



## Fireworks, Family Traditions & Community Pride Await

**By: Laurna Todd**  
KPI Writer

America only turns 250 once, and Mayfield-Graves County is inviting residents and visitors to be part of history during a weekend packed with patriotic celebrations, family traditions and unforgettable memories.

Whether you're looking to honor our nation's past, spend quality time with family or simply enjoy fireworks under the summer sky, there is no shortage of opportunities to celebrate this historic milestone.

The festivities begin Friday, July 3, at 11 a.m. with the ceremonial burial of the **Mayfield-Graves County America250KY Time Capsule** at Edana Locus. Hosted by the Mayfield-Graves County Tourism Commission, the capsule will preserve a snapshot of life in 2026 for future generations. It's a meaningful way

to leave a piece of today's history for tomorrow.

Friday evening, the celebration shifts to **Sedalia Ball Park for Red, White & Blue Day** beginning at 7 p.m. Hosted by the Sedalia Lions Club, the evening will feature live music, fireworks, sweet treats from Sedalia Cafe and free hot dogs, chips and drinks for the first 150 guests. Bring a lawn chair, gather with friends and enjoy an evening of hometown fun.

On **Saturday, July 4**, the celebration continues all day long. One of the newest additions to this year's festivities is the **Fourth of July Pet Costume Contest** at the **Mayfield Downtown Farmers Market** beginning at 11 a.m. Dress your dog, cat or favorite furry friend in their best red, white and blue attire for a chance to win prizes. Even if you don't have a pet participating, it's sure to provide plenty of

smiles while supporting local vendors and enjoying the festive atmosphere downtown.

Also on Saturday, families can spend the day at the beloved **St. Denis Picnic in Fancy Farm** from 10 a.m. until 9 p.m. with games, raffles, delicious barbeque, live entertainment and activities that have made the annual event a Fourth of July tradition for generations.

As night falls, all eyes turn to the **City of Mayfield Fireworks Spectacular** at the Mayfield-Graves County Ballpark beginning at 9 p.m. Before the fireworks light up the sky, residents are encouraged to tune in to **WYMC 93.9 FM or 1430 AM** for a special reading of the Declaration of Independence followed by patriotic music, making the evening even more meaningful.

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## Four Graves County FFA members make their mark in Washington, DC



**By: Laurna Todd**  
KPI Writer

Four members of the Graves County FFA Chapter recently returned from an unforgettable leadership experience at the National FFA Washington Leadership Conference (WLC) in Washington, D.C., where they joined hundreds of FFA members from across the country to develop leadership skills, build lifelong friendships and

discover how they can make a lasting impact in their communities.

Representing Graves County were Callie Smith, Grace Hurley, Izzy Foy and Morgan Burton. The students were among just 100 Kentucky FFA members selected to participate in the inaugural Kentucky WLC Bus Tour, made possible through the generous support of the Bill Gatton Foundation.

The National FFA Washington Leadership Conference is one of the organization's premier leadership development programs. The conference is designed to help FFA members discover their leadership potential through hands-on workshops, team-building activities and service-focused learning. Participants are

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## Mayfield Rotary hears how hope continues to rebuild lives

**By: Laurna Todd**  
KPI Writer

Members of the Mayfield Rotary Club welcomed Amy Chicoine, executive director of the Mayfield Graves County

Long-Term Recovery Group (MGCLRG), as the guest speaker during the club's June 29 meeting.

Chicoine shared how the nonprofit organization continues helping local families

recover from disasters, including the devastating December 2021 tornado. Formed as a 501(c)(3) organization following the tornado, the MGCLRG focuses on meeting the long-term, unmet needs of

households affected by natural disasters.

Since its formation, the organization has assisted 1,660 households and secured more than \$8.5 million through partnerships. It has also processed more than \$865,000 in Team Western Kentucky Tornado Relief Funds, leveraged more than \$2.1 million in warehouse donations, coordinated volunteers who have contributed 88,844 service hours, and helped build or repair 245 homes through community partnerships.

Chicoine noted the organization has also responded to additional disasters over the past three years, including floods, severe storms and tornadoes. Looking ahead, MGCLRG plans to streamline its client screening and warehouse opera-

tions while expanding disaster preparedness workshops throughout the community. The organization follows the national framework for long-term disaster recovery to help families rebuild after emergencies.

Pictured are Rotarian Al Chandler, Mayfield Rotary Club President Lindsay Holmes-Shankle, Amy Chicoine, and Rotarian Lee Martin.

The meeting also marked the beginning of Holmes-Shankle's term as club president. Rotarian Brad Smith was recognized for building and installing a custom shelf to hold the club's ceremonial bell. Holmes-Shankle was also thanked for creating a new video presentation featuring club announcements and information that will be displayed on the country club's

television during meetings.

Certificates of Appreciation were presented to Donnitta Pyle and Amanda England in recognition of their service and contributions to the club during the past year.

Rotary Challenge Coins, originally purchased by an anonymous Rotarian for the club's 100th anniversary in 2025, were presented to new members.

Sergeant-at-Arms Dale Usher conducted fines and happy dollars, while Stacy Overby led members in singing God Bless America. Two prospective members also attended the meeting as guests of Usher.

The next regular Rotary meeting is scheduled for July 6, with the Board of Directors meeting set for July 20.



# Summer Turkey Brood survey ongoing through August

By TOM LATEK  
Kentucky Today

FRANKFORT, Ky. (KT) – The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources is asking the public to be on the lookout for Kentucky’s native wild turkeys this summer and share their observations through the summer turkey brood survey, now through Aug. 31.

Survey results will help biologists better understand and manage wild turkey populations in the state.

“Turkey populations naturally fluctuate from year to year,” said Zak Danks, Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Wild Turkey Program coordinator. “This survey helps us gauge numbers in all parts of the state.”

To report sightings of wild turkeys during the survey window, July 1 to Aug. 31, visit



Wild turkey brood survey is ongoing through August.

the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Summer Turkey Brood Survey webpage, or enter the key words “turkey survey” in the search bar on the agency’s website (fw.ky.gov) to access the online survey portal, link to

the mobile survey app or download a printable form that can be mailed or emailed to the department. Data collected through this survey help the department to better understand turkey population trends over

time. “Kentucky and most states around us just experienced excellent spring turkey harvests, which reflected great hunting weather but also much-improved hatches the past few summers,”

Danks noted. “The summer survey helps us be vigilant with our monitor of the flock.” Hunters harvested a record 36,439 turkeys during the 2026 spring hunting season in Kentucky, smashing the 10-year average of

30,847. Wildlife officials attribute the high harvest to a variety of factors, including more turkeys on the landscape this year, more hunters in the woods and weather conducive for hunting.

State fish and wildlife agencies are conducting scientific research to shed more light on the status of turkey populations. Turkey observation data gained through the public survey are used in conjunction with research findings, making this citizen-science data set vital for long-term conservation.

Questions on the annual summer turkey brood survey or turkey hunting may be directed to the agency’s information center at 800-858-1549, 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. (ET) weekdays, excluding state holidays, or at info.center@ky.gov.

# FNB earns designation of savings excellence award from america saves for fourth year

(Washington, D.C): FNB Bank (FNB) has earned the 2026 America Saves Week Designation of Savings Excellence (DOSE) award, an honor explicitly reserved for financial institutions who effectively and actively promote saving strategies during the annual America Saves Week campaign. FNB was also awarded the Designation of Savings Excellence Award in 2021, 2023 and 2024.

FNB is one of 15 financial institutions honored with this distinction, out of more than 5,300 participating organizations of America Saves Week, which took place April 6 – 10, 2026 as part of Financial Literacy Month.

“We are honored to celebrate these organizations for their leadership and commitment to helping people build stronger financial futures,” said Amy Miller, Director of America Saves. “The success of America Saves Week is made possible by partners who meet consumers where they are and provide practical opportunities to save, plan, and build financial confidence. These organizations went beyond simply raising awareness; they empowered consumers to take



action! Together, we are helping millions of Americans take small steps that lead to lasting financial progress.”

The work of these financial institutions

contributed to an impressive collective impact. During the week, these institutions helped to reach over 22.59 million individuals and encouraged \$169 million

in reported savings into new and existing savings accounts.

“We are proud to be recognized as one of the seven banks across the nation to earn the annual America Saves Designation of Savings Excellence award,” stated Brooke Wiles, FNB Chief Marketing Officer. “FNB has received this prestigious national award for the fourth time out of the last six years. We take pride in helping our customers save money and prepare for the unexpected. FNB customers

are the real winners here, as they make the commitment to save money far beyond America Saves Week.”

2026 America Week DOSE Recipients:

**BANKS:**

Bank of America  
Community Bank of Mississippi  
Community Savings Bank  
F&C Bank  
FNB Bank, Inc.  
The Dime Bank  
WesBanco Bank, Inc.

**CREDIT UNIONS:**

Appalachian Community Federal Credit Union  
Arsenal Credit Union  
DuTrac Community Credit Union  
Eagle Community Credit Union  
Family Savings Credit Union  
Peninsula Federal Credit Union

America Saves Week is an annual event by America Saves, a program under the Consumer Federation of America.

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# First District Retired Teachers Association Honors Students and Volunteers at June Meeting



**By Laurna Todd**  
KPI Writer

The First District Retired Teachers Association (RTA) gathered June 11 at the Stockade Restaurant in Murray for its monthly meeting, buffet luncheon and annual awards ceremony celebrating outstanding students, educators and volunteers.

The meeting opened with a devotional by Sandy Anderson, followed by the blessing offered by Jeff Hill.

One of the highlights of the afternoon was recognizing county winners of the 2025 AARP/Kentucky Retired Teachers Association Grandparent Essay Contest. Students from across the First District read their essays answering the question, "Why Should My Grandparent Be Grandparent of the Year?" Each winning student and their honored grandparent received medals, while the students' teachers were presented with

plaques in recognition of their support.

The district winners included:

McCracken County: Jackson Manning, honoring Calvin Manning; teacher Cristie Wooten, Concord Elementary.

Lyon County: Adam Reid Brown, honoring David Brown; teacher Barrett White, Lyon County Schools.

Graves County: Ruby Lain, honoring Arson Potts; teacher Kelsie Kendall, Sedalia Elementary.

Fulton County:

Angelina Leiva Martinez, honoring Marcia Martinez; teacher Danielle Cruise, Carr Elementary.

Calloway County: Layla Koebbe, honoring Beth Ott; teacher Megan Milliken, East Calloway Elementary.

A special plaque was presented to Ruby Lain of Sedalia Elementary, the First District's 2025 AARP/KRTA Grandparent Essay Contest winner. Ruby, a fifth-grade student in Kelsie Kendall's class, wrote her award-winning essay

about her grandfather, Arson Potts. She also represented the First District during the Kentucky Retired Teachers Association Convention held in April in Louisville.

The association also recognized Greg Gerhart of Calloway County as the First District RTA Volunteer of the Year. Gerhart contributed an impressive 3,347 volunteer hours during 2025, earning not only the district honor but also being named the Kentucky Retired

Teachers Association Volunteer of the Year. In addition, he was elected to serve on the First District RTA Executive Council.

The annual awards ceremony highlighted the importance of honoring family, education and volunteer service while recognizing the students, educators and community members who continue to make a positive impact across western Kentucky.

**ABSOLUTE REAL ESTATE AUCTION**  
**THURSDAY, JULY 9TH, 2026 • 6:00 PM**  
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**PREVIEW DATE: Monday, June 29th • 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM**



**PROPERTY OVERVIEW**  
Harris Real Estate & Auction is proud to offer this exceptional estate home in Paducah's desirable Woodland Manor Subdivision. Situated on approximately 0.40± acres, this spacious brick residence features 4 bedrooms, 3.5 bathrooms, and a walk-out basement designed for comfortable family living and entertaining.

**The home's standout feature** is its impressive indoor swim spa/current pool room with soaring vaulted ceilings, exposed beams, and dramatic floor-to-ceiling windows that fill the space with natural light. The continuous-current swim spa provides year-round exercise and recreation in the comfort of your own home.

**Additional highlights** include formal living and dining rooms, a family room with fireplace, private office/library, spacious kitchen, and a walk-out basement offering abundant space for recreation, storage, or future expansion. Outside, mature landscaping and attractive brick architecture provide outstanding curb appeal in one of Paducah's most established neighborhoods.

*Whether you're looking for a spacious family home or a truly one-of-a-kind property, this exceptional estate offers amenities rarely found on today's market.*

**PROPERTY HIGHLIGHTS**

- Woodland Manor Subdivision
- Approximately 0.40± Acre Lot
- 4 Bedrooms | 3.5 Bathrooms
- Walk-Out Basement
- Indoor Swim Spa / Current Pool
- Floor-to-Ceiling Windows
- Formal Living Room with Fireplace
- Family Room with Fireplace
- Formal Dining Room
- Private Office / Library
- Spacious Kitchen with Ample Cabinetry
- Mature Landscaping
- Brick Exterior

**REAL ESTATE TERMS:** A 10% Buyer's Premium will be added to the final bid and included in the deed transaction sale price. 15% as down payment on the day of the auction with balance in cash at closing on or before 30 days. The down payment may be in the form of cashier's check, personal check, or corporate check. YOUR BIDDING IS NOT CONDITIONAL UPON FINANCING, SO BE SURE YOU HAVE ARRANGED FINANCING, IF NEEDED, AND ARE CAPABLE OF PAYING CASH AT CLOSING. Make Inspections Prior To Date Of Sale. Closing shall take place on or before 30 days from auction date. All 2026 ad valorem taxes will be prorated at closing. The property will be sold the deed.

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**Situated in a highly desirable location along the Tennessee River, this 43± acre property offers a unique combination of recreational, residential, hunting, and waterfront opportunities.**

The property features approximately 26± acres on one side of Shar-Cal Road and approximately 13.47± acres bordering the Tennessee River with valuable riparian and mooring rights. A boat ramp is already in place providing direct access to the river from the property. Improvements include a **32'x48' Barndominium-style building** featuring a two-car garage and upper-level living quarters complete with cabinets, cooking stove, dishwasher, bathroom, propane heat, window air conditioning, and well water service. Additional improvements include a **30'x30' equipment shed** and multiple mature fruit trees throughout the property.

**REAL ESTATE TRACTS**

Tract 1	2.5 Acres± with Barndominium and Living Quarters
Tract 2	24.43± Acres located on the west side of Shar-Cal Road with Large Pond
Tract 3	13.47± Acres fronting the Tennessee River with boat ramp access and mooring rights
Tract 4	2.58± Acre Building Lot
Tract 5	0.64± Acre Building Lot

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# WEST KY SPORTS



## McMain named Calloway County softball head coach



Toree McMain was named head coach of Calloway County softball

### Staff Report

MURRAY — Toree McMain has been named the head coach of the Calloway County softball program.

McMain is a former Calloway County player. She is a Calloway County High School graduate.

McMain is returning home after a successful coaching career that includes serving

as head coach at Trigg County High School, where she became the winningest coach in program history. She also gained valuable experience as an assistant coach at Marshall County and Murray high schools.

After a successful stint as a player in high school, McMain continued her playing career at Murray State University.

“I’m honored to return to the program that helped shape me as both an athlete and a person,” said McMain. “I can’t wait to begin working with our players and continuing the proud tradition of Lady Laker Softball.”

McMain and her husband, Matt, reside in Murray and have three sons Brooks, Knox, and Rhodes.

## Chiefs double up Rhythm

### Staff Report

HENDERSONVILLE, Tenn. — Paducah doubled up Full Count 4-2 in an Ohio Valley League game on Monday, June 29.

A home run to center field by Trey Dooley put Paducah on the scoreboard in the top of the third inning.

Avery Starks started on the mound for the Chiefs. The Paducah starting pitcher gave up six hits and one

run over three and two-thirds innings, striking out five and walking one.

Trent Miller stepped on the mound first for the Rhythm. The Full Count starting pitcher surrendered five hits and three runs over three innings, striking out five and walking three.

Caysen Mitchell, Jhett Long and Johnny Bingham each threw shutout innings in relief for the Chiefs.

Dooley paced Paducah offensively, finishing with three runs batted in. The first baseman for Paducah, Dooley went two-for-four at the plate. Dooley and Jack Robinson each collected two hits for the Chiefs.

Edward McLeod drove in one run for the Rhythm. Productive at the plate, Gabe Jenkins and Rylan Moses each collected two hits for Full Count during the matchup.

## Railroaders defeat Flash

### Staff Report

FULTON — Zaid Diaz collected three hits in four at bats as Fulton defeated Henderson 7-2 in an Ohio Valley League game at Lohaus Field on Monday, June 29.

Diaz hit a solo home run to right field in the seventh inning, singled in the third inning, and singled in the second inning.

A ground out by Jacob Tucker put Henderson on the scoreboard in the top of the first frame.

Henderson committed an error, which helped Fulton Railroaders tie the game at 1-1 in the bottom of the second inning.

In the bottom of the third inning, Fulton broke up the tie when

Diaz singled, scoring one run. Then a home run to center field by Ben Kauffman followed to extend the lead to 5-1.

Fulton scored one run in the bottom of the seventh inning on a solo home run to right field by Diaz.

Luca Dickinson earned the win on the mound for the Railroaders. Pitching out of a starting role for Fulton, Dickinson surrendered four hits and one run over seven innings, striking out seven and walking none.

Micah Sanders pitched in relief for Fulton and claimed the save.

Henderson starting pitcher Reed Rheinhardt took the loss on the mound. Rheinhardt pitched four

innings, giving up six runs (five earned) on seven hits, striking out one and walking two.

Fulton Railroaders tallied 12 hits. Kauffman and Diaz each collected three hits for the Railroaders. Kauffman led Fulton at the plate, delivering three RBIs. Kauffman went three-for-four at the plate. Aiding Fulton offensively, Nick Causey and Thomas Kuhn each collected multiple hits.

Tucker led Henderson, driving in one run. The cleanup hitter went one-for-four. Another batter, Tyler Rinehart, went two-for-four at the plate to lead the Flash.

# Five new sport programs approved by Murray State University Board of Regents

### Staff Report

MURRAY — After a thorough analysis of future departmental growth and campus enrollment strategies, Murray State Athletics has announced that it will be expanding its sports offerings ahead of the 2027-28 season after receiving approval from the University Board of Regents on Friday, June 12.

The five new, non-scholarship sport programs the Racers will add are: Women’s Stunt, Women’s Beach Volleyball, Women’s Rowing, Women’s Bowling, and Men’s Tennis. In total, the new additions can bring up to 171 new students to campus and expand the visibility of the Murray State brand through new emerging sport offerings.

“Launching these five new sport programs is about much more than athletics—it is a strategic invest-

ment in the long-term growth and vitality of our university,” Murray State University President Dr. Ron Patterson said. “These programs will expand access to higher education, attract new students to our campus and create opportunities for young people to develop as leaders, scholars and competitors.”

“As we continue leading the pack in everything that we do, we must think boldly about how athletics can support the broader mission of our university, community and region through this new bifurcated model,” Director of Athletics Nico Yantko said. “The addition of five new programs is a strategic move that will expand opportunities for student-athletes while creating a significant enrollment pipeline for Murray State. In today’s collegiate landscape, successful athletics

departments are those that align competitive excellence with institutional growth, and this initiative accomplishes both.”

A breakdown of each proposed new sport for the Racers follows.

Women’s Stunt Stunt is regarded as one of the fastest-growing sports in the NCAA, crossing the benchmark of 40 schools meeting minimum contest and participant requirements in its first year as an emerging sport in all three divisions. It joined the Emerging Sports for Women program in 2023. Stunt transforms traditional cheerleading skills into a head-to-head, four-quarter format emphasizing athleticism and precision. Teams compete in partner stunts, pyramids, and jumps and tumbling, with points awarded based on execution.

Beach Volleyball

Known as sand volleyball prior to being recognized as a championship sport in 2015, beach volleyball has rapidly grown since its time as an emerging sport. The sport grew rapidly in popularity due to the global rise of beach volleyball through the Olympics and increased youth participation across the United States. NCAA beach volleyball competition is played in duals, with 10 student-athletes split into five pairs and up to three coaches.

Women’s Rowing Murray State carried rowing as a varsity program beginning in 1998 until 2008 when it was discontinued. The NCAA officially recognized women’s rowing as an NCAA championship sport in 1996, marking a major milestone in the continued growth of the sport. Since becoming an NCAA sport, women’s rowing has grown into one of

the premier collegiate endurance and team sports, with championship competition divided into Division I, II, and III levels.

Women’s Bowling Women’s bowling became one of the NCAA’s emerging women’s sports in the late 1990s before earning official NCAA championship status in 2003. The sport has grown rapidly at the collegiate level due to increasing youth participation, strong regional support in bowling-rich areas of the United States, and expanded opportunities for student-athletes. Uniquely, the NCAA hosts only one combined National Collegiate Championship rather than separate divisional tournaments. There are currently just under 100 programs throughout the country.

Men’s Tennis Murray State last carried men’s tennis as an NCAA varsity

sport during the 2015-16 academic year. The program had a long and successful history dating back to 1954, winning 19 Ohio Valley Conference championships during its existence. The program was led by Racer legends Bennie Purcell and Mel Purcell for five decades.

Murray State Athletics has raised \$44.25 million dollars in support of new facilities, initiatives and championship resources, a total that has been made possible by 16, seven-figure gifts.

The \$44.25 million is committed towards the department’s bold, comprehensive \$100 million fundraising campaign, Leading The Pack, which was created to further position itself for the future by investing in student-athlete success and wellness, revenue share and competitive resources and world-class facilities.

## NCAA Division I adopts age-based eligibility model

### Staff Report

INDIANAPOLIS — The NCAA Division I Cabinet on Tuesday June 23 unanimously approved a sweeping overhaul of eligibility rules for student-athletes, permitting Division I student-athletes up to five years of eligibility if they enroll in college no later than the academic year after their 19th birthday. The new rule streamlines a significant portion of the Division I rule book by eliminating season-of-competition limits, sport-specific eligibility and redshirt rules, and eligibility extension waivers.

“With these changes, the Cabinet has taken decisive action for the benefit of student-athletes and the system of NCAA Division I athletics,” said Josh Whitman, athletics director at Illinois and chair of the Cabinet. “For many student-athletes who enroll in college immediately after high school, these changes will result in the opportunity to potentially compete for an additional season in their chosen sport. For campus officials and coaches, this change provides rules that are simpler to administer and easier to predict for roster management decisions.”

The reforms will align athletics eligibility with enrollment and graduation patterns for the general student population.

“While previous NCAA rules have served college sports well for a long time, we heard also loud and clear from NCAA members and student-athletes that eligibility rules should be easier to understand,” NCAA President Charlie Baker said. “This change to an age-based model eliminates aspects of the rules that have proven difficult to



administer in the current litigious environment and clearly defines the exceptions available in limited circumstances, while preserving the long-intended alignment of eligibility with typical college enrollment and graduation patterns, because 98% of the 550,000 NCAA student-athletes will go pro in something other than sports.”

The Division I Student-Athlete Advocacy Committee leadership team also issued a statement supporting the rule change.

“The Student-Athlete Advocacy Committee has met with student-athlete leaders across Division I, and we consistently heard that student-athletes want an eligibility model that is simple to understand, transparent to administer, and applied fairly across all sports and schools. This rule change, which clearly establishes an individual’s period of eligibility, provides student-athletes with greater certainty as they plan for college and make important decisions regarding enrollment, competition and degree completion.”

Implementation The rule change will be effective for all prospects initially enrolling full time in college in fall 2027 or later.

For students enrolling full time in college for the first time in fall 2026 and current student-athletes with eligibility remaining after the 2025-26 academic year, Division

I schools will apply the previous rules (allowing four seasons of competition within five years) or the age-based model, whichever results in the most favorable outcome for each individual.

Exceptions The Cabinet defined the exceptions that could delay or pause an individual’s period of eligibility under the age-based rules, which include pregnancy, active-duty military service and official religious missions. These exceptions will only be available if the student-athlete does not participate in organized competition for the duration of the exception.

For consistency throughout Division I, the NCAA Eligibility Center will administer the use of the exceptions.

Waivers under previous rules Under the age-based eligibility model, waivers will not be available — including clock extensions and waivers previously granted for hardships, seasons of competition and delayed enrollment.

For current student-athletes with eligibility remaining under the previous rules, schools must submit any season-of-competition or eligibility clock extension waiver requests based on circumstances that occurred during or before the 2025-26 academic year — and all supporting documentation — to the national office no later than July 31, 2026. After that date, waivers of the previous rules will no longer be available.

## Former captain Megan Wilson returns to Murray State women’s soccer coaching staff

### Staff Report

MURRAY — The Murray State women’s soccer program has announced the addition of Megan Wilson to its coaching staff as a graduate assistant for the 2026 season.

Wilson spent four seasons as a player at Murray State (2021-25), serving as team captain during her senior campaign. A native of Maidstone, England, she earned a psychology degree during her time with the program.

Wilson capped her playing career with one of the most decorated individual seasons in program history in 2025, earning First Team All-Missouri Valley Conference and MVC Defender of the Year

honors, as well as United Soccer Coaches All-Region Third Team recognition. She was also named MVC Defensive Player of the Week once during the season. Wilson led the Racers in minutes played while contributing two goals, four assists and a game-winning goal on the offensive end.

