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# **Weekly**

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January 22, 2026

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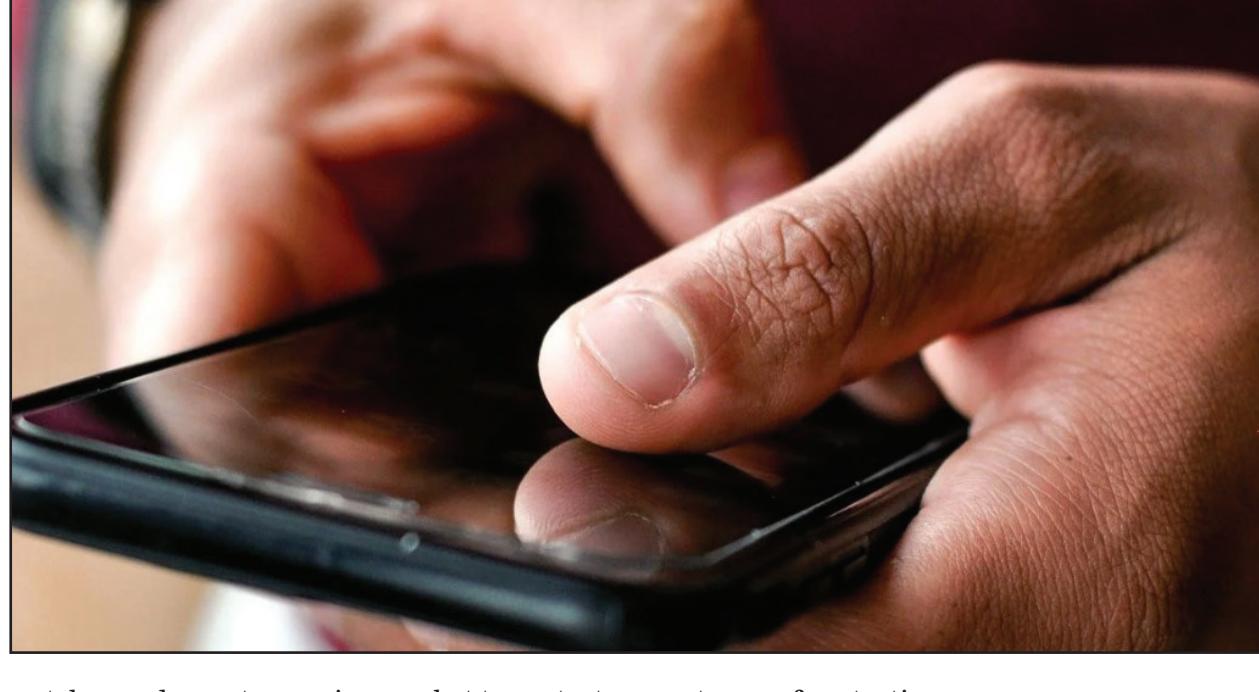
## **Protect your devices: Verizon gives advice for electronics during winter weather**

By: Mike Mohundro;  
WSIL

As winter weather settles in and temperatures drop, Verizon is sharing tips to help people protect their electronics from the cold and avoid costly damage during snow, ice, and freezing conditions.

Cold temperatures can take a toll on smartphones, wearables, and other devices, especially when people spend extended time outdoors. Verizon recommends keeping phones close to your body when you're outside, such as in a coat pocket, where body heat can help prevent devices from getting too cold.

For those heading out to shovel snow or salt walkways, wearable technology can add an extra layer of safety. Newer smart-



watches and smart rings can monitor heart rate and other health indicators, which may be especially useful during strenuous activity in cold weather.

When possible, keep phones tucked away

in a pocket to protect them from snow, sleet, and freezing rain. Using a paired Bluetooth headset allows users to take calls without exposing their device to the elements. Verizon also suggests investing in a

waterproof protective case, which can help prevent liquid damage if a phone is dropped into snow or slush.

Battery life is another concern during winter months. Cold temperatures can drain batteries faster

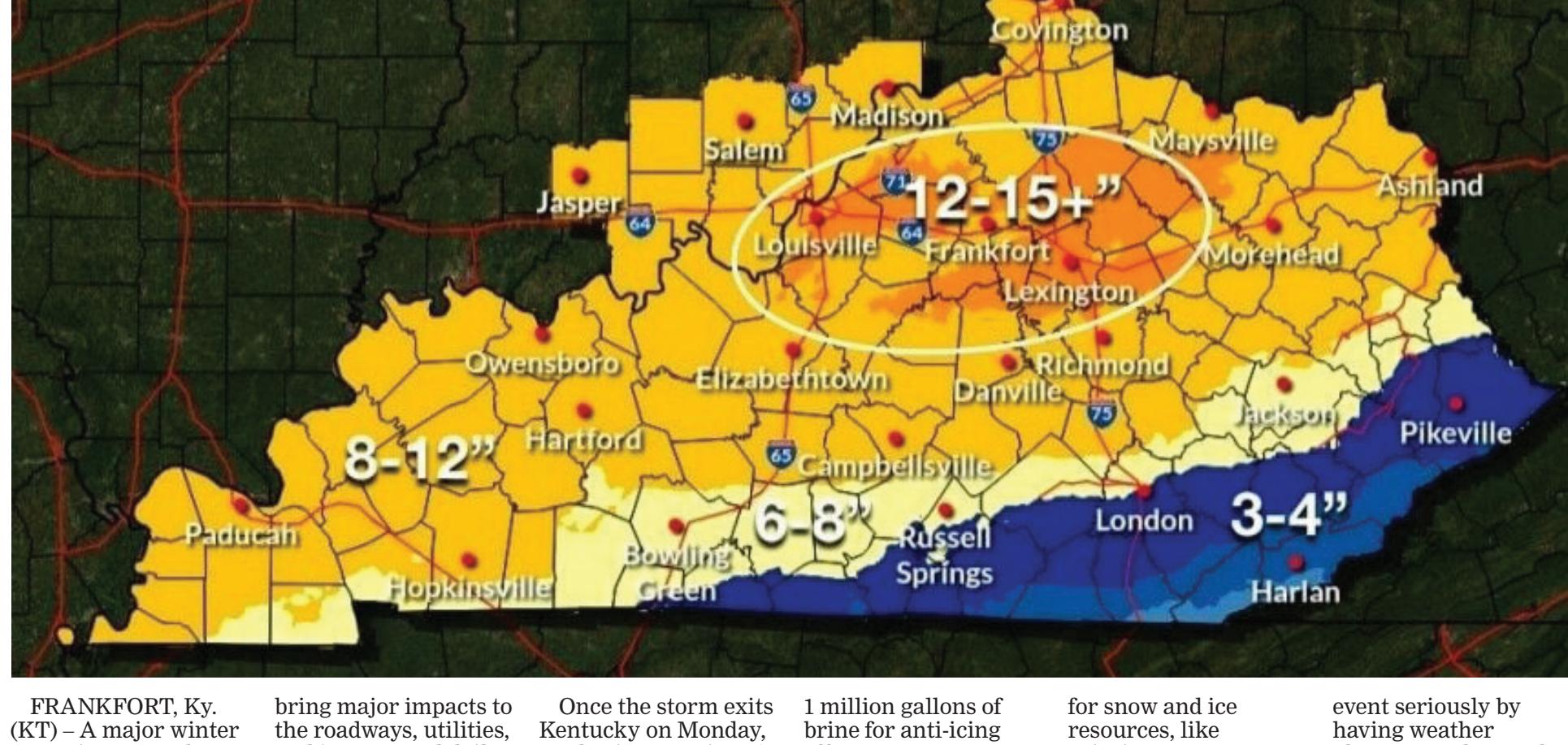
than usual, so carrying an extra battery pack or power station can help keep devices charged while on the go. Drivers are encouraged to keep a mobile charger in their vehicle in case of emergencies.

The cold can also make smartphone screens more fragile, increasing the risk of cracks if the device is dropped. Verizon notes that its Mobile Protect plan offers unlimited cracked screen repairs at no extra cost, along with additional benefits.

If a device does become extremely cold, Asurion advises letting it warm up to room temperature before turning it back on or charging it. This helps prevent condensation from forming inside the device, which could lead to internal damage.

As winter weather continues, taking a few simple precautions can help keep electronics functioning properly—and safely—throughout the season.

## **Kentucky braces for major winter storm**



FRANKFORT, Ky. (KT) – A major winter storm is expected to affect Kentucky from Friday night through Monday morning, with up to 15 inches of snow in much of the state, along with up to a half inch of ice, especially in the south and southeast.

Michael Kochasic, a forecaster with the National Weather Service office in Louisville, says to expect major effects. "The large amount of snow and ice will

bring major impacts to the roadways, utilities, and just general daily life - Power outages, impassable roads across the area. If you don't have to travel, we recommend that you don't, except for emergencies, so the road crews can do their jobs."

He notes it can change between now and when the severe winter weather arrives and asks Kentuckians to stay up to date on updates of changing weather conditions.

Once the storm exits Kentucky on Monday, Kochasic says winter's grip will continue. "We have dangerously cold temperatures and wind chills through at least midweek.

Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) highway crews are monitoring forecasts, preparing to deploy nearly 1,500 state-owned and contracted plow trucks, and ready to tap into their stockpile of 311,000 tons of salt and over

1 million gallons of brine for anti-icing efforts.

"During winter storms, particularly when arctic temperatures are possible, our priority is safety," said Transportation Secretary Jim Gray. "Crews will work to keep state highways passable and ensure access for emergency personal responding to downed power lines or other issues."

You can go to [snowky.ky.gov](http://snowky.ky.gov)

for snow and ice resources, like priority route maps, traffic cameras, tips and highway district updates.

"Kentucky, we are facing some severe winter weather this weekend, and we are doing everything possible to prepare ahead and have options in place to keep Kentuckians safe," said Gov. Andy Beshear. "We are asking everyone to take this winter weather

event seriously by having weather alerts turned on and phones charged and by avoiding travel if possible. Let's do whatever we can to keep our people safe this weekend."

In addition to KYTC crews, Kentucky State Parks and Kentucky Emergency Management (KYEM) are implementing steps to pre-treat roadways and offer assistance to Kentuckians as needed.

# Kentucky Snowfighting Crews Preparing for Weekend Winter Storm

## Press Release

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Jan. 22, 2026) – On Thursday, Gov. Andy Beshear announced that Team Kentucky state highway crews are preparing equipment, mobilizing resources and pre-treating roads where possible ahead of a forecast winter storm that could create snowy and potentially hazardous conditions for travel across the state this weekend. Kentuckians are encouraged to prepare now, avoid non-essential travel and exercise caution on the roads by slowing down and driving distraction-free.

"We are facing some serious winter weather this weekend that will impact roadways, and Team Kentucky state highway crews are working hard to keep our roads as safe as possible for Kentuckians," said Gov. Beshear. "The same way state highway crews have their plans in place, I want to encourage every Kentuckian to do the same by monitoring the weather, avoiding unnecessary travel and packing an emergency car kit."

National Weather Service forecasts show that widespread snow is possible across the state, with increased potential for icing across southern Kentucky raising the risk of slick roads and power disruptions. Tem-



peratures well below freezing statewide are expected this weekend with single digit temperatures and sub-zero wind chills forecast into early next week.

Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) highway crews are monitoring forecasts, preparing to deploy nearly 1,500 state-owned and contracted plow trucks, and ready to tap into their stockpile of 311,000 tons of salt and over 1 million gallons of brine for anti-icing efforts.

