56"
Year to date 2.30"
Last year to date 2.83"
Normal year to date 2.56"

RIVER & LAKE LEVELS

In feet as of 7 a.m. yesterday

Flood Stage	Level
Ohio River	52
Ashland	35.04

UV INDEX TODAY

The higher the **AccuWeather.com UV Index™** number, the greater the need for skin and eye protection.

10 a.m.	2 (Low)
Noon	2 (Low)
2 p.m.	2 (Low)
4 p.m.	0 (Low)

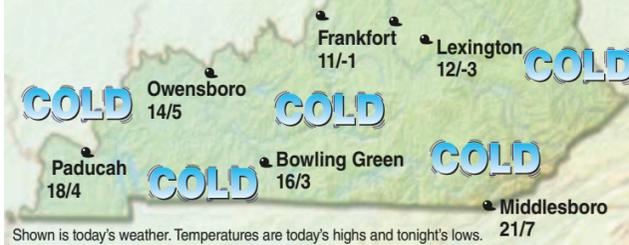
SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today 7:39 a.m.
Sunset tonight 5:48 p.m.
Moonrise today 5:19 a.m.
Moonset today 3:37 p.m.

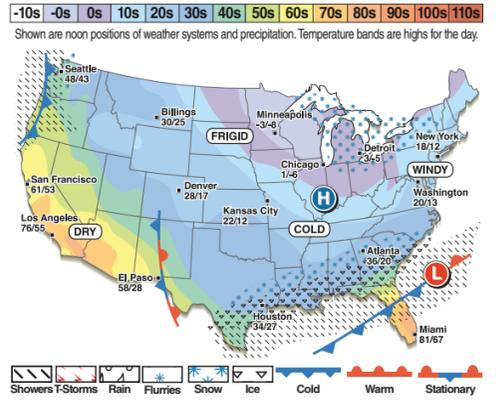
New	First	Full	Last
Jan 30	Feb 6	Feb 14	Feb 22

KENTUCKY WEATHER

Regional Forecast: Frigid today with partial sunshine; extreme cold can be dangerous. Bitterly cold tonight; extreme cold can be dangerous. Mostly sunny tomorrow. Thursday: not as cold.



NATIONAL FORECAST TODAY



NATIONAL SUMMARY

A major winter storm will affect the Interstate 10 and 95 corridors in the South with travel delays and the risk of power outages today. The heaviest snow and ice will occur along the southern Atlantic Seaboard. Rain showers are in store for central Florida and South Texas. Snow is forecast to reach as far to the north as southeastern Virginia at night. Mainly dry and very cold air will stretch from the Great Plains to New England and much of the mid-Atlantic.

Yesterday's National High/Low: (For the 48 contiguous states)
High 84° in Fort Lauderdale, FL Low -31° in Brimson, MN
Forecasts and graphics provided by **AccuWeather, Inc.** ©2014

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Bridge

From Page A1

nance facility closed the bridge at 11 p.m. and the closure will be in effect until inspections have cleared it to be reopened.

Although the bridge, which links Ironton to Russell, is safe for travel, its steel truss structure is

not wholly guarded against temperatures sustained below zero should it incur damage from any severe or unusual external force. Therefore, ODOT officials monitor the weather closely during cold-weather months, and in the event of projected sub-zero temperatures, the bridge is closed as a precautionary measure to ensure motorists' safety and the structural integrity of the bridge.

Once the temperature is sustained above five degrees Fahrenheit, ODOT inspectors will conduct a field inspection to determine if any changes have been critical to the bridge's load-carrying capacity. In addition, they will review the information from strain gauges that are affixed to the bridge to determine if the bridge has incurred any additional stress and ascertain if any

course of action is deemed necessary before reopening the bridge to travel.

While the bridge is closed, motorists will be detoured via U.S. 52 and the Ashland bridges.

For information on additional lane and road closures caused by construction, accidents, flooding or other related traffic events throughout the state, visit ODOT on the web at Ohgo.com.

LOTTERIES

Kentucky

Pick 3 Midday
7-4-8
Pick 4 Midday
8-9-3-7
Powerball
Estimated jackpot: \$171M

School

From Page A1

Barry Gowin.

Students are to be what Gowin calls "a select group" who will be tested to ensure they meet academic standards for enrollment. They also must exhibit the maturity needed to take college classes. ACTC will not hold special class sections for the Holy Family stu-

dents; they will be enrolled in regular classes with adult college students.

The rigorous freshman and sophomore curriculum will include challenging academic materials, classes in religion from literary and historical perspectives, and electives, he said.

Because it isn't yet known how many students will apply, it remains uncertain whether admission will be competitive.

The high school won't be limited

to Holy Family students and applicants don't have to be Catholic. Students from the region, including Ohio and West Virginia, may apply.

Tuition hasn't been finalized, but for the junior and senior years would be at college rates, paid to Holy Family and passed through to ACTC.

Holy Family may be able to offer scholarships as it does to students in earlier grades, Gowin said.

Holy Family probably would be

able to start the program with its current staff and perhaps one new hire, said vice principal Matt Anderson, who will take the principal's position in the fall.

The school building at 932 Winchester Avenue has plenty of available classrooms, he said.

