

Multiple benefit events planned for Lenny and Anita Boatman *Cont. from cover*



Lenny and Anita Boatman (front, center), with support from their family, continue their fight against cancer. Anita was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2024 and underwent treatment last year before being diagnosed with giant cell myocarditis. Lenny was diagnosed with stomach cancer in 2025, underwent chemotherapy, and will soon need his stomach removed altogether. The family is receiving support from the community through a variety of benefits. JOSIE GRONAU/HOMETOWN GIRARD

benefits going on for Lenny and Anita, and every one of them is greatly needed. This is taking all of us to help them out.” Additional support is also planned in the coming weeks. On Sunday, March 22, the Knights of Columbus will host a free-will donation breakfast at

St. Francis Parish Hall in St. Paul from 8 to 11 a.m. The menu will include sausage, eggs, pancakes, biscuits and gravy, juice, coffee, and milk. Another benefit dinner and auction is scheduled for Saturday, April 25, from 5 to 9 p.m. at St. Michael’s Catholic Hall.

The evening will feature a meal along with both live and silent auctions. The St. Michael’s event is being organized by Karen Collier, Charlene Coomes, Diane Coomes, Bryan Hoffman, Terri Hoffman, Cathy McDonald, Michele Meins and Rachel Prewitt. Prewitt,

a relative of Lenny, said they began by securing a location, establishing a bank account, and meeting to plan the fundraiser. While auction items are still being collected, Prewitt emphasized that community support remains the greatest need. “The most important need

overall is the love, support, and prayers,” she said. Her favorite part of helping organize the event has been “watching everyone come together. The families, friends, and communities have offered to help in many different ways.”

An account for the St. Michael’s fundraiser has been established at GNBank under the name “Lenny and Anita Boatman Benefit.” Updates on the couple’s progress are also being shared through the “Lenny and Anita Boatman’s Journey” Facebook page.

Transportation funding, ARPA allocations and illegal dumping discussed at Friday meeting

CRAWFORD COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING – FEBRUARY 20, 2026

BY PHILIP STEVENS
HOMETOWN GIRARD

►► The Crawford County Commission addressed public transportation funding, approved additional ARPA expenditures, conducted a public hearing to vacate a platted street in Ringo, and discussed enforcement options related to illegal dumping during its Friday, Feb. 20 meeting at the courthouse. Following approval of the consent agenda and signing of prior motions, commissioners heard an update from SEK-CAP leadership regarding recent changes to county transportation routes. SEK-CAP CEO Jamey Whitney told commissioners the agency has reduced general public routes in Crawford County from three to one, though a PAC route in Pittsburg will continue operating, fully funded by the City of Pittsburg, in the amount of \$40,000. Whitney said the agency was able to “manipulate one of the grants enough” to keep two routes running temporarily, but added that three of the five buses previously operating in the county are now suspended unless additional funding becomes available before the end of June. Whitney explained that the county’s pledged support has averaged between \$15,000 and

\$17,000 in recent years, but the allocation awarded through the grant process this year was \$14,901. County Counselor Jim Emerson clarified that distributions from the elderly services fund are based on actual tax collections and can be reduced if collections fall short of 100 percent. “If we only collect a certain amount of money for the year, that’s all you get,” Emerson said, noting that the fund is separate and not automatically supplemented by the general fund. He further explained to commissioners that these allocations are budgeted based on anticipated collections - namely property tax - but the actual amount sent out by the county depends on the actual collections the county takes in. The amount sent out is a prorated percentage of the actual collections, which County Clerk Lisa Lusker and Emerson said are typically between 95-98% of the budgeted (expected) collections. Lusker quipped that this is because that is the percentage of residents who pay their taxes each year. Commissioners discussed the need to determine what level of service the county wants to support beginning July 1, when the new fiscal year planning cycle begins. Whitney said the City of Pittsburg has pledged

funding to maintain one vehicle five days a week within city limits, and SEK-CAP plans to meet with Girard officials and other communities in the coming weeks. He emphasized that if routes are not operated at capacity, the federal and state transportation funds tied to them are forfeited. “If you don’t use it (the grant money), you lose it,” Whitney said. Commissioner Carl Wood expressed support for maintaining rural transportation services, particularly for elderly residents outside Pittsburg. Commissioners indicated further discussions will occur during the upcoming budget process. Next, the commission considered several American Rescue Plan Act funding requests. Commissioners approved \$100,000 for New Foundations for roof-related work and \$119,631.94 for Sugar Creek to cover steel costs for the same building project. They also approved \$211,609.58 for Point Forward, which Emerson said would complete its licensure and remaining project costs. The Point Forward motion passed on a roll call vote of 2-1, with commissioners Bruce Blair and Tom Moody voting in favor and Wood voting no. Additional ARPA-related county expenditures were approved for Adam Jones Law Firm for

comprehensive plan work, Turnkey for childcare project administrative fees, and Design Mechanical for a courthouse boiler project. That motion passed unanimously. Point Forward Chair Ron Scripsick was in attendance. As Scripsick was leaving, Commissioner Blair thanked him and others who have made the project a reality. “I know it’s been a battle for this whole process. It’s amazing what you’ve turned that facility into, and I appreciate that. You’ve beaten the bushes to get people in the community to help support stuff like that. I think it’s amazing,” Blair said. Scripsick replied, “Well, there’s a lot of happy families out there and a lot of happy mothers and fathers... I appreciate everyone’s support. Thank you very much.” During a public hearing, commissioners vacated a portion of platted 2nd Street in the original town of Ringo at the request of a landowner. Emerson said the roadway, originally platted in the early 1900s, is a dead-end section with no landlocked properties. The commission approved Resolution No. 2026-007 to formally vacate the segment. In additional business, Emerson presented a request from a landowner in Opolis to vacate an alley in Block 27.

Commissioners approved publication of the notice to begin that process. Commissioners also voted to publish bids for 2026 mowing services at county facilities, with bids to be opened on March 6. Emerson said the county is not obligated to accept any bids but will use the process to evaluate costs. The commission adopted Resolution No. 2026-008, establishing an “Infant at Work Policy,” outlining procedures for remote or flexible work arrangements. Emerson said the policy requires advance agreements between department heads and employees and had been reviewed in a prior work session without objection from elected officials or department heads. Under new business, Blair raised concerns about ongoing illegal dumping along county roads and bridges, including mattresses, appliances, and household waste. Emerson confirmed that illegal dumping and littering are violations under state law and require investigation and reporting by the sheriff’s department. Commissioners discussed the importance of documenting incidents and pursuing enforcement when sufficient evidence is available. The commission held two executive sessions during the meeting. One

30-minute session involved commissioners, the county counselor, and EMS Billing Jill Warford to discuss non-elected personnel matters related to EMS. A second 20-minute session included commissioners, the county counselor, and Courthouse Maintenance Aaron Crozier, also under the non-elected personnel exception. No action was taken following either session. Upcoming items include a Feb. 24 work session with Zoning Administrator May Smith and KDHE representative Toby Kuhn regarding nuisance property, a March 3 work session on RHID matters, and a March 5 Planning and Zoning public hearing at the Girard Civic Center. Culvert bids will be opened on March 6, along with a public hearing to vacate a road in Martin Kane’s 2nd Addition in Arma. The meeting adjourned without further action.

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