"During winter storms, particularly when arctic temperatures are possible, our priority is safety," said KYTC Secretary Jim Gray. "Crews will work to keep state highways passable and ensure access for emergency personal responding to downed power

lines or other issues." Preliminary transportation activities now taking place throughout the state include:

Pretreatment of roadways across districts, as conditions allow.

Statewide KYTC communication with Kentucky Emergency Management, Kentucky State Police, forestry officials and other partner agencies for potential resource requests.

KYTC Division of Equipment actively inventorying resources, including graders and other heavy equipment, to make sure they're ready and available depending on the upcoming weather forecast.

All highway districts and crews in each county actively preparing equipment and resources for the upcoming weather

event.

A briefing with KYTC staff and the National Weather Service held Thursday morning to discuss forecasts and anticipated impacts.

Communicating and coordinating with the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) in case either state should experience closures of Interstate corridors in order to place messages on overhead message signs alerting the traveling public.

Maintaining most roads, streets and bridges that are part of the state highway system, including interstates, parkways and U.S. route designations, KYTC operates on a four-tier priority system to keep people and commerce moving in the most effective way possible.

Road Safety and Preparation Tips for Kentuckians

Kentucky drivers are valuable partners in ensuring highway safety, especially during severe weather events. KYTC encourages Kentuckians to monitor forecasts, avoid unnecessary travel when possible, pack an emergency car kit and, if you must travel during the storm, check your route before you go at GoKY.ky.gov. For your safety, make sure to take it slow and know what to do if power lines are down or signals aren't working.

Emergency Car Kit Suggested Items for Drivers

First aid kit

Extra coat, gloves, and blankets or sleeping bag

Non-perishable food and water

Baby formula, diapers, wipes

Flashlight with extra batteries

Portable phone chargers

Pet food, water, leash, bowl

Medications

Ice scraper and jumper cables

Shovel, and a bag of sand or litter

What To Do if Traffic Signals Are Not Working:

Flashing yellow, proceed with caution

Flashing red, treat as a stop sign

No signal lights, treat as a 4-way stop

What To Do When a Downed Power Line Is on the Roadway:

Never touch or drive over a fallen power line; report the issue to the power company.

If a power line has fallen on your vehicle, STAY INSIDE, do not exit, and call 911.

Assume all downed power lines are live and DO NOT attempt to move.

Visit snowy. ky.gov for snow and ice resources, like priority route maps, traffic cameras, tips and highway district updates.



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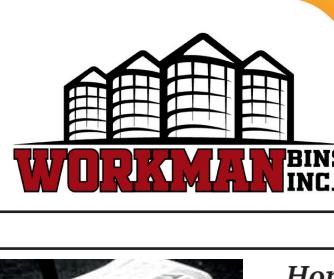
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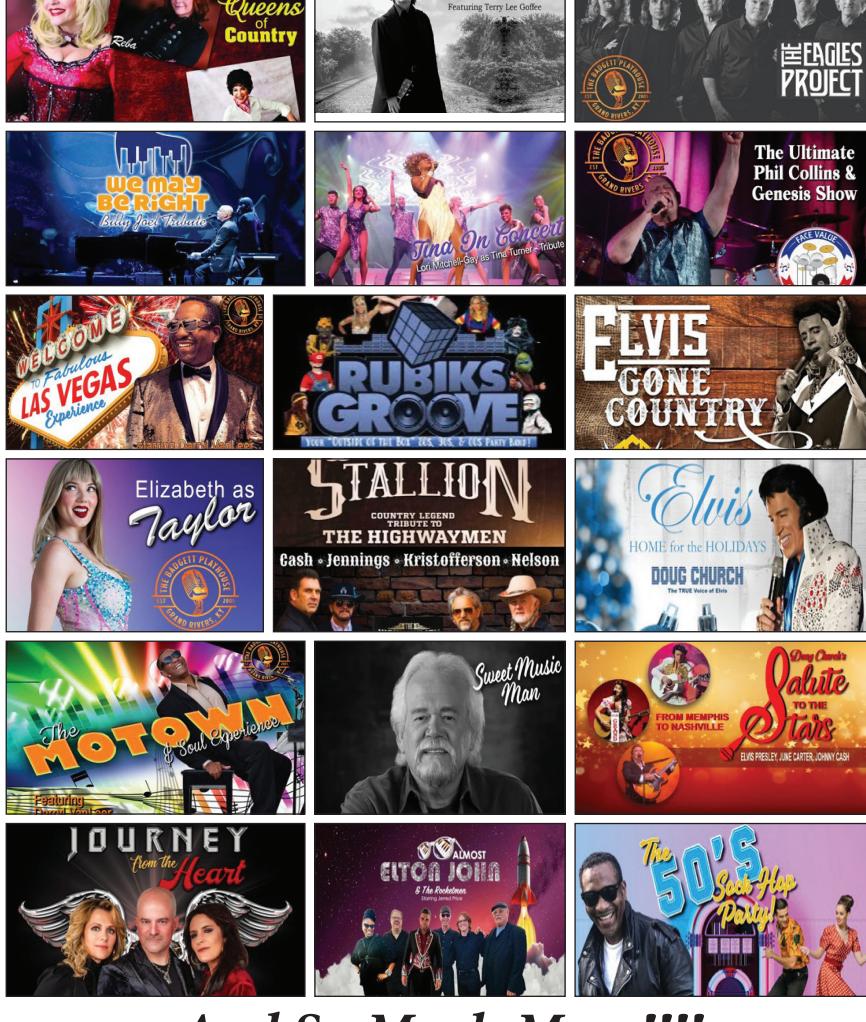
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## **AAA: Bitter Cold Dangerous for Homes and Vehicles**

Some of the winter's most frigid temperatures are hitting a large portion of the country this week and AAA is reminding vehicle owners and homeowners about the importance of being prepared for inclement weather. Below-freezing temperatures can wreak havoc on a home's heating system, plumbing, and exterior features. Also, winter is particularly tough on car batteries and tires. Maintaining homes and vehicles during cold strikes is essential to reduce the risk of winter damage.

"As much of the country is being impacted by winter storms, homeowners and motorists should be proactive in making sure their residences and vehicles are ready for cold weather," said Jim Garrity, director of public affairs, AAA East Central. "High repair costs and headaches can hopefully be avoided by taking measures to ensure a home's interior and exterior are prepared for frigid temperatures and car batteries and tires are in proper working order."

### **Home Protection**

Remove hoses from exterior faucets.

Repair or replace weather stripping around windows and doors, vents and fans, plumbing, air conditioners and electrical and gas lines.

Use caulk or insulation to seal all cracks, holes and other openings on exterior walls.

Let faucets drip a little bit to prevent freezing pipes.

Know where water shutoff valves are located so water can be turned off in case of an

emergency.

Air inside the walls, where pipes are, can be much colder than air in the room, so set the thermostat at a reasonable temperature, even if no one is home.

Keep bathroom and kitchen cabinet doors open to let warm air circulate around the pipes.

Winter Damages Covered by Homeowners Insurance

Winter comes with snow, and sometimes lots of it. A standard home insurance policy may cover the damage if a roof collapses or is damaged due to the weight of snow or ice from a storm. Another threat to homes in the winter season is cold snaps. Water left standing in pipes when the temperature drops may expand with enough force to cause it to burst, leading to severe water damage if the issue isn't immediately identified.

Damage caused by burst pipes and the repair costs are covered by most standard home insurance policies, if regular maintenance is performed and owners maintain heat in the building.

Most damages not covered by insurance are due to homeowner neglect or lack of maintenance. These may include damage resulting from extreme cold due to failure to maintain heat in the home.

### **Be Proactive**

By taking the necessary precautions and preparing houses for winter, making an insurance claim this winter season can be avoided. Trimming threatening trees, shutting off water and draining pipes, and cleaning gutters are all

things that can be done before it gets too cold. If a winter disaster does strike, having the right home insurance coverage will help. Review policies with a trusted agent to be sure everything is in order.

To prepare a vehicle for winter driving, AAA recommends the following tips:

Have the vehicle's battery tested. Last winter, AAA East Central contractors responded to more than 66,000 battery calls, the number one call received by the Club.

Replace worn windshield-wiper blades. Purchase one-piece, beam-type or rubber-clad "winter" blades to fight snow and ice buildup. Use cold-weather windshield washer solvent and carry an ice scraper.

Inspect tires. Make sure tires have adequate tread depth – at least 4/32" – as worn tires can affect a motorist's ability to stop in slick conditions. An easy way to check for wear is by inserting a quarter into the tread groove. If the top of Washington's head is exposed, the tread depth is less than 4/32" and it's time to replace tires. Also, check that the vehicle has a spare tire and keep it properly inflated. In harsh winter climates, a set of snow tires may be a wise investment.

Carry an emergency kit equipped for winter weather. The kit should include sand or cat litter, a small shovel, flashlight, an ice scraper or snow brush, booster cables, a blanket, gloves or mittens and flares or reflective triangles.

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Tract 5	100± Acres
Tract 6	84± Acres



**REAL ESTATE TERMS:** The property will be offered in 6 individual tracts, any combination of tracts, or as a whole property. The property will be sold in the manner resulting in the highest total sale price. 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. **SURVEY:** Real estate sells by existing deed description. If sold in individual tracts, a new survey will be completed, and the buyer shall be responsible for fifty percent (50%) of the survey cost. **CROP RIGHTS:** Buyer will receive 2026 crop rights upon removal of current wheat crop. YOUR BIDDING IS NOT CONDITIONAL UPON FINANCING, SO BE SURE YOU HAVE ARRANGED FINANCING, IF NEEDED, AND ARE CAPABLE OF PAYING CASH AT CLOSING. Closing shall take place on or before 30 days from auction date. All 2025 ad valorem taxes will be prorated at closing.

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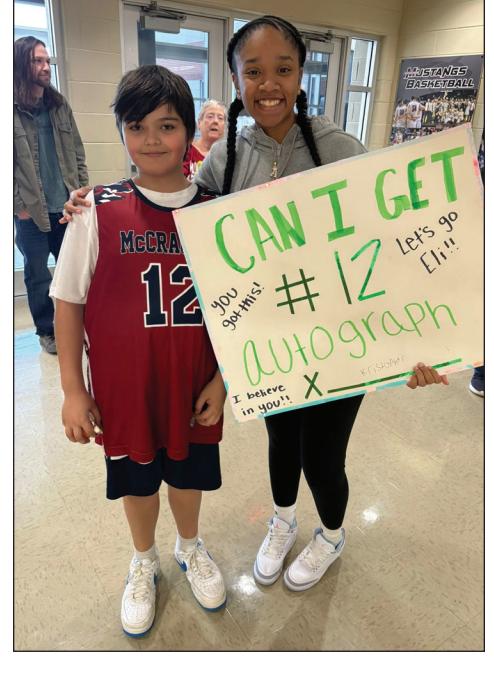
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# WEST KY SPORTS



Calloway County won the 2026 2A Girls' Basketball State Tournament Championship at the Sportscenter in Owensboro on Sunday, Jan. 18. The Lady Lakers outlasted Taylor County 49-46 in the 2A Girls' Basketball State Tournament title game. Calloway County standout Jaidan Koch was named the state tournament's Most Valuable Player after scoring 56 points in three games. The Lady Lakers exited the state tournament with a 21-0 overall record.

(Photo courtesy of Calloway County Schools)



The McCracken County girls' basketball team hosted the McCracken County Special Olympic squads for an afternoon of games on Sunday, Jan. 18.

(Photo courtesy of McCracken County High School)



The Christian Fellowship girls' basketball team won the Autism Shootout Classic championship in Cloverport on Saturday, Jan. 17.