Prior to her senior season, Wilson appeared in 17 matches as a junior in 2023, scoring her first career goal Oct. 5 against Northern Iowa and logging a season-high 76 minutes in the opening round of the MVC Tournament against Evansville. As a sophomore in 2022, she played in 20 games with nine starts and recorded her first two career assists Oct. 9

against Illinois State. Wilson appeared in 18 matches as a freshman in 2021 before a shoulder injury cut her season short.

Before coming to Murray State, Wilson represented West Ham United’s under-21 side for two years in her native England, winning two School National Southern Cups during that time.

“We are super excited to add Megan to the staff,” Madsen said. “She is a Racer through and through. Since we got on campus, she has provided us with valuable insights on all things Murray State. Not only was she a great player, but she has a great soccer mind, and we can’t wait to see the impact she has in this new role.”

## Jenkins inducted into National High School Hall of Fame Class of 2026

### Staff Report

SALT LAKE CITY — One of Kentucky’s most decorated officials, Burney Jenkins has dedicated 50 years of his life to high school sports, serving as a referee, umpire and later as an assigning secretary — all “for the love of the game.” On Tuesday, June 30 in Salt Lake City, Jenkins joined the elite of the elite in the NFHS Hall of Fame.

During his officiating career, Jenkins has called six Kentucky High School Athletic Association (KHSAA) State Football Championships (three as referee), five KHSAA State Basketball Finals and five State Baseball Final Four Tournaments, in addition to countless college contests and a National Football League game in 2001.

As an undergraduate student at Georgetown College, Jenkins got into officiating as a way to make some extra money — a decision that would eventually develop into a lifetime career path. He began teaching at Georgetown Middle School after graduating, where he coached football for 28 years (18 as head coach). Urged by Principal George Lusby to get back into officiating, Jenkins returned to football officiating and took up baseball three years later.

In the years that followed, Jenkins went on to work nine regional tournaments, seven regional finals and seven state tournaments (five in basketball). Upon retiring from officiating, Jenkins spent six

years as the JV Supervisor of Officials for the 10th and 11th Region before becoming the Supervisor of Officials for the 8th Region in 2001.

Jenkins has been a licensed baseball umpire and football official for 51 years and a licensed basketball official for 48 years. In addition to the six state football finals, he has officiated state football playoff games in 34 of his 51 years.

In 2003-04, he was honored with the KHSAA Supervisor of the Year award and was inducted into the Baseball Coaches Hall of Fame as an official later that year, having worked 31 regional tournaments, 15 state sectionals and five state tournaments (four championship finals). In 2013, Jenkins was inducted into the DAWAHARES/Kentucky High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame as a sports official. In 2020, he was selected the KHSAA Outstanding Football Official of the Year.

In addition to officiating games at the high school level, Jenkins has been a longtime collegiate official in football and basketball for several conferences, including the Ohio Valley, Gulf-South and Mid-South. He has officiated six NAIA National Football Playoffs and the NAIA Men’s Basketball Tournament for eight years, as well as 10 NCAA Division I-AA National Playoff games, and the Football Championship Series (FCS) National Championship game in 2009.

Jenkins, who obtained his master’s degree from Georgetown College in 1981, worked at the Scott County Schools for 44 years in various capacities before retiring in 2022. Shortly thereafter he was elected mayor of Georgetown, the sixth-largest city in the state and is finishing his first term and seeking a second term.

“As a supervisor and a teacher, Jenkins always strived to instill in others his beliefs that integrity, honesty and trustworthiness are the cornerstones of officiating, and that every game should be treated like a state championship,” said Julian Tackett, KHSAA commissioner. “He teaches others to rely on the abilities they are blessed with, while maintaining humility at all times.”

Jenkins joins 11 other Kentuckians in the NFHS Hall of Fame. The additional Kentuckians in the NFHS Hall of Fame are Cliff Hagan, Athlete (Class of 1988); Paul Hornung, Athlete (Class of 1989); William Kean, Coach (Class of 1993); Geri Grigsby, Athlete (Class of 1993); Garnis Martin, Coach (Class of 1994); S.T. Roach, Coach (Class of 1996); Charles Ruter, Official (Class of 2001); Louis Stout, Administrator (Class of 2006); Jerry Kimmel, Official (Class of 2013); Tim Couch, Athlete (Class of 2021) and Ron Kordes, Coach (Class of 2023).

## KHSAA Dead Period to end July 9

### Staff Report

PADUCAH — The KHSAA Dead Period will end at 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, July 9.

Prior to the start of the KHSAA Dead Period in late-June, numerous area student-athletes and teams remained active.

Annually, student-athletes are sidelined June 25-July 9 via the KHSAA Dead Period.

The Dead Period was adopted 20-plus years ago by member schools in response to concerns about year-round play and practice and parental and coaching desire for some down time from interscholastic play. Member schools

adopted the period of June 25-July 9 as a time of inactivity, which followed the pattern of the historic idling of southern textile mills and this time allows administrators, coaches, student-athletes and their families a time where they are not committed to school play.

According to Article 3 of Bylaw 26 (The Dead Period), it states that: “Students may not receive coaching or training from school personnel (either salaried or non-salaried) and school facilities, uniforms, nicknames, transportation or equipment shall not be used each year in any KHSAA-sanctioned sport or cheer-

leading squad during the period beginning June 25 and going through July 9. School funds may not be expended in support of interscholastic athletics in any KHSAA sanctioned sport during this period. These restrictions shall not apply to any postseason wrap-up activities, celebrations and recognition events relating to a spring sports team at a school which participated in KHSAA state championship play in that particular sport during that particular year.”

Fall sports teams will open preseason practices in July, following the conclusion of the Dead Period.

## Murray State Athletics announces future premium stadium club with \$2.25 million gift

### Staff Report

MURRAY — Murray State Athletics has received a \$2.25 million gift from Tommy and Sandy Draffen that will further enhance the ability for the department to continue leading the pack behind its bold vision for the future, it was announced on Tuesday, June 30.

As the department continues to put an emphasis around new premium activations throughout the athletics footprint, the new premium club and suite level will be named the Draffen Family Founders Club within the heart of Rudolph Family Field at Roy Stewart Stadium.

“This extraordinary gift reflects a deep belief in our mission and a commitment to creating opportunities that will positively impact generations of Racer student-athletes, alumni and fans,” University President Dr. Ron Patterson said. “The continued support we receive from the Draffen Family will leave a lasting legacy on our athletics department and we are incredibly grateful for this \$2.25 million investment in the future of Murray

State Athletics.”

The Draffen Family Founders Club will feature a common area with a high-class bar, premium food offerings and comfortable seating so fans can enjoy a world-class game day experience. The space will also double as additional student-athlete dining hub on non-game days and external event space.

“Tommy and Sandy consistently go above and beyond for Racer Athletics, playing a crucial role in our ability to position ourselves to be one of the premiere athletic departments in the country and to continue leading the pack,” Director of Athletics Nico Yantko said. “Their unwavering support allows us to continue competing at a high level in everything that we do and we are extremely grateful for their commitment to our long-term vision for excellence with this generous \$2.25 million gift.”

Murray State previously received a generous gift from the Draffen Family that propelled the transformation of the weight room in the football stadium, securing the

naming rights for the Draffen Family Performance Center.

“Sandy and I are thrilled to invest in a project that will elevate the experience for Racer student-athletes, coaches and fans for generations to come,” Tommy Draffen said. “Murray State has always held a special place in our hearts and we strongly believe in the new vision and momentum surrounding Racer Athletics. We are excited to play a small role in building something that will benefit all of Racer Nation for many years to come.”

Murray State Athletics has raised \$46.75 million dollars in support of new facilities, initiatives and championship resources, a total that has been made possible by 17, seven-figure gifts since the campaign began.

The \$46.75 million is committed towards the department’s bold, comprehensive \$100 million fundraising campaign, Leading The Pack, which was created to further position itself for the future by investing in student-athlete success and wellness, revenue share and competitive resources and world-class facilities.

## Racer Football Reunion to celebrate 1986 and 1996 championship teams

### Staff Report

MURRAY — Two of the most decorated teams in the history of Murray State Football will be celebrated the night before homecoming when the 1986 and 1996 championship squads will be honored during the team’s reunion the night before Homecoming on Friday, Oct. 16.

All former players are invited back for the event to celebrate their time wearing the navy and gold and to celebrate the immense amount of progress being made at Roy Stewart Stadium and within the program as a whole.

“We are incredibly excited to welcome our former football student-athletes, coaches and their families back to campus as we celebrate the proud tradition of Murray State Football,” Director of Athletics Nico Yantko said. “This reunion is an

opportunity to honor the generations of Racers who helped build our program while paying special tribute to the 1986 and 1996 Ohio Valley Conference Championship teams, whose accomplishments continue to inspire our student-athletes today. It will be a special weekend of reconnecting, celebrating our history and continuing to strengthen the bonds that make Racer Nation so unique.”

“Our program has been built by the players and coaches who came before us, and it is important that our current team understands the pride, toughness and championship standard they established,” head coach Jody Wright said. “We are thrilled to welcome so many former Racers back home and to celebrate the 1986 and 1996 OVC Championship teams. It will be an honor to reconnect with our

alumni and celebrate the tradition that continues to shape the future of Racer Football.”

1986 Championship Team

The 1986 team, led by sixth-year head coach Frank Beamler, compiled an overall record of 7-4-1 with a mark of 6-1 in conference play to earn a share of the OVC title. Murray State advanced to the NCAA Division I-AA Championship playoffs, where the Racers lost to Eastern Illinois in the first round.

1996 Championship Team

The 1996 squad, coached by Houston Nutt, finished with an impressive 11-1 overall record and a perfect 8-0 in the OVC. They secured the outright OVC Championship that season and reached the NCAA Division I-AA playoffs, defeating Western Illinois 34-6 in the first round before falling to Troy.

## Kentucky game wardens focus on boater safety over July 4 holiday weekend

### Staff Report

FRANKFORT — The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources will step up patrols on Kentucky’s waterways during the upcoming Independence Day weekend, working to ensure everyone enjoys a safe and responsible boating experience.

The increased patrols July 3-5 are part of “Operation Dry Water,” a nationwide boating safety initiative that brings together Kentucky game wardens and law enforcement agencies to increase awareness, enforce boating laws and reduce alcohol- and drug-related incidents and fatalities.

Alcohol and drugs impair judgment, balance, vision and reaction time for both boat operators and passengers. Environmental factors like sun, wind, noise, vibration and motion can worsen these effects and increase fatigue. Boaters are encouraged to stay sober and vigilant to ensure a safe and enjoyable day on the water.

“All boating encounters, such as meeting and overtaking of vessels and obstacle avoidance, require time to perceive,



evaluate, decide and act,” said Capt. Jerrod Alley, the Kentucky boating law administrator for Kentucky Fish and Wildlife. “Intoxicants of any type slow each of those steps. An intoxicated operator is not an effective operator and, unfortunately, often only becomes aware of a dangerous situation after an incident occurs. Our goals as wardens are to educate the public, recognize dangerous actions on the waters and address those actions to prevent property damage, injury and death.”

In addition to making sure there is a sober boat operator, boaters should also check that all safety equipment is on board, in good condition and easy to access. Many boating accidents become fatal when people fall overboard without wear-

ing a flotation device.

Boaters can learn more about boating laws in the Kentucky Fishing and Boating Guide, the regulations summary booklet, available online at fw.ky.gov and wherever licenses are sold, or at “Operation Dry Water.”

For emergencies, dial 911. For non-emergency assistance call 800-25-ALERT (800-252-5378) or contact a local law enforcement agency or nearest Kentucky State Police post. Marine channel 16 can be used to contact a local marina.

“Operation Dry Water” is an annual effort coordinated by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA), headquartered in Lexington, in partnership with the U.S. Coast Guard and law enforcement agencies.

## Murray State Athletics celebrates groundbreaking of Sandra Hartmann Press Box

### Staff Report

MURRAY — Racer Field continues to undergo its incredible transformation after the department officially broke ground on the Sandra Hartmann Press Box at the home of Murray State Softball on Friday, June 12. The project was made possible thanks to the generous \$500,000 cash gift from Hartmann.

The stadium is currently undergoing a significant renovation, with the outfield being outfitted with turf and other projects underway.

“This is a landmark day for Murray State Athletics and our softball program as we celebrate the groundbreaking of the Sandra Hartmann Press Box at Racer Field,” Murray State University President Dr. Ron Patterson said. “The Sandra Hartmann Press Box will be a lasting symbol of excellence and pride for Racer Softball, and we are excited to see this transformational addition take shape in the months ahead.”

“As we continue building championship-caliber programs across Murray State Athletics, projects like the Sandra Hartmann Press Box demonstrate our commitment to investing in the future of Racer Softball,” Director of

Athletics Nico Yantko said. “This facility will enhance the game-day experience, provide valuable recruiting advantages and serve our current and future student-athletes for years to come. We are deeply thankful to Sandra Hartmann and all those who have contributed to making this vision a reality, and we look forward to celebrating its completion as we continue leading the pack.”

The press box will feature a main media area and additional auxiliary space, all of which will be ground level to make Racer Field tournament-host ready. Grandstands will be fixed to the top of the facility, providing a new vantage point for fans to enjoy the game.

Other investments into the softball program have included revenue share money for student-athletes, the new indoor hitting facility in Roy Stewart Stadium, updates to the weight room and training room, and more.

“The Sandra Hartmann Press Box will be a transformational addition to Racer Field that will benefit our current student-athletes and have a significant impact on our future recruiting,” head softball coach Kara Amundson said. “The generosity and passion for Murray

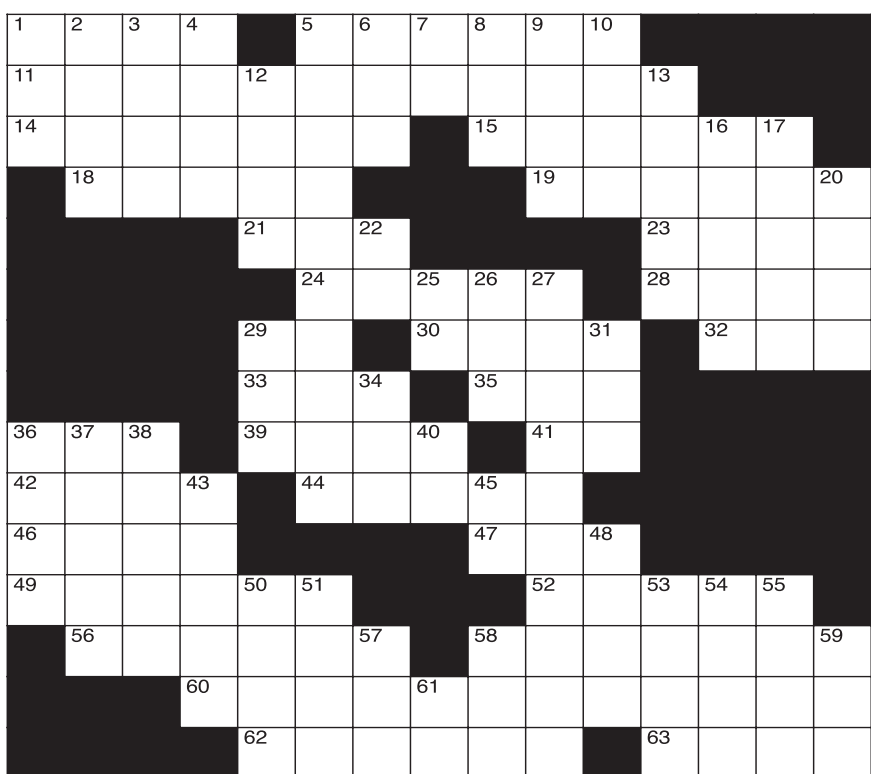
State from Sandra and so many others have created an opportunity that is generating this positive momentum. We are thankful for the unwavering support and are excited to see this vision come to life as we continue building a championship-caliber program.”

Hartmann is a 1975 graduate of Murray State University with a degree in geography. She used her educational experience at Murray State to enjoy a successful career, which resulted in her recently retiring as Senior Payroll Administrator at Colgate-Palmolive Co.

Over the last two years, Murray State has raised a school-record \$44.25 million dollars in support of new facilities, initiatives and championship resources. That total was made possible by 16, seven-figure gifts, which also amounts to the most in department history.

The \$44.25 million is committed towards the department’s bold, comprehensive \$100 million fundraising campaign, Leading The Pack, which was created to further position itself for the future by investing in student-athlete success and wellness, revenue share and competitive resources and world-class facilities.

### Crossword Puzzle



#### CLUES ACROSS

- 1. \_\_\_ chat
- 5. Statue near the Pyramids
- 11. A process to change the look
- 14. Herb
- 15. Think about excessively
- 18. Bass vocal part
- 19. Supreme Allied Cmdr. of NATO
- 21. A major division of geological time
- 23. New Zealand parrot
- 24. Cognitive contents
- 28. Lump of yarn
- 29. Atomic #109
- 30. Let go of
- 32. Indian title of respect
- 33. Whereabouts unknown
- 35. Electronic data processing
- 36. Drivers' licenses count
- 39. Snakelike fishes
- 41. They precede C
- 42. Popular personal computers
- 44. Intermediate community stage in ecological succession
- 46. Wings
- 47. Indicates position
- 49. Pleasantly smooth or soft
- 52. Jeweled headdress
- 56. In slow tempo
- 58. \_\_\_ Falls
- 60. Reassertions
- 62. Eras
- 63. Hyphen

#### CLUES DOWN

- 1. Corporate executive
- 2. A plant used for flavoring food
- 3. Opinion or belief
- 4. Sheep in their second year
- 5. Intensities of sound
- 6. Indicates support for
- 7. Expression of laughter
- 8. OJ trial judge
- 9. Pointed ends of pens
- 10. True bugs genus
- 12. Lawyers argue theirs
- 13. Body parts
- 16. Closes tightly
- 17. World Heritage site in Nigeria
- 20. Islamic calendar month
- 22. Commercial
- 25. "Westworld" actor Harris
- 26. They \_\_\_
- 27. Religious guilds
- 29. Woman (French)
- 31. Parts per billion (abbr.)
- 34. Brew
- 36. Spiritual leader
- 37. Indigo bush
- 38. Burn with a hot liquid
- 40. Older citizen
- 43. Scad fish genus
- 45. Morning
- 48. Line passing through the center (abbr.)
- 50. Double S-shaped curve
- 51. Small, thin person
- 53. Older
- 54. Mars crater
- 55. Humanities
- 57. Word element meaning ear
- 58. To the \_\_\_ degree
- 59. Residue
- 61. It cools your home

**Puzzle Solutions on B7**

### Word Search

#### DAY AT THE PARK WORD SEARCH

S R E L A X A T I O N U K W Y E D B D N  
 P G P F P G X L H K Y M G P F G O S W M  
 G S M A R C E E A L P E F I L D L I W S  
 N A P F R I E E S P B I M S C C U S D B X P  
 I T H E S K Y S L L Y K N O U S Y I C O  
 K F T U S C X E E I O S H M G E G K A R  
 H E S F W W G T M S R X W U Y L M N P S  
 L T E I X N A I Y Y D L A N E L Y G S U  
 B S U D K U R F D A W X B I G E X U L X  
 A C O O I E D I X W T Y Y T N W N S X P  
 F D B X Y S E N S H R S M Y N L H L L S  
 K Y A I S Y N R F T E R X B I T P A F C  
 R S U A M C E H G A E P D G M T Y T M X  
 I W I F D W I A H P S R H C S G D I D H  
 T I R E O L M N L E A T N O R O P L D R  
 R N U L K N O N C O Y L D O G U C S R P  
 A G F W F H A O W I Y W U E Y T W I N C  
 I S N T D I T O E I P N B D F S G U A B  
 L W M M N A T U R E D C E S S A R G E L

#### ANSWERS IN THE B SECTION

#### WORDS

- BENCHES
- BIKING
- COMMUNITY
- FITNESS
- FLOWERS
- GARDEN
- GRASS
- HIKING
- LEISURE
- NATURE
- PARK
- PATHWAYS
- PICNIC
- PLAYGROUND
- RELAXATION
- SOCIAL
- SPORTS
- SUNLIGHT
- SWINGS
- TRAIL
- TREES
- WELLNESS
- WILDLIFE
- YOUTH

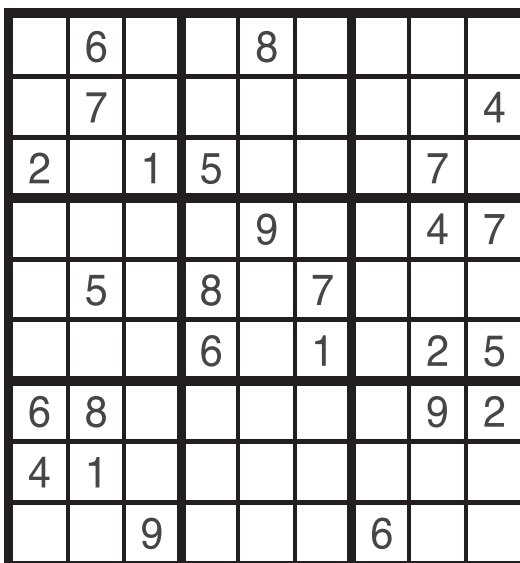
Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

### Sudoku Puzzle

#### How it Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle! Good Luck!

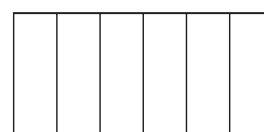
#### ANSWERS IN THE B SECTION



### Word Scramble

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to parks and recreation.

SSRPOT



Answer: Sports

### Guess Who?

GUESS WHO?

I am an actress born on July 2, 1990 in Australia. I earned my first acting role shortly after graduating from college, and I went on to play a character on the soap opera "Neighbours." Eventually I found fame in the United States, bringing life to films about a fallen ice skating star and a beloved doll.

Answer: Margot Robbie

**IF IT MATTERS TO YOU,  
IT MATTERS TO US.  
THANKS FOR READING!**

### Coloring Fun



### PUZZLE SOLUTION



### GO, USA!

While making your way through the maze, write down each letter you encounter along the correct path. These letters will spell out three words that pertain to the United States of America.

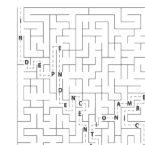
#### WORDS:

\_\_\_\_\_

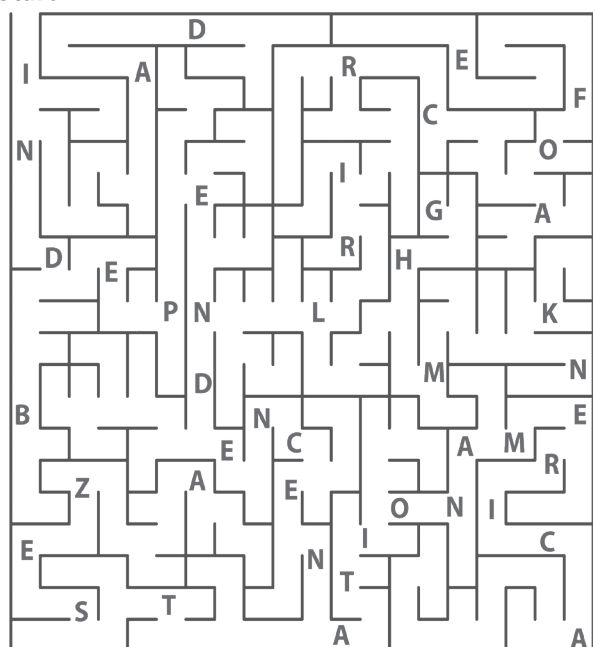
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### Solution:



#### Start



Finish

# Third Annual Fort Jefferson Patriot Grave Marking Ceremony A Great Success



The 3rd Annual Fort Jefferson Patriot Grave Marking (PGM) at Fort Jefferson Memorial Park on June 6th was led by the Col. Stephen Trigg Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) from Cadiz, Kentucky.

Fort Jefferson was an American Revolutionary War fortification and civilian settlement located in southern Ballard County and was occupied between 1780-1781 by more than 550 people. Through research by Dr. Ken Carstens, we can name, as well as document their day-to-day activities at this extremely important historical settlement.

Welcoming remarks to the ceremony were made by Ballard County Judge Executive Todd Cooper, who also explained the status of recent Fort Jefferson archaeological contract studies. Jim Stinnet, vice president of the Kentucky SAR from Harrodsburg, KY, brought greetings, and an historical perspective, from the Office of the President of the KY SAR, as did National Adjutant Color Guard Commander, Patrick Wesolosky from Lexington, KY. Other SAR members

present included representatives from the Col. Benjamin Logan Chapter in Russellville, Captain William Prince Chapter from Princeton, as well as several other SAR Chapters from Kentucky, Indiana, and Tennessee. Dr. Carstens gave a brief speech titled, "Where you stand today" that highlighted the major and historic events that have taken place at the Confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers over the last 400 years.

Prior to the Patriot Grave Marking ceremony, several members of the Ballard-Carlisle Historical and Genealogical Society, located at 257 North 4th Street in Wickliffe, hosted the Fort Jefferson descendants and their families who traveled from East Dundee (IL), Birmingham (AL), Murfreesboro (TN), Evansville (IN), Paducah (KY), and Dexter (MO). The ladies of the historical/genealogical society served light refreshments to the out-of-town guests, who were also treated to original violin music that was first played at George Rogers Clark's Fort Jefferson in January

of 1781—a waltz created by Captain George Slaughter, who at the time was commander of Clark's "river fort" at the Falls of the Ohio.

