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Grants awarded to school system



**By Charles Mattox
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Photo by Charles Mattox
NCHS students enjoyed a relaxing meal and some free time in the sun April 18 during CATS Recognition Day. The day was devoted to students and gave them a last moment chance to relax after studying hard for the CATS testing going on this week across campus.

work assistance, according to school officials. A daily snack will also be provided as part of the program and will focus on younger students in grades K-8.

"This was a highly competitive and complicated (100+ page) grant," said Bob Stevens, School Business Officer. "We have not had a program like this before."

According to Stevens, Doug Bechaman, the Nicholas County Schools Safety Director, completed the grant application.

Nicholas County School Board members voted in favor of creating a classified position of site coordinator for the 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant, on a motion by Annette Flora, seconded by Charles Ring, during Monday night's school board meeting at the school system's central office.

Stevens said that of the 100 applicants for the grant, only 13, including Nicholas County Schools, were chosen.

"We're very fortunate," Stevens said while explaining that the grant would be in effective over the next five years.

A \$130,000 Mathematics Achievement Grant was also awarded to the school system through the Kentucky Department of Education.

The grant provides salary, professional development, curriculum, and resources for a full-time Math Intervention Teacher who will work directly with k-3 graders who are behind in math. Those students will receive services in addition to their current math class. Once they are proficient in math they will be shifted out of the program, according to Stevens.

"This will be of a great help since we had no planned curriculum for individual or small group intervention assistance for students in K-3," Bechaman said. "Once again, receiving the grant was a pleasant surprise as we were one of 25 chosen from over 240 applications."

Doug Bechaman with assistance staff members helped complete the grant application form.

Alleged bank robbers arraigned

**By Charles Mattox
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A Cynthiana couple who were charged in the March 19 robbery of Integra Bank of Mt. Olivet, were arraigned in Robertson District Court April 17 before the Honorable Judge Jay Delaney.

Anna Smith, 21, and Miguel D. Ayala, 28, both of Cynthiana, entered not guilty pleas to the charge of complicity to third degree burglary.

Both appeared separately in court from the Mason County Detention Center and both received the counsel of Public Defender, La Mer Kyle Reno.

Reno explained to Judge Delaney, and County Attorney Jesse Melcher, that Smith had no felony criminal record, but did have a very young infant. "She has a three-month-old child, Your Honor," Reno said. "She'll follow any bond conditions that are set by this court."

Judge Delaney paused, examining Smith's court case and hearing concerns from Melcher before modifying Smith's bond from the original \$10,000 cash to \$2,500 cash or ten percent of that amount, or a \$5,000 property bond.

Ayala, tall and slender,



Photo by Charles Mattox
Anna Smith, 21, of Cynthiana, right, one of two alleged accomplices to last month's robbery of Integra Bank of Mt. Olivet, appeared in Robertson District Court last week and entered a plea of not guilty after speaking with PD Lamer Kyle Reno, left.

Gray double murder trial date set

**By Charles Mattox
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On April 26 it will have been one year since the discovery of the murdered bodies of James and Vivian Gray, of Sadoville.

Their son, Anthony Gray, 28, who lived near Carlisle at the time of their murders, was arrested last October and charged with the heinous crime. He remains lodged in the Scott County Jail on \$1 million cash bond.

The killer is still on the loose. They arrested the

wrong guy," said Gray's attorney Rodney Barnes, last week. Barnes is a Directing Attorney for the Department of Public Advocacy.

"As far as I'm concerned, Barnes said, "this is an unsolved crime."

Gray's double murder trial has been scheduled for June 2009 in Scott County Circuit Court.

"Mr. Gray has entered a plea of not guilty and he says he is not guilty," Barnes said. "I support him and I believe in him. There is considerable conflicting evidence in this case. I'm going through a mountain of evidence pronounced through the discovery (a legal motion where the prosecution must provide the defense with all of the evidence against the individual charged with the crime.)"

Barnes said the stakes were high for his client. "This is a death penalty case," he said solemnly.

Scott County Sheriff's Detective Roger Persley arrested Gray after an intense investigation that covered several counties. Persley was called to 8811 Cincinnati Pike, along US 25, near the

small town of Corinth, just south of the Grant County border last year when the bodies of James "Jim" Gray and his wife of 40 years Vivian, were discovered in their home.

Scott County Coroner John Goble, and his Deputy Coroner Tom Moss arrived on the scene and pronounced the couple deceased quickly afterward.

"This was a very disturbing scene," said Goble, a personal friend of the couple. "Very... Very... Very disturbing scene."

Gray has been reluctant to discuss his charges since his arrest but spoke sincerely to The Mercury prior to that.

"They both loved people and loved animals as well," he then said of his late parents. "They were good, honest, trusting Kentucky people and that makes this even harder to bear."

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Relay For Life sponsorship

Joseph H. "Jock" Conley, right, of the legal firm of Conley and Conley Attorneys of Carlisle, presents Marjorie Catherine Knapke with a \$1,000 corporate sponsorship check for this year's Relay For Life celebration

Photo by Charles Mattox

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