(Photo courtesy of Christian Fellowship School)

# Hickman County 51, Webster County 40

## Staff Report

CLINTON — Hickman County defeated Webster County 51-40 in a non-district girls' basketball game on Saturday, Jan. 17.

The Lady Falcons improved to 8-5 after registering the win.

Hickman County, which won for the third time in four games, shot 46.2 percent (18-of-39) from the field. The Lady Falcons shot 50.0 percent (seven-of-14) from three-point range.

Hickman County connected on eight of 17 free throw attempts, shooting 47.1 percent from the foul line.

Kaylee Britton paced Hickman County, scoring 18 points for the Lady Falcons. Britton made three of seven three-point field goal attempts.

Accompanying Britton in double figures for Hickman County, Kylie Meshew netted 14 points. Meshew made four of five three-point field goal attempts.

Finishing near double figures for Hickman County, Audrey Tucker scored eight points.

Seven players supplied scoring for the Lady Falcons. The additional scorers for Hickman County were Ann White (six points), Lakyn Wilber (two points), Bailey Childress (two points) and Jenna Byassee (one point).

Webster County shot 30.2 percent (13-of-43) from the field. The Lady Trojans connected on three of 18 three-point field goal attempts.

Webster County shot 52.4 percent (11-of-21) from the free throw line.

The scorers for Webster County were Addison Wright (eight points), Adleigh Tapp (eight points), Josie Cardwell (seven points), Ella Rakestraw (seven points), Sylvana Torres (six points) and Alyssa Cartwright (four points).

Hickman County and Webster County met for the first time in the 2025-26 girls' high school basketball season. The Lady Falcons are scheduled to visit Webster County for a late-season girls' basketball game on Thursday, Feb. 12.



Mayfield entered the week set to compete in the All "A" Classic Statewide Boys' Basketball Tournament at the Sportscenter in Owensboro. The All "A" Classic Statewide Boys' Basketball Tournament tipped off on Wednesday, Jan. 21.

(Photo courtesy of Mayfield High School)

## KHSAA Board of Control discusses football realignment considerations during meeting

## Staff Report

LEXINGTON — The KHSAA Board of Control conducted its fourth meeting of the 2025-2026 school year on Thursday, Jan. 15.

The meeting included in-depth back-and-forth dialogue on football realignment considerations for 2027, a drastic increase in eligibility cases, and movement of member schools within the 8th Region necessitated by the placement of Cornerstone Christian in Shelbyville.

A spirited conversation addressing an upcoming football realignment, which occurs every two years, looking for new opportunities for schools in the playoff structure took place. The Board of Control will review bracketing.

One concept to consider is using RPI-based pairings starting in the second round. The first round could then either involve adjacent districts or be within a district, and the board will survey the membership on those options. The intent is to avoid repeated playoff matchups. The Board of Control will consider the survey results, and if any change is approved, it could be in place for the 2027 season.

The Board of Control also asked for additional data on the potential adoption of multipliers, including their enrollments prior to classification, and for consideration of a "success factor" to be included in the realignment considerations. The Board of Control will continue to study this information and consider options, with implementation no earlier than the 2029 season, using data from the 2027 and 2028 seasons.

In addition, the Board of Control voted 12-4 to place Cornerstone Christian into District 29, beginning with the 2026-2027 school year, in the various team sports, in an effort to balance the district alignment in the 8th Region. A proposal to send Collins to the 29th District was voted down 5-11 before the final motion was

approved.

During the Board of Control reports section of the agenda, the Commissioner and the Board recognized long-time software engineer and developer Frank Riherd, Jr. Riherd plans to continue his work with the KHSAA on the Riherd/KHSAA scoreboard through June 30. He recently notified the KHSAA and also posted on social media his recent diagnosis of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS). "From the time Mr. Riherd told us nearly two years ago that he wanted to start to adjust his time commitment and focus primarily on the scoreboard after the transition of our data system to ArbiterSports, we have been very public in both our appreciation of his work and the need for that product to continue", said KHSAA Commissioner Julian Tackett. "We deeply love Frank and the great things he has done for the KHSAA, its member school administrators and coaches, and a generation of students, and want that legacy project to continue long into the future. While the future scoreboard may not be identical and could take on a different look or feel, we would not be acting responsibly if we didn't work to continue this great project. We are committed to the scoreboard continuing in 2026-27 and beyond after Frank steps aside on June 30 this year, and we are forever indebted."

The Board of Control approved the first-round sites for the golf state tournament for the next three years.

Other action by the Board of Control included the following:

- Adjust the standard regular season contract fee with an increase of \$5 for regular season basketball officials and review the postseason fee to increase that as well. Wrestling would be adjusted in its standard fees. These two sports were a part of the routine review scheduled every four years for all sports.

- Began a review of soccer, potentially adopting a three-year pilot program moving into classes.

## Lady Cards Get Their Revenge



By Tim Taylor  
KPI Sports Writer

Your best players must come up big in big time games. That is exactly what Mayfield girl's all-time leading scorer Lay Mayes did in their All A semifinal game against Ballard Memorial. She finished with 27 of the Lady Cardinals 43 points in Mayfield's 43-32 win to advance to the All A 1st Region championship game. The Lady Bombers defeated Mayfield by 3 nine days prior to the rematch and the Lady Cards were able to avenge the loss. Taking away the Lady Bombers' outside shooting was a key element to the Mayfield game plan. Ballard Memorial drained 13 treys in their quarterfinal win over St. Mary. Mayfield limited Ballard Memorial to 4 of 19 shooting from behind the arc, challenging

most shots and preventing quality chances. Mayes scored Mayfield's first 7 points of the game to propel the Lady Cards to a 7-1 lead. Ballard Memorial responded with the next 6 points to tie the game at 7. The Lady Cards built the lead again to 11-7 before Kate O'Neill and Liyah Holman scored to tie the game at 11. Mayfield had the answer each time as they scored the final 8 points of the quarter to lead 19-11 at the half. Mayes bucket to begin the 2nd half extended the lead to 21-11. Ballard Memorial made their move going on a 9-2 run. Mayes continued making plays. She scored 5 in a row on a pair of free throws and a trey off a Ballard Memorial turnover in the back court to push the lead back to 8. The Lady Bombers answered the call. Rilee Bodell

hit one of two free throws. Shortly after, her trey followed by a Gracee Beere trey and Ballard Memorial was back to within 28-27. Mayes took over from there. She scored the next 10 points for Mayfield on a field goal and 8 free throws to push the lead to 38-28. Mayfield's defense limited Ballard Memorial to their only field goal of the 4th quarter in the final minute of play. The Lady Cardinals outscored the Lady Bombers 15-5 to end the game. O'Neill led Ballard Memorial with 9 points and Liyah Holman had 7 rebounds. The loss ended the Lady Bombers 6 game winning streak as they now try and begin a new winning streak to start their post All A Tournament swing of the schedule. Beere and O'Neill were selected to the All A All-Tournament Team for the Lady Bombers.

## Operation River Raid nets more than 700 criminal charges

## Staff Report

FRANKFORT — After a 10-month multi-agency investigation, game wardens with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources have identified 25 individuals to be charged with a range of violations in connection with the illegal commercial harvest and sale of catfish from public waters, as well as the unlawful operation of pay lakes across Kentucky.

Dubbed Operation River Raid, the extensive enforcement effort spans from Paducah to Ashland and represents one of the most significant cases of illegal wildlife harvesting and distribution in recent state history.

"This case reflects our commitment to safeguarding Kentucky's natural resources," said Col. Jeremy McQueary, director of the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Law Enforcement Division. "Illegal commercialization of wildlife — especially through the exploitation of native fish populations — undermines conservation efforts and lawful recreation. We will not tolerate it."

The investigation is anticipated to result in more than 700 criminal charges across six counties: Livingston, Marshall, Boyd, Bath, Lawrence and Powell. Wardens

plan to present more than 100 felony counts to local grand juries, seeking indictments. Charges remain pending as investigators continue reviewing evidence and case materials. Authorities allege that the defendants failed to report the harvest of a total of more than 300,000 pounds of catfish, a clear violation of Kentucky law.

"A critical piece of information to properly manage any fishery is accurate harvest rates," said Dave Dreves, director of the Fisheries Division. "That is why commercial fishers are required to report their harvest each month. This egregious underreporting undermines our ability to properly monitor catfish populations, especially trophy catfish."

Officials believe the illegal activity involved harvesting catfish from public waterways and transporting them for sale to unregulated or illegally operated pay lakes. This practice not only violates state law but also harms fish populations and lawful businesses, and it threatens the long-term sustainability of Kentucky's natural resources.

The success of Operation River Raid is the result of coordinated efforts by multiple agencies, including Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Game Wardens and Fisheries Division employees from across the state, as well as district and circuit courts from numerous counties. Investigators utilized surveillance, intelligence sharing and field inspections across multiple counties to disrupt these illegal activities.

Due to the active nature of the case, specific names and details are being withheld until court proceedings are underway. Updates will be provided as they become available.

"This case sends a strong message," added Maj. David Marques, assistant director for the Law Enforcement Division. "If you profit from poaching or operate outside the law, we will find you and you will be held accountable."

The public is encouraged to report suspected poaching activity to Kentucky Fish and Wildlife by calling 800-25-ALERT, texting "KFWLAW" and your message to tip411 (847411), or by contacting their local Kentucky Game Warden at the Find My County Contact webpage on the department's website (fw.ky.gov).

# Cats hook Longhorns, win season-best fourth straight game

By Keith Taylor  
Kentucky Today

LEXINGTON, Ky. (KT) — Make it four in a row for Kentucky.

The Wildcats (13-6, 4-2 Southeastern Conference) won for the fourth straight time for the first time this season with an 85-80 triumph over Texas on Wednesday night.

Unlike its three previous comeback victories, Kentucky didn't need a second-half rally to defeat the Longhorns. The Cats finished it off at the foul line, hitting 6 of 8 free throws in the final minute after not making a field goal in the last 5:48 of the game.

"We played one of the top offensive teams in the country and I thought we had some great individual efforts on the defensive end and some team efforts," Kentucky coach Mark Pope said. "I'm proud of our guys for grinding out the win."

Denzel Aberdeen made all six free throws in the final minutes and led the Wildcats with 19 points. Paced by Aberdeen, the Wildcats made 30 of its 35 foul shots and connected on 23 of those in the second half. Kentucky withstood 11 lead changes and 11 ties.

Collin Chandler and

Otega Oweh added 18 points each, with Chandler scoring a career-high. Playing with an illness, Chandler played a big role in the second half and scored 14 points, including a pair of 3-pointers. Chandler missed the shoot-around prior to the contest because of a stomach bug.

"I thought he was great and it was hard," Pope said. "You're kind of like cold sweats in bed for three straight days and then get up and come compete in the game. For him to come perform like he did, I thought he was elite."

Chandler practiced despite the illness but took a break to prepare for the game.

"I missed shoot-around today mostly to just catch up on sleep and rest and being sure I had all my energy for tonight, but there was never doubt on whether I was going to play or not," he said. "I haven't been feverish which has been the nicest thing about it, but there's been stuff going around. That's just how the winter is so it's something I get every year."

While he was effective offensively, Pope also praised Chandler's performance



**Collin Chandler scored a career-high 18 points in Kentucky's 80-75 victory over Texas on Wednesday night.**

(Photo by Les Nicholson)

on the defensive end against Texas guard Jordan Pope.

"He put together a really incredible performance, seven rebounds in a game where that was (against) one of the best offensive rebound teams in the country, and unbelievable job on Pope when he was guarding him," Pope said. "I thought both (Aberdeen) and Collin really gave us great efforts trying to try to corral Pope."