The program may give a boost to Holy Family's enrollment in earlier grades because it will give families another high school option, development director Rhonda Suman said. Currently, those

who complete eighth grade there typically go either to public school in their home district or to Catholic high schools in Ironton or Huntington.

Talks are still in an early stage, but the program appears viable, ACTC dean of academic affairs Janie Kitchen said. "It's not something we have done before, but certainly we would be able to map a pathway for students to meet high school and college requirements for associate degrees," she said.

Whitlatch

From Page A1

the Kentucky Cabinet for Health Services, Office of Inspector General in the spring of last year. KDMC had initially opposed the application based on statistics that showed KDMC's cardiology program was more than sufficient to take care of the community's patient population.

"Today, health care requires greater collaboration among health care providers and other non-profit organizations. In this

case, cooperation, not competition, makes sense as it allows patients greater access to the care they need," said Whitlatch.

"Sadly, heart disease remains the No. 1 killer of men and women in Kentucky. By working together and making sure all residents have access to cardiac services, we can try to change that fact."

Whitlatch, a Boyd County High School graduate who began her career at KDMC in 1987, was promoted from chief operating officer to CEO in December following the retirement of Fred Jackson, whose 17-year tenure at the helm of the hospital was highlighted by both

unprecedented growth and controversy. Under Jackson's leadership, KDMC became a major regional health care provider, but, his management style rankled many, and his retirement came amid an ongoing investigation by the U.S. Department of Justice into the hospital's interventional cardiac procedures.

Dr. Richard Ford, a KDMC physician who also spoke at Monday's Rotary meeting, said Whitlatch had spent much of her first few weeks as hospital CEO meeting with others in the regional health care community, "rebuilding bridges that long since had

been burned."

Ford also said Whitlatch's ascension to the hospital's top position had been a huge boost to employee morale.

"Nothing is better for morale than (employees) seeing promotion can come from within," he said.

Whitlatch acknowledged improving the morale of KDMC's 4,000-member work force had been one of her top priorities.

"Our team has been through so much the past several years," with the elimination of several hundred jobs from the hospital payroll, she said.

Whitlatch also said KDMC's major focus for the past several years, out of necessity, had been on "expense management." While that has helped see the hospital through some difficult times, "I believe now we need to focus on the revenue side a little bit more," she said.

To do that, the hospital will need to seek out new services that will be profitable in the future, Whitlatch said. However, at the same time, she said she never wanted KDMC to lose sight of its main mission, which she said is "to serve the Ashland community."

Webb

From Page A1

ketball coach at West Carter High School — was employed by the school system from 1974 until his retirement in 2004. However, the following year, he was rehired as the district's construction supervisor and then as maintenance director.

In April of last year, the suit

states, Webb was terminated based on claims he had engaged in acts of "dishonesty" and "insubordination." Those charges stemmed from Webb allegedly gaining prohibited access to the district's fuel pumps by using an unauthorized key.

However, "The stated reason for (Webb's) termination was not the actual reason he was terminated" and was "insufficient to explain" why the board chose to fire Webb, the suit states.

The suit alleges that other dis-

trict employees "under the age of 40 or ... significantly younger" than Webb engaged in the same or similar conduct of which Webb was accused without any reprisals.

The district committed age discrimination against Webb — who was 64 at the time of his firing — "by terminating his employment and by subjecting him to sanction for the same or similar conduct committed by significantly younger employees, who faced no adverse employment or disciplinary action

of any kind," the suit states.

The complaint also states Webb was a member of a "protective class" because of his age and was replaced by a person outside the class who was "significantly younger" than him.

The suit, filed by attorney Reid Glass of Grayson, also seeks punitive damages against Dotson for slander stemming from remarks the superintendent allegedly made to other school officials that Webb claims indicated he was being re-

placed for poor job performance, "which is false and misleading."

Glass also argues his client is entitled to damages for psychological and emotional distress for having his privacy invaded and being cast in a false light by Dotson's alleged remarks.

Claims made in civil lawsuits state only one side of an issue. Under Kentucky law, defendants have 20 days from the date they are served to file responses to complaints.

Water

From Page A1

The three million gallon water tank has almost been emptied, impacting South Ashland areas and the downtown area, according to

city officials. It could be late Tuesday or even longer before it is fully restored.

Temperatures were expected to plunge below zero Monday night and Tuesday. The high for Tuesday was predicted to be 10 degrees.

Facebook posts began popping up almost immediately with many

worried about frozen water lines.

Water has been a huge issue in the Ashland area for the past couple of weeks. The City of Catlettsburg went nearly a week without water, too.

Several main water lines throughout the northeastern Kentucky area have broken under the

unusually cold temperatures the past couple of weeks.

Boil water advisories were in effect for all of Ashland, Catlettsburg, Westwood and parts of Summit fed by the Ashland system because of low pressure/no water.

Also, acting Ashland city manager Tony Grubb said the fire depart-

ment was topping off the trucks.

Ashland schools cancelled classes around 8 p.m. because of the water situation. Boyd County, Greenup County, Lawrence County, Elliott, Fairview, Lewis, Johnson and Carter County schools were closed because of the cold. Rose Hill Christian also closed.