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It's semi-finals time - Page 9

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Budget proposals spell tax increases but lack support

Suggested state funding plan could double Nicholas tax rate

By Hank Bond
The Carlisle Mercury
CARLISLE, March 8 — Nicholas County residents may face a large tax increase if the suggested tax reforms for funding education are signed into law.

Under the suggested plan, Nicholas County taxpayers would realize a 108 percent increase in their tax rate to generate an additional \$139,822.

Nicholas County residents currently pay 14.4 cents per \$100 of property valuation.

In addition, there is a 15.9 cents per \$100 valuation collected for a special voted building fund from 1970, which will expire in 1990.

The original special voted levy could have meant a rate as high as 21 cents per \$100 valuation, but the system has been able to arrest its obligation at a rate of 15.9 cents.

The newly proposed plan would mean Nicholas County residents would be taxed at a rate of 45.5 cents per \$100 valuation next year, should the legislation pass as it has been proposed.

This rate would most likely remain in place until the special-voted building tax is removed in 1995.

According to Donald Elder, superintendent of Nicholas County schools, the only way Nicholas County schools can afford any additional construction would be for the building levy to remain in place in some manner.

Elder also said, at current funding levels, it may take a rate as high as 21 cents per \$100 valuation to support new construction costs.

Legislators are discussing a plan to allow state funding to supplement local funding in operation of Kentucky's school districts.

According to Elder, the proposed tax increase would be dramatic for Nicholas County.

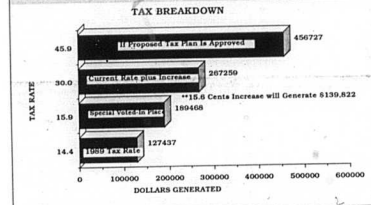
In 1988, the latest complete figures available, the Nicholas County school system's total receipts for the Nicholas School District was \$5,823,729.

Local revenue in that figure amounts to about \$187,000. Of that amount, \$127,437 was directly generated from the levied tax rate of 14.4 cents per \$100 valuation, with the other nearly \$60,000 coming from other local sources.

This does not include the special voted fund, which generates about \$189,468 per year.

According to the suggested state plan, the local figure will have to increase to \$227,529, with the additional funding coming from the increase in taxes.

"In order for us to receive our power equalization money from the state, we will have to generate the additional funds, should the plan be put in force," Elder explained.



Quick recall team takes third place

By Josh Shepherd
The Carlisle Mercury
LEXINGTON — The Nicholas County Academic Team took third place in a statewide quick recall competition last weekend at the University of Kentucky College of Engineering.

The team placed fourth in regional Governor's Cup competition.

The academic competition, sponsored by the University of Kentucky's College of Engineering and the Junior Engineering Technical Society, had more than 60 school teams represented across the state and about 220 high school students.

Schools were divided according to enrollment. The six teams — on English, math, Continued on Page 6

Teachers seek reforms in skills testing method

By Josh Shepherd
The Carlisle Mercury
CARLISLE — Current methods of skills testing in grades K-3 are inappropriate for assessing the progress of a child in the primary levels of school, according to a Nicholas County school official.

Dr. Mariam Williams, assistant principal at Nicholas County Elementary school, has been lobbying to have the K-3 testing requirement re-

interpreted in Kentucky schools.

Mandatory testing of Kentucky school children has been one of the "primary sources the state employs to evaluate students' progress and development," Williams said.

There are other more valid and accurate means of assessment for children between the ages 5-8, Williams said.

Williams said part of the reason the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) is invalid is because the tests are often difficult for students to understand or take seriously.

At age five, an 8- to 10-month gap in age makes a big difference in the ability to understand and effectively work with the test, Williams said.

There is no research to date that says the CTBS is a valid or reliable means of assessing students in grades K-3. It can, however, unfairly impose another year of school on a child. The most the teacher can measure a child, children is screening out the very young and the very poor," Williams said.

Assessment at the first four grade levels, including kindergarten, is better left to constant observation and record keeping from the teacher, Williams said.