Captain Slaughter had sent the handwritten sheet music to Fort Jefferson's commander, Captain Robert George, who responded in a letter to Slaughter that the music was a catchy tune and that he (Capt. George) wished Slaughter had sent more of it. Dr. Carstens stated that finding a piece of previously unknown 18th century music in the Fort Jefferson papers was extremely rare and that the music (a waltz) adds to a greater understanding about the culture and lifestyle of the day-to-day life that occurred 'even within a remote frontier settlement.' SAR member, and Fort Jefferson descendant, Harlan Dabney, recreated that music with computer software and played it via an MP3 program, much to the delight of all in attendance.

Descendants were also introduced to the Historical/Genealogical Society's Fort Jefferson Research Room where several

people used that time to research additional information about their ancestors that Dr. Carstens has documented and made available. The public is encouraged to contact Dr. Carstens on Fridays at the Historical/Genealogical Society to inquire about their Fort Jefferson ancestors.

The formal Patriot Grave Marking Ceremony was led by Compatriot Steve Mallory, President of the SAR Trigg Chapter, and past-President of the KY SAR. The ceremony included a reading of the names of the documented 63 people who died at Fort Jefferson along with a bell ringing followed by the reading of each deceased's name. Each year, five new deceased patriots, who contributed to the war effort at Clark's Fort Jefferson, are recognized. This year Pvt James Dean, Gunner Henry Haul, Militiaman Conrad Ilor, Militiaman Henry Ilor, and matross and Sgt. John March were honored.

The Capt. Virgil McCracken Chapter of the SAR assisted with formal soldier recognition and bellringing. Both a

color guard ceremony and a flintlock salute by all SAR members present were given. Descendants were given long-stem red roses to place on top of a remembrance table. Plans are currently underway to make the Fort Jefferson Patriot Grave marking a national event for the Sons of the American Revolution.

Lastly, a 'surprise' National SAR recognition ribbon and certificate, called the Thomas Jefferson Ribbon for Volunteerism, was awarded to Dr. Carstens. Carstens spent a good part of 2025 doing voluntary research at the request of the SAR National Headquarters in Louisville to assist with the development of the SAR's new multi-million-dollar Museum of the American Revolution. Carstens was charged with determining how General Clark's Fort Nelson in Louisville was constructed (based on primary documentation only) between 1781-1782, the names of the workers who worked on that fort, and the names of the workers who worked at the "boat yard along Beargrass Creek adjacent to

Clark's Fort Nelson." Carstens was also tasked with coming up with the exact clothing design that a particular militiaman at Fort Jefferson would have worn so that an historically accurate bronze statue could be created of that soldier who served both at Clark's Fort Jefferson and Fort Nelson and displayed in the new national museum.

Date for the 4th Annual Patriot Grave Marking has been set for 2pm, Saturday, April 17th, 2027, in connection with the National Patriot's Day, the 252nd anniversary of Lexington and Concord on April 19th, 1775, and the 247th founding of George Rogers Clark's Fort Jefferson on April 19th, 1780. As in years past, the Ballard-Carlisle Historical and Genealogical Society will open at 11am on the 17th for all descendants of Clark's Fort Jefferson and its civilian town of Clarksville. The public is invited to the Patriot Grave marking at Fort Jefferson Memorial Park, adjacent to the Fort Jefferson Cross and the Ballard County Visitor's Center, one mile south of Wickliffe.

## A key ingredient in your July 4th Picnic starts with SOY!

### Staff Report

By now you know that soybean meal is used as animal feed, nourishing poultry and livestock at all growth stages before it enters the food system. But did you know that your side dishes likely have soybean oil as an ingredient?

If potato salad, deviled eggs, creamy pasta salad or cole slaw are on your menu, Kentucky's soybean farmers probably had a hand in helping get that dish to the picnic table! Whether your favorite recipe calls for mayonnaise or Miracle Whip, soy-

bean oil is one of the top two ingredients on the Nutrition Facts panel in most commercial brands.

Not a fan of those traditional cookout foods? If you're more interested in a crisp cool salad on these hot days, your favorite dressing probably has soybean oil as its base, too. Ranch, Honey Mustard, Thousand Island, or Italian – soybean oil (sometimes referred to as vegetable oil) is where most dressings and many sauces get their start.

From the meat on the grill to the sides on your plate,

Kentucky's soybean farmers are working hard to produce food, feed, and fuel for our nation and beyond. The volunteer farmer-leaders and staff of the Kentucky Soybean Board and the Kentucky Soybean Association wish everyone a safe and happy holiday and remind you that – just like in our picnic example – soy touches every life, every day.

For more information about the versatility and uses of soy, visit the Kentucky Soybean Promotion Board website, [KySoy.org](http://KySoy.org).



Pictured are Leanne and Cory Ragland and Jamie Guffey (Photo by Rae Wagoner)



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# Dennis Hancock named as executive director of UK Research and Education Center at Princeton

By Derrick Meads  
University of Kentucky

LEXINGTON, Ky.— The University of Kentucky Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment (CAFE) has named Dennis W. Hancock executive director of the UK Research and Education Center (UKREC) and the Grain and Forage Center of Excellence in Princeton, Ky.

Hancock will provide managerial and strategic leadership for the 1,600-acre research and education center. He will work with college administrators, departmental chairs, faculty, staff and stakeholders to advance UKREC's mission of delivering innovative research, Extension programming and educational opportunities that support Kentucky agriculture. The position also includes leading efforts to further establish UKREC as a nationally recognized center of excellence focused on grain, forage, livestock, tobacco and horticultural production systems.



*“Dr. Hancock is an accomplished leader with a deep understanding of our land-grant mission and a proven ability to build partnerships that connect research, education and Extension,” said Dr. Laura Stephenson, vice president for land-grant engagement and dean of Martin-Gatton CAFE. “His experience leading large, multidisciplinary organizations and his Kentucky roots make him uniquely qualified to help guide UKREC into its next chapter and expand*

*its impact across the Commonwealth and beyond.”*

Hancock currently serves as director of the U.S. Dairy Forage Research Center in Madison, Wisconsin, where he also serves as the U.S. Department of Agriculture Agricultural Research Service (USDA-ARS) location coordinator. In that role, he oversees a \$20.5 million research center budget, coordinates research operations involving more than 100 employees and leads partnerships with univer-

sities, producers and industry stakeholders across the country. During his tenure, the center expanded its scientific workforce, increased research capacity and advanced several major capital projects.

Before joining USDA-ARS, Hancock served as professor and state Extension forage specialist in the Department of Crop and Soil Sciences at the University of Georgia. He is widely recognized for his contributions to forage systems, grazing

management and agricultural outreach and has received numerous national and regional awards for his research and Extension leadership.

The appointment also marks a homecoming for Hancock. A native of Dawson Springs, Kentucky, he earned both his master's degree and doctorate from the University of Kentucky and previously served as a Grant County Extension agent and research and Extension associate with the Martin-Gatton

CAFE. He began his agricultural career as a summer intern at UKREC in Princeton in 1995.

“I first developed a passion for the research, Extension and education missions of the land grant universities while at UKREC,” said Hancock. “I dreamt of one day having an opportunity to be part of the team in Princeton. Now, I return to my beloved Commonwealth of Kentucky armed with nearly 30 years of multidisciplinary experience and know-how. Given this opportunity to lead the team, I bring a singular focus: meeting the research, Extension and educational opportunities of the agricultural systems of Kentucky that are relevant to the present and with an eye toward the future.”

Hancock will begin his appointment on January 1, 2027.

Learn more at UK Research and Education Center at Princeton or visit [ukrec.mgcafe.uky.edu](http://ukrec.mgcafe.uky.edu).

# CBP seizes fake watches in Louisville

By TOM LATEK  
Kentucky Today

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (KT) – U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers at the Port of Louisville intercepted a shipment June 18 containing 375 counterfeit watches, which would have had a total Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price of over \$54 million, if real.

The shipment from Hong Kong was headed for a residence in New York when officers pulled the parcel for inspection. The examination revealed 375 Audemars Piguet watches. The items were deemed to be inauthentic by CBP's Centers of Excellence and Expertise, the agency's trade experts,



Fake watches were confiscated by border patrol.

and were seized for bearing counterfeit versions of registered and recorded trademarks.

“Intellectual property theft threatens America's economic vitality and funds criminal activities and

organized crime,” said Louisville's Port Director, Philip Onken. “Our officers protect private industry and consumers by removing these kinds of shipments from our commerce.”

Illegitimate sales

are some of the most profitable transnational crimes. Counterfeiters sell inauthentic versions of popular products in response to trends, often through online sources, which adversely impacts legit-

imate U.S. businesses. These items, including fake medications, perfumes, and cosmetics, children's toys and costumes, fashion, jewelry, and luxury products, and unsafe electronics and automotive parts, can pose serious health and safety risks to American consumers as they are often made with substandard or harmful materials.

CBP reminds consumers to shop from reputable online sources. E-Commerce sales have contributed to large volumes of low-value, small packages being imported into the U.S. Over 90% of all counterfeit seizures occur in the international mail and express environments, which are channels

through which small, e-commerce packages destined for the U.S. travel. Many of these shipments contain counterfeit goods that pose the same health, safety, and economic security risks as large, containerized shipments.

CBP protects the intellectual property rights of American businesses through an aggressive Intellectual Property Rights enforcement program, safeguarding them from unfair competition and use for malicious intent while upholding American innovation and ingenuity. Suspected violations can be reported to CBP by visiting the Trade Violations Reporting site.



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# The Food Connection Honors 2026 Kentucky Farm and Food Champions at Local Food Systems Summit

LEXINGTON, Ky.— The Food Connection at the University of Kentucky serves farmers, food producers, students and consumers by cultivating creative strategies and partnerships to support a vibrant, healthy and equitable local food economy. During the 2026 Kentucky Local Food Systems Summit, the Food Connection recognized three outstanding leaders for their contributions to Kentucky's local food system.

The annual Farm and Food Champion Awards celebrate individuals whose leadership, innovation and service have strengthened local food systems, supported Kentucky farmers and advanced healthier, more resilient communities across the Commonwealth.

### Bill Best Food & Farm Steward Award

The 2026 Bill Best Food & Farm Steward Award was presented to Anna Haas, program director of local food connection



at What Chefs Want. Named in honor of renowned Kentucky seed saver and food system advocate Bill Best, the award recognizes individuals' work that reflects the patient, community-centered stewardship necessary to sustain local food systems.

Through her leadership, Haas has helped connect Kentucky farmers with institutional buyers, restaurants, schools and health-care organizations, creating new market opportunities while increasing access to Kentucky-grown food. Her efforts have helped move millions of dollars in local

food through regional supply chains, demonstrating that values-based sourcing can thrive at scale.

### Local Food Systems Innovator Award

The 2026 Local Food Systems Innovator Award was presented to CheyAnne Fant, longtime director of nutrition services and afterschool programs for Barren County Schools.

Fant has been a driving force behind one of Kentucky's most recognized Farm to School programs, creating innovative partnerships between local farmers, school nutrition programs and students. Under

her leadership, Barren County Schools expanded food production projects across district campuses, increased local food purchasing and developed hands-on educational opportunities that connect students to agriculture. Her work has served as a model for districts across the state and demonstrates the power of local food to improve student health, strengthen communities and support Kentucky farmers.

### Legacy Award

The 2026 Legacy Award was presented to M. Scott Smith, director of The Arbore-

tum, State Botanical Garden of Kentucky, and former Dean of the University of Kentucky Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment.

The Legacy Award honors individuals whose careers have created lasting impacts on Kentucky agriculture and food systems. Throughout decades of service as a researcher, educator, administrator and advocate, Smith has helped shape the future of Kentucky agriculture through leadership in higher education, natural resource stewardship and community engagement. His contributions continue to influence generations of agricultural professionals and strengthen connections between people, food and the land.

"The Farm and Food Champion Awards recognize individuals whose work exemplifies leadership, service, and a commitment to building a stronger local food system," said Ashton Potter, executive director of

The Food Connection. "This year's honorees have each made extraordinary contributions to Kentucky agriculture and food systems, and their work continues to inspire communities across the Commonwealth."

The Kentucky Local Food Systems Summit brings together farmers, chefs, educators, researchers, public health professionals, nonprofit leaders, and community advocates to explore opportunities for strengthening Kentucky's local food economy. The 2026 Summit featured farm tours, culinary experiences, educational sessions, networking opportunities, student poster presentations and keynote speaker Vivian Howard, award-winning chef, author, and host of PBS's *A Chef's Life and Somewhere South*.

For more information about The Food Connection and the Kentucky Local Food Systems Summit, visit <https://foodconnection.mgcafe.uky.edu/>.

## Kentucky Office of Agricultural Policy announces July meetings

FRANKFORT (July 1, 2026) – The following meetings in July involving the Kentucky Office of Agricultural Policy will take place in person.

Friday, July 10  
The Kentucky Agricultural Finance Corp. (KAFC) Loan Review Committee will meet at 9 a.m. EDT at

the Franklin County Extension Office, 101 Lakeview Court in Frankfort.

KAFC's monthly business meeting will

follow at 10 a.m.

Friday, July 17  
The Kentucky Agricultural Development Board (KADB) will have its

monthly business meeting at 9 a.m. EDT at the Franklin County Extension Office, 101 Lakeview Court in Frankfort.

KADB's Application Review and Compliance Committee will meet immediately following the adjournment of the business meeting.

## Kentucky AG exposes \$10.8 million in health care fraud

By TOM LATEK  
*Kentucky Today*

FRANKFORT, Ky. (KT) – Kentucky Attorney General Russell Coleman has announced that investigations by his office, along with state and federal partners, uncovered \$10.8 million in health care fraud. Six people have been indicted.

Kentucky was one of 45 states to take part in the National Health Care Fraud Takedown, with 455 defendants charged with more than \$6.5 billion in fraud.

Angela Renfro, of Louisville, founder of Kristy Love Foundation, was federally indicted on 32 total counts including 28 counts of Health Care Fraud, Conspiracy to Commit Health Care Fraud and three counts of Aggravated Identity Theft.

Briana Gosnell, of Louisville, was indicted for 18 counts of Health Care Fraud,



Kentucky Attorney General Russell Coleman

two counts of Aggravated Identity Theft and one count of Conspiracy to Commit Health Care Fraud.

The indictments state the two submitted more than \$11 million in fraudulent Medicaid claims between August 2021 and January 2024. This allegedly resulted in more than \$10 million in fraudulent and un-

authorized claims paid out by Medicaid.

A Jefferson County Grand Jury indicted Christine N. Allen, of Louisville, with Presenting Fraudulent Claims to Defraud the Kentucky Medical Assistance Program over \$1,000 (Class D Felony), in connection with causing Kentucky Medicaid to be billed for services that

were never provided in the amount of \$6,732.00.

A Boone County Grand Jury indicted Tyler Vanway of Erlanger with one count of Presenting Fraudulent Claims to Defraud the Kentucky Medicaid Assistance Program over \$1,000 (Class D Felony), one count of Devising a Plan or Scheme or

Artifice to Obtain Benefits by Means of False Representation three counts of Forgery of a Prescription (Class D Felony) and one count of Theft by Deception (Class D Felony).

Ana Vanway, also of Erlanger, was indicted on one count of Presenting Fraudulent Claims to Defraud the Kentucky Medicaid Program over

\$1,000, and one count of Devising a Plan or Scheme or Artifice to Obtain Benefits by Means of False Representation.

A Laurel County Grand Jury indicted Anastasia Jandes, 51, Lexington, with two counts of Theft by Deception \$10,000 or more, (Class C Felony), and five counts of Theft by Deception \$1,000 or more but less than \$10,000 (Class D Felony). The alleged loss amount to Medicaid recipients is \$66,358.45.

"This is what collaboration among the Trump Administration and law enforcement looks like as we take on everything from benefits fraud to violent crime," Coleman said. "By working with our state and federal partners we can protect taxpayer dollars and preserve vital services for those who need them most."



# AG UPDATE

for Ag and Natural Resources



Tom Miller,  
Ballard County Ext. Agent

## 2026 Corn, Soybean and Tobacco Field Day

The University of Kentucky Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment (CAFE) will host the 2026 Corn, Soybean and Tobacco Field Day on July 21 at its UK Research and Education Center in Princeton to deliver timely, research-based information to growers and agribusiness professionals.

Tours will run concurrently, allowing participants to choose sessions on field crops or tobacco:

- 2026 Corn Disease Update - Kiersten Wise
- Managing the silent yield robber:

soybean cyst nematode – Carl Bradley

- Row Crop Edge-of-Field Water Quality Monitoring in Kentucky - Brad Lee

- Stink Bug Management in Soybeans and Corn Leafhopper Updates in Kentucky – Felipe Batista

- 2026 Weed Control Update – Travis Legleiter

- Soil fertility update – John Grove

- Corn Emergence Uniformity Affected by Tillage and Cover Crop Management – Chad Lee & Emily Marsh

- 2026/27 Corn and Soybean Outlook – Grant Gardner

- Pre-purchasing in-



put strategies for 2027 – Jordan Shockley

- Dark Tobacco Update: Dark Air-cured Tobacco Production for Nicotine Extraction – Andy Bailey

- Burley Tobacco Update: Burley Plant

Population Effects and Stand Loss Thresholds – Mitchell Richmond

- Long-Term Effects of Crop Rotation and Tillage on Burley Tobacco Yield - Shelby Spiggle

Approved CEUs:

- CCA - Grain Crops IPM Tour (Integrated Pest Management 1.0), Grain Crops Agonomic/ Economics Tour (Soil & Water Mgmt 1.0, CM 0.5, Tobacco Tour (Crop

Mgmt 1.5)

- Pesticide Applicator - Grain Crops IPM Tour (1hr. Cat 1A, 1 hr. Cat 10); Grain Crops Agonomic and Economic Tour (1 hr. Cat 1A, 1 hr. Cat 10); Tobacco Tour (1 hr. Cat 1A, 1 hr. Cat 10)

Check-in will begin at 7 a.m. CDT at 300 Extension Farm Road, Princeton, KY 42445. The tours will begin at 8 a.m. Pre-registration is preferred to plan for the complimentary lunch made available with generous support from Kentucky Corn, the Kentucky Soybean Board and Altria Client Services.

## Fragipan Field Day showcases farmer success in soil remediation

By Jennifer Elwell  
University of Kentucky

ELKTON, Ky.— The University of Kentucky Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment invites farmers, agronomists and others interested in improving crop production on fragipan soils to a Fragipan Field Day hosted by Todd County Extension on Wednesday, July 29, at the Kenner/Walker Farm in Elkton.

The event will give producers a firsthand look at how annual ryegrass used as a cover crop can help break down fragipan, a dense, cement-like soil layer that restricts root growth and water movement. Fragipan soils are found on millions of acres in Kentucky and across the United States, limiting crop productivity by creating shallow soils with reduced water-holding capacity.

Lloyd Murdock, emeritus professor in the UK Department of Plant and Soil



The first Fragipan Field Day was held in 2018 at the UK Research and Education Center at Princeton.

(Photo by Matt Barton)

Sciences who studied fragipan remediation for more than two decades, said the field day is designed to help farmers see the process on a working farm.

“Lab and greenhouse-based research indicated that annual ryegrass was effective,” Murdock said. “As I’ve visited farmers who have incorporated the practice, I’ve found out how much it breaks the fragipan down, how deep it is, how much yields have increased, and how it

has changed drainage and wetness in the field.”

Although the research has shown promise, Murdock said adoption has been slower than expected, partly because producers are understandably cautious about using annual ryegrass, which can be a problematic weed in wheat systems, and skeptical that a long-standing soil limitation can be changed.

At the Kenner/Walker farm, partic-

ipants will see how four years of annual ryegrass cover crops are attributed to increasing the depth to the fragipan layer by eight inches and contributing to a 59-bushel-per-acre increase in corn yield.

Chris Kenner, who farms at the field day site, began using annual ryegrass after attending the first Fragipan Field Day in 2018.

“I was shocked when I read that they were going to have a field day to reme-

diate the fragipan because I have known that the fragipan has been my number one restricting factor on our whole operation,” Kenner said. “They weren’t asking us to do anything too crazy. It’s not all that terribly costly, and I had always been trying to look for ways to reduce erosion and ditches. We also have a need for hay for our cattle, so it just seemed to make sense.”

After four years and no other manage-

ment changes on a poor-producing field, Murdock confirmed with a soil probe that the depth from the surface to the fragipan layer had increased. Kenner now says this field is among the most productive.

In addition to pit demonstrations of treated and untreated soil, the field day will include farmer experiences from Kenner and Mitchell Paschall, ryegrass control management and drone seeding demonstrations.

The field day begins at 9 a.m. CT at the Kenner/Walker Farm, 4369 Sharon Grove Road, Elkton, KY 42440. Lunch, compliments of the Kentucky Soybean Board, will follow at the Todd County Extension Office, 240 Pond River Road, Elkton. The field day, which is also sponsored by Kentucky Corn, is free and open to the public. Those interested should contact Todd County Extension at 270-265-5659.

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**PRIDE** from Front Page

The celebration continues **Sunday, July 5**, with the annual **Fancy Farm Fourth of July Parade** beginning at 5 p.m. Patriotic floats, community organizations and hometown pride will fill the streets before another fireworks show closes out the weekend at 9 p.m.

Also beginning at 5 p.m. Sunday, **Pentecostal Tabernacle Church in Water Valley** will host a free community celebration featuring hamburgers, hot dogs, popcorn, kettle

corn, snow cones, games, music, fellowship and fireworks.

As communities celebrate America's 250th anniversary, organizers also encourage families to create their own time capsules. Filling a box with family photos, handwritten letters, favorite recipes, children's artwork and newspaper clippings is a simple but meaningful way to preserve today's memories for future generations.

This Fourth of July is more than just another holiday. It marks a once-in-a-lifetime anniversary that none of us will

see again. Whether you're watching fireworks, cheering at a parade, entering a patriotic pet costume contest or simply spending time with those you love, every event offers an opportunity to celebrate the freedoms we enjoy and the community we call home.

So grab your lawn chairs, wear your red, white and blue, and make plans to attend. America's 250th birthday is a celebration of our nation's past, our present and the generations still to come—and Mayfield-Graves County is ready to celebrate together.

**CAPITAL** from Front Page

challenged to think beyond themselves, identify needs within their communities and return home equipped with the confidence and skills to make a positive difference. For many students, it is also their first opportunity to visit the nation's capital and experience American history and government up close.

During the week, the Graves County students participated in leadership workshops, explored historic monuments and memorials, toured the United States

Capitol and met with Congressman James Comer. They also connected with FFA members from across the nation, exchanging ideas and learning from students with diverse backgrounds and experiences.

Graves County FFA expressed its appreciation to the Bill Gatton Foundation for sponsoring the inaugural Kentucky WLC Bus Tour and to the Kentucky FFA Foundation for providing Kentucky students with access to this nationally recognized leadership program.

The opportunity doesn't end there. Three more Graves

County FFA members have been selected to attend the July session of the Washington Leadership Conference, allowing even more students to grow as leaders while representing Graves County on the national stage.

Congratulations to Callie Smith, Grace Hurley, Izzy Foy and Morgan Burton on representing Graves County FFA with excellence. The leadership lessons and experiences gained in Washington will continue to benefit not only these students, but also their chapter, school and community for years to come.

# Young Steps Up to the Plate as New Head Baseball Coach



By: Graves County Schools

“Compete. It’s not just an action. It’s a mentality. Whether you are experiencing success or failure, these players are gritty...not afraid to work...and refuse to accept defeat.”

New head baseball coach, Josh Young, has a clear vision for this team. A foundation they will build on this coming season as he takes them under his wing. Regardless of circumstance or records, this season the baseball field will consist of young men competing.

A familiar face in the GC dugout, Young has been serving as assistant coach for two years, as well as an assistant football coach. Prior to landing at the Eagle’s Nest, Young served as head baseball coach at his alma mater, Caldwell County High School. It was then, while serving at his old stomping grounds, that he realized the impact and importance his coach had on him during his time as a tiger.

“My high school baseball coach used the game of baseball as a way to invest in young men. He taught the game to me in a way that gave me a new appreciation for it, and showed me the connections between baseball and real life. It is a hard game, but the people around you make it a lot more manageable.”

The upcoming season brings lofty goals for Young and the Eagles. With a raised standard firmly in place, which Young

attributes to previous coaching staff, the future of this team certainly could include some hardware.

“I truly believe this team and this program are more than capable of competing for and winning a regional championship. There is a lot of talent in this school system; it is just a matter of utilizing it and establishing a work ethic worthy of a championship.” While this time is officially the “off season” for Young and his team, there is still plenty of work to be done... and sometimes that doesn’t necessarily mean on the field. Young insists that his priorities begin in the lives of these young men as they are determining at this stage of life the person they will ultimately be.

“Priority number 1 for me as a coach is to develop young men of high character and responsibility who are prepared to become successful men upon graduation and approaching adulthood. If I am doing my job correctly, I have no doubt that results will show up on the field, but more importantly...off the field. Winning games will be a byproduct of building young men of character, discipline, and accountability.”

Coach Josh Young has been married to his wife, Erica, for 5 years and they have a son, Dax who is 1 ½.

Congratulations and we look forward to the future of Graves County baseball!