Texas coach Sean Miller said Chandler was a difference-maker for Kentucky. Chandler got the call after Kam Williams left the

game in the first half with a broken foot.

"They have great depth," Miller said. "They have the ability to bring guys in off the bench that can make a difference and make plays. Collin Chandler was six-for-six from the line, 18 points. He really hurt us tonight. He had two really big threes. He comes off

the bench and he can change the game. He is a really good player and I think he's an important player for Kentucky."

Pope said Williams broke a bone in his foot and will be sidelined "for a while."

"He's just a beautiful kid," Pope said. "I thought he actually made some special

plays tonight. So we're going to get him back healthy as soon as we possibly can."

Malachi Moreno provided eight points but was a factor on the defensive end with five blocks and added six assists with only two turnovers.

"That's a ridiculous number," Pope said of the blocks. "That's really good."

Miller also praised the outing by Moreno against his squad.

"I think he's one of the best freshmen in the country certainly has a big role on Kentucky's team, and I think he's improving," he said.

Texas forward Dailey Swain led all scorers with 29 points. The Longhorns, who edged the Wildcats 82-78 a year ago in Austin, fell to 11-8 and 2-4 on the season.

Gametracker: Ole Miss at Kentucky, noon, Saturday. TV/Radio: ESPN, UK Radio Network.

## 'I like where we stand right now': Stein happy with first UK roster

By KEITH TAYLOR  
Kentucky Today

LEXINGTON, Ky. (KT) — Will Stein's first roster at Kentucky is nearly intact.

The first-year Wildcats' coach is eager to focus solely on Kentucky after he helped lead Oregon to the national semifinals. Stein said he feels "really good with where we're at" during a press conference Monday at Kroger Field.

"We were strongly resourced to make sure that we got the right players," he said. "We're still pushing the envelope there, but we have fielded a team I believe that can go out there and compete immediately. It really starts with depth, that's the key part in college football."

Stein credited general manager Pat Biondo and assistant Pete Notchta for filling the void while he finished out his term as Oregon's offensive coordinator.

"Those guys really spearheaded building this roster, along with me," Stein said. "I like where we stand right now."

The Wildcats focused on rebuilding and fine-tuning the offensive line, a component that Stein considers beneficial especially during the latter part of the season.

"That was a major, major thing," Stein said. "The teams that win in November, December, January, (are good) in the trenches. So, making sure that we are solidifying the offensive line

was a major piece to this puzzle."

spot, his next venture ... I just think he's a great person."

Stein's first recruiting class, a mixture of transfers and newcomers, features 10 players from Texas, seven from Georgia and five from Florida and three from Kentucky. Stein's overall philosophy is to recruit the home state first for the best talent.

"The best way that we're going to move forward is really starting inside the state of Kentucky - it has to," Stein said. "In this next class, there's a lot of really good talent in the state right now, a lot. When I've seen Kentucky at its best, it's homegrown talent. That's where you got to start."

However, Stein added the Wildcats will do whatever it takes to recruit the best players to fit the system.

"(After that) then you look at really the five-, six-hour radius around us, Nashville, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Chicago, Detroit. I'm even going to Charlotte, Atlanta, those are the cities that you really want to hone in on, even St Louis.

"This is a national brand — the University of Kentucky. This logo holds weight. This is where you can use your resources and your relationships that you built, maybe prior to going to a state like Texas, to really dive into South Florida, even the DMV area, to use those connections to acquire players that want to be here. We'll go wherever."



**ALLISON BALL**  
AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

### Independent Auditor's Report

The Honorable Michael Williams, Livingston County Judge/Executive  
The Honorable Sonya Williams, Livingston County Clerk  
Members of the Livingston County Fiscal Court

#### Report on the Audit of the Financial Statement

##### Opinions

We have audited the accompanying Statement of Receipts, Disbursements, and Excess Fees - Regulatory Basis of the County Clerk of Livingston County, Kentucky, for the year ended December 31, 2024, and the related notes to the financial statement.

##### Unmodified Opinion on Regulatory Basis of Accounting

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statement presents fairly, in all material respects, the receipts, disbursements, and excess fees of the Livingston County Clerk for the year ended December 31, 2024, in accordance with the basis of accounting practices prescribed or permitted by the Commonwealth of Kentucky to demonstrate compliance with the Commonwealth of Kentucky's regulatory basis of accounting and budget laws as described in Note 1.

##### Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles

In our opinion, because of the significance of the matter discussed in the Basis for Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles section of our report, the financial statement does not present fairly, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, the financial position of the Livingston County Clerk, as of December 31, 2024, or changes in financial position or cash flows for the year then ended.

##### Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS) and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards (GAS), issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, and the Audit Program for County Fee Officials issued by the Auditor of Public Accounts, Commonwealth of Kentucky. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statement section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Livingston County Clerk and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinions.

##### Basics for Adverse Opinion on U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles

As described in Note 1 of the financial statement, the financial statement is prepared by the Livingston County Clerk on the basis of the accounting practices prescribed or permitted by the laws of Kentucky to demonstrate compliance with the Commonwealth of Kentucky's regulatory basis of accounting and budget laws, which is a basis of accounting other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

The effects on the financial statement of the variances between the regulatory basis of accounting described in Note 1 and accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, although not reasonably determinable, are presumed to be material and pervasive.

##### Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statement

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of this financial statement in accordance with accounting practices prescribed or permitted by the laws of Kentucky to demonstrate compliance with the Commonwealth of Kentucky's regulatory basis of accounting and budget laws. Management is also responsible for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of a financial statement that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statement, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Livingston County Clerk's ability to continue as a going concern for twelve months beyond the financial statement date, including any currently known information that may raise substantial doubt shortly thereafter. Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statement

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statement as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinions. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS and GAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statement.

In performing an audit in accordance with GAAS and GAS, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statement, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statement.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Livingston County Clerk's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statement.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Livingston County Clerk's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time. We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we have identified during the audit.

##### Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards

In accordance with Government Auditing Standards, we have also issued our report dated September 19, 2025, on our consideration of the Livingston County Clerk's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, grant agreements, and other matters. The purpose of that report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with Government Auditing Standards in considering the Livingston County Clerk's internal control over financial reporting and compliance. Based on the results of our audit, we have presented the accompanying Schedule of Findings and Responses, included herein, which discusses the following report findings:

2024-001 The Livingston County Clerk's Office Does Not Have Adequate Segregation of Duties

Respectfully submitted,

Allison Ball  
Auditor of Public Accounts  
Frankfort, KY

September 19, 2025

State law requires the Auditor of Public Accounts to annually audit fiscal courts, county clerks, and sheriffs; and print the results in a newspaper having general circulation in the county. The complete audit and any other audit of state agencies, fiscal courts, county clerks, sheriffs, and property valuation administrators may be viewed in the reports section of the Auditor of Public Accounts' website at [auditor.ky.gov](http://auditor.ky.gov) or upon request by calling 1-800-247-9126.

(01-23-26\_LL\_1x)

*Allison Ball*



# AG UPDATE

for Ag and Natural Resources



**Tom Miller,**  
Ballard County Ext. Agent

When news breaks about a new threat to livestock, the food supply, or even human health, it can feel hard to sort through basic info and what to do next. Kentucky has recently confirmed a couple of cases of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), also called H5N1. Influenza viruses carry only a small set of genes, but tiny changes in that genetic "recipe" can alter which species they infect, how they spread, and how severe disease can be—sometimes in birds, sometimes in mammals, and sometimes in people.

There are many influenza strains that affect birds and other animals. What makes this strain more concerning is its aggressiveness toward poultry. "Highly pathogenic" means it spreads easily among birds and can cause severe disease. Once HPAI enters a flock of chickens, fatality rates can be extremely high—sometimes up to 90%. That kind of loss can devastate poultry farms and disrupt the supply of fresh eggs. Another reason this strain draws attention is its ability to infect a wid-



er range of species than most bird flu viruses.

Wild birds—especially waterfowl—are natural reservoirs for avian influenza viruses. They can carry the virus and develop respiratory infections. During spring and fall migration, birds travel long distances, and an infected bird can expose domestic poultry and other wildlife along the way. If you find dead wild birds on your farm, report them to the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife so testing can be considered.

Backyard flocks and birds raised outdoors are at higher risk because they're more likely to be

exposed to migrating birds overhead. Droppings can contaminate areas where poultry eat and drink. When possible, keeping poultry indoors can reduce risk. Outbreaks can also spread from farm to farm through movement of animals, equipment, vehicles, feed, or people. With a virus this contagious, skipping biosecurity steps can put an entire flock at risk.

In poultry, HPAI often causes severe respiratory disease: discharge from the eyes and nose, sneezing, swelling or discoloration of the comb and wattles, loss of appetite, decreased egg production, and lack of

coordination. Birds may only appear sick for a short time or die suddenly. Any flock with unexpected deaths or severe respiratory signs should be evaluated by a veterinarian and tested through state agencies or diagnostic laboratories to rule out avian influenza.

Cattle and other mammals can be infected. In cattle, respiratory signs may be mild and short-lived, but mastitis can occur and may last weeks, with de-

creased milk production and an inflamed udder. Avoid drinking raw (unpasteurized) milk, especially from sick animals. Cats, including barn cats, may develop neurologic signs such as staggering, tremors, or seizures, along with eye/nose discharge. Illness in cats can be severe and progress quickly.

People exposed to sick wild birds, poultry, or raw milk can become infected. Symptoms often resemble influenza—fever, body aches,

fatigue, runny nose, sore throat, and cough—and conjunctivitis (pink eye) is also common.

To report sick wild birds, call the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife: 1-800-858-1549.

For poultry deaths or severe respiratory disease, contact your local veterinarian; state or federal agencies can help arrange testing.

For sick poultry questions, call USDA: 1-866-536-7593.

For questions about people and avian flu, contact your health care provider or the Kentucky Department of Public Health: 502-564-3970.

Programs of the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service serve all people regardless of race, age, sex, color, religion, disability or national origin. For additional information, contact the Ballard County Extension Office, 110 Broadway, LaCenter, 665-9118.

## What you need to know about High Path Avian Flu

Source: Jessie Lay, Extension Animal Health Veterinarian

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# State Senate passes bills on restricting cellphone use and limiting pardon power of governor

By TOM LATEK  
Kentucky Today

FRANKFORT, Ky. (KT) – A bill restricting cellphone use while driving and one limiting a governor's pardon power for 60 days before a general election and until the next inauguration, passed the Kentucky Senate on Tuesday.

Senate Bill 28, known as the Phone Down Kentucky Act sponsored by Sen. Jimmy Higdon, Lebanon, has several provisions:

--Expanding Kentucky's existing ban on texting while driv-

ing to prohibit nearly all hand-held mobile device use while operating a vehicle.

--Maintaining exemptions for GPS navigation, emergencies, and law enforcement.

--Allowing use of a device while the car is not in motion (e.g., at a red light or when pulled over).

Violators, who would have to be seen by a police officer using the phone, would face a \$100 fine, which can be prepaid, with no court costs or points on the violator's license.

"This is about sav-



Sen. Christian McDaniel wants to pause a governor's pardon powers in the final stretch of their term. He is proposing a constitutional amendment to that end.

ing lives, plain and simple," Higdon said. "It is an opportunity for us to honor her, and finally do the right thing by putting

the Phone Down Kentucky Act into law."

The bill passed on a 31-7 vote.