Rep. Arnold against some elements of plan

By Hank Bond
The Carlisle Mercury
FRANKFORT, March 5 — State Rep. Adron Arnold (D-Mt. Sterling) said he cannot support the cigarette tax or the services tax proposed by Gov. Wallace Wilkinson.

"I had to oppose the cigarette tax. I think it sends the wrong message to Washington (D-C) and surrounding states about tobacco," Arnold said.

"Tobacco is Kentucky's number one crop, and for Kentucky to add taxes at this point is simply an invitation to surrounding states and the federal government to possibly increase taxes on tobacco."

Arnold also said he has continued to receive a great deal of negative input on the governor's proposed services tax.

Arnold said based on input from consultants, in his district he cannot support the tax.

Solid waste management

Rep. Arnold has introduced House Bill 565, which would have impact on local control of solid waste.

"The legislation I have proposed will allow local boards of control to have specific control and expand their operational control," Arnold said.

"It is unconstitutional to prevent out-of-state solid waste from being deposited in Kentucky, but the legislation, if approved, will give the local boards more control."

Dire effects predicted for advertising tax

By Mark H. Chelgren
Associated Press Writer
FRANKFORT — FEB. 28 (AP) — The author of a study that predicted dire economic consequences from a tax on advertising defended that study, saying it would apply to Kentucky as well as the state where it was originally done.

Opponents of Gov. Wallace Wilkinson's \$1.037 billion tax plan also took their last formal opportunity to shoot at the package before the House Appropriations and Revenue Committee.

The study of the effect an advertising tax had in Florida, where it had an abbreviated run in 1987, has been the subject of intense debate in Kentucky.

Last week, Wilkinson administration officials cast doubt about the veracity of the study done by Wharton Economic Forecasting Associates, noting that it was paid for by a group of advertisers.

Gerald Godshaw said his company paid for him to come to Kentucky to rebut that allegation.

"We at no time tailor our research results to what the client's interests are," Godshaw said.

In a letter to Wilkinson, Godshaw and another company official made the same point.

Furthermore, Godshaw said his 1987 study is applicable to Kentucky.

"Any tax on advertising is likely to lower the rate of growth in the economy of Kentucky or any other state that proposes it," Godshaw said.

Other complaints

surround services tax.

Three others also complained about the services tax

Plans unveiled for elderly living complex

By Josh Shepherd
The Carlisle Mercury
CARLISLE, Feb. 28 — Jewell Vice and Gene Snapp unveiled plans for a multi-living complex for senior citizens on Rayne Street during the regular meeting of the Carlisle Independent Planning Commission.

Vice said he knew the area was outside of the city but wanted to inform the commission in case of the existence of any zoning restrictions.

"We are making preliminary steps toward construction," Vice said.

The dwelling he and Snapp are proposing will be built specifically for senior citizens age 62 and over.

The complex is planned to

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Calling agriculture a \$3 billion industry in Kentucky, Arnold is working to help the Department of Agriculture get its fair share of the next budget.

"We're going to set up a structure where some additional loans may be available to small farmers," he said.

"The governor has requested \$14 million in economic development, but I believe helping the small farmer survive is, in itself, economic development."

"I'm not against taking action on economic development, but I do believe we need to help the small farmer survive, as well as the best ones already in Kentucky," Arnold said.

during the committee meeting, which will take no more public testimony on the tax measure, according to chairman Joe Clarke, D-Danville.

John Williams, chairman of Computer Services Inc. in Paducah, said the services tax would hurt his data processing business and his clients, primarily banks.

Williams said large banks and holding companies can do their own data processing so the tax would hurt smaller banks. Also, he said the way the law is written now, holding companies may have to change sales tax on data processing done for affiliates.

Broadcast executives also express concern.

Broadcast executives in border areas of Kentucky also warned of the loss of business if a tax is enacted and rebated any notion that an advertiser would be exempt.

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A brush fire raged through two acres of land owned by Gene Tout on Locust Grove Road, Monday afternoon, Nicholas County firefighters arrived on the scene shortly after the blaze had been reported and quenched the flames. County Fire Chief Mark Nugent said the blaze appeared to have caused from a burning trash pile near the field as wind possibly blew burning trash about the area.