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# Fireworks, smoke and your lungs

By **TOM LATEK**  
*Kentucky Today*

FRANKFORT, Ky. (KT) – Fireworks are a summertime staple and an iconic element of Independence Day celebrations. However, many people don't realize that the resulting smoke is hazardous.

The American Lung Association wants to educate the public on the risks associated with firework smoke and is sharing tips to enjoy these spectacular displays more safely.

When fireworks explode, they release irritating gases and harmful metals, including carbon monoxide, aluminum and

cadmium, into the air. Firework smoke also contains tiny particles, known as particulate matter (PM), which can irritate the lungs, trigger asthma attacks and cause other respiratory symptoms. Note that particulate matter levels tend to be elevated not only during the fireworks, but for hours or even days afterward.

Breathing in firework smoke is unhealthy for everyone, but children, older adults, those who are pregnant and individuals with lung or heart disease are especially vulnerable.

To protect your health and stay safe, the American Lung



Association has this guidance:

Try to stay upwind from firework displays to help minimize your exposure to harmful particles. This applies to personal fireworks too, as the smoke stays closer to the

ground.

If it is smoky outside, stay indoors with the windows closed and if you have air conditioning, use it on recirculate. This helps keep indoor air clean and reduces your exposure to outdoor

pollution.

Keep an eye on local air quality reports, especially during holidays when fireworks are common. A 2015 study found that air pollution levels increased by an average of 42 percent on the Fourth of July. Websites and apps such as AirNow.gov provide real-time air quality information to help you make informed decisions about outdoor activities.

If you have asthma or COPD, follow your action plan if you experience symptoms. This may include using your inhaler or seeking medical attention if necessary.

If you are experiencing wheezing,

shortness of breath, difficulty taking a full breath, chest heaviness, lightheadedness, dizziness, a persistent cough or experience difficult or painful breathing, contact your healthcare provider.

The American Lung Association's free Lung HelpLine at 1-800-LUNGUSA is staffed by nurses and respiratory therapists who can answer any lung health questions, including how to protect you and your family from firework smoke.

More information about firework smoke and lung health can be found at Lung.org.



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## Some tips on controlling energy usage during heat wave

By TOM LATEK  
*Kentucky Today*

ASHLAND, Ky. (KT) – The first week of July is bringing a heat wave that has air conditioning units humming and fans turning as electric utility customers in Kentucky try to beat the heat.

“As temperatures climb, air conditioners have to work harder and use more energy to keep homes cool,” said Ryan Lake, external affairs manager for Ashland-based Kentucky Power. “Extreme weather like this heat wave can cause customer bills to spike. However, there are many ways

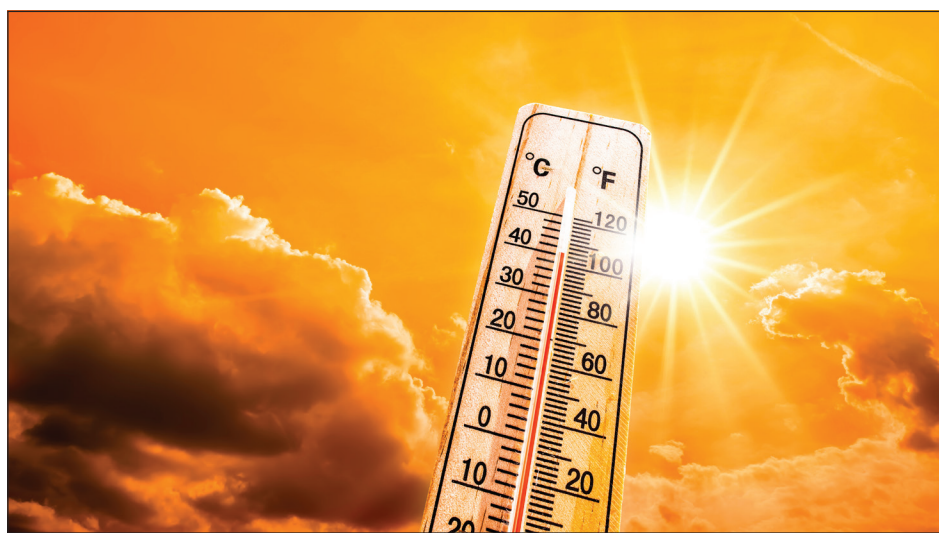
customers can control their energy usage, which can help manage high bills, even in extreme heat.”

There are many low- and no-cost energy efficiency measures customers can put into place to save money without jeopardizing comfort, including:

- Repair air leaks in the home; up to 25 percent of energy used to cool homes escapes via leaks.

- Maintain consistent temperatures and monitor your thermostat settings. The U.S. Department of Energy recommends a summer thermostat setting of 75-78 degrees.

- Use ceiling fans



- to circulate cool air throughout the house and to help cool people directly. This allows for a higher thermostat setting.

- Close drapes and shades on south-facing windows to block sun

and heat during the day.

- Move furnishings away from floor or return air vents for more efficient HVAC operation.

- Avoid using heat-producing appli-

ances such as ovens or dryers during the hottest parts of the day.

Remember, the National Weather Service has issued Extreme Heat Warnings for all of Kentucky. They remain in effect through

Friday evening for most of the state, and through Thursday evening in Northern Kentucky.

Hot and humid conditions are forecast to push the heat index, which is a combination of the air temperature and humidity, to between 105 and 115, with limited nighttime cooling during that period.

There is some relief in sight from the heat and humidity, according to the National Weather Service with an increasing chance of showers and thunderstorms, but that won't take place until early next week.

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# Former Murray police officer indicted on multiple counts

By TOM LATEK  
Kentucky Today

FRANKFORT, Ky. (KT) – A former Murray Police Department detective sergeant, arrested on six charges due to an alleged sexual relationship with an underage girl, has been indicted on many more counts, said Attorney General Russell Coleman.

A Calloway County Grand Jury indicted Justin Swope, 44, on one count of Unlawful Transaction with a Minor, First Degree, Illegal Sexual Act, Victim

Under 16 (a Class B Felony with a sentence of 10-20 years, if convicted), one count of Unlawful Transaction with a Minor, First Degree, Illegal Sexual Act, Victim Under 18 (a Class C Felony punishable by 5-10 years in prison), ten counts of Promoting a Sexual Performance By A Minor, Victim Under 18 (Class C Felony), four counts of Sodomy, Third Degree (a Class D Felony with a potential 1-5 years behind bars), ten counts of Rape, Third Degree



Justin Swope, a former police officer in Murray, was indicted on multiple charges.

(Class D Felony), and two counts of Sexual Abuse, First Degree (Class D).

According to the

indictment, the abuse began in 2018 when the victim was just 15 and continued through 2021. During that time,

Swope sent the girl inappropriate pictures of himself and forced her to do the same. Later, he forced her to take part in sexual acts and sexual intercourse, sometimes in a parked car. Swope was employed with the Murray Police Department during this time.

The Kentucky State Police (KSP) said on May 19, 2026, the Mayfield Post was contacted by the Murray Police Department (MPD) requesting KSP to investigate allegations of sexual abuse

against one of their officers that had been brought to their attention that same day.

An investigation led to the original charges against Swope, which the KSP said occurred in Calloway County as well as Trigg County.

Swope resigned from the Murray Police Department following his arrest.

Assistant Attorney General Richie Kemp presented the case to the grand jury on behalf of the commonwealth.

# Highway safety officials: Celebrate responsibly during holiday weekend

By TOM LATEK  
Kentucky Today

FRANKFORT, Ky. (KT) – State highway safety officials are reminding all Kentuckians to drive sober and celebrate responsibly this Independence Day to keep everyone safe on the roads.

Drivers are encouraged to make plans early for a sober ride home and should expect to see an increased law enforcement presence during the holiday weekend to prevent drunk driving crashes, as even one drink can impair a driver's ability to safely operate a vehicle.

"As we celebrate this holiday weekend, we encourage everyone to make smart decisions so we can keep Kentucky's roads safe for everyone," said Gov. Andy Beshear. "Drive sober, look



out for your friends and family, and help anyone who has been drinking find a safe way home."

Along with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Kentucky Transportation Cabinet officials are reminding drivers to "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" and remember that "Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving."

According to Kentucky State Police crash records, last year there were 55

crashes involving a drunken and/or drugged driver over the Fourth of July holiday period, resulting in 30 injuries and three deaths.

"You might feel okay to drive, but even a small amount of alcohol or drugs can impair your ability to drive safely, think clearly or react quickly," said Transportation Secretary Rebecca Goodman.

"Don't take the risk of putting yourself and others on the road in danger."

To prevent tragedies, follow these recommendations:

--Before the festivities begin, plan to get home safely at the end of the night.

--If you're impaired, use a ride-booking company, taxi, call a sober friend or family member, or use public transportation to get home safely.

--If you see an impaired driver, safely pull over and contact law enforcement. You may dial the Kentucky State Police's toll-free line at 800-222-5555 or call z11.

--If you know people who are about to drive or ride while impaired, take their keys and help them make other arrangements to get to their destination safely.

--Wear a seat belt! It is not only the law; it is also the best defense against an impaired driver. Buck-

ling up helps prevent injury and death if you are involved in a crash.

For more information go to [kyhighway-safety.com](http://kyhighway-safety.com).

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## BALLARD

**Kimberly Ann Ferren**, 44 years old, passed away on Friday, June 26, 2026, at Baptist Health in Paducah, KY. Funeral service was held Tuesday, June 30, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. at Morrow Funeral Chapel in LaCenter, KY, with Rev. Butch Latta officiating. Interment followed at Providence Baptist Church Cemetery in LaCenter, KY.

## CALDWELL

**George Harvey Choate**, 93, passed away Sunday, June 28, 2026, at the Christian Care Center in Hopkinsville, KY. Graveside services will be held at 1:00 pm Thursday, July 2, 2026, at Princeton Memorial Gardens, 1372 Hopkinsville Road in Princeton, KY.

**Sandra Clift Haberlock**, age 65, of Princeton, Kentucky, was called home to Heaven early in the morning on Thursday, June 25, 2026, surrounded by her loved ones at Baptist Health in Paducah after a valiant battle with cancer. Funeral services were held at 3:30 PM on Sunday, June 28, 2026, at Morgan's Funeral Home with Bro. Dane Hodges officiating. Burial followed at Bethlehem Cemetery in Caldwell County (Crider).

## CALLOWAY

**Larry R. Ball**, 79, of Hardin, KY, passed away on Saturday, June 27, 2026 at his home. A celebration of Larry's life will be held and announced. Imes Funeral Home is entrusted with caring for his family.

**Robert "Bob" Bruce LaMore**, 81, of Murray, passed away on Monday, June 22, 2026 at Passion and Purpose Assisted Living. A public graveside service with military honors is set for 11 AM on Monday, July 13, 2026 at Murray City Cemetery. Kim Reeder will officiate.

**Priscilla Rae Schanbacher** passed away Saturday June 20, 2026, at the Anna Mae Owen Hospice House at age 90, after a brief illness. An informal celebration of the life of Priscilla Schanbacher is planned for July 11, 2026, at 2:30 with visitation hours at 1:00 - 2:30 pm prior to the celebration at the First United Methodist Church, 503 Maple Streets in Murray, KY.

**Sharilyn Broach**, age 78, of Murray, Kentucky, passed away on Saturday, June 27, 2026, at the Ray and Kay Eckstein Hospice Care Center at Mercy Health in Paducah, Kentucky. Arrangements are currently incomplete at the J.H. Churchill Funeral Home & Cremation Services.

## CHRISTIAN

**Jennifer A. Trogden**, age 80, of Hopkinsville, KY, passed away on Thursday, June 25, 2026, at Bradford Heights Nursing and Rehab of natural causes. Funeral Services were held at 1:00 PM at Maddux-Fuqua-Hinton Funeral Home on Monday, June 29, 2026, with Bro. David Tucker officiating and burial to follow in Riverside Cemetery.

**Terry Bordelon, Jr.**, age 61, of Murfreesboro, TN, passed away on Monday, June 22, 2026, at his home of natural causes. Funeral Services were held at 1:00 PM on Thursday July 2, 2026, at Maddux-Fuqua-Hinton Funeral Home with burial to follow in Kentucky Veterans Cemetery West with full military honors.

**Steve Dunning**, 68, Antioch Road, Hopkinsville, KY passed away Tuesday, June 30, 2026 at his home of natural causes. A celebration of life will be held from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Friday, July 3, 2026 at Lamb Funeral Home. A private family burial will follow in Antioch Community Cemetery.

**Peggy T. Groom**, 82, Lafayette Road, Hopkinsville, KY passed away Saturday, June

27, 2026 at her home of natural causes. Funeral services were held at 1:00 p.m. Wednesday, July 1, 2026 at Flat Lick Cumberland Presbyterian Church with Rev. Nick Ashley officiating. Burial followed in Flat Lick Cemetery.

**Margie Christine Jackson** was born in Christian County, Kentucky, to the late George Thomas Jackson and Mary Irvin. On Tuesday, June 23rd, 2026, only a few days before her birthday, Margie departed from this life. Funeral Service was held on June 27th at the Gamble Funeral Home at 12 pm, 1311 Liberty St., Hopkinsville, KY.

**Shannon Lea Ballard**, 52, of Crofton, Kentucky died at 1:47 a.m., Wednesday, June 24, 2026 at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, Tennessee. Funeral services were held at 2:00 p.m., Monday, June 29, 2026 at Dogwood Funerals & Cremations of Crofton with Rev. Melvin Felts officiating. Burial followed in Lanier Cemetery in Crofton.

**Neveah Monae Gill** was born May 30, 2007, in Hopkinsville, Kentucky to her mother, Nichelle Nicole Babb and her father, Derrick Antonio Gill. Neveah passed away June 23, 2026 and lived 19 years, 3 weeks, 3 days. Funeral Service was held on July 1st from 12-1 pm at Adams & Sons Mortuary, 306 Mechanic, Hopkinsville, KY. Graveside Service was held on July 1st at 1 pm at Cave Springs Cemetery, 2120 Greenville Rd., Hopkinsville, KY.

**Darlynene (Finch) Jackson** went home to be with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ on June 21, 2026. Funeral Service was held on Tuesday, June 30th at Gainesville Baptist Church - 12 pm in Hopkinsville, KY. Burial was held at Kentucky Veterans Cemetery West.

## CRITTENDEN

On Sunday, June 28, 2026 at 6 a.m., **Eula Mae Milligan Ralph** went home to be with Jesus, Charles, her parents Burley and Ethel, brother C.W. and many other family members waiting on her on the other side of those pearly gates. She will be greatly missed. Services for Eula Mae Milligan Ralph were held on Wednesday, July 1, 2026 at 11:00 a.m. Funeral will be held at 1:00 p.m. and Greg Love will officiate. Burial was in Central Cemetery.

**Daniel Wayne Lynch**, age 33, of Murray, KY and formerly of Marion, passed away on June 26, 2026, at his home. Funeral services were held at 12:00 PM at Gilbert Funeral Home with burial to follow in Deer Creek Cemetery.

## GRAVES

**Bobby Earl McBee**, age 93, of San Antonio, TX formerly of Mayfield, KY passed away Wednesday June 24, 2026 at his residence. A private graveside service will be held at a later date at Spring Creek Church of Christ Cemetery. Byrn Funeral Home in Mayfield, KY is in charge of arrangements.

**Richard "Richie" Galloway**, age 72, of Sedalia passed away on Tuesday, June 30, 2026 at Mercy Health Lourdes in Paducah, KY. Funeral services for Mr. Richard "Richie" Galloway will be 11:00 a.m. on Friday, July 3, 2026 at Byrn Funeral Home in Mayfield, KY. Elliott Hamm and Collin Matheny will officiate. Interment will follow at Lebanon Church of Christ Cemetery.

**Kevin Dale Fox**, age 61, of Murray, formerly of Mayfield, passed away on Sunday, June 28, 2026 in Murray, KY. A private memorial service for Mr. Kevin Dale Fox will be held at a later date. Byrn Funeral Home in Mayfield, KY is in charge of arrangements.

**Nita Jane Nicholes Brown**, age 75, of Mayfield passed away on Sunday, June 28, 2026 at her residence. A private memorial service will be held

at a later date. Byrn Funeral Home in Mayfield, KY is in charge of arrangements.

**Jr. Champion**, age 81, of Mayfield passed away on Thursday, June 25, 2026 at Ascension St. Thomas West in Nashville, TN. Funeral services for Mr. Jr. Champion were held at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 1, 2026 at Byrn Funeral Home in Mayfield, KY. Rev. Keith Osborne will officiate. Interment followed at Mt. Olive Methodist Church Cemetery.

**Judith Jane Hildebrandt** age 82 of Mayfield passed away on Tuesday, June 30, 2026. at the Mercy Health Lourdes Hospital in Paducah, Ky. Private family burial will be held in the Camp Beuregard Cemetery. The Brown Funeral Home of Mayfield in charge of arrangements.

**Albert Waggoner**, age 73 and a lifelong resident of Mayfield, Kentucky, passed away at 1:54 a.m. on Sunday, June 28, 2026, at Vanderbilt Wilson County Hospital under the care of Gentiva Hospice in Lebanon, Tennessee. Funeral services for Albert Waggoner were held at 11:00 a.m. Thursday, July 2, 2026, at Brown Funeral Home in Mayfield. Bro. Tim Roland will officiate, assisted by Bro. Carson Barrow. Burial followed at Coldwater Church of Christ Cemetery in Coldwater, Kentucky.

**Dorothy Ann Hobbs**, age 85, of Fancy Farm, KY passed away at 1:57 AM Friday, June 26, 2026 at the Mills Health & Rehab in Mayfield, KY. Graveside Memorial Services for Dorothy will be held at a later date. The Brown Funeral Home in Mayfield, KY is in charge of the arrangements.

**Donald "Don" Goodman** age 75 of Mayfield passed away at 5:33 PM Wednesday June 24, 2026 at his daughters residence in Lexington. Funeral service will be held at 1:00 PM Friday July 3, 2026 at the Brown Funeral Home in Mayfield with Rev. Ike Murphey officiating, burial will follow in the Fellowship Cemetery in Wingo, visitation will be after 11:00 AM Friday July 3, 2026 at the Brown Funeral Home in Mayfield.

**Loretta Jo Alexander**, 78, of Mayfield, passed away on Wednesday, June 24, 2026, at Green Acres in Mayfield. Per her wishes she will be cremated. Lindsey Funeral Home is honored to serve the Alexander family.

## HICKMAN

**Erica Selene Busby Mayes**, age 47, of Hickman, Kentucky, passed away peacefully at her residence on Sunday, June 28, 2026. Funeral services for Erica Selene Busby Mayes were held at 2PM Tuesday, June 30, 2026 at the Hornbeak Funeral Chapel in Hickman.

## LIVINGSTON

**William Anthony Earl**, 72, of Smithland, KY passed away Saturday, June 27, 2026, at Mercy Health – Lourdes Hospital in Paducah, KY. A memorial service will be held on July 11, 2026 at 5 PM at Ilsley Christian Church at 100 Ilsley Spur, Dawson Springs, Ky.

## LYON

**Charles Donald Robertson "Don"**, 79, of Kuttawa, Kentucky, passed away peacefully on June 27, 2026, at Vanderbilt Hospital, surrounded by the love of his family. A celebration of life will be held on Friday, July 3, 2026, at Dunn's Funeral Home in Eddyville, Kentucky. Family visitation will be from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m., followed by public visitation from 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Funeral services will begin at 2:00 p.m.

## FUNERAL NOTICES continued

## MARSHALL

**Russell A. Novotny, Sr.**, 83, of Benton, Kentucky, passed away on June 11, 2026, at the Ray & Kay Eckstein Center in Paducah, Kentucky. Filbeck-Cann Funeral Home of Milner & Orr is handling the arrangements. There are no services scheduled at this time.

**Diane Fischer**, 91, of Gilbertsville, Kentucky, passed away on Tuesday, June 16, 2026, at the Ray & Kay Eckstein Hospice Care Center in Paducah, Kentucky. Visitation will be held from 12:00 PM to 12:30 PM on Friday, July 10, 2026, at St. Pius X Catholic Church in Calvert City. Funeral mass will be held at 12:30 PM on Friday, July 10, 2026, at St. Pius X Catholic Church with Father Brian Johnson officiating. A private graveside service will be held before the services take place at Kentucky Veterans Cemetery West.

**Tyler Joseph Montgomery**, 27 of Paducah, Kentucky passed away on Tuesday, June 30, 2026 at Baptist Health in Paducah, Kentucky. A funeral service will be at 2:00 PM on Friday, July 3, 2026 at Collier Funeral Home with Elder Danny Ferrell officiating. Interment will be in Fooks Cemetery, Benton, KY. Visitation will begin at 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM on Friday, July 3, 2026, at Collier Funeral Home, 211 West 5th, Benton, Kentucky.

**Christine Lynn Hinkebein Thornton**, 43 of Benton, passed away on Monday, June 29, 2026 at Ray and Kay Eckstein Hospice Care Center. A memorial mass will be held on Friday, July 3, 2026 at St. Pius X Catholic Church in Calvert City with Father Brian Johnson officiating. A memorial visitation will be held from 9:00 AM until 10:00 AM on Friday, July 3, 2026 at St. Pius X Catholic Church.

**William Milton Martin (Bill)**, age 73 of Benton, KY passed away on June 29, 2026. There are no events scheduled at this time. Collier Funeral Home is charge of arrangements.

**Wheeler Stanley Blythe**, 82, was born December 23, 1943 to Wade and Ollie Blythe in Monroe County, Kentucky. He passed away at his home in the Aurora area, June 24, 2026 with his family beside him. A Celebration of Life will be held at 3:00 pm on Saturday, July 11, 2026 at his home. Friends and family are welcome to visit from 1:00 pm until 3:00 pm on Saturday, July 11, 2026 to share stories and fellowship.

**Jerry Wayne McFarland**, 77, of Benton, passed away on Tuesday, June 23, 2026 at his home. A funeral service was held at 1:00 PM on Sunday, June 28, 2026 at Collier Funeral Home, Inc. 211 West 5th St Benton, KY 42025 with burial to follow at Dixon Cemetery.

## McCRACKEN

**Vira Mable Myers**, age 94, passed away at her residence on Saturday June 27, 2026, with her family by her side. Vira was cremated at, her request services for Ms. Myers will be at a later date. Lindsey Funeral Home oversees the arrangements for the Myers family.

**Thomas Edward Belt “Dancing Bandit”**, passed away at age 70, Wednesday 24, 2026, at his residence. Lindsey Funeral Home is honored to serve the Belt family.

**Angela Sue Reed**, 71, of Paducah, passed away on Sunday, June 28, 2026, at Livingston County Hospital. Graveside Services were held at 10:00 am on Thursday, July 2, 2026, at Woodlawn Memorial Gardens with Rev. Katie McKown officiating.

**Margie Davis**, 86, of West Paducah, passed away on Monday, June 29, 2026, at the Calvert City Convalescent Center in Calvert City, KY. Graveside services will be at 10:00 AM Friday, July 3, 2026, at Spring Bayou Baptist Church Cemetery with Rev. Jared Hayes, Rev. Wes Morehead, and Rev. Terry Tipton officiating. There will be no visitation. Milner & Orr Funeral Home of Paducah is in charge of all arrangements.

**Thomas Charles Meshew Jr.**, age 78, passed away on June 27 at his home in Paducah, KY. There will be no public service, but there will be a private graveside service at a later date. Share a memory or leave a message for the family at [www.milnerandorr.com](http://www.milnerandorr.com).

**Charles “Charlie” Reeves**, 87, of Paducah, Kentucky, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, June 26, 2026, surrounded by his family. A funeral service will be held at 11:00 AM on Friday, July 3, 2026, at Milner & Orr Funeral Home of Paducah with Bro. Michael Wooley officiating. Burial will follow at McKendree United Methodist Church Cemetery.

**Martin Allen Barnes**, 59, of Mayfield, Kentucky, passed away on Thursday, June

25, 2026, at Jackson Purchase Medical Center. A memorial service was held at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 30, 2026, at Lone Oak Church of Christ, with Jamie Boone officiating.

With heavy hearts and faith in the promises of our Lord Jesus Christ, we celebrate the life and homegoing of **Michael Myers** on June 25, 2026, a devoted Christian, loving husband, proud father, farmer, and respected community leader. Funeral services for Michael was held at 11:00 am on Wednesday, July 1, 2026, at Milner & Orr Funeral Home of Paducah with Bro. Ryan Baker, Bro. Mark Bond and Bro. Jason Browning officiating. Burial followed at Bethel Cumberland Presbyterian Cemetery in Kevil.

**Carter Hayes Crass**, infant son of Kyle & Tori (Taylor) Crass, was born into the arms of Jesus on June 25, 2026, at Baptist Health Paducah. A private family service will be held with burial at Kevil Cemetery.

**Hetzel Marie Kohl**, 93, of Murray, Kentucky, passed away on Wednesday, June 24, 2026, at Countryside Nursing & Rehabilitation Center in Bardwell, Kentucky. Milner & Orr Funeral Home and Cremation Services of Bardwell is in charge of arrangements.

**David Lavon “Red” Shannon**, 61 of Brookport, IL, transitioned from this life on Tuesday, June 23, 2026 at Mercy Health in Paducah, KY. Arrangements are pending. Donations can be made to Pettus Rowland Funeral Home at 1229 Madison Street Paducah, KY.