The Senate also approved a pro-

posed constitutional amendment, sponsored by Sen. Christian McDaniel, R-Ryland Heights, that would pause a governor's pardon powers in the final stretch of their term.

Designated as a priority bill by Senate leadership, SB 10 would prohibit pardons and commutations, beginning 60 days before a gubernatorial election through the next governor's inauguration.

"This reform has passed the Senate in multiple sessions, and I'm optimistic

this is the year it reaches the ballot," McDaniel stated while presenting the measure. "I appreciate the encouraging words I've heard from House colleagues and the positive comments from Speaker David Osborne. It's time to let the people decide."

SB 10 received 36 "Yes" votes, and one "Pass" vote, well above the three-fifths margin required of a proposed Constitutional Amendment.

Both measures now head to the House.



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# Measure to block expansion of occupational taxes clears panel

By Tom Latek  
kentucky Today

FRANKFORT, Ky. (KT) – Legislation to block expansion of local occupational taxes with a vote of the people has cleared its first hurdle, as it was approved by the Senate Appropriations and Revenue Committee on Wednesday.

Senate Bill 76 was introduced by Sen. Amanda Mays Bledsoe, R-Lexington, in response to widespread public frustration following last year's procedurally flawed attempt by the Fayette County Board of Education to impose a new school board occupational license tax increase.

SB 76 raises the population threshold required for a county to gain authority to increase the relevant tax from 300,000 to 500,000 residents. Counties like Fayette would no longer be able to revisit or implement such an increase unless they eventually reach the new population requirement.

The legislation does not remove or alter any existing occupa-



tional license taxes. Instead, it prevents future expansion of the tax in growing counties that have not reached the higher population threshold.

Last spring, the Fayette County Board of Education voted to raise its occupational license tax during Memorial Day weekend, drawing sharp criticism for its lack of transparency. In response to constituent complaints, Bledsoe formally re-

quested an attorney general's opinion. On June 4, 2025, Attorney General Russell Coleman issued a formal opinion finding the board's action violated public notice requirements. The vote was later voided, and the tax was never implemented following public outcry.

The controversy sparked widespread coverage across local media and fueled frustrations among Fayette County's Senate Majority Caucus

legislative delegation and beyond.

"Having served on

the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Council and now as

vice chair of the Senate's budget committee, I understand the importance of how we raise local revenue and the need for transparency when doing so," Bledsoe said. "After last year's public debacle, I heard clearly from Fayette County residents who felt blindsided and frustrated. Their concerns were well-founded, and I felt compelled to act."

Bledsoe said SB 76 will allow time for public trust to be restored while providing stability and confidence for both employees and employers in the years ahead.

The measure now heads to the Senate floor.

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## Tate refiles human growth, development education bill



Rep. Nancy Tate, R-Brandenburg, speaks on House Bill 470, an act related to gender transition services, on the House floor.

(LRC photo)

By TESSA REDMOND,  
Kentucky Today

FRANKFORT, Ky. (KT) – A Republican lawmaker has filed a bill adding human growth and development instruction to Kentucky's school curriculum.

House Bill 359 would direct the state's school districts to adopt curriculum including instruction on human growth and development for students in grade six or above. A high-

definition ultrasound video and computer-generated animation demonstrating fetal development would be required presentations, and parents could opt their children out of the instruction.

It is the third time State Rep. Nancy Tate, R-Brandenburg, has proposed the bill, known in previous sessions as the "Baby Olivia Act."

Earlier iterations of the bill were named after Baby Olivia, a human development

video produced by pro-life advocacy organization Live Action. The animation could be used in Kentucky classrooms under HB 359.

Live Action released a sequel video to Baby Olivia, called Baby Oliver, in December 2025. Tate did not respond to an earlier request for comment about the use of Baby Oliver in Kentucky curriculum and did not respond to an email seeking comment on HB 359.

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**BALLARD**

**Gary "Red" Underwood**, age 73, of Wickliffe, Kentucky, passed away at his home on January 15, 2026. Funeral services was held at 11:00 am on Monday, January 19, 2026, at Milner & Orr Funeral Home of Wickliffe with Bro. Billy Prince officiating. Burial followed at Wickliffe City Cemetery.

**Tawnya Ellen Scott**, age 26 passed away at Vanderbilt Medical Center in Nashville, TN on Friday, January 16, 2026. Memorial Visitation will be held at a later date at Morrow Funeral Chapel in LaCenter, KY.

**Warren Sylvester Durrell**, age 75, of Wickliffe, KY passed away on Wednesday, January 14, 2026, at Lourdes Hospital in Paducah, KY. Visitation will be held on Saturday, January 24, 2026, after 11:00 a.m. at Morrow Funeral Chapel in LaCenter, KY. Funeral Service will be held on Saturday, January 24, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. at Morrow Funeral Chapel in LaCenter, KY with Rev. Guy Johnson officiating. Interment will follow at Mount Zion Cemetery in Wickliffe, KY.

**CALDWELL**

**Ronald Ervin Pryor**, age 79, of Mt. Juliet, TN, formerly of Princeton, passed away January 16, 2026 in Mt. Juliet, TN. Funeral services were held at 1:00 pm Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at Morgan's Funeral Home. Burial will follow in Cedar Hill Cemetery with military honors.

**Betty Jean Stewart**, age 87, of Princeton, passed away Thursday, January 15, 2026, at her home. Funeral Services for Betty Jean Stewart were held Sunday, January 18, 2026, at Morgan's Funeral Home at 2:00 pm with Bro. Mark Faughn officiating.

**Jerry Edward Murphy**, 78, of Princeton, Ky passed away in the early hours of Wednesday January 14th 2025. There are no services scheduled at this time

**Wayne Duncan**, age 84 of Princeton, departed this life peacefully at his home on January 18, 2026, surrounded by the love of his family while holding his wife's hand. A visitation was held at Goodman Funeral Home in Princeton, Kentucky, on January 21, 2026, from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM, and on January 22, 2026, from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM. A funeral service will follow on January 22, 2026, at 11:00 AM with Bro. Terry Rhye officiating. Burial will follow at Salem Baptist Church Cemetery in Morton's Gap. One of his favorite scriptures, John 14:1, resonates with his journey: "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me."

**Margie Lee Pfahler**, of Princeton, KY, a beloved mother, grandmother, and dedicated member of the community, passed away on January 15, 2026, at Mercy Health of Paducah. There are no services scheduled at this time.

**CALLOWAY**

**Billy Steve Meade**, 82, of New Concord, KY, passed away on Saturday, January 17, 2026 at his home. Mr. Meade will be interred in Lawndale, NC. Imes Funeral Home is entrusted with caring for his family.

**Travis K. Osserman**, 37, of Murray, formerly of Roswell, NM, passed away on Thursday, January 15, 2026 at his home. No services are planned at this time. Imes Funeral Home is entrusted with caring for his family.

**Norman Allen Bumby**, 91, of Paducah, KY, passed away on Wednesday, January 14, 2026 at Ray and Kay Eckstein Hospice Care Center. Visitation will be held from 5 pm - 7 pm on Thursday, January 29, 2026 at Imes Funeral Home, 311 North 4th Street, Murray, KY 42071. The memorial service honoring Mr. Bumby will begin at 7 pm on Thursday at the funeral home. A family graveside service with military honors is set for 10 am on Friday, January 30, 2026 at Kentucky Veterans Cemetery West in Hopkinsville, KY.

**Manfred Morrison Trenholm**, 72, of Murray, passed away on Wednesday, January 14, 2026 at Baptist Health in Paducah, KY. Per Manfred's wishes, no services will be held.

**Martha Nell (Garland) Lassiter**, age 86, of Murray, Kentucky, passed away on Monday, January 19, 2026, at the Trigg County Hospital in Cadiz, Kentucky. A funeral service was held at 2:00 p.m., Thursday, January 22, 2026, at the J.H. Churchill Funeral Home & Cremation Services with Bro. Martin Severns and Kathy Farley officiating. Burial will follow in the Elm Grove Cemetery.

**Joseph Lee Simpson**, 50, of Murray, Kentucky, passed away Thursday, January 15, 2026, at his home. The family plans to remember Joseph privately, with no public visitation or funeral service being held at this time.

**CHRISTIAN**

**Jerry Lynn Craft**, age 75, of Hopkinsville, KY, joined his Father's Heavenly Kingdom on Thursday, January 15, 2026, of natural causes at Ascension Saint Thomas Hospital West. Funeral Services will be at 2:00 PM on Friday, January 23, 2026, at Maddux-Fuqua-Hinton Funeral Home with Rev. Darrell Crawford officiating and burial to follow in Ridgetop Cemetery in Crofton. Visitation will be at Maddux-Fuqua-Hinton Funeral Home from 12:00 PM Noon until the service time at 2:00 PM on Friday, January 23, 2026.

**Larry James**, 81, of Hopkinsville, KY died at 2:47 p.m. Friday, January 16, 2026 at his residence surrounded by his family. Funeral services were held at 2:00 p.m. Tuesday, January 20, 2026 at Hughart, Beard & Giles Funeral Home with Rev. Mike Humphries officiating. Burial will follow in Green Hill Memorial Gardens.

**Bertha Helen Metcalfe White**, 81, of Hopkinsville, passed away on January 14, 2026, in Madisonville, KY. Services will be held on Friday, January 23, 2026 @ 1:00 pm at the Virginia St. Baptist Church, 209 S. Virginia St, Hopkinsville, KY 42240. Burial at Cave Springs Cemetery.

**CRITTENDEN**

**Tanya Don Ramage**, 67, of Marion, KY passed away January 19, 2026 at Aperion Care Lincoln Nursing Home in Evansville, IN. Services are scheduled for 1 PM Tuesday January 27, 2026 at Gilbert Funeral Home in Marion, KY with interment in Dycusburg Cemetery. The family will receive visitors from 10 AM until service time Tuesday at the funeral home.

**Helen Teer Cullen**, 85, of Marion, Ky., died Thursday, Jan. 15, 2026, at Salem Springlake Health and Rehabilitation Center. Funeral services were at 1 p.m., Saturday, Jan 17 at Gilbert Funeral Home in Marion with Bro. Rob Ison and Bro. Kirk Greenfield officiating.

**Carolyn Sue Driver** age 81 of Marion, KY passed away January 19, 2026 at Crittenden County Health and Rehabilitation Center. Funeral services were held at 1 PM Thursday, January 22, 2026 at Myers Funeral Home.

**FULTON**

**Eddie Eugene Bell, Jr.**, age 64, of South Fulton, Tennessee, passed away on Friday, January 16, 2026, at his residence. A memorial service will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, January 24, 2026, at Walnut Grove Church. Friends are asked to meet at the church at the hour of service.

**Sharon A. Johnson**, age 84, of Fulton, Kentucky, passed away on Thursday, January 15, 2026, at her residence. Graveside services for Ms. Johnson were held at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, January 17, 2026, at Greenlea Cemetery.

**GRAVES**

**James Robert "Bobby" Bennett**, age 78,

passed peacefully from this life on January 19, 2026 surrounded by his children, in his warm home-the house he built with his own hands. Funeral services for Bobby Bennett were held at 2:00 pm on Thursday January 22, 2026 at Byrn Funeral Home in Mayfield, KY. Stacy Overby and Ryan Overby will officiate. Interment will follow at Bennett Cemetery.

**Dortha Sue Williams**, 101, long time resident of Cuba, passed away peacefully on Tuesday, January 20, 2026 at Mills Manor Health and Rehab. Graveside services for Mrs. Dortha Sue Williams will be 3:00 p.m. on Friday, January 23 at Cuba Baptist Church Cemetery. Visitation will be 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. on Friday at Byrn Funeral Home in Mayfield, KY.

