

A red-tailed hawk perches high at the top of an oak tree Wednesday afternoon near Kentucky 85 in the backyard of Madisonville residents Sandra and Wayne Oakley.

Doreen Dennis, The Messenger, ddennis@the-messenger.com, 824-3255

# Library seeking funds

BY LANA KUNZ  
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Hopkins County-Madisonville Public Library is attempting to find funding for the renovations of its downtown buildings.

Board member Dr. Bill Smith has met with county and city officials to discuss contracts to secure library funding.

Hopkins County Judge-Executive Donnie Carroll agreed to consider entering into a contractual arrangement to provide funds of about \$270,000 for a yet-to-be determined time period.

Madisonville Mayor David Jackson did not offer to enter into an agreement with the library during the Friday meeting, Smith said.

A call to Jackson was not returned by press time.

The contract will show lending entities that the library has the ability to pay back a loan to renovate its downtown buildings, Smith said during the board's Tuesday meeting.

SEE LIBRARY/PAGE A2

# Initiative designed to aid quality of local work force

BY DOREEN DENNIS  
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Economic developers, educators, employers and leaders in Hopkins County are taking steps to improve the quality of its work force.

Area professionals and leaders gathered for a Kentucky Work Ready Communities luncheon at Trover Tower for an introduction from the Kentucky Workforce Investment Board and the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet Wednesday.

Dr. Judith Rhoads, president of Madisonville Community College, said it will take Hopkins County two or three months to complete the application process.

"We can be one of the first counties in the state to be a Work Ready Community," Rhoads said to the group.

The program, designed for communities to improve its work force through education, certifications and other credentials, is a key component in gaining a competitive edge over other areas to attract industry and grow economically.

Madisonville-Hopkins County Chamber of Commerce President Harriett Whitaker said it could work for the area because everyone works well together.

"Let's do it," she said. Madisonville Mayor David Jack-



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Dr. Judith Rhoads, president of Madisonville Community College, speaks to a group of Hopkins County officials, employers and other professionals during a Work Ready Community seminar held at Trover Tower Wednesday. The purpose of the program is to transform the local economy and attract new jobs through education and economic development strategies.

son said he is glad Hopkins County has begun the process.

"I wish we had started this 10 years ago," he said.

Tom West, director of the state's work force investment board, said he has presented the program to 30 counties in the state thus far and hasn't seen a bigger turnout than Hopkins County.

West said funding and budget cuts by the state and federal governments mean communities must take initiatives to build economic bases. Improving the workforce can generate good jobs and expand the quality of life for citizens.

Community agencies such as

the college, schools, employers, job training and government can work together to keep costs down for testing certifications also, said Stan Hill, administrator of the Office of Employment and Training in Hopkins County.

The cost for a National Career Readiness Certification is approximately \$55. It is a credential acquired by workers to verify their skills through testing.

Six criteria the local community must meet to become a Work Ready Community are high school graduation rates, NCRC certified

SEE WORK/PAGE A3

There were two nominations for the seat — Lee and businessman Frank Versnick. Lee won the seat on a 3-2 secret ballot vote.

Lee and his family moved to the area in 2000, the same year they built the Paragon of Madisonville. He serves as the president of Paragon Development Consultants, LLC and also practices law.

In a letter to the council about his interest in serving the unexpired term, Lee said he intended to file for election by the end of January.

"My reason for seeking the appointment is to contribute to our community, and to serve its citizens," Lee wrote in the letter.

The council met again Wednesday afternoon, a makeup

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The Messenger staff appreciates all of its customers. Today, we would like to personally thank Clyde Tittle of Madisonville for subscribing to the paper.

## INSIDE TODAY

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**TODAY:**  
Partly sunny  
High: 42 Low: 26

Vol. 94, No. 283  
Established 1917

**FRIDAY:**  
Mostly cloudy  
High: 45 Low: 18

**NEWS TIPS**  
824-3224

**SPORTS**  
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**CIRCULATION**  
824-3256

**CLASSIFIEDS**  
824-3300

More Weather A8



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was sentenced to 90 days in  
jail, with 80 days discharged  
for two years on condition  
he commit no violation of  
law and pay restitution and  
\$184 court costs.

• Rubio Andres  
Rodriguez, to disorderly  
conduct. Rodriguez was  
sentenced to 30 days in jail,

Harris was sentenced to  
pay a \$35 fine, suspended  
on condition he commit  
no violation of law and  
not go about the involved  
property.

• Terri Newman, to no/  
expired registration plates.  
Newman was sentenced to  
pay a \$20 fine, suspended,  
and \$143 court costs.

went over the annual fire

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## WORK

### FROM THE FRONT PAGE

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holders, community com-  
mitment, education attain-  
ment, soft skill development  
and Internet availability.

For every employer and  
economic developer, work  
ethics are a big deal also,  
West said.

Currently, Hopkins  
County has 324 NCRC-cer-  
tified holders and has a goal  
of 5,000 certifications in the

next three years.

Hopkins County exceeds  
the required 82.32 percent-  
age rate for high school  
graduation. It almost meets  
the 90 percent criterion of  
Internet availability, which  
is at 86 percent, Rhoads  
said.

"Some of the criteria  
will not take long for us to  
meet," Rhoads said, adding  
that some of the goals will  
take more time.