**James Michael “Mike” Ryan**, 76, of Paducah, Kentucky, passed away peacefully on June 27, 2026. A visitation was held from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm on Tuesday, June 30, 2026, at Hughes Funeral Home in Paducah. There will be no service.

## TRIGG

**Marty Crenshaw** - September 10, 1969 - June 23, 2026 - Graveside Services for 56 year old Marty Crenshaw of Cadiz were held Saturday, June 27, 2026 at 2:00 p.m. at Bethel Methodist Church Cemetery with Rev. David Banister officiating and Eulogy by Christopher Crenshaw. Burial will follow in the Bethel Methodist Church Cemetery. King's Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements.

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*“I am the resurrection  
and the life.  
He who believes in me  
will live, even though  
he dies; and whoever  
lives and believes in me  
will never die.”*

— ✨ —  
JOHN 11:25-26

— IN GOD WE TRUST ★ FOREVER IN HIS CARE —

# VICTORIOUS *Living* ...in a troubled world

## Go where you grow

By Teresa LeNeave  
leneave2@comcast.net

Being part of a spiritual community can be one of the most beneficial things you can do for yourself. In the past few years, it seems that is not the “norm”. Many churches have fewer attendees. I’m reminded of what apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 12 where most of the chapter is devoted to comparing the church to a human body with different body parts working together in unity and unison. That’s what we are. That’s who we are. One body with many parts, all connected to the Creator of the universe.

Why would Paul explicitly go into such detail to show how connected we are? To answer that, maybe we should discuss the advantages of community. In Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, King Solomon said, “Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labor. For if

they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falls; for he hath not another to help him.” Being part of a spiritual community assures us, we are not alone in our spiritual journey. When we see all the similar struggles, trials and victories, it helps us have a deeper understanding of life and God’s purpose for our lives.

People go through so many heartbreaking situations and, to me, it is comforting to know you have friends who will pray with you, and for you. When we go through challenging times, having (or seeking for) a body of believers who you can fellowship with will provide much-needed comfort. Not only do you need them, but they need you. We gain mutual inspiration and encouragement from each other. We need each other. It’s that simple.

From the day God



created Adam and said, “He needed a help mate”, I believe, it became a universal law that God created us to live in community. To spend time loving and encouraging and helping each other.

In addition, to me, we benefit mentally and emotionally from spiritual community when we worship. We draw off the strength and joy of each other. Go to church where you get strength and joy from

people around you. If you don’t, it won’t take long before you begin to feel far away from God. When that happens, we tend to withdraw. Go where you grow!

Personally, I feel we attend church to rebuild and maintain our connection to God. To keep it alive. To keep our prayer life alive. To keep faith alive. To keep us opening our Bible more than just a few times a year.

Having a spiritual

community also helps us let go of things we can’t change and let God. In I Peter 5:7 he tells us, “Cast all your cares on Him, for He cares for you.” These words serve as a reminder that God is not far away at any time. We can’t carry the heavy burden and God doesn’t want us to. He said, “cast”. Let go of them. God cares about our struggles, our doubts and even our fears.

Sometimes, all we need is a long walk

to clear our anxiety and bring clarity to our souls. I encourage you, and even myself, to find moments when you can get alone with God and let your heart be still in His presence. In those quiet moments, sprinkled with thanksgiving to God, we begin to see He is right there ready to pick us up and carry us when we can’t carry the heavy burden. Other times, you will need a friend who can give you a bear hug and tell you they understand. I’d like to encourage all Christians to not neglect your spiritual community because there you can find inspiration and encouragement.

As you know, the journey of faith has never been without its difficulties, so cling to the people God has placed in your life to encourage you. And, let’s not forget to return the favor. We need mutual inspiration and mutual encouragement. Go where you grow.

## HE KNOWS HIS OWN

Bro. Brandon G. Bramlett  
Bandana Baptist Church

Her life was a lie. Twenty-eight years passed before she discovered the life-shattering truth. In a quest to uncover her family lineage, Raylane Amaral submitted her DNA to a trustworthy ancestry firm. The first result hit her like a freight train: the woman she called “mom” was not her biological mother at all. Then came another revelation which left her questioning everything—she had a brother she never knew about.

The New York Post reported that Raylane contacted her newly discovered brother, who claimed his sister was born the very same day. Surely, she

was that baby and reuniting with her real mother was finally on the horizon. Not even close. Raylane and her newfound brother learned that his “sister” had also been mistakenly sent home with the wrong woman, meaning that there had not been one mix-up in the hospital, but two. At last, the web of confusion untwined when the women tracked down their real mothers, while the hospital became trapped in a web of its own when all the families joined together in a lawsuit.

Stories like these are rare nowadays because of safeguards in maternity wards, but it serves as a reminder that human beings with the best intentions sometimes mix

up who is who. The postal service occasionally delivers your neighbor’s mail to you. Waitresses sometimes bring the wrong meal to your table. Airports erroneously assign your luggage to someone else. But this is something the Lord will never do, which is why the Scripture says, “But God’s firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: “The Lord knows those who are his” (2 Tim. 2:19a).

The all-knowing Christ similarly promised, “I know my own and my own know me” (John 10:14b). Paul likewise guaranteed, “But if anyone loves God, he is known by God” (1 Cor. 8:3). The Lord knows every believer by name and has recorded their names with indissolu-

ble ink in the Book of Life (Phil. 4:3; Rev. 3:5). He will never forget His children—the only thing He forgets are their sins (Heb. 8:12). This is why God tenderly swore, “Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you. Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands” (Isa. 49:15-16a).

You are known by God if you know Christ and there is no possibility of any mix-up. The Lord never questions whether or not you are His. You can never slip from His memory or be accidentally mistaken for an unbeliever. The hymn-writer Norman J. Clayton (1903–1992)

said it best: “Jesus, my Lord will love me forever, from Him no pow’r of evil can sever, He gave His life to ransom my soul;

now I belong to Him; Now I belong to Jesus, Jesus belongs to me, not for the years of time alone, but for eternity.”



### A - Admit to God That You Are A Sinner

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. - Romans 3:23 Repent, turn away from your sin. - Acts 3:19; 1 John 1:9

### B - Believe Jesus Died for Your Sins

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only son, that WHOEVER believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. - John 3:16

### C - Confess Jesus is Lord

If you confess with your mouth “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead you will be saved. - Romans 10:9

# OUTDOOR Truths

By Gary Miller  
Outdoortruths.org



## Leaves or Fruit

July is the month when the fruit of sowing begins to show. Gardens begin to produce their harvest, and trees begin to reveal what has been hiding behind their leaves. For deer hunters, behind those oak leaves should be tiny acorns beginning to take shape. And since acorns are a deer's favorite food, these signs tell us where to hang a tree stand. It's not unusual for me this time of year, to just ride around on my side-by-side looking for the trees that will be dropping acorns during the upcoming deer

season. And there's really no rhyme or reason to know which trees these will be. Sometimes I will see a large tree, thick with leaves, and think this tree will be full of acorns, only to do a deeper look and find no fruit whatsoever. It looked "fruity," but nothing was there.

There's a story in the Bible where Jesus saw a fig tree that looked fruity, but when He arrived at the tree, the figs were absent. He cursed the tree and it withered. He understood that while leaves do most of the work that makes fruit possible,

leaves are not the fruit.

For years, when it came to the Christian life, I got the fruit wrong. I thought the fruit of a follower of Christ was church attendance, prayer, giving, Bible study, and some other disciplines. Somehow, I overlooked one of the simplest verses in the Bible. The Apostle Paul put it on the lower shelf for people like me. He said, "But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-con-

trol." (Gal 5:22-23 NLT) For some reason, I always thought these verses read this way. "But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: Bible reading, church attendance, prayer, and giving." I'm not sure how I missed something so plain. Maybe I couldn't see the fruit for the leaves. More likely however, I thought the leaves were the fruit. Let me break this down quickly. (And you can join me on Zoom on Tuesday mornings as I talk about this.) The true test of spiritual growth is not found

in the leaves but in the fruit. And what the Holy Spirit is trying to produce in you and me, is not church attendance, prayer, Bible study, or giving. These are only the leaves. And while they do most of the work toward producing fruit, they are not the fruit. Let me break it down a little more. If you and I are a follower of Christ and we are not more loving, joyful, peace-filled, have more patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, than we were a few years ago, then we

have mistaken the leaves for the fruit. And while others may be initially drawn to our fruity look, they will ultimately leave disappointed because our life produced nothing that satisfied.

*Gary Miller has written Outdoor Truths articles for 23 years. He has also written five books which include compilations of his articles and a father/son devotional. He also speaks at wild-game dinners and men's events for churches and associations. Stay updated on Outdoor Truths each week by subscribing at Outdoortruths.org*

## Is there more than one path to heaven?

By William F Holland Jr.  
billyhollandministries.com

Christians insist there is only one way to heaven, as salvation is associated with believing in Jesus Christ – nothing or no one else. The foundation of their evangelistic mission is declaring that Jesus is THE way, and all other religions are counterfeit and dangerously deceived. The world calls this a controversy despite the Bible revealing that God has never been tolerant of other religions. One of the most common outcries within the realm of spirituality is how could such knowledgeable and devout people from the history of the world who worship other entities be considered deceived and God's enemy? The Christians response is that they have become brainwashed with misinformation and have fallen in love with a spiritual impostor.

As humanity continues to evolve toward a more unified concept of independence, there is a growing criticism against any religion claiming to be exclusive.

A critical component of Christian salvation is how a person who receives Christ as their Lord and Savior becomes born again by being transformed from a state of being lost, into a new creation and identity as now a saved child of God. According to the Christian view, until a person has gone through this process of accepting God's grace through faith, the person is being held captive by sin, and their name is not written in the Lamb's book of life. These individuals will be lost forever, no matter how devoted they were to the contrasting religious philosophies they were taught. Christianity has always been strong-

ly resistant to being incorporated into a global religion, and by the way, they are not the only ones. Following Christ requires an all-or-nothing commitment to Jesus as the one and only incarnation of the Son of God, who, as a member of the Trinity, is also the one true God.

Within the concept of religious pluralism and universalism, there are progressive and non-exclusive belief systems that respect all types of paths to heaven, including simply living a moral life and being a nice person, which has always been accepted as non-judgmental. Some Universalists who embrace the idea of total reconciliation are convinced everything will be restored and forgiven, and that all those who ever lived will eventually return to God to live with Him forever. The philosophy of there being no

such thing as hell or an eternal consequence and punishment for not accepting Christ is no doubt also growing in popularity, even though the Bible warns of such a place. Since the God of the Bible is not a team player, the world finds this offensive, especially with a culture that thrives on the freedom of choice. The world wants to know why can't everyone serve a god like cheering for a beloved team, having personal political views, or eating at a favorite restaurant?

As a Christian, the Archbishop of Canterbury insisted that truth cannot contradict itself. Either Jesus is the Son of God who provides salvation to all who will believe, or he is not. It is either one or the other; it cannot be both. To believe that all contradictory religions are God's truth is like saying 2+2=5, or 8, or 26, or

whatever you like. And to believe in all religions simultaneously is to become hopelessly self-contradictory. One simply cannot accept the Hindu belief that there are hundreds of thousands of gods, while embracing the Muslim belief that there is only Allah, along with Buddhism, which does not believe in God at all, at the same time. Consider religious opinions about the afterlife: Certain sects of Taoism and Shintoism maintain that there is no afterlife. Buddhists, through endless reincarnation experiences, seek Nirvana, where the human conscience finds complete peace, while Christianity, in Revelation 22:4, teaches that heaven is a reality where, after this life, only the redeemed will spend eternity in God's presence. How can they all be true?

Free will allows everyone to have their

own opinions, and humans can worship any idol or religion they choose, but they cannot make up their own truth. To insist that all religions are equally true is another way to say that all religions are equally false. A.W. Tozer is quoted, "Jesus does not only speak the truth that we must believe; He is the truth that we must live." Ravi Zacharias is quoted, "Divine truth is not merely a concept to be embraced, but a person to be known." "Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" John 3:3.

*Dr. Holland is a Christian minister, author, and community outreach chaplain. Ask for a free download of his song, "Intentions of the Heart" at psalmz103@gmail.com*

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135 Allegheny Road • Gilbertsville, Kentucky • \$1,399,900 - MLS # 130868. This Incredible Customer Built 2015 property is amazing! Across the road 1,000 yards from KY Dam Village State Park, Dam, Marina, Restaurant/Lodge. 2,000 yards from the Golf course! Less than 2 miles to Aviation Airfield, & I-24/69. 5 total bedrooms, 4 full baths, 2 half baths, 2 laundry areas & 3 gas log fireplaces! Vaulted & Cathedral ceilings. Detailed woodwork & moldings, polished marble, w/unique characteristics! Expansive Living room open to kitchen/breakfast area. Primary suite offers a custom tiled bath, heated floor & walk-in closet! Covered patio w/ wood burning FP. In-ground pool, privacy fence & gated concrete drive w/ ample parking, 2 1/2 car garage has apartment, extra lot & huge PRIVA-

CY FENCE! CALL Jennifer Palmer Realty at 270-519-9000

27 Paradise Point Road • Gilbertsville, Kentucky • \$369,000 – MLS # 122709. 3 beautiful lots, over 1/2 acre sitting up HIGH on a hill with a SPECTACULAR BREATHTAKING VIEW OF KY LAKE in Cambridge Shores Subdivision! Build your Dream Home! Magnificent Stunning view of KY Lake! Enjoy all the amenities that Cambridge Shores has to offer. This quiet KY Lake neighborhood is the perfect place to call home! CALL Jennifer Palmer Realty at 270-519-9000

718 Marina Village Dr., Grand Rivers, Kentucky • \$610,000 – MLS # 130701. Beautiful Custom Built 3 bed 3 & 1/2 bath 2006, looks like a new Home sitting on 2 private lots in Prestigious Gated Marina Village Subdivision! Hardwood Floors, 9 ft ceilings, many updates, large family room open to Kitchen! 2 Bedrooms on main level & one HUGE bedroom up. All bedrooms have a full bath. Kitchen has custom cabinetry! NEW HEAT/AIR UNITS IN 2023. Upstairs-2019. NEW DECK, 4 car garage heated & cooled, Storm Shelter, ALL FURNITURE, DECOR, TABLEWARE, BEDDING, LIGHTHOUSE PICTURES, Towels STAY PLUS NEW flooring that has not been installed. Take a golf cart ride to Grand Rivers, World Famous Patties Restaurant, antique shops & more! CALL Jennifer Palmer Realty at 270-519-9000

738 Marina Village Dr., Grand Rivers, Kentucky • \$799,000.00 MLS # 136804. Quality Custom built 3 bedroom 3 full baths, 1/2 bath and 9 ft ceilings throughout. Built in 2006 in Prestigious Gated Marina Village Subdivision! Stunning Great room features wonderful brick fireplace, 25 ft high ceiling with beams, porch with stone

gas stove, wood flooring, unique character open to kitchen for perfect entertaining! Large Kitchen plenty of cabinetry, pantry, bar stools & dining area. Primary bedroom suite on main level! Beautiful tray ceilings, walkout deck, bath has huge walk-in shower, walk-in closet, Jacuzzi tub, and double vanity. Half bath & utility room on main level. Guest bedrooms up, full bath, walk-in closet plus massive attic storage. Family room down, full bath, wine cellar, walkout patio, outdoor Kitchen, Pellet grill and BIG GREEN EGG grill built-in. Garage and workshop. APHW home warranty. Everything stays with full price offer!

643 Whitney Dr., Paducah, Kentucky • \$450,000.00 - MLS # 137569. Unique 3 bedroom 3 full bath West End home located in the desirable Pines Subdivision loaded with captivating character! Impressive living room features gas log fireplace, very tall valuted ceiling & large stylish windows for plenty of light. Kitchen has plenty of cabinets, island, breakfast area, and pantry. Excellent primary bedroom with spacious bath, jacuzzi tub, double vanity, walk-in closet, surround sound, balcony overlooking deck & backyard. Ample storage space throughout the home. New refrigerator & microwave in 2026. Massive deck perfect for entertaining! Beautiful yard, trees and landscaping. Well insulated home so utility bills are low. Convenient to the mall area, I-24 and downtown Paducah. Underground Dog fence. CALL Jennifer Palmer Realty 270-519-9000

2836 James Sanders Blvd., Paducah, KY. MLS #134672. High traffic location, Approximately 3+ acres off exit #4 I-24 on James Sander's BLVD between Texas Road House and Academy Sports. Great location for commercial development. Approximately 450 feet of road frontage, level, with all utilities. \$2,450,000, Carla Bridges @ REMAX at 270-559-8425

6330 Burchell, Paducah, KY. MLS #136950. Premier custom home in one of Paducah's most prestigious neighborhoods, The Grove, privately set on a cul-de-sac. Grand entry, open kitchen with butler's pantry, spacious living room with fireplace, office, craft room,

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1114 Broadway, Paducah, KY. MLS #132732. Excellent opportunity for a client in need of a nice office building in midtown Paducah, centrally located in the heart of Paducah's business district with high traffic location. Dual access from Broadway and Kentucky Avenue. Current tenants are expected to move by late fall. \$459,900. Contact Carla Bridges @ REMAX at 270-559-8425

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4 Adjacent 1 acres lots in Peninsula Subdivision on Lake of Egypt. Great year round fishing with

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1	5	9	8	7	4	6	2	3
3	8	7	9	2	6	5	1	4
2	6	4	3	5	1	7	8	9
5	2	8	1	3	9	4	6	7
6	3	6	7	4	8	2	5	1
7	4	1	5	6	2	9	3	8
8	7	3	6	9	5	1	4	2
4	9	5	2	1	3	8	7	6
6	1	2	4	8	7	3	9	5

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 J I M T L A A O G G O  
 P D T J O P O P O N  
 H H T A T I A T I A T  
 X H T A T I A T I A T  
 C C T P A F L S  
 L S L S N N N N N  
 X X X G G H H H H  
 U S U V T D D A A A  
 S S P D N W T A V A  
 T T H T N A M X R  
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 C O U S P L A S P  
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ry Milan 82000 miles. Bought August 2024 for commuting to work. No longer needed. Last Service June 2025 78,500 miles New Tires June 2025 78,800 miles. Price \$7500.00. Call 615-430-7544.

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1950 8N Ford tractor \$1,250.00, Call 270-832-1281. W0.5x32

King Kutter Bushhog 48" w/ PTO Connector, Like New. \$900 OBO. Ben-

ton, KY. 815-236-9455 (TFN)

**MISC. FOR SALE**

For Sale: New and Used Christmas Toys and Tools. Rosanna's Place Salem Ky. Thurs -Fri. 8-4. Sat. 8-1

Goodman 4 ton central heat & air split unit, hardly used. Call thomas 270-247-7589. (tfn)

Fiddle/Violin (Karl Knilling), Hand-Made in Germany, 2 Bows & Hard Case. Very Good Condition. \$300, 270-328-

8801 (tfn)

Roofing supplies left over a job. GAF shingles, under lay, edging, nails. Retail value \$700. Your cost for lot \$250 cash and carry. 270-559-8467

Hunting equipment, trophy deer heads, tools, household horse and Indian items, thousands of like new items priced to sell. Traders Mall Flea Market June 13th

# Frazier Kentucky History Museum to Open I Too Am a Kentuckian Exhibition on Fourth of July

**Press Release**

LOUISVILLE, KY—Wednesday, July 1, 2026—The Frazier is opening a major new exhibition on America's 250th birthday—and offering free admission from 1 to 4 p.m. if you say the exhibition's name!

Join us Saturday, July 4, for the opening of I Too Am a Kentuckian. The museum will be open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., with free admissions from 1 to 4 p.m. if you say "I too am a Kentuckian" at the front desk! The first 100 museum admission will receive a free "I too am a Kentuckian" lapel pin. Activities include guided exhibition tours with Simon Meiners, 1:30 and 2:30 p.m., and a curator availability with Amanda Briede, 2 and 3 p.m. Plus, Sarah Jemerson will lead a family engagement in another one of the Frazier's America250 exhibitions, Pursuit of Happiness, 1-4 p.m.

Visitors can celebrate 250 years of Kentucky's spirit in the new exhibition I Too Am a Kentuckian. Those words were spoken by one of the most famous Kentuckians of all, Abraham Lincoln. The exhibition is a powerful journey through the Commonwealth's ongoing pursuit of America's founding ideals and the many people who have made a mark and continue to on our beloved Kentucky.

From voting to civic duty, public and military service, and community leadership, I Too Am a Kentuckian showcases how everyday citizens preserve the promises of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Through inspiring stories of individuals, communities, and pivotal moments, visitors see how the spirit of the Founding Fathers lives on in the Bluegrass State—and how many people take great pride in saying, "I too am a Kentuckian."

"We are so excited for every Kentuckian to experience this inspiring and interactive exhibition that shares stories, service, and songs from the fifteenth state in the union," Frazier President Andy Treinen said. "Our team has worked very hard to curate a proud, yet honest, experience that captures our Commonwealth in war time and peace—through lawmakers, justices, protestors, and we the people, to better understand Kentucky's integral role in America's 250 years of this great experiment."

The exhibition features stencils of text excerpted from the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution. Each area establishes the values asserted in these documents, then explores how

Kentuckians have advanced these values—through government service, military service, public service, civic activism, labor organizing, religious practice, artistic expression, or promoting education.

Objects on display include a packhorse librarian's book crate, country singer Loretta Lynn's red chiffon dress, and a chair made by Shakers. Archaeological artifacts include household goods recovered from a refugee settlement for the formerly enslaved families of Black soldiers at Camp Nelson. Also on display are military uniforms from all branches of the armed forces—including a uniform that belongs to Bowling Green native General B. Chance Saltzman, the Chief of Space Operations in the US Space Force. The military attire includes uniforms Kentuckians have worn in nearly every major American conflict, including the Mexican-American War, the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, World Wars I and II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, and the Global War on Terror. An audio station will feature famous and everyday Kentuckians saying "I too am a Kentuckian."

Learn about Kentuckians who have served our Common-

wealth in all ways.

The exhibition will be open July 4, 2026, to July 4, 2027.

I Too Am a Kentuckian was made possible in part through generous

sponsors, including the National Endowment for the Humanities, the America250KY Commission in Louisville, WLKY, and Louisville Public Media. Any views,

findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this exhibition do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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# USA 250<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

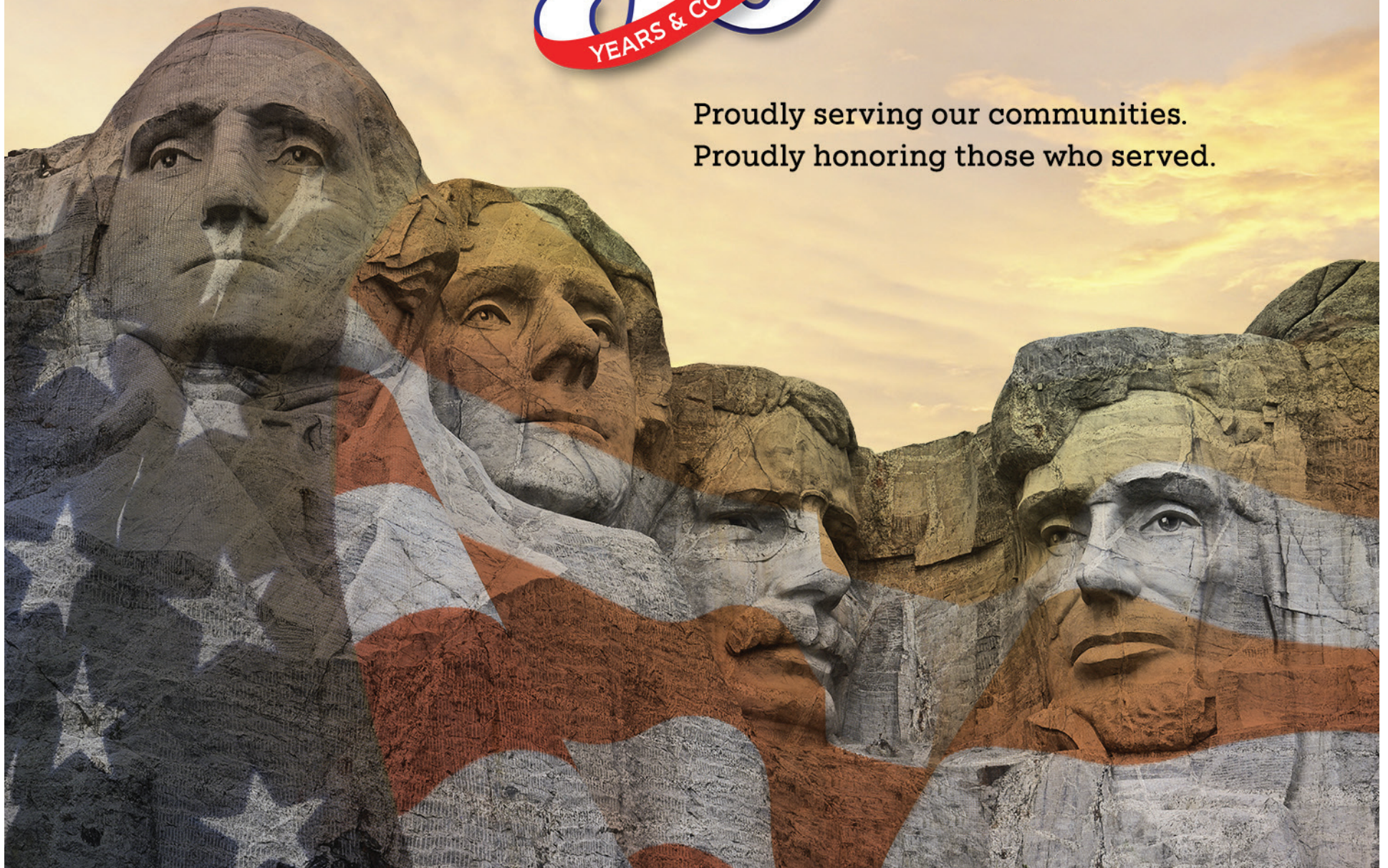
## HONORING OUR HEROES CELEBRATING OUR NATION

To every veteran – thank you for your sacrifice, your dedication, and your commitment to preserving the freedoms we enjoy every day. Your service has helped shape our nation’s past and continues to inspire its future.