**Robbye Kirby Ford**, age 91, of Mayfield passed away on Sunday, January 18, 2026 at Oakview Nursing and Rehab in Calvert City, KY. Funeral services for Mrs. Robbye Kirby Ford will be 12:00 p.m. Friday, January 23, 2026 at Byrn Funeral Home in Mayfield, KY. Rev. John Taylor will officiate. Interment will follow at Mayfield Memory Gardens. Visitation will be 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. on Friday, January 23, 2026 at the funeral home.

**Martha Alice Moreland Strong**, age 85, of Mayfield, KY passed away Saturday, January 17, 2026 at the Mills Health and Rehab in Mayfield, KY. A funeral service for Martha Alice Moreland Strong was held on Thursday, January 22, 2026 at the Byrn Funeral Home in Mayfield, KY. Rev. Al Chandler officiated. Interment followed in the Mayfield Memory Gardens.

**John Wayne Miller**, age 87, of Mayfield, KY passed away Saturday, January 17, 2026 at the Mills Health and Rehab in Mayfield. A funeral service for John Wayne Miller was held at 1:00 PM Tuesday, January 20, 2026 at the Byrn Funeral Home in Mayfield, KY. Rev. Al Chandler will officiate. Burial will follow in the North Mt. Zion Cemetery.

**Bob D. Cornman**, age 94, of Mayfield passed away on Wednesday, January 14, 2026 at Jackson Purchase Medical Center in Mayfield, KY. Due to a family emergency, funeral arrangements for Bob D. Cornman have been postponed, Funeral arrangements will be announced at a later date.

**Patricia Louise Adams**, age 60, of Fancy Farm, KY passed away at 11:21 PM Monday, January 19, 2026 at the Jackson Purchase Medical Center in Mayfield, KY. Private family services for Patricia will be held at a later date.

**Zachary Rogers**, age 39 and a resident of Mayfield, passed away at 3:20 A.M. Friday, January 16, 2026 at the Sarah Cannon Research Hospital in Nashville, TN. Funeral services for Zachary will be held at 2:00 P.M. Monday, January 19, 2026 at the Brown Funeral Home in Mayfield with Rev. Ike Murphey officiating.

**Linda J. Watts**, age 87 of Wingo, KY passed away at 3:04 AM Thursday, January 15, 2026 at her residence. Funeral Services was held at 11:00AM Tuesday, January 20, 2026 at the Brown Funeral Home in Wingo, KY with Rev. R.B. Mays officiating. Burial will follow in the Mayfield Memory Gardens.

**Gary Ray "Robby" Robertson** passed away on Tuesday, January 20th, at the Jackson Purchase Medical Center in Mayfield. Funeral arrangements for Mr. Gary Ray "Robby" Robertson are incomplete at this time.

**Jane Burnette**, age 86, of Mayfield, Kentucky, passed away peacefully at her residence on Friday, January 16, 2026. Graveside services for Ms. Jane Burnette were held at 2:00 PM on Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at Union Cemetery in Fulton. The family will receive visitors at the funeral home on Tuesday, beginning at 12:30 PM and continuing until departure for the graveside service.

**HENDERSON**

**Florence Edith Joyner**, age 91, of Henderson, KY, passed away on Sunday, January 18, 2026, at the Lucy Smith King Care Center under the care of St. Anthony's Hospice in Henderson, KY. Relatives and

**FUNERAL NOTICES** continued

friends were invited to Edith's Life Celebration from 10:00 a.m. until service time on Thursday, January 22, 2026, at Benton-Glunt & Tapp Funeral Home in Henderson, KY. The funeral service will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday at the funeral home with Pastor Andrew Harris officiating. Burial will follow at Roselawn Memorial Gardens in Henderson, KY.

**Joel E. Spainhoward**, age 78, of Henderson, KY, passed away on Saturday, January 17, 2026, surrounded by family under the care of Deaconess Linda E. White Hospice House in Evansville, IN. Per Joel's wishes, the family will celebrate his life with a private burial. Expressions of sympathy may take the form of contributions to March of Dimes, P.O. Box 5141, Boone, IA, 50950.

**Gregory "Jerry" Wayne Clay**, age 68, of Henderson, KY, passed away on January 17, 2026, at Henderson Nursing and Rehab Center. Relatives and friends are invited to Jerry's Life Celebration from 12:00 p.m. until the service time on Saturday, January 24, 2026, at Benton- Glunt & Tapp Funeral Home in Henderson, KY. A memorial service will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday at the funeral home.

**Johnny - John M. Potts** - November 13, 1952 — January 16, 2026 - On Friday, January 16, 2026, at 3:43 p.m., Johnny Potts, our beloved husband, father, papaw, and brother, at his home, surrounded by his loving wife, children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and sister, left his temporary earthly home to be with Jesus in his eternal forever home. Funeral services were held at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, January 21 at Tomblinson Funeral Home in Henderson with Bros. Mike Spivey and Jackie Dale Townsend officiating. Burial will follow in Roselawn Memorial Gardens.

**Gregory Eugene Courtney** - May 19, 1964 — January 15, 2026 - It is with heavy hearts and deep sadness that we announce the passing of Gregory Eugene Courtney, 62, of Henderson, KY. A cherished father, son, grandfather, brother & friend. Please join us in a Celebration of Life that will be held at Warehouse of Worship, 652 Short 7th Street, Henderson, KY. Visitation was on Wednesday, January 21, 2026, from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. & Thursday, January 22, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Service Thursday, January 22, 2026, at 12:00 p.m. with a dinner to follow at Warehouse of Worship. Pastor Deacon Lingerfelt will officiate.

**Garrett Allan Pitt**, passed away on January 15, 2026, at the age of 33. He was born on August 1, 1992, Garrett was a beloved son, brother, and friend, known for his warm spirit and love for life. A memorial service will be held in his honor at Tomblinson Funeral Home Henderson Chapel on Friday, January 23, 2026, at 4:00 PM. Visitation will take place earlier that day from 11:00 AM until the time of service at the funeral home. Friends and family are invited to gather to celebrate Garrett's life and share in their memories of him.

**Gwendolyn Sue Jenner**, 89, formerly of Henderson, Kentucky, passed away January 17, 2026, at the Center for Hospice Care in Mishawaka, Indiana. A memorial service was held at 9 a.m. on Thursday, January 29, 2026, at Rudy-Rowland Funeral Home in Henderson, Kentucky. The Reverend Eric Hoey of The Presbyterian Church of Henderson will officiate. Burial will be at Fernwood Cemetery in Henderson, Kentucky.

**Harold "Jack" Sasse**, 92, of Henderson, Kentucky, passed away Thursday, January 15, 2026, at Redbanks Nursing Home. Services were held at noon Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at First United Methodist Church. The Reverend Janet Carden will officiate. Burial will be in Roselawn Memorial Gardens.

**HICKMAN**

**Juda Faye Spraggs Dean**, age 82 of Clinton passed away Saturday, January 17, 2026 at Spring Creek Post Acute Care in Murray, KY. Funeral Services for Juda will be held 1 PM Tuesday, January 27 at the Brown Funeral Home in Clinton with Rev. Bob Risner and Rev. Mark Jackson officiating. Burial will follow in the Springhill Cemetery. Visitation will be held after 11 AM on

**OBITUARIES**

Tuesday at the Brown Funeral Home in Clinton.

**Roy Richard Scott**, age 85 of Clinton, passed away Thursday, January 15, 2026 at Baptist Hospital in Union City. Funeral services for Richard were held Thursday, January 22, 2026 at 1:00 PM at the Brown Funeral Home in Clinton with Rev. Bob Risner officiating. Burial will follow in the Oakwood Cemetery.

**Kenneth Henry Phillips**, age 70 of Clinton, passed away Thursday, January 15, 2026 at St. Thomas Hospital in Murfreesboro, TN. Graveside services for Kenneth will be held Friday, January 23, 2026 at 1:00 PM at the Wesley Cemetery with Pastor Don Herron officiating. Friends are asked to meet at the cemetery at the service time.

**Domma Garner Huey**, age 81, of Hickman, Kentucky, passed away on Monday, January 19, 2026, at her residence. Funeral services were held at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 21, 2026, at Hornbeak Funeral Chapel in Hickman.

**Jane Burnette**, age 86, of Mayfield, Kentucky, passed away peacefully at her residence on Friday, January 16, 2026. Graveside services for Ms. Jane Burnette were held at 2:00 PM on Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at Union Cemetery in Fulton. The family will receive visitors at the funeral home on Tuesday, beginning at 12:30 PM and continuing until departure for the graveside service.

**Michael Makay (Walter Arthur Kay)** died in the Lighthouse at Clinton Place, Clinton, Kentucky on January 18th, 2026. A family gathering will be held in San Diego, California. Blalock-Coleman Funeral Home & Cremation Services is honored to be entrusted with the care of Mr. Makay.

**HOPKINS**

**Jody Truskey**, 71, of White Plains, KY died at 2:36 a.m. January 20, 2026 at her residence. Service will be held at a later date. Dogwood Funerals & Cremations of Crofton is assisting with the arrangements.

**Florine Faye Gentry Todd Alexander**, age 87, passed away peacefully January 19th. 2026 at Baptist Health Deaconess Madisonville.

Funeral services will be held 1:00 P.M. Friday, January 23, 2026 at Barnett and Strother Funeral Home with Bro. Bill Burzynski and Bro. Sammy Franklin officiating. Burial will follow at Zion Brick Cemetery.

Visitation will be from 11:00 A.M. until service time Friday at the funeral home.

**Evelyn Joyce Hopper Sisk**, 92, of Madisonville, KY, passed away to her heavenly home on Friday January 16, 2026.

Funeral services were held at 1:00 P.M. Thursday, January 22, 2026, at Barnett-Strother Funeral Home in Madisonville with Bro. Len Young officiating. Burial will take place at Odd Fellows Cemetery.

**Vickie Parks**, 70, of Madisonville, KY, passed away on Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at her home. Arrangements are currently pending.

**June V. Dorris Jones**, 87, of Madisonville, KY passed away on Sunday, January 18, 2026, at her home. A graveside service was held at 11:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 22, 2026, at New Suthards Missionary Baptist Cemetery, 3940 Ilsley Road, Earlington, KY with Bro. George Brooks officiating.

**Jeffrey "Jeff" Lynn Merrill**, 59, of Dawson Springs, KY passed away on Saturday, January 17, 2026, at Deaconess Gateway Hospital in Newburgh, IN. A funeral service was held at 4 p.m. on Thursday, January 22, 2026, in the chapel of Harris Funeral Home with Bro. Robert Pierce officiating.

**LIVINGSTON**

**Fred Edwards**, age 73, of Kuttawa, passed away January 14, 2026 at Baptist Health Paducah. He spent many years as a 911 dispatcher for Livingston County as well as serving as chief deputy dispatcher. A memorial visitation will be held from 11:00 am until 2:00 pm Saturday, January 24, 2026 at Lakeland Funeral Home with military honors to follow.

**Ronnie D. "Dee Boy" Foley**, 71, of Grand Rivers, Kentucky, passed away on Monday, January 19, 2026, at his place of residence in Livingston County. A graveside service will be held at 1:00 PM on Friday, January 23, 2026, at Dixon Cemetery in Grand Rivers. Bro. Gary Knuckles officiating.

**Patricia Southern**, 92, of Tiline, passed away Thursday, January 15, 2026 at Salem Springlake Health and Rehabilitation Center. Graveside services were held on Wednesday, January 21, 2026 at 1PM at Scott's Chapel Cemetery with Pastor Chris Clarke officiating.