As we commemorate America’s 250th birthday, we celebrate the values that unite us: liberty, service, and community. Pepsi MidAmerica is proud to stand alongside those who have answered the call to serve and the communities that support them.



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# AMERICA AT 250



- OUR PAST
- OUR PEOPLE
- OUR PROGRESS

## Reminder to join us for the City of Paducah Independence Day celebration

Paducah's Independence Day Celebration, sponsored by Independence Bank and Global Laser Enrichment, will be Saturday, July 4 in historic downtown Paducah.

Enjoy live music, food trucks, free Ferris wheel rides, and a fireworks show.

Paducah's Independence Day Celebration, sponsored by Independence Bank and Global Laser Enrichment, will be Saturday, July 4 in historic downtown Paducah.

Enjoy live music, food trucks, free Ferris wheel rides, and a fireworks show. An estimated 10,000 people come each year to the riverfront to enjoy Paducah's celebration.

"This Independence Day, I invite everyone to come to downtown Paducah and be part

of a truly historic celebration," said Mayor George Bray. "As our nation marks its 250th anniversary, we're proud to bring our community together to honor



America's past while creating new memories with family and friends. This year, we've expanded entertainment hours and extended food vendor operations so visitors can enjoy even more of the festivities throughout the day and evening. We're also excited

to introduce Ferris wheel rides for the first time, adding a fun new attraction for all ages. Join us downtown as we celebrate 250 years of American independence with great food, live entertainment, family activities, and a community spirit that reflects the very best of our nation."

To celebrate 250 years, this year's event features expanded hours for food vendors, live music, and activities, along with free Ferris wheel rides. The Ferris wheel will be available from 1 to 9 p.m. in the parking lot in the

100 block of Jefferson Street. Mobile food vendors will be serving from noon until 9 p.m. They will be along Jefferson Street between Water Street and 2nd Street. Live entertainment

see **CELEBRATION**, page C2



## America's story: *Living on through every voice, every word and every generation*

By **Laurna Todd**  
SCENE Writer

America's story has never been written by just one person. It has been told through newspaper pages, songs, paintings, speeches, photographs, films and now with the

touch of a screen. As the nation celebrates its 250th anniversary, one freedom has remained at the heart of that story—the freedom to express ourselves.

Since the founding of the United States, Americans have enjoyed the ability to

share their minds, tell their stories. That freedom helped build a nation where new ideas could be discussed, communities could stay

see **STORY**, page C3

## Calvert City invites community to celebrate veterans at annual Veterans Brunch on July 4th

The community is invited to honor those who have served our country during the annual Veterans Brunch on Friday, July 4, from 9 to 11 a.m. at the Calvert City Civic Center.

Previously held at the Lakeland Event Center, this year's celebration moves to the Civic Center while continuing the tradition of bringing the community together to recognize the service and sacrifice of local veterans.

Veterans will receive free admission, while breakfast is \$10 per person. Children ages 7 and under eat free.

Breakfast will be prepared by 50's Cafe, allowing families

and friends time to enjoy a meal together while celebrating the veterans who have served our nation.

"Independence Day is a time to celebrate the freedoms we enjoy, and those freedoms exist because of the courage and sacrifice of our veterans," said Brittany Story, president of the Calvert Area Development Association.

"This brunch is a small way for our community to say thank you, share a meal, and honor the men and women who have selflessly served our country. We encourage everyone to come celebrate the veterans in their lives."

The Veterans Brunch is organized

by the Calvert Area Development Association (CADA) and made possible through the generous support of community sponsors, including 50's Cafe, Los Tres Amigos, Lake Chem Federal Credit Union, Hilary Washer State Farm, and CFSB.

Whether you're a veteran, family member, friend, or community member, you're encouraged to attend, enjoy breakfast, and celebrate the heroes who have dedicated themselves to serving our nation.

For more information about the Veterans Brunch or other July 4 Ameribration events, visit [www.calvertcityky.gov](http://www.calvertcityky.gov).

**CELEBRATION,**

Continued from page C1

begins at 1 p.m. featuring two stages: Wilson Stage on the riverfront and the Riverfront Plaza Stage, provided by McCracken County, which will be in the parking lot at the corner of Broadway and Water Street. The entertainment lineup is as follows:

- 1:00 p.m. – Jack Martin & Co. (Wilson Stage)
- 2:00 p.m. – The BLOOM Initiative (Wilson Stage)
- 3:00 p.m. – Sam Lynn (Wilson Stage)
- 4:00 p.m. – Lew Jetton (Wilson Stage)
- 5:00 p.m. – Lost Stars (Riverfront Plaza Stage)
- 6:30 p.m. – Cody Bradley (Riverfront Plaza Stage)
- 8:30 p.m. – Paducah Community Band (Wilson Stage)
- 9:15 p.m. – Fireworks Show

The City has contracted with Pyro Shows for a 20-minute display with the fireworks discharged from a barge provided by Pine Bluff Materials. The tug is provided by Ingram Barge Company. The creative show is choreographed to music with speakers placed along the riverfront near Wilson Stage. Viewing is

available along the riverfront near Wilson Stage, Schultz Park, and the Transient Boat Dock.

“Our Independence Day celebration would not be possible without the incredible support of our sponsors, community partners, volunteers, public safety agencies, and local businesses,” said Director of Parks and Recreation Amie Clark. “As we commemorate our nation’s 250th anniversary, we’re especially grateful for the organizations and individuals who have invested their time, resources, and energy to create a memorable experience for our residents and visitors. Thanks to their generosity and collaboration, we’re able to offer expanded entertainment hours, a larger selection of food vendors, and exciting new attractions like Ferris wheel rides. This event is a true community effort, and we thank everyone who has helped bring this special celebration to life.”

If a thunderstorm is in the area at the scheduled time for the fireworks, the fireworks show will be delayed until the weather clears or rescheduled for Sunday, July 5. The Paducah Fire and

Police Departments, McCracken County Sheriff’s Department, and McCracken County Department of Emergency Management will be at the event for additional safety.

Boaters should use the Ohio River Boat Launch at 6th and Burnett Streets since the floodwall openings at Broadway and Kentucky will close at 9 p.m. on July 3.

On July 3, Broadway and Jefferson will close to vehicular traffic from 2nd Street to the floodwall. Water Street from Kentucky to Jefferson also will close on that date. The downtown parking lot at 2nd and Broadway will be closed to vehicles due to the space needed for the Ferris wheel and stage.

Parking will be available in several locations including downtown on-street street parking, the Farmers’ Market parking lot, Convention Center lots, and the parking lot at 3rd and Kentucky.

While pets are allowed at the Celebration, the City of Paducah’s dog ordinance mandates that the dog must be restrained by a leash or other lead that is no longer than three feet.

**CITY OF PADUCAH, KY  
INDEPENDENCE DAY  
CELEBRATION**

12:00-9:00PM	<b>MOBILE FOOD VENDORS</b>	
1:00-9:00PM	<b>FERRIS WHEEL</b>	FREE ADMISSION
1:00-5:00PM	<b>MUSIC ON WILSON STAGE</b>	1:00PM JACK MARTIN & CO.   2:00PM BLOOM INITIATIVE   3:00 PM SAM LYNN   4:00PM LEW JETTON
5:00 PM	<b>LOST STARS</b>	RIVERFRONT PLAZA STAGE
6:30 PM	<b>CODY BRADLEY</b>	RIVERFRONT PLAZA STAGE
8:30 PM	<b>PADUCAH COMMUNITY BAND</b>	WILSON STAGE
9:15 PM	<b>FIREWORKS BY PYRO SHOWS</b>	SPECIAL THANKS TO: INGRAM PINE BLUFF MATERIALS CO.

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**STORY,**

Continued from page C1

informed and history could be preserved for generations to come.

During the Revolutionary War, pamphlets, newspapers and public speeches helped spread the message of independence across the colonies. Printers worked tirelessly, setting each letter by hand so news and ideas could travel from town to town, connecting people with a common purpose.

As America grew, so did its appetite for knowledge. Newspapers became the trusted source for hometown news, state events and national headlines. Libraries and public reading rooms opened the door for more Americans to learn, explore new

ideas and become active members of their communities.

But freedom of expression has always been about more than words on a page.

Music has given voice to every generation, from traditional folk songs to the birth of jazz, a uniquely American art form that influenced music around the world. Artists and photographers captured moments that defined our nation's history, while murals and public artwork brought inspiration to schools, post offices and town squares.

Then came radio, movies and television, bringing stories, news and entertainment into homes across the country. Families gathered around to experience historic moments together, creating memories

that became part of America's shared history.

Today, technology has opened even more doors. The internet, podcasts, blogs and social media allow everyday people to share their stories with the world in seconds. While the tools may be different, the purpose remains the same—to inform, inspire, entertain and connect.

As America celebrates 250 years of freedom, it's worth remembering that every generation has added its own chapter to the nation's story. Whether through a newspaper article, a family photograph, a favorite song or a post shared online, freedom of expression continues to preserve our history and remind us that every voice has the power to leave a lasting mark.



*Wishes Everyone*

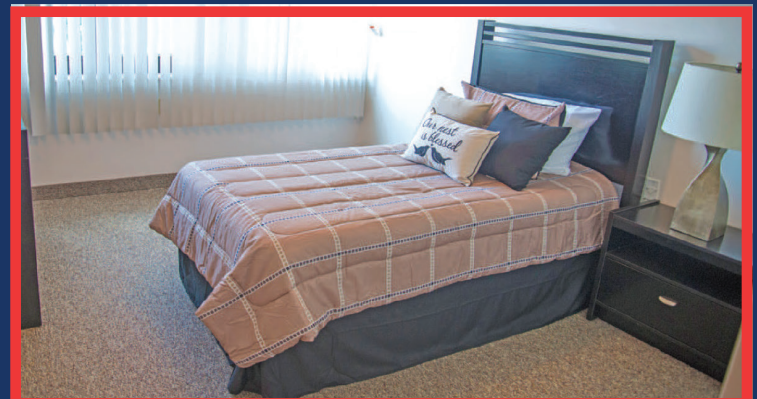


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# The soundtracks of America:

*How music has changed over the last 250 years*

By **Laurna Todd**  
SCENE Writer

Music has always been part of America's story. For 250 years, it has celebrated victories,

comforted broken hearts, inspired change and brought people together. While the styles have changed dramatically, one thing has remained the

same—music has a way of connecting people, no matter their age or background.

In America's earliest days, music was something you

experienced in person. Families gathered to sing songs they knew by heart, churches filled with hymns, and musicians entertained at community gatherings and celebrations. As the nation grew, so did its music. New sounds emerged, including blues, jazz, country, gospel, rock and roll, hip-hop and pop. Every generation added something new while keeping pieces of the past alive.

The funny thing about music is that not everyone likes the same genre—and that's perfectly fine. Growing up, my mom loved rock and even rap music, while my dad was all about country. My sister and I never felt like we had to choose because both kinds of music filled our home. Somewhere along the way, something interesting happened. Mom started enjoying more country music, and Dad found himself listening to rock. It seems our tastes often change as life changes.

Our moods often decide what's playing through the speakers.

Have you ever been in such a great mood that you searched for upbeat songs you could sing along with? Or maybe you've had one of those days when only a slow song and a good cry would do. Music has a way of meeting us exactly where we are.

The way we listen has changed just as much as the music itself. For much of America's first century, there was no way to hear recorded music. If you wanted to hear a song, someone had to sing it or play an instrument. That changed in 1877 when Thomas Edison invented the phonograph, making it possible to record and play back sound. From wax cylinders came record players, followed by 8-track tapes, cassette tapes, CD players and MP3 players. Today, we can instantly play almost any song ever recorded with the touch of a button on our phones.

My Nana listened to records spinning on a turntable. My mom remembers getting her first car with a CD player and later thinking she had reached the height

of technology when she bought a 12-disc CD changer. At the time, carrying a dozen CDs in your car felt like having every song you could ever want.

My mom also remembers racing home to watch MTV, hoping her favorite artist's music video would finally come on. Back then, you had to wait and hope you caught it at just the right time. Watching music videos was part of the excitement. Today, new songs and videos are released online where fans can watch, replay and share them instantly with people around the world.

No matter how we listen or what genre we enjoy, music has a way of bringing back memories. One song can take us back to a first date, a family vacation, a high school dance or a loved one we miss. As America celebrates 250 years, its soundtrack continues to grow, proving that while music will always evolve, its greatest gift remains the same—it brings people together, one song at a time.



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## HOW AMERICANS

### Have Listened to Music

FROM LIVE PERFORMANCES TO STREAMING EVERYWHERE

BEFORE 1877		○	<p><b>LIVE MUSIC ONLY</b> For centuries, the only way to hear music was live. Families, churches, and communities sang and played together.</p>
1857		○	<p><b>PHONAUTOGRAPH</b> Édouard-Léon Scott records the first sound using his phonautograph. It could record, but not play back.</p>
1877		○	<p><b>PHONOGRAPH</b> Thomas Edison invents the phonograph, the first machine that could record and play back sound.</p>
1887		○	<p><b>GRAMOPHONE</b> Emile Berliner creates the gramophone, using flat discs (later records) that changed the way we listened.</p>
1920s		○	<p><b>RADIO COMES TO LIFE</b> Commercial radio stations bring music, news, and entertainment into homes across America.</p>
1930s		○	<p><b>CAR RADIO</b> Radios in cars make it possible to enjoy music on the go, changing road trips forever.</p>
1948		○	<p><b>VINYL RECORDS (LPs)</b> Long-playing records from Columbia Records let us enjoy albums and more music at home.</p>
1950s-1960s		○	<p><b>CASSETTES &amp; 8-TRACKS</b> Portable cassettes (1963) and 8-track cartridges (1966) bring music to cars and portable players.</p>
1979-1980s		○	<p><b>PORTABLE PLAYERS &amp; MTV</b> Walkmans (1979) let us take music anywhere. MTV (1981) changes the game with music videos.</p>
1982-1990s		○	<p><b>COMPACT DISCS &amp; DIGITAL SOUND</b> CD players (1982) deliver better sound. Digital formats and MP3s (1990s) make music easier to store and share.</p>
2000s		○	<p><b>DIGITAL MUSIC REVOLUTION</b> iPod (2001) puts thousands of songs in your pocket. Online stores and file sharing grow in the 2000s.</p>
2005-2010s		○	<p><b>STREAMING BEGINS</b> YouTube (2005) launches a new way to discover music. Streaming services (late 2000s) put millions of songs online.</p>
TODAY		○	<p><b>MUSIC ANYTIME, ANYWHERE</b> Smartphones, wireless earbuds, and smart speakers give us instant access to millions of songs—wherever life takes us.</p>

★ ★ *Different times. Different technology. One universal language. Music brings us together.* ★ ★

# From horseback to highways:

## *How transportation changed America in 250 years*

By **Laurna Todd**  
SCENE Writer

Imagine telling someone living in 1776 that one day Americans would climb into a vehicle, travel hundreds of miles in just a few hours, or even fly across the country before dinner. Better yet, imagine trying to explain that some of those vehicles wouldn't even need gasoline—they would run on electricity.

They probably would have thought you were telling a fairy tale.

Over the past 250 years, transportation has transformed nearly every part of American life. It has determined where communities were built, how businesses grew, how families traveled and how quickly ideas spread across the nation.

In America's earliest days, getting from one place to another wasn't easy. People traveled by horseback, wagon or boat, often following rough trails or rivers. A trip that today takes a couple of hours could once require several days—or even weeks. Rivers served as the nation's first highways, making them essential for trade and communication.

As the country expanded, so did the need for better transportation. Roads improved, canals connected inland communities to larger markets, and the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825 opened new opportunities for commerce.

Then came the railroads.

The railroad revolution changed everything. Towns flourished along the



The first automobile

1885-1886.

Photo provided via Internet of mercedes-benz archives

tracks, businesses reached customers farther away, and families could travel farther than ever before. When the transcontinental railroad was completed in 1869, the nation became more connected than ever.

Ironically, even as railroads stretched across America in the late 1800s, everyday transportation still depended largely on horses. More than 15 million draft horses worked throughout the United States, pulling wagons, carriages and freight. Few could imagine that horses would soon be replaced by something completely different.

That changed in 1885 when German engineer Karl Benz completed what is widely recognized as the world's first automobile. The unusual three-wheeled vehicle looked more

like a motorized bicycle than today's cars. It featured a lightweight steel frame, wire-spoked wheels and a small single-cylinder gasoline engine mounted behind the seats that produced less than one horsepower. Although simple by today's standards, it introduced engineering ideas that became the foundation for future automobiles.

On January 29, 1886, Benz received a patent for his gas-powered vehicle, a date many historians consider the birth of the modern automobile. When the strange new machine made its first public appearance later that year, many people laughed at the noisy invention and doubted it would ever replace the dependable horse.

The automobile might never have caught on without the determination of Karl's wife, Bertha

Benz. In 1888, without telling her husband, she and their two sons set out on what became the world's first long-distance automobile trip—traveling more than 60 miles on roads never designed for cars. Along the way she purchased fuel from pharmacies because gas stations didn't yet exist, unclogged a fuel line with a hatpin and even convinced a cobbler to reinforce the brakes with leather, creating what is considered the first brake lining. By the time she reached her destination, she had proven the automobile was more than a curious invention—it was practical transportation and a glimpse into the future.

From that point on, transportation changed at an incredible pace.

The automobile gave Americans a new sense of freedom. Roads expanded,

suburbs grew, and the great American road trip became part of the nation's culture. Air travel followed, shrinking distances even more after the Wright brothers' first successful flight in 1903. Eventually, transportation carried Americans beyond Earth's atmosphere through space exploration.

Today, technology continues to reshape how we travel. Electric vehicles, hybrid technology and self-driving features would seem impossible to the generations that depended on horses and wagons.

It's amazing to stop and think about how far we've come in just 250 years.

Can you imagine what someone from 1776 would say if they saw an electric car quietly driving down the highway? They would likely be amazed

that a vehicle could move without horses—or even without the roar of an engine.

Then consider this.

If transportation has changed from horse-drawn wagons to electric vehicles, commercial airliners and spacecraft in only 250 years, what will transportation look like 250 years from now?

Will our descendants travel in ways we can't even imagine today? History suggests they just might.

After all, every generation has looked at what seemed impossible and found a way to make it reality. As America celebrates its 250th birthday, transportation reminds us that innovation never stands still. The next great breakthrough may already be taking shape, waiting to carry future generations farther than we can even imagine today.



History of transportation — Encyclopedia of Milwaukee



History of transportation — wikipedia

# From Colonial tables to backyard cookouts:

## *How American food has changed in 250 years*

By **Laurna Todd**  
SCENE Writer

If you really want to understand America, don't just read a history book—pull up a chair at the dinner table.

For 250 years, food has told the story of who we are. It reflects where we've lived, what we've grown, the cultures that shaped us and the traditions families have passed down from one generation to the next. As America changed, so did the food on our tables.

The very first Independence Day celebrations looked much different than they do today. While the Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776, the first official Fourth of July celebration took place in 1777. Historians don't know exactly what was served, but it certainly wasn't hamburgers or hot dogs. Families likely celebrated with roasted meats, fresh vegetables from the garden, homemade bread, beans, seasonal berries and fruit pies. Nearly everything came from their own farms, gardens or nearby neighbors.

As America expanded westward, so did its menu.

Native American, African American, European and later immigrant traditions blended together to create the foods we enjoy today. Southern kitchens became known for fried chicken, biscuits, cornbread and slow-cooked vegetables. New England embraced seafood, the Midwest became known for farm-fresh cooking, and the Southwest developed bold flavors influenced by Native American and Mexican traditions.

Some of America's favorite foods didn't arrive until much later. Historians believe the hamburger sandwich was created sometime between the 1880s and 1900, while hot dogs became popular around the same time. By the early 1900s, both had become favorites at fairs, picnics and Fourth of July celebrations. Today they've evolved into gourmet burgers, loaded hot dogs and countless topping combinations.

That evolution reminds me of my own family's Fourth of July traditions.

Every year, we gathered at my great-aunt's house. The yard was filled with family, kids running everywhere



and someone always watching the grill. We knew exactly what would be on the menu—hamburgers, hot dogs, fresh corn on the cob and enough side dishes to feed anyone who stopped by. Back then, the burgers and hot dogs were simple. Today, they've turned into gourmet creations with every topping imaginable,

but I wouldn't trade those simple cookouts for anything.

But there was one tradition I looked forward to more than anything.

### **Homemade ice cream.**

I can still remember hearing the ice cream freezer turning while everyone impatiently waited for it to be ready. Somehow

it always tasted better because it was homemade and because everyone was together enjoying it.

My mom also loved making patriotic desserts. Every year she found a different way to bring red, white and blue to the table. As I got older, the decorations became more elaborate, the desserts became

more creative and the food became a little fancier. But the heart of the celebration never changed.

### **Family was always the center of it all.**

Those celebrations at my great-aunt's house are now just memories. As family members passed away and life changed, the tradition slowly faded. Today, only one of my Peepaw's siblings is still living. It reminded me that traditions don't continue on their own—we have to choose to carry them forward.

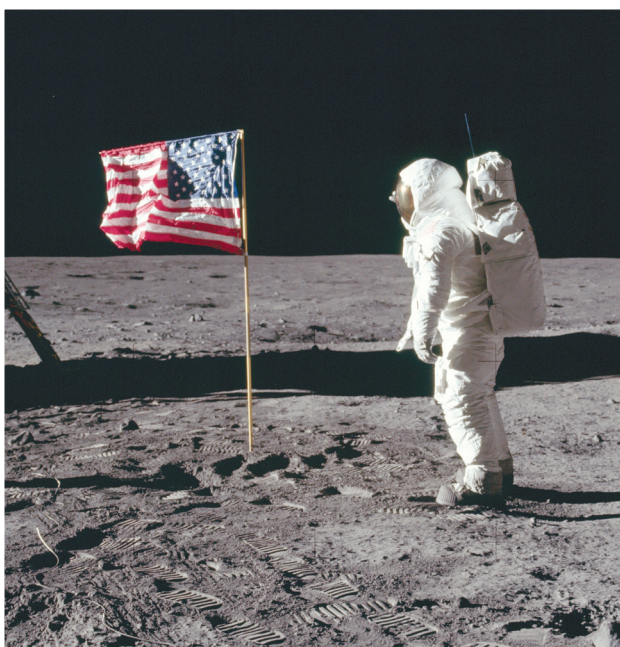
Food will continue to evolve just as America continues to evolve. New recipes will become traditions, old family favorites will be passed down, and every generation will add something different to the table.

As America celebrates its 250th birthday, our menus may look very different than they did in 1777, but the greatest ingredient has never changed. It isn't the hamburgers, the homemade ice cream or the patriotic desserts.

It's the people gathered around the table.

What food memories have become part of your family's story?

## American Firsts: *Milestones that shaped a nation*



Wikimedia photo

Throughout its 250-year history, the United States has been marked by groundbreaking achievements that changed the way people lived, worked, and connected with one another. These historic "firsts" were often driven by determination, creativity, and a desire to solve everyday challenges. While many began as small experiments or local innovations, they eventually transformed communities across the nation and, in many cases, around the world. One of the earliest

breakthroughs came in transportation. In 1807, inventor Robert Fulton successfully demonstrated a commercially practical steamboat capable of traveling upstream under its own power. This innovation revolutionized river transportation, making trade faster and more reliable while opening new opportunities for settlement and economic growth along America's waterways.

Many early inventions followed a similar path. New ideas were first tested on a small scale before proving their

value and spreading across the country, improving daily life and encouraging further innovation.

### **Connecting a Growing Nation**

A major milestone arrived in 1869 with the completion of the first transcontinental railroad. For the first time, rail lines connected the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, dramatically reducing travel times and making it easier to move goods, people, and information across the country. The railroad strengthened commerce, encouraged

westward migration, and helped unite a rapidly expanding nation.

Innovation soon reached the skies. In 1903, brothers Wilbur and Orville Wright achieved the world's first successful powered, controlled airplane flight at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. Although the flight lasted only seconds, it proved that sustained human flight was possible. Over the following decades,

# Making Memories:

## *The traditions that hold America together*

By **Laurna Todd**  
SCENE Writer

For 250 years, Americans have celebrated more than holidays. They've celebrated each other.

From Fourth of July cookouts and county fairs to Thanksgiving dinners, homecomings and Christmas gatherings, these traditions have become the threads that tie generations together. While fireworks fade and decorations come down, the memories made during those moments often last a lifetime.

As America celebrates its 250th birthday, it's a reminder that the traditions we enjoy today only continue if we choose to keep them alive.

Throughout our nation's history, celebrations have brought people together. Early Independence Day observances featured public readings, parades and community meals. As towns grew, county fairs, harvest festivals, school homecomings and neighborhood gatherings became annual traditions families looked forward to year after year.

Food has always been at the center of many



of those celebrations. Whether it was a backyard barbecue, homemade ice cream, a church picnic or a table full of family recipes passed down through generations, sharing a meal has always been one of the simplest ways to bring people together.

Music, sports and parades also became part of the American tradition. Marching bands filled streets with patriotic songs, little league ballgames created lifelong memories, and hometown festivals

gave neighbors a reason to gather and celebrate the communities they called home.

Growing up, the Fourth of July wasn't just another day on the calendar for me. Every year, our family gathered at my great-aunt's house. There were fireworks lighting up the night sky, tables overflowing with food, kids running through the yard and family members laughing long after dark. It wasn't about how fancy the celebration was—it was about being together.

Those celebrations at my great-aunt's house are now cherished memories. As the years passed, family members left us, children grew up and life took everyone in different directions. Slowly, the tradition that once brought our family together every Fourth of July came to an end.

Today, only one of my Peepaw's siblings is still living, and sometimes it feels like the Fourth of July I loved so much faded away with the generation that built

those traditions. Looking back has made me realize something important: traditions don't continue on their own. They only survive when someone decides they're worth carrying forward.

Families have changed over the years. Schedules are busier, relatives are spread farther apart, and gatherings often seem smaller than they once were. Sometimes people wonder if hosting everyone is worth the effort.

It is.  
The best family

traditions don't have to be elaborate or expensive. A simple cookout, homemade desserts, lawn games, fireworks or just sitting on the porch talking can become the memories children carry with them for the rest of their lives. They won't remember whether the house was spotless or every detail was perfect. They'll remember the people who showed up.

As we celebrate America's 250th anniversary, perhaps the greatest way to honor our nation's history is by continuing the traditions that have always strengthened it. Keep getting together. Keep inviting family. Keep celebrating birthdays, holidays and reunions. Whether your family has grown or become smaller through the years, make the effort to gather.

The greatest gift we can give future generations isn't simply stories about the memories we made. It's creating new memories they will one day share with their own children and grandchildren.

Because one day, they'll be the ones saying, "I remember when..."

## Hidden chapters in American history

America's history is often remembered through landmark events and well-known figures, but many of the nation's most fascinating stories lie in the lesser-known details. These overlooked moments reveal how everyday decisions, practical innovations, and gradual changes helped shape the United States over the past 250 years.

One surprising example involves voting rights. During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, some states allowed women who met certain property qualifications to vote. In New Jersey, this practice continued until 1807, when state law changed. The episode illustrates that questions about civic participation were being debated and redefined from the nation's earliest years.

The nation's capital

also had several temporary homes before Washington, D.C., became the permanent seat of government. Cities such as New York, Philadelphia, and Annapolis each served as the nation's capital at different times, reflecting the challenges of governing a young country while balancing the interests of its states.

### Surprising Facts from the Early Republic

One of America's most recognizable symbols, the Liberty Bell, was not always known by that name. It gained widespread recognition during the mid-nineteenth century when abolitionists adopted it as a symbol of freedom and equality. Over time, what had once been a statehouse bell became an enduring national icon.

Early presidents

often lived far more simply than many people imagine. Thomas Jefferson, for example, was known for hosting informal dinners at the White House, where guests gathered with relatively little ceremony. His approach reflected a belief that public service should be accessible rather than overly formal.

Even the nation's borders were once uncertain. Following the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, much of the newly acquired territory had not been thoroughly explored or accurately mapped. The famous Lewis and Clark Expedition was charged not only with exploring the West but also with learning more about the vast lands the United States had acquired.

### Quiet Achievements with Lasting Impact

Some of America's greatest accomplishments developed gradually rather than through dramatic announcements. Construction of the Erie Canal began in 1817 using largely manual labor with picks, shovels, and simple tools. Although many doubted the project's success, the completed canal dramatically reduced transportation costs and transformed commerce throughout the Northeast and Midwest.

Weather forecasting also has deeper roots than many realize. During the 1870s, the U.S. Army Signal Corps began issuing some of the nation's first organized weather forecasts. These reports helped farmers, merchants, and shippers prepare for changing conditions and eventually evolved into today's modern weather forecasting system.

Even familiar holidays developed over time. Labor Day was first celebrated by local labor organizations during the 1880s before Congress established it as a federal holiday in 1894. Its September observance helped distinguish it from other national celebrations while recognizing the contributions of American workers.

### Small Details That Tell a Bigger Story

Some historical facts highlight just how rapidly the nation changed. When Abraham Lincoln was born in 1809, fewer than one in ten Americans lived in urban areas. By the time he served as president, cities were expanding quickly, transforming transportation, manufacturing, and daily

life across the country.

Language also evolved through quiet influence. Noah Webster's dictionary, first published in the early nineteenth century, introduced spelling reforms that helped distinguish American English from British English. Many familiar spellings used today became standard because of Webster's efforts.

As the United States celebrates its 250th anniversary, these lesser-known stories offer a broader understanding of the nation's past. They remind us that history is shaped not only by famous battles, presidents, and landmark events, but also by practical decisions, steady progress, and countless everyday moments that together helped build the country Americans know today.

# Then vs. Now:

## *The cost of living after 250 years*

By **Laurna Todd**  
SCENE Writer

Life in 1776 looked different than it does today, but maybe not as different as we sometimes think. Many families still bake homemade bread, gather fresh eggs from backyard chickens, plant gardens, preserve food and even heat their homes with wood-burning stoves. Depending on where you live, those traditions never really disappeared—they simply became a choice instead of a necessity.

Whether you live in the city or the country, everyone has their own way of life. The biggest difference over the past 250 years may not be how people live, but how much everyday life costs and the technology that has become part of our daily routines.

Item	1776 (Estimated Colonial Average)	2026 U.S. Average
Loaf of Bread	8-10¢	\$2.75
Flour (5 lbs.)	18-22¢	\$4.50
Dozen Eggs	12-18¢	\$4.25
Sugar (4 lbs.)	45-55¢	\$4.00
Pork (1 lb.)	6-8¢	\$5.25
Beef (1 lb.)	4-7¢	\$8.25
Cup of Coffee	2-3¢	\$3.75
Newspaper	6¢	\$2.00
Average Household Income (Annual)	\$500-700	About \$80,000
Automobile	Not Invented	About \$50,000
Gasoline	Not Available	About \$3.35/gal.
Monthly Electric Bill	No Electricity	About \$163
Four-Year Public College Tuition	Very Limited	About \$11,000/year
Home Computer	Not Invented	About \$900
Soft Drink	Not Invented	About \$2.50
U.S. President	None*	Donald Trump
Postage Stamp	None	78¢**
World Population	About 790 million	About 8.3 billion

### 250 Years of Change

Some of the items on this list simply didn't exist when America declared its independence. Gasoline wasn't commonly used until the late 1800s, after gasoline-powered automobiles began appearing. Before then, it was often considered little more than a byproduct of refining crude oil. The first purpose-built drive-in gas station didn't open until 1913.



Soft drinks also came much later. The world's first commercially bottled carbonated beverage was introduced by Schweppes in 1783, just seven years after the Declaration of Independence. America's most recognizable soft drink, Coca-Cola, wasn't created until 1886—110 years after the nation was founded.

The United States also did not have a president in 1776. After declaring independence, the country was governed by the Continental Congress until the U.S. Constitution took effect. George Washington became the nation's first president in 1789.

### More Alike Than You Think

Although technology has transformed many aspects of daily life, many of the values that shaped America remain the same. Families still gather around the dinner table, neighbors still help neighbors, gardens still produce fresh vegetables, and many Americans continue to enjoy the satisfaction of making things with their own hands.

Looking back over the past 250 years reminds us that while the cost of living has changed dramatically, many of the traditions that helped build America continue to connect generations today. Whether you're baking bread from scratch, collecting eggs from the chicken coop or simply enjoying a cup of coffee with family, some of life's greatest treasures have never gone out of style.

Disclaimer: Colonial prices are approximate estimates based on surviving merchant ledgers, account books and historical economic records. Modern prices reflect 2026 national averages. Actual costs varied by colony in 1776 and continue to vary today depending on where you live, local markets, product availability and purchasing habits.

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Energy Information Administration, U.S. Postal Service, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Library of Congress, and historical economic records.

# America's Voices:

## *A tradition of expression and conversation*



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Throughout its 250-year history, the United States has been shaped not only by events but also by the voices of its people. Americans have expressed their beliefs, hopes, concerns, and experiences through spoken words, written works, and public conversations. These countless voices—coming from every community and generation—have helped define the nation's identity while reflecting its changing values.

During the nation's earliest years, communication took place in churches, town meetings, newspapers, and public gatherings. Citizens gathered to discuss local issues, exchange ideas, and participate in decisions affecting their communities. Early

newspapers published editorials, letters, and announcements that informed readers and encouraged public discussion long before the arrival of modern media.

Not every influential voice belonged to a public official or well-known figure. Farmers, merchants, teachers, laborers, and other everyday citizens shared opinions and observations that strengthened communities and contributed to the nation's civic life. Their participation demonstrated that the American story has always been written by people from many different backgrounds.

**The Power of Public Speech**

Public speaking has long been an important part of American tradition. Leaders addressed citizens during celebrations, times of crisis, and moments of national change, offering guidance, encouragement, and hope. These speeches often helped communities understand important events while inspiring confidence in the future.

Official documents also played a significant role. Founding documents, laws, and public charters established shared principles and responsibilities, using carefully chosen language to express the

see **VOICES**,  
page C11

**FIRSTS,**

Continued from page C6

aviation transformed transportation, business, military operations, and global travel.

Communication also entered a new era. In 1876, Alexander Graham Bell received a patent for the telephone, introducing a technology that allowed people to speak with one another across great distances. The telephone reshaped business, strengthened personal relationships, and eventually became an essential part of everyday life.

**Advancing Science and Society**

The twentieth century brought remarkable advances in medicine and scientific discovery. The widespread use of

antibiotics beginning in the 1940s dramatically improved the treatment of bacterial infections, saving countless lives and extending life expectancy. These medical breakthroughs changed healthcare and improved public health around the world.

In 1969, the United States reached another historic milestone when the Apollo 11 mission successfully landed the first humans on the Moon. The achievement required years of collaboration among scientists, engineers, government agencies, universities, and private industry. Beyond its historic significance, the space program produced new technologies and innovations that later found practical applications in everyday life.

American innovation has also been evident

in less-publicized achievements. Advances in manufacturing, emergency response systems, engineering, and industrial organization have improved safety, productivity, and efficiency, benefiting communities across the nation.

**Innovation that changed everyday life**

What connects these historic firsts is their lasting impact on ordinary Americans. Many innovations that began as bold experiments eventually became everyday conveniences. Steamboats, railroads, telephones, commercial aviation, and countless other developments evolved from remarkable achievements into familiar parts of daily life.

These

accomplishments were rarely the work of a single individual. Inventors, engineers, skilled workers, educators, business leaders, and communities all played important roles in turning new ideas into lasting success. Their combined efforts helped create innovations that continued to build upon one another across generations.

As the United States celebrates its 250th anniversary, these milestones serve as reminders that progress often begins with curiosity, determination, and the courage to explore new possibilities. America's history of innovation reflects a tradition of testing ideas, learning from experience, and continually seeking better ways to meet the challenges of the future.

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82nd Airborne from  
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# The founders and the creation of the American government

The individuals who led the United States during its founding years faced a challenge unlike any they had encountered before. Winning independence from Great Britain was only the

beginning. The new nation needed a stable government capable of bringing together states with different economies, interests, and priorities. Rather than relying on unanimous agreement,

the founders used discussion, compromise, and practical decision-making to build a system that could endure. Even before the Revolutionary War ended, cooperation among the

colonies was tested through the Continental Congress. Representatives from across the colonies worked together to coordinate military strategy, secure foreign alliances, and manage limited resources. While these efforts demonstrated the value of cooperation, they also revealed the difficulties of governing a collection of regions with differing concerns.

Following independence, the nation adopted the Articles of Confederation as its first governing framework. The Articles granted significant authority to

the states while limiting the powers of the national government. Although this arrangement protected state independence, it often made it difficult to address financial problems, regulate commerce, and respond effectively to national issues. These challenges convinced many leaders that reforms were necessary.

### Building a Stronger Government

A major step forward came with the Constitutional Convention of 1787. Delegates gathered to address the

weaknesses of the Articles and design a more effective system of government. Debates centered on representation, executive authority, and the relationship between state and federal power.

Several important compromises emerged from these discussions. The Great Compromise balanced the interests of large and small states by creating a two-house legislature. The Constitution also established separate legislative, executive, and

see **FOUNDERS**, page C12




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Today we reflect on our history, celebrate our progress and honor those who serve. **May we all work together to create a future that upholds the values of liberty, justice and equality!**



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**VOICES,**

Continued from page C8

ideals of self-government and civic participation.

As the country grew, opportunities for public discussion expanded beyond government. Community lectures, debates, school programs, and civic organizations encouraged citizens to exchange ideas, making open dialogue a lasting feature of American society.

**The lasting impact of the written word**

Writing has preserved the personal side of American history. Letters, journals, and memoirs reveal how individuals experienced the nation's greatest triumphs and challenges, providing perspectives that often differ from official accounts.

Newspapers remained a vital source of information for generations, reporting local events while offering editorial opinions that reflected community viewpoints. Opinion pages became places where readers considered different perspectives, debated important issues, and found common ground.

American literature also enriched the nation's voice. Through novels, essays, and poetry, writers explored themes such as family, work, freedom, and identity, encouraging readers to reflect on both personal experiences and the broader American story.

**Expression in everyday life**

Communication has always extended beyond

speeches and books. Music, familiar sayings, patriotic slogans, and community traditions have helped preserve memories, celebrate achievements, and strengthen a sense of belonging. These everyday forms of expression often connect people just as effectively as formal speeches or written documents.

Advances in technology have continually expanded

opportunities for communication. Radio and television brought news and ideas into homes across the country, while the internet and social media now allow millions of people to share their thoughts instantly with audiences around the world.

Although the methods have changed, the purpose remains much the same. Americans continue to use words to

inform, encourage, celebrate, persuade, and build connections with others.

**A conversation that continues**

The American voice has never been limited to a single viewpoint. Instead, it has always reflected a wide range of experiences, opinions, and perspectives. This diversity of expression has encouraged participation, dialogue,

and continued engagement in civic life.

As the United States commemorates its 250th anniversary, the exchange of ideas remains one of the nation's greatest strengths. By listening as well as speaking, Americans continue to shape their communities and contribute to a story that is still unfolding—one conversation, one generation, and one voice at a time.



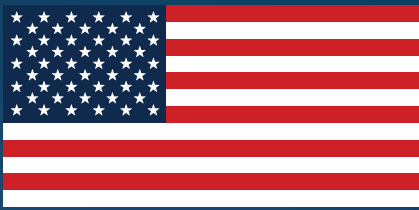
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### FOUNDERS,

Continued from page C10

judicial branches, creating a system of checks and balances designed to prevent any one branch from becoming too powerful. The Constitution reflected a practical approach to governance. It created structures for making, enforcing, and interpreting laws while including a process for future amendments. This flexibility allowed the document to adapt as the nation changed over time. Public approval was essential before the Constitution could take effect. Supporters explained the proposed system through a series of essays later known as The Federalist Papers. Concerns about individual liberties led to the adoption of the Bill of Rights, which helped build confidence in the new government and encouraged ratification across the states.

**Turning Principles into**

### Practice

Creating a government on paper was only the first step. Early leaders worked to put the Constitution into action by establishing federal courts, organizing executive departments, and addressing national financial obligations. They also pursued foreign policies that helped secure diplomatic recognition and expand trade opportunities. Disagreements quickly emerged over issues such as taxation, banking, foreign relations, and the role of government. However, the constitutional framework provided a way to address these disputes through debate, elections, and legislation rather than conflict. The nation's early elections and peaceful transitions of power demonstrated that the new system could function effectively. These practices helped establish confidence in the republic and set important precedents for future generations.

### An Enduring Influence

The founders understood that no government would be perfect. They viewed self-government as an ongoing process requiring participation, responsibility, and adaptation. Their work created institutions designed to evolve while preserving stability. Over the centuries, amendments, elections, court decisions, and civic engagement have allowed the American system to respond to changing circumstances while maintaining its foundational principles. As the United States celebrates its 250th anniversary, the influence of the founders remains evident in the government they established. Their commitment to debate, compromise, and constitutional structure created a framework capable of enduring through periods of growth, challenge, and change, helping sustain the republic for generations.

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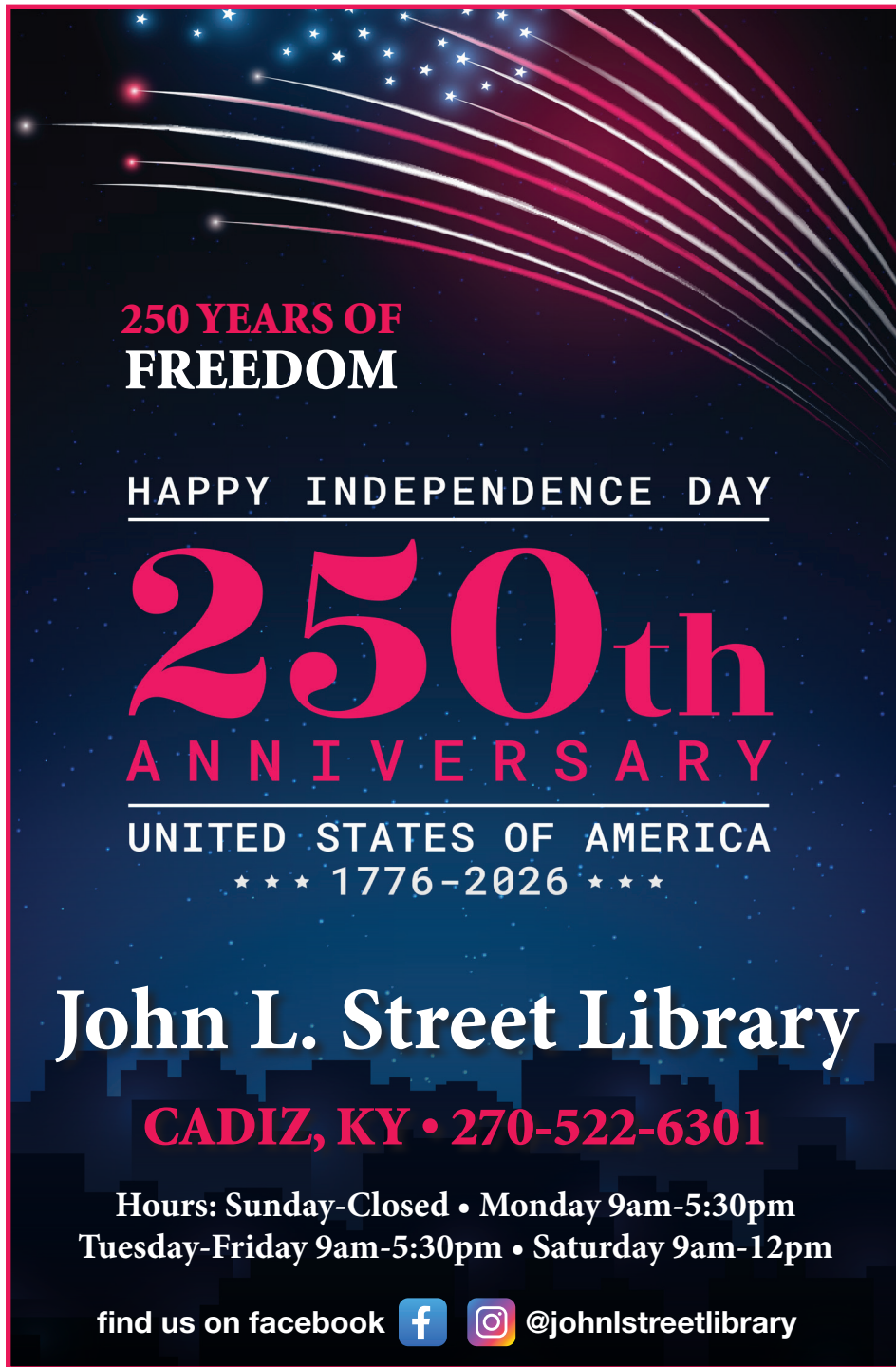
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# National symbols reflect America's shared heritage

National symbols have long helped Americans recognize a common history and set of ideals without requiring everyone to interpret them in the same way. Rather than being created through a single plan, many of these symbols emerged gradually through tradition, legislation, and public acceptance. Together, they create a visual and cultural connection that has endured for generations.

Among the nation's most recognizable symbols is the American flag. First adopted during the country's earliest years, its stars and stripes represent the union of the states. As new states joined the nation, additional stars were added, allowing the flag to grow alongside the United States. Today, it flies over government buildings, schools, businesses, community celebrations, and homes, remaining a familiar symbol of the nation.

The bald eagle became America's national emblem in the

late eighteenth century when it was chosen for the Great Seal of the United States. Representing strength, freedom, and independence, the eagle has since appeared on official seals, currency, military insignia, and government documents, becoming one of the country's most enduring symbols.

### Symbols in Everyday Life

Some national symbols earned their significance through history rather than official designation. The Liberty Bell became widely recognized during the nineteenth century when abolitionists embraced it as a representation of liberty and equality. Although its famous crack rendered it unusable, the bell continues to symbolize the principles of freedom and justice.

The Statue of Liberty, presented as a gift from France in 1886, gradually became one of America's most meaningful landmarks. For millions of immigrants arriving by

sea, it represented hope and new beginnings. Today, it continues to symbolize opportunity, democracy, and the nation's tradition of welcoming newcomers.

Music and national mottos also contribute to America's shared identity. "The Star-Spangled Banner," inspired by events during the War of 1812, was officially adopted as the national anthem in 1931. Likewise, the motto "E Pluribus Unum," meaning "Out of many, one," reflects the idea of unity among diverse states and people.

### Evolving Meanings

The meaning of national symbols continues to develop as each generation experiences history through its own perspective. The American flag, historic monuments, and other national icons have served as backdrops during times of triumph, challenge,

see **SYMBOLS**, page C15

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**SYMBOLS,**

Continued from page C14

celebration, and remembrance.

Their significance is reinforced through everyday use. Schools, public ceremonies, veterans' events, holidays, and civic gatherings regularly feature familiar national imagery, helping preserve a sense of continuity while

allowing individuals to attach their own personal meaning to these symbols.

National symbols are also visible throughout daily life in places such as courthouses, parks, libraries, and public squares. Rather than conveying a single message, they serve as common reference points that connect people with the nation's history and traditions.

Together, these

enduring symbols create a shared visual language that links Americans across generations. As the United States commemorates its 250th anniversary, they continue to bridge the past and present, reflecting a nation shaped by its history, strengthened by its diversity, and united through symbols that remain meaningful to millions.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

# 250 YEARS

1776 ★ 2026

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— UNITED STATES OF AMERICA —

# 250

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# All-American Fun

## U.S.A. HIDDEN MESSAGE PUZZLE

This word search puzzle has a hidden message in it.

- Find all of the words in the list.
- Words can go in any direction and share letters as well as cross over each other.
- Once you find all of the words, copy the unused letters starting in the top left corner into the blanks to reveal the hidden message.

T H E G M Y N E T T Y S B U R  
 G A D D O R O R E S S O E U G  
 F O O P D O I X P L N Q A L D  
 Y Q G T E T T J J P P V Y R O  
 T C P J E C A D B T Q L N K N  
 O S C Q R I N R E Q I K X K M  
 Z K P L F V N O Y V S J X S K  
 K Y M T X V C J I P N S C B O  
 P A V D Q H D C E V N O N V Z  
 L I N C O L N E P X R I X M K  
 R H J Z W Z C V Q E F E P H P  
 P A G P E H D G X R P N G J P  
 Y K G Z M A M H Y A C M U U Z  
 W Q S W H T M R D W M O B T H  
 S T S N D U H E X D W N C I S

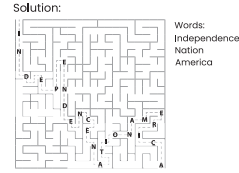
WORDS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 HIDDEN MESSAGE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 CIVIL \_\_\_\_\_  
 NATION \_\_\_\_\_  
 VICTORY \_\_\_\_\_  
 FREEDOM \_\_\_\_\_  
 SCORE \_\_\_\_\_  
 LINCOLN \_\_\_\_\_  
 SPEECH \_\_\_\_\_



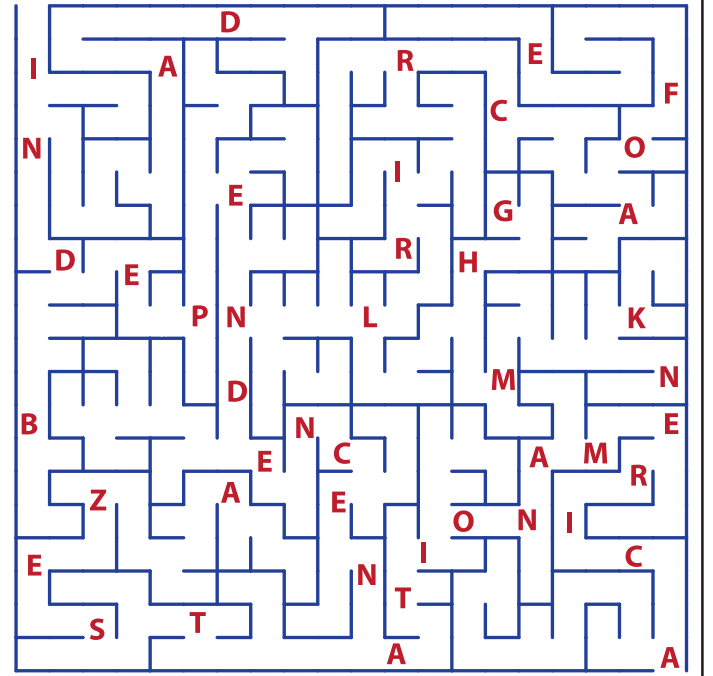
## GO, USA!