**LYON**

**Linda McKinney-Meyer**, age 75, of Eddyville, passed away January 14, 2026 at Deaconess Gateway Medical Center in Evansville, IN. Funeral services were held at 1:00 pm Tuesday, January 20, 2026 at Lakeland Funeral Home. Burial will be held at a later date at Maple Grove Cemetery in Boonville, IN

**MARSHALL**

**Ollie J. Edwards**, 100, of Benton, Kentucky, passed away on Monday, January 19, 2026, at Lake Way Nursing and Rehabilitation Center. Funeral services were held at 1:00 PM on Thursday, January 22, 2026, at the Life Celebration Center of Filbeck-Cann with Marc Morris officiating. Burial will follow at Fairdealing Cemetery.

**Dortha Mae "Dot" Mathis**, 96, of Calvert City, Kentucky, passed away on Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at Calvert City Convalescent Center. There are no services scheduled at this time.

**Deborah Lynn Steele**, age 61, of Hardin, Kentucky, passed away on Thursday, January 15, 2026, at Vanderbilt Medical Center, surrounded by her loving family. Funeral Service was held at 2:00 PM on Monday, January 19, 2025, at the Life Celebration Center of Filbeck-Cann. Burial following at Union Hill Cemetery.

**Forrest Stanley "Woody" Scruggs, Jr.** age 83 of Benton, KY passed away on Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at Henry County Health and Rehab in Paris, TN. He was a veteran of the US Navy stationed on the U.S.S. Courtney and also served as a recruiter. No services are scheduled at this time.

**Danny Wayne Newton**, 81 of Benton, Kentucky passed away on Sunday, January 18, 2026 at his home. A funeral service was held at 2:00 PM on Wednesday, January 21, 2026 at Collier Funeral Home with Bro. Dennis Lawrence and Tim Chiles officiating. Interment will follow at Fairdealing Cemetery, Benton, KY.

**Ruby Lee Starks** went to be with her Lord on January 17, 2026. A funeral service for Mrs. Ruby L. Starks was held Tuesday, January 20, 2026 at 1:00 pm at the Collier Funeral Home with Bro. Kendrick Lewis officiating. Interment will be in the McNatt Cemetery section at the Marshall County Memory Gardens.

**Sue Wynn**, 88 of Benton, Kentucky passed away on Friday, January 16, 2026, at Calvert City Convalescent Center in Calvert City, Kentucky. A funeral service was held at 11:00 AM on Monday, January 19, 2026 at Collier Funeral Home with Bro. Brad Walker officiating. Interment will follow at Provine Cemetery, Benton, KY.

**Brenda Kay Frizzell Sirls**, 78, of Benton passed away on Friday, January 16, 2026 at Calvert City Convalescent Center. Visitation will be held from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM on Saturday, January 24, 2026 at Collier Funeral Home, 211 W 5th Street, Benton, KY 42025. A funeral service will be at 1:00 PM on Saturday, January 24, 2026 with Bro. Charles Frazier and Bro. Wes Morehead officiating. Burial will follow in Briesburg Cemetery.

**Vernon Raymond Koym, Jr.**, a man of profound faith, quiet strength, and unwavering devotion, passed away peacefully on January 16, 2026. He was 74 years old. Services were held on Thursday, January 22nd with a visitation from 11-1 followed

## FUNERAL NOTICES continued

by a celebration of life at 1PM at Collier's Funeral Home in Benton, KY.

## McCRACKEN

**Robert V. Morgan**, 76, of Paducah, Kentucky, passed away at his residence on Tuesday, January 20, 2026. There will be no services. You may leave a message of sympathy at [www.milnerandorr.com](http://www.milnerandorr.com).

**Ricky E. Gray**, age 73, passed away on Monday, January 19, 2026, at St. Thomas West in Nashville, Tennessee. Funeral services were held on Thursday, January 22, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. at Milner & Orr Funeral Home of Paducah with Pastor Jason Medley officiating. Burial followed the service at Everett-Gray Cemetery.

**Trula Mae (Teffeteller) Eldridge**, 101, of Paducah, Kentucky, passed away on Saturday, January 17, 2026, surrounded by loved ones. A service was held at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 21, 2026, at Milner & Orr Funeral Home of Paducah with Bro. Jared Hayes officiating. A graveside service will be held on Friday, January 23, 2026, at East Maryville Cemetery in Maryville, Tennessee, officiated by Pastor Douglas Hawkins. Visitation will be held at McCammon Ammons Click Funeral Home in Maryville, Tennessee, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**Arlene Thompson Mathis**, 88, a cherished mother, grandmother, and friend, passed away peacefully on January 17, 2026, at Providence Pointe Healthcare in Paducah, Kentucky. A funeral service will be held at 1:00 PM on Friday, January 23, 2026, at the Lone Oak Chapel of Milner & Orr Funeral Home with Daniel Farris and Jerome Frandle officiating. Burial will follow at Owens Chapel Cemetery in Melber, Kentucky.

**Johnna Gail Moore Thomasson**, known affectionately to friends and family as Gail, passed away peacefully on the 16th of January, 2026, at the age of 80. A graveside funeral service took place at 1:30 P.M. on Monday, January 19, 2026, at the Harris Cemetery in West Paducah with Rev. Kevin Gaunce officiating.

**Norma Penn Evans**, age 84, of Paducah, Kentucky, peacefully passed away Friday, January 16, 2026, at home surrounded by family. There will be no visitation per her request. A celebration of Norma's life will be held at a later date.

**Jane Edwards**, age 99, of Lone Oak, Kentucky, passed away Thursday, January 15, 2026, at Parkview Nursing and Rehab Center. Memorial services will be held at a later date, with burial to follow at the Maple Grove Cemetery in Russellville, Kentucky.

**Tom Bates**, 59, of Paducah passed away on Friday, January 16, 2026, at Mercy-Health Lourdes

Hospital in Paducah. He will be cremated per his wishes.

**Nellie Pearl Whitledge**, age 87, went to be with the Lord on January 15th, 2026, at Passion and Purpose in Murray, Ky. Graveside services were held on Tuesday January the 20th at 1:00 PM at Woodlawn Cemetery in Paducah. Officiating the service will be Bro. Berry Perkins.

**Kevin Dion Sanders**, age 54 of Paducah, passed away on Friday, January 16, 2026 at Mercy Health Lourdes Hospital. Funeral services have been scheduled for Saturday, January 31, 2026, 11:00 a.m. at Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church with Reverend Stephen Harvey and Reverend Calvin R. Cole Sr. officiating. Burial will follow in Oak Grove Cemetery. Family will receive friends from 10:00 a.m. until the funeral hour.

**Chris Cooper**, age 62, passed away at Vanderbilt University Hospital on Friday, January 10, 2026. Chris was a member of Newton Creek Baptist Church. There will be no services at this time.

## TRIGG

**Bruce "B.W." White** - February 11, 1950 - January 14, 2026 - A Celebration of Life for 75 year old Bruce "B.W." White of Hopkinsville will be held on Saturday, January 24, 2026 at 4:00 p.m. at the Cadiz Church of Christ. Visitation will be from 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. at the Cadiz Church of Christ. King's Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements.

**Joshua Patten** - April 9, 1987 - January 18, 2026 - Funeral arrangements are incomplete for 38 year old Joshua Patten of Clarksville, TN. He passed away Sunday, January 18, 2026 at Centennial Hospital in Nashville, TN.

**Jane Futrell Wright**, age 100, a native of Trigg County, Kentucky, passed away on Saturday, January 17, 2026, at Westport Place Health Campus in Louisville, Kentucky. A private family graveside service will be held at Futrell & Wright Cemetery, with a public memorial service to be held at a later date.

**Thomas Truett Greene**, age 83, of Cadiz, Kentucky, passed away Sunday, January 18, 2026, at his home. A memorial service will be held at 12:00 PM, Saturday, January 24, 2026, at Gracey West Union Baptist Church, 185 Gracey-Sinking Fork Rd, Gracey, Kentucky, with Brian Hacker presiding. Visitation will precede the service at the church from 11:00 AM until 12:00 PM.

## UNION

**Adelheid Schoeneck**, age 90 of Morganfield, KY passed away peacefully on Friday, January 16, 2026 at her home. A private family service will be held at the Kentucky Veterans Cemetery West. Rev. Jody Hughes will officiate.

## Many cancer patients can now donate blood, officials say

By Tom Latek  
kentucky Today

LEXINGTON, Ky. (KT) — Many cancer patients who previously could not give blood are now eligible to donate under the Kentucky Blood Center's updated blood donor eligibility requirements.

In accordance with U.S. Food and Drug Administration guidelines, and with insight from extensive collection, validation and analysis, Kentucky Blood Center Medical Director Dr. Dennis Williams has determined there

is no further need for a lengthy deferral for donors who have completed treatment for certain cancers, including organ cancers and melanoma. Many donors who were previously issued longtime deferrals from a cancer diagnosis will now be eligible to donate blood one year after completing treatment for cancer.

Donors diagnosed with hematologic cancers that affect the blood cells, bone marrow or the lymphatic system will remain permanent-

ly ineligible to give blood out of an abundance of caution. Certain medications for cancer treatments may still prohibit a donor from donating, and additional health requirements must be met.

"We are pleased to update our donor eligibility requirements," Williams said. "There is no evidence that cancers are transmitted by blood transfusion. While there are certain cancers and treatments that will still impact donation, we are excited to

offer a wider opportunity for those who wish to give blood to do so."

The Kentucky Blood Center is licensed by the FDA, which has federal oversight of the collection and use of all blood products in the U.S. The FDA leaves the eligibility of donors after cancer treatment up to the discretion of the donor center's medical director.

The updated donor eligibility requirements are now in effect. There are many factors that impact

a person's ability to donate blood, and the Kentucky Blood Center encourages those interested in donating to review requirements before attempting to give blood. The current medication deferral list can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

The Kentucky Blood Center needs 400 donors a day to provide lifesaving blood products to more than 70 hospitals in Kentucky. One donation can save up to three lives.

There are donor centers in Corbin,

Frankfort, Lexington, Louisville, Pikeville and Somerset.

Blood donors must be at least 17 years old (16 with parental consent), weigh at least 110 pounds, be in good health, show a photo I.D. and meet additional requirements. Appointments are preferred but walk-ins are welcome. To schedule an appointment, visit [kybloodcenter.org](http://kybloodcenter.org) or call 800.775.2522.

All blood types are needed, especially after donations dropped during the holidays.

To place a full obituary, including a photo, call 270-442-7389 for details and pricing.  
Obituaries and funeral notices should be received by 9 a.m. Wednesday for inclusion in that week's paper.

# Illegal harvesting of 300,000 catfish uncovered in 'Operation River Raid'

By Tom Latek  
kentucky Today

FRANKFORT, Ky. (KT) – A statewide commercial fishing investigation has uncovered illegal harvest of more than 300,000 pounds of catfish, with more than 700 criminal charges expected to be filed.

After a 10-month multi-agency investigation, game wardens with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources have identified 25 individuals to be charged with a range of violations in connection with the illegal commercial harvest and sale of catfish from public waters, as well as the unlawful operation of pay lakes

across Kentucky.

Dubbed "Operation River Raid," the extensive enforcement effort spanned from Paducah to Ashland and represents one of the most significant cases of illegal wildlife harvesting and distribution in recent state history.

"This case reflects our commitment to safeguarding Kentucky's natural resources," said Col. Jeremy McQueary, director of the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Law Enforcement Division. "Illegal commercialization of wildlife — especially through the exploitation of native fish populations — undermines con-



servation efforts and lawful recreation. We will not tolerate it."

The investigation is anticipated to result in over 700 criminal charges in six counties: Bath, Boyd, Lawrence, Livingston, Marshall, and Powell. Wardens plan to present more than 100 felony counts to local

grand juries, seeking indictments. Charges remain pending as investigators continue reviewing evidence and case materials. Authorities allege that the defendants failed to report the harvest of a total of more than 300,000 pounds of catfish, a clear violation of Kentucky law.

"A critical piece of information to properly manage any fishery is accurate harvest rates," said Dave Dreves, director of the Fisheries Division.

"That is why commercial fishers are required to report their harvest each month. This egregious under-reporting undermines our ability to properly monitor catfish populations, especially trophy catfish."

Officials believe the illegal activity involved harvesting catfish from public waterways and transporting them for sale to unregulated or illegally operated pay lakes. This practice not only violates state

law but also harms fish populations and lawful businesses, and it threatens the long-term sustainability of Kentucky's natural resources.

The success of Operation River Raid is the result of coordinated efforts by multiple agencies, including Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Game Wardens and Fisheries Division employees from across the state, as well as district and circuit courts in numerous counties. Investigators utilized surveillance, intelligence sharing and field inspections in numerous multiple counties to disrupt these illegal activities.

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

### Do we have faith in God or the world?

By William F Holland Jr.  
[billyhollandministries.com](http://billyhollandministries.com)

Whatever we are concerned about today, faith and discernment are key components of our prayers. Without spiritual sensitivity, we do not understand God's plans, which is why seeking Him empowers and activates our communication with Him. We believe in miracles because we know that God listens and is the only one who has the authority to restore and provide for us. If someone is having a health crisis, the Bible declares that He is the Great Physician and our healer. This is an exciting truth until doubt and fear sneak through the back door, and Satan repeats the same strategy to deceive as he did with Adam and Eve in the garden. His favorite temptation is to sow seeds of uncertainty and fear in our minds,

causing us to question whether faith is real or just an illusion. In our times of trouble, we are bombarded with opinions, but we must become unmovable in knowing that God's promises cannot fail.

Josh Christmas once said, "I do not believe what I see, but I see what I believe." This means that followers of God are not to place their trust in speculations or how things appear to our natural senses. Since we are filled and guided by God's Spirit, we place our spiritual confidence in Him alone. Faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen, which means the answers are ready to be manifested, but conditional on our knowing and believing with our hearts. For example, when a doctor says there is no hope, we must realize that a

human diagnosis is not more powerful than God's final word. Doctors practice medicine, but God is the healer. Our daughter and our daughter-in-law were both told by the experts that they would never have a child. This was not true as the Lord had other plans. Today, our daughter-in-law has three amazing children, and our daughter has a beautiful baby girl. My wife and I prayed about this for years and believe that nothing is impossible with God. Luke 1:37.

When Lazarus was dead for four days, Jesus told the people to remove him from his tomb and unwrap his grave garments. His body was starting to smell, and according to natural thinking, this was disrespectful and even insane. However, they did not understand the power of God. Christ commanded Lazarus

to live again, and he did! Ezekiel describes a valley of dry bones, and God asks the prophet if he believes the bones could live. He told Ezekiel to speak to the bones in faith, and the flesh came back upon them, and they were restored to life. The reason these stories are recorded is to teach us the importance of spiritual discernment when it comes to hearing God's voice and knowing His will. Christians are to live with an expectation of the supernatural and to walk in the constant awareness of God's presence as they trust and obey His instructions. My latest book about healing and miracles contains recent accounts of God miraculously intervening, as Hebrews 13:8 promises that Jesus never changes.

Many people build their worldviews on what they have

been told instead of researching for themselves. Beware of listening and seeking the world's opinions more than learning to know God as true truth. Remember, what we believe becomes our reality. If we absorb what an unbelieving culture tells us, we are vulnerable to being brainwashed and conformed to negativity and doubt. Who do you suppose decides what is truth and what is censored as disinformation in our society? Satan is the father of all lies and never stops influencing chaos and confusion.

Our decision to seek God and know what He is saying, versus accepting the report of natural opinions, is the difference between thinking clearly and falling into a delusion. Every moment we are faced with the choice to absorb the light and life of God, or the deception and hope-

lessness of a blind and fallen world. You see, faith is not limited to only being associated with positive thinking; it can also be the driving force behind negative attitudes. If we are convinced to accept the worst, we are joining forces with dark energy that will make the problem worse. Unbelief is enmity toward God, Hebrews 3:12-13, Ephesians 4:18. We are not be conformed to the persuasions of carnality, but to be transformed by the renewing of our mind in Christ, which means we know that God is who He says He is.

*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](mailto:psalmz103@gmail.com)*



**By Gary Miller**  
[Outdoortruths.org](http://Outdoortruths.org)

The bass fishing tournaments are getting ready to start with a vengeance. Once they begin, each weekend will offer another opportunity to fish for money. All bass tournaments have pretty much the same rules; two fishermen; one boat;

the five biggest fish by weight, win. Some men will literally come to blows in pursuing first prize. And first prize can be worth lots of money even in the smaller tournaments. As I have said before these types of events touch both the competitive

and outdoorsy side of men. It's fun enough to fish but add in beating somebody in the process and winning cash to do it makes it an addictive potion. Most of the time, each team will spend the first few hours on the water just trying to catch

any size of fish. The immediate goal is to get five fish in the boat. After (or if) that is accomplished, the goal changes. Now it's time to cull the smaller ones that are already in the live well for bigger replacements. Remember, it's the five heaviest fish. Sometimes the technique changes just for the purpose of perhaps catching less fish but bigger ones. Again, the lesser ones get tossed back in when a better quality one is caught. And there are occasions when some good fish are thrown back because a great one is caught.

Our life is somewhat like these bass tournaments.

We know we only have room for so many things in our life as well. Each one of these can be of little or great importance. Our life's pursuit and God's desire for us is to constantly add something that has a greater value than what we already have. What we must remember, however, is sometimes we must get rid of something that is of great value to add something else that is priceless. This decision always comes with a mixed sense of both loss and excitement. As we mature, we understand it just has to be that way. It's just like that exercise shirt that you once wore that said, "No

Pain; No Gain." This is so true. But never forget, what you give up now will not seem so great a sacrifice when you get to the weigh-in. These types of sacrifices will always put you in the real money.

*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*

## LOOKING BEYOND THIS LIFE

**Bro. Brandon G. Bramlett**  
Bandana Baptist Church

You are standing on a vanishing strip of soil, but not for long. Surrounding you on both sides are two rapidly raging rivers, eating away the ground beneath your feet. Swimming to safety is not an option, and it is only a matter of time before one of the turbulent torrents sweeps you away forever. Strangely, the secret to survival is your sight—keeping your gaze locked on both rushing rapids. And this is not a heart-stopping scene from a survival movie—this is how John Wesley (June 28, 1703—March 2, 1791) picturesquely described living a life that counts for eternity before your heart stops: "I desire to have both heaven and hell ever in my eye, while I stand on this isthmus of life, between two boundless oceans."

The Scripture supports Wesley's sobering statement. Life is as short as a three-to-five second breath (Ps. 144:4), and fades as quickly as a vapor (James 4:14). We are candles flickering in the wind, living on borrowed time, and only one heartbeat away from eternity. But why should heaven-bound believers live with one eye fixed on

heaven and the other eye fixed on heaven? Simply put, concentrating on heaven keeps our hearts lifted and contemplating hell keeps our feet moving.

To cheer our troubled hearts, we should think often of that glorious place being prepared for us by Christ (John 14:2-3), and to ignite evangelistic zeal in our hearts, we should think often of that

gruesome place prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41), where lost souls are headed. While enduring bitter afflictions, we should ponder the bliss and wonder of spending a never-ending eternity of worshipping Christ (Rom. 8:18), but to strengthen our resolve to preach the gospel to every creature, we should pin our thoughts to the banishment and

woe of a never-ceasing eternity of enduring the wrath of God, laid up for our unbelieving friends and family members (2 Thess. 1:8-9). While we rejoice that our names are written in heaven (Luke 10:20), we must remember that the souls whose names are not found in the Lamb's Book of Life will be cast into the lake of fire forever and ever (Rev. 20:12-15), and

that should compel us to preach unto them, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29). While we yearn for the day when God will wipe away every tear from our eyes (Rev. 21:4), we must grieve that there is a place of weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. 13:42), to which unsaved souls around us are bound, unless they hear and believe

the gospel from our lips.

Keep both infinite oceans in view. Let heaven anchor your heart—let hell awaken your concern. Let heaven console you—let hell compel you to action. Think about the glory awaiting you, and be encouraged—think about the gloom awaiting the unsaved, and be evangelistic.

**His Faithful Love ENDURES**  
Psalm 136:1

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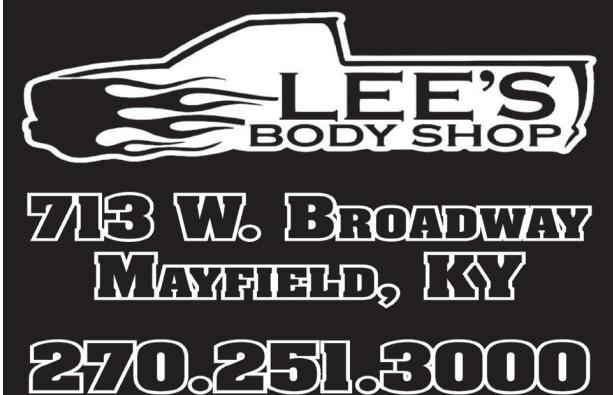
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2 Cemetery Lots (side by side) Located at Woodlawn Memorial Cemetery (in The Garden

of the Good Shepard).

6965 Old Hwy 45, Paducah, KY. \$5,000 for both lots 2702-519-5449 or 270-841-5001.

For Sale 1 Vault in Brookhaven Memorial Park, last one in the chapel. Holds 2 caskets. \$8,000.00. Call 270-556-0524

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will sell for \$2500.00 each Call 270-970-0678

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

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### Sudoku Answers

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

### Word Search Answers



Puzzle Page in A Section

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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 no carp, barges, or big boats. 50 minutes from Paducah. \$29,995 for all four. Might divide into 2 parcels. Call owner 314-239-6676.

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1.6 acres with hookups septic and well. 2357 State Rt 384 Mayfield Ky. \$20k FIRM 270-564-6774(TFN)

Large Ky Lake lot Mature trees, utilities, restricted to new construction or double wide. \$24,900. 270-970-8000 (tfn)

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**401 E 12th St.**, Benton Charming and spacious 2,240 sq. ft. home. Immaculate property centrally located in Benton on a well landscaped corner lot. 3 Bedroom / 2 Bath. Expansive basement includes interior and exterior entrances. Workshop with additional outbuilding with concrete flooring for mower etc. \$269,900 Call Carla Bridges REMAX Realty Group at 270-559-8425

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1953 Farmall Cub Woods Belly Mower. to ad for 1950 8n Ford Tractor \$1250.00. 270-832-1281

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

For Sale: Baldwin Upright Piano In Good Condition \$300.00 Call 270-331-9835

Fiddle/Violin (Karl Knilling), Hand-Made in Germany, 2 Bows & Hard Case. Very Good Condition. \$300, 270-328-8801 (tfn)

# Drawing contest open to Kentucky students 13 and under

By Tom Latek  
kentucky Today

FRANKFORT, Ky. (KT) – Kentucky Auditor