While making your way through the maze, write down each letter you encounter along the correct path. These letters will spell out three words that pertain to the United States of America.

WORDS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_



Start



Finish



Happy 4th of July

## WHEEL OF WORDS



See how many words you can form with these letters.  
 See how many patriotic words you can form.  
 All of the words should contain the letter in the center circle.

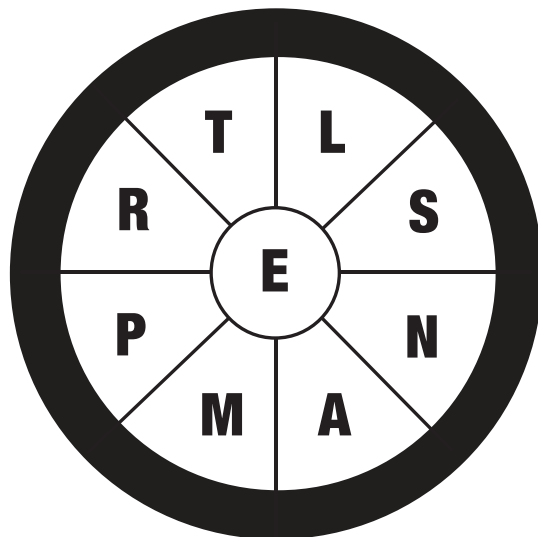
## UNITED STATES TRIVIA

Test your knowledge of the history of the U.S.

1. How many original colonies were there?
2. Where was the Declaration of Independence signed?
3. Which explorer is America named after?
4. In what year were women finally granted the right to vote in the U.S.?
5. Who are the only two non-presidents to appear on widely used U.S. currency?
6. What are the three branches of the U.S. government?
7. If someone requests your John Hancock, what are they referring to?
8. Who was the first woman to serve on the United States Supreme Court?
9. Which Civil Rights figure led the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955?
10. True or False? Apple Pie was invented in the U.S.
11. Who was the first U.S. astronaut in space?
12. What is the United States motto?
13. When was Washington established as the capital of the United States?
14. Which state was the first admitted to the Union?

## WORD ROUND-UP

See how many words you can form.  
 Each word must contain the letter in the center circle.



\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Hidden Message Answers  
 T H E G M Y N E T T Y S B U R  
 G A D D O R O R E S S O E U G  
 F O O P D O I X P L N Q A L D  
 Y Q G T E T T J J P P V Y R O  
 T C P J E C A D B T Q L N K N  
 O S C Q R I N R E Q I K X K M  
 Z K P L F V N O Y V S J X S K  
 K Y M T X V C J I P N S C B O  
 P A V D Q H D C E V N O N V Z  
 L I N C O L N E P X R I X M K  
 R H J Z W Z C V Q E F E P H P  
 P A G P E H D G X R P N G J P  
 Y K G Z M A M H Y A C M U U Z  
 W Q S W H T M R D W M O B T H  
 S T S N D U H E X D W N C I S



Wheel of Wordse Answers

Word ideas: Star, Flag, Great, State, Legal, Eagle, Health

Word Ideas: Teal, Near, Peft, Name, Sent, Meal, Pest, Rent

# The History of Newspapers:

## Chronicling the story of society

For centuries, newspapers have served as one of the world's most important sources of information. They have documented wars and peace treaties, celebrated triumphs, exposed wrongdoing, announced births and marriages, and connected communities through stories that matter. Although the way people consume news has changed dramatically with the rise of television, the internet, and social media, newspapers continue to play an essential role in preserving history and informing the public.

The roots of newspapers stretch back long before the first printing presses arrived in America. In ancient Rome, government officials posted handwritten public notices known as *Acta Diurna*, or "Daily Acts," to keep citizens informed about laws, military victories, and public events. These early bulletins demonstrated society's growing need for reliable information.

The invention of Johannes Gutenberg's movable-type printing press around 1450 transformed communication. Printing became faster, less expensive, and more accessible, allowing books, pamphlets, and eventually newspapers to reach far larger audiences. By the early 1600s, regularly published newspapers had appeared in several European countries, covering trade, politics, and international affairs.

The first successful newspaper in the American colonies was *The Boston News-Letter*, first published in 1704. Printed weekly, it provided readers with news from Europe, local announcements, and government

information. Soon afterward, additional newspapers appeared throughout the colonies, helping residents stay informed in an era when communication was slow and travel was difficult.

As tensions with Great Britain increased during the eighteenth century, newspapers became more than simple information sources. Printers published essays, editorials, and political commentary that encouraged public debate about taxation, representation, and individual rights. Newspapers played an important role in spreading revolutionary ideas that ultimately contributed to the movement for American independence.

Following the American Revolution, newspapers expanded rapidly. Every growing town wanted its own publication to report local events, government decisions, and business developments. Editors often expressed strong political opinions, and many newspapers openly supported particular parties or candidates. While objectivity was less common than it is today, newspapers provided an important forum for civic participation and public discussion.

The nineteenth century brought significant changes to newspaper publishing. Advances in printing technology made newspapers faster and cheaper to produce, while improved transportation systems helped distribute them across wider regions. Steam-powered presses dramatically increased printing capacity, allowing publishers to reach thousands of readers each day.

One of the biggest developments came during the 1830s with



the rise of the "penny press." Newspapers that once cost six cents became available for only one penny, making them affordable for working-class readers. Publishers such as Benjamin Day recognized that lower prices combined with advertising revenue could dramatically increase circulation. As readership expanded, newspapers began covering crime, human-interest stories, local events, sports, and entertainment alongside political news.

The invention of the telegraph during the 1840s revolutionized journalism. News that once took days or weeks to travel could now be transmitted almost instantly over long distances. This led to the creation of cooperative news organizations, including the Associated Press in 1846, which enabled newspapers across the country to share reliable reports from distant locations.

Photography introduced another major transformation. By the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, newspapers increasingly included photographs that brought important events to life. Readers could see the people and places making

headlines rather than relying solely on written descriptions.

As newspaper competition intensified, publishers sought new ways to attract readers. Large headlines, investigative reporting, comics, puzzles, serialized stories, and Sunday editions became increasingly popular. Some publishers emphasized sensational stories, while others focused on in-depth reporting and public service journalism. Investigative journalists, often called "muckrakers," exposed corruption, unsafe working conditions, and social problems, leading to important reforms during the Progressive Era.

During both World Wars, newspapers served as a primary source of information about military operations, political developments, and life on the home front. Families eagerly followed daily reports about battles, troop movements, rationing, and wartime production. Newspapers also helped unite communities during periods of national challenge.

The middle of the twentieth century brought new competition. Radio delivered breaking news

almost immediately, while television added live images that transformed how audiences experienced major events. Despite these innovations, newspapers remained valued for their detailed reporting, investigative journalism, editorials, and local coverage that broadcast media often could not match.

The arrival of computers during the late twentieth century changed newspaper production dramatically. Reporters began using digital word processors instead of typewriters, while page designers replaced manual layout techniques with computer publishing software. Color printing became more common, and production schedules became faster and more efficient.

The internet created perhaps the greatest transformation in newspaper history. Beginning in the 1990s, many publications launched websites to reach online readers. Digital editions allowed people to access news instantly from computers, smartphones, and tablets regardless of location. At the same time, online advertising disrupted the traditional business model that had supported newspapers

for generations, forcing many organizations to adapt through digital subscriptions, memberships, and multimedia journalism.

Today, newspapers continue to evolve. Many combine print editions with websites, mobile apps, podcasts, newsletters, and social media platforms. Journalists now produce videos, interactive graphics, and live updates alongside traditional written stories. Despite these technological changes, the core mission remains the same: gathering accurate information, verifying facts, and reporting news that serves the public interest.

Local newspapers remain especially important. They cover city council meetings, school boards, community events, high school sports, local businesses, and neighborhood achievements that larger national organizations often overlook. They preserve a community's history one edition at a time, creating a permanent record for future generations.

As the United States celebrates its 250th anniversary, newspapers continue to reflect the nation's story. They have documented moments of triumph and tragedy, recorded scientific discoveries, chronicled elections, and captured the everyday experiences of ordinary Americans. While the methods of delivering news will undoubtedly continue to change, the importance of trustworthy journalism and informed communities remains as vital today as it was when the first colonial newspapers rolled off the printing press more than three centuries ago.



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# When your business is under water

With the recent flooding, it's hard not to think about the families and businesses that have found themselves underwater, both literally and figuratively.

Sometimes business feels the same way. You may not have floodwaters in your building, but you can still feel overwhelmed. Maybe sales have slowed, expenses have piled up, a key

employee has left, or an unexpected setback has left you wondering what to do next. Whatever the challenge, it's important to remember that you don't have to face it alone.

If your business has experienced actual flood damage, your first call should be to your insurance company. They can help assess the damage, explain your coverage, and

often recommend approved contractors to begin the cleanup and recovery process. The sooner you begin that conversation, the sooner you can start getting back on your feet.

If your business is "under water" financially or facing other operational challenges, don't be afraid to ask for help. Your local bank can be an excellent resource. Many financial institutions

have business banking specialists who work with owners every day to navigate difficult situations, explore financing options, and develop plans for long-term success.

And remember, your Chamber of Commerce is here for you as well.

One of the Chamber's greatest strengths is connecting businesses with the resources they need. Whether

you're looking for referrals, professional services, networking opportunities, educational programs, or simply someone to help point you in the right direction, we're here to help.

Every business faces difficult seasons. Asking for help isn't a sign of failure, it's a sign of good leadership. The strongest businesses aren't the ones that never encounter

challenges; they're the ones that know where to turn when those challenges arise.

No matter what kind of water you're facing, remember this: there are people and organizations in your community ready to help you weather the storm and move forward.

Because when our businesses recover, our entire community grows stronger.

#LoveLocalDuCo

## Summer business trends across the U.S.

Summer has long been one of the busiest seasons for businesses across the United States. As temperatures rise and schools let out for vacation, consumer spending patterns shift, creating new opportunities and challenges for companies of every size. From tourism and hospitality to retail, construction, agriculture, and outdoor recreation, the summer months often provide a significant economic boost while also highlighting changing consumer preferences and workforce trends.

One of the strongest drivers of summer business activity is travel. Millions of Americans take vacations between Memorial Day and Labor Day, filling hotels, campgrounds, vacation rentals, restaurants, amusement parks, and attractions. Popular destinations—from beaches and national parks to mountain resorts and small-town festivals—see increased foot traffic that benefits not only lodging providers but also local retailers, gas stations, museums, and entertainment venues.

Restaurants also experience seasonal changes. Outdoor dining remains popular during the warmer months, prompting many establishments to expand patio seating or offer special seasonal menus featuring fresh fruits, vegetables, grilled

foods, and refreshing beverages. Food trucks and mobile vendors frequently see increased business at concerts, fairs, sporting events, and community festivals.

Retail businesses adjust their inventory to meet seasonal demand. Home improvement stores experience increased sales as homeowners tackle landscaping, gardening, painting, and remodeling projects. Lawn equipment, outdoor furniture, grills, pools, and patio accessories become top sellers throughout the summer. Clothing retailers shift toward lightweight apparel, swimwear, sandals, and travel accessories, while sporting goods stores benefit from increased interest in camping, fishing, hiking, cycling, and water sports.

Construction is another industry that reaches peak activity during the summer months. Favorable weather allows contractors to complete roofing, paving, home construction, commercial development, and infrastructure improvements more efficiently than during colder seasons. Across many regions of the country, road construction projects accelerate during summer when weather conditions are most favorable, creating employment opportunities while improving transportation systems.

Agriculture remains

one of America's most important summer industries. Farmers work long hours planting, irrigating, maintaining crops, and preparing for harvest seasons that begin later in the summer and continue into the fall. Farmers' markets flourish during this time, giving consumers access to locally grown fruits, vegetables, meats, honey, baked goods, and handcrafted products. The growing popularity of buying local has strengthened many rural economies while supporting family farms.

Tourism-dependent communities often rely on summer as their busiest and most profitable season. Small businesses in coastal towns, lake communities, and mountain destinations frequently generate a large percentage of their annual revenue between June and August. Festivals, county fairs, concerts, farmers' markets, and community celebrations attract visitors who spend money throughout local economies.

Technology continues to shape summer business trends. Mobile ordering, contactless payment systems, online reservations, and digital marketing have become standard tools for businesses seeking to attract customers. Restaurants encourage online ordering, retailers promote seasonal sales through social media, and tourism

organizations use digital advertising to showcase destinations to potential visitors across the country.

Artificial intelligence is also beginning to influence summer operations for many businesses. Retailers use AI to forecast inventory needs, hotels utilize automated booking systems, and customer service chatbots help answer questions around the clock. While human interaction remains essential, technology is helping businesses improve efficiency during their busiest seasons.

Hiring seasonal employees remains an important trend each summer. Students on break often find temporary work at restaurants, amusement parks, retail stores, pools, landscaping companies, and recreational facilities. These seasonal jobs help businesses meet increased customer demand while providing valuable work experience for young employees.

However, employers continue to face workforce challenges. Many industries report difficulty finding enough seasonal workers, leading some businesses to increase wages, offer flexible schedules, or provide hiring bonuses to attract qualified applicants. Companies are also investing more in employee training and retention to improve customer service during peak travel months.

Consumers are increasingly seeking experiences rather than simply purchasing products. Businesses have responded by offering interactive events, workshops, live entertainment, family-friendly activities, and personalized customer experiences. Breweries host outdoor concerts, garden centers offer planting workshops, bookstores organize author events, and retailers create special promotions that encourage shoppers to visit in person.

Health and wellness trends continue to influence consumer spending as well. Sales of fitness equipment, bicycles, healthy foods, outdoor recreation gear, and wellness products often increase during the summer months as people spend more time outdoors and focus on active lifestyles.

Environmental sustainability has also become a growing consideration for many businesses. Companies are reducing plastic waste, offering reusable products, improving energy efficiency, and sourcing more locally produced goods. Consumers increasingly appreciate businesses that demonstrate environmentally responsible practices, particularly during outdoor events and tourism activities.

Weather remains one of the biggest variables affecting summer business

success. Heat waves, severe storms, drought, flooding, and hurricanes can significantly impact tourism, agriculture, construction, and outdoor events. As a result, many businesses now develop contingency plans and invest in technologies that help them respond quickly to changing weather conditions.

Looking ahead, economists expect consumer spending to remain relatively strong throughout the summer, although inflation, interest rates, and household budgets continue to influence purchasing decisions. Businesses that emphasize value, excellent customer service, convenience, and memorable experiences are likely to remain competitive in an evolving marketplace.

Summer continues to represent more than just a change in seasons—it is one of the most important economic periods of the year. Whether it's a family-owned ice cream shop, a construction company, a local farmers' market, or a national retail chain, businesses across the United States benefit from increased activity during the warmer months. Those that adapt to changing consumer preferences, embrace new technologies, and prioritize customer satisfaction will be well-positioned for success throughout the summer and beyond.

# Summer safety tips for seniors

Summer is a wonderful time to enjoy sunshine, family gatherings, gardening, and outdoor activities. However, hot temperatures can present serious health risks for older adults. As people age, the body's ability to regulate temperature changes, making seniors more vulnerable to heat-related illnesses such as dehydration, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke. By taking a few simple precautions, older adults can stay safe and enjoy everything the season has to offer.

One of the most important summer safety tips is to stay hydrated. Seniors may not feel thirsty as often as younger people, even when their bodies need fluids. Drinking water throughout the day is essential, especially during periods of hot weather. Avoid excessive amounts of caffeinated or alcoholic beverages, as these can contribute to



dehydration. Eating water-rich foods such as watermelon, cucumbers, oranges, and berries can also help maintain proper hydration.

Limiting outdoor activities during the hottest part of the day is another effective way to stay safe. Temperatures are typically highest

between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. If outdoor work or exercise is necessary, schedule it for the early morning or evening when conditions

are cooler. Taking frequent breaks in the shade or an air-conditioned building can help prevent overheating.

Choosing the right clothing also makes a difference. Lightweight, loose-fitting, light-colored clothing helps reflect sunlight and allows air to circulate around the body. Wearing a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses offers additional protection from harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays. Applying sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30 helps prevent painful sunburn and reduces the risk of skin cancer.

Keeping the home cool is equally important. Air conditioning is the best defense against dangerous heat. If air conditioning is unavailable, spend time at a local library, senior center, shopping mall, or other public building with cooling. Closing curtains during the day and using fans may provide additional comfort, although fans alone may not prevent heat-related illness during extreme temperatures. Many medications commonly taken by seniors can affect how the body responds to heat or increase the risk of dehydration. Individuals should review their medications with their healthcare provider or pharmacist and understand any precautions they should take during hot weather. Never change or stop medications without professional guidance.

Family members, friends, and neighbors play an important role in summer safety as well. Checking in regularly with older loved ones during heat waves can help identify problems before they become emergencies. Watch for signs of heat-related illness, including dizziness, confusion, weakness, nausea, headache, rapid heartbeat, or unusually heavy sweating. If someone shows symptoms of heat stroke—such as a body temperature above 103 degrees, confusion, loss of consciousness, or hot, dry skin—call emergency services

see **SAFETY**,  
page C21

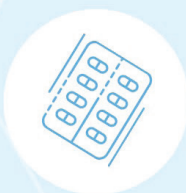
## SUMMER SAFETY TIPS

### For Seniors



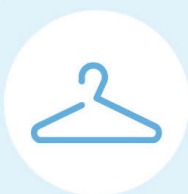
#### Stay Hydrated

Drink 8 cups of water a day to remain healthy and hydrated.



#### Know Side Effects of Medications

Some medications cause sensitivity to the sun.



#### Wear Light, Loose Clothing

Wear breathable clothing, ie cotton or linen.



#### Stay Cool

Stay in the a/c or indoors, use the shade when outside, go swimming.



#### Have Emergency Contacts

Have a list of contacts available in the case of an emergency.



#### Know the Weather Forecast

Plan your days in accordance with the weather.

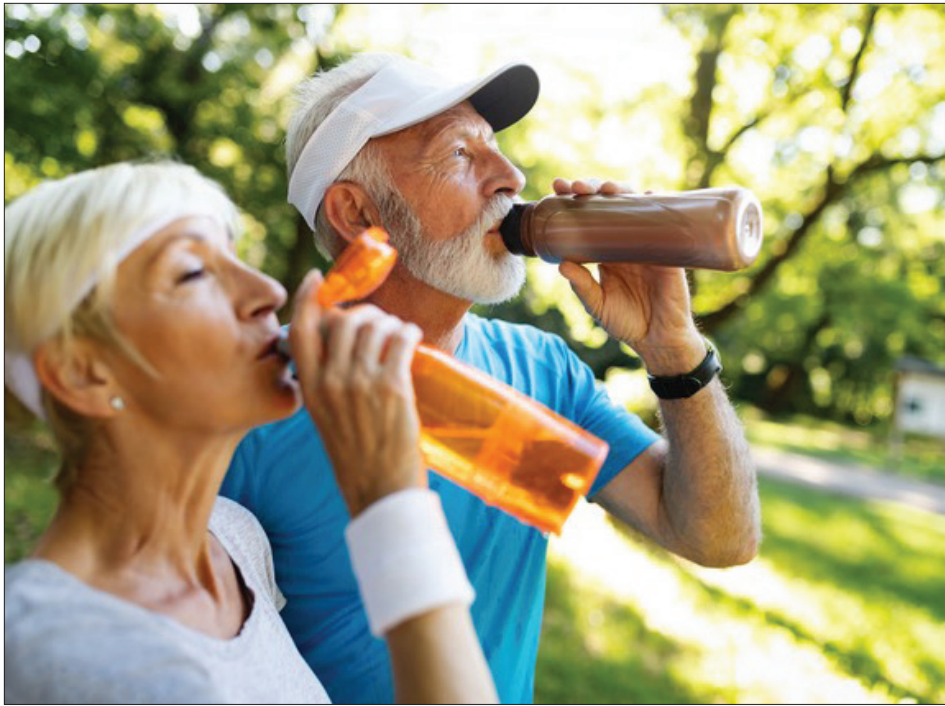
Many medications commonly taken

**SAFETY,**  
from page C20

immediately.  
Summer should be a season of enjoyment, not unnecessary health

risks. By staying hydrated, dressing appropriately, avoiding excessive heat, keeping living spaces cool, and remaining aware of the warning signs of heat-related illness, seniors can

safely participate in summer activities. A little planning and preparation go a long way toward ensuring a healthy, active, and enjoyable summer for older adults and the families who care for them.



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# How seniors can remain physically and mentally active this summer

Growing older is often equated with slowing down. Aging may be characterized as a period of decline marked by an inability to do the things you once did, but recent data indicates otherwise.

According to a report in the journal Geriatrics, a far more optimistic reality awaits seniors. Nearly 45 percent of people age 65 and older show measurable improvements in brain health, physical function or both over time when they take certain steps to

promote physical and mental wellness.

### Physical activity

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity per week, supplemented by at least two days of muscle-strengthening exercises. Brisk walking or swimming can improve cardiovascular health and reduce the risk of stroke and hypertension, says the Massachusetts Council on Aging.

Incorporating yoga or Tai Chi is vital for fall prevention, as it targets balance and flexibility. The CDC says improving joint mobility and balance can significantly extend the amount of time seniors can live independently. In addition, lifting light weights or using resistance bands helps combat age-related muscle loss, which is essential for maintaining metabolic health.

### Cognitive advantages

Mental fitness is just as vital to

seniors as physical fitness. According to the World Health Organization, routine cognitive stimulation enhances “brain capital,” delaying the onset of dementia and Alzheimer’s. Strategies for effective mental engagement include:

- **Learning:** Lifelong learning techniques include picking up a new language or learning an instrument. This helps strengthen neural pathways that allows the brain to reorganize itself even in later decades.

- **Play games:** Play isn’t just for kids; games like chess or complex puzzles improve problem-solving and memory retention, according to Nixon Adult Daycare in Houston.

- **Socialize:** Isolation is a leading risk factor for cognitive decline, says the National Institutes of Health. Group activities like book clubs or community volunteering can offer emotional fulfillment and mental stimulation.

### Power of positivity

Findings from a recent Yale University study indicated seniors with a positive outlook on aging were significantly more likely to show physical and mental improvements compared to those with negative perspectives. Psychological resilience is an important tool for seniors to stay healthy.

Movement, social interaction, stimulating activities, and a positive attitude can help seniors maintain overall health.

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# Summer travel tips for seniors

Summer is one of the most popular seasons for travel, offering opportunities to visit family, explore new destinations, or simply enjoy a relaxing getaway. With a little planning, older adults can travel safely and comfortably while making lasting memories.

Before leaving home, seniors should schedule any necessary medical appointments and ensure they have enough prescription medications for the entire trip, plus a few extra days in case of unexpected delays. It's also wise to carry medications in their original containers and pack them in a carry-on bag if flying.

Staying hydrated is especially important during summer travel. Whether driving, flying, or sightseeing, drinking plenty of water helps prevent dehydration and fatigue. Travelers should also wear lightweight clothing, comfortable walking shoes, sunscreen, sunglasses, and a wide-brimmed hat to protect themselves from the summer sun.

When planning activities, it's best to avoid spending extended periods outdoors during the hottest part of the day. Taking frequent breaks, seeking air-conditioned locations, and allowing time to rest can help prevent heat-related illnesses. Seniors should also avoid overpacking their itineraries, leaving room for relaxation and flexibility.

Road trips require additional precautions. Drivers should take regular breaks every two hours to stretch, stay alert, and improve circulation. Keeping a small emergency kit in the vehicle with bottled water,

snacks, a flashlight, and a first-aid kit can provide added peace of mind.

Travel insurance may also be worth considering, particularly for longer trips or international travel. It can help cover unexpected medical expenses, trip cancellations, or travel interruptions.

Most importantly, seniors should listen to their bodies. If they begin feeling tired, overheated, or unwell, it's important to slow down and seek

assistance if needed.

With thoughtful preparation and a focus on health and safety, summer travel can be an enjoyable and rewarding experience. Whether visiting loved ones, exploring scenic destinations, or taking a relaxing vacation, seniors can confidently embrace the adventure and create cherished memories throughout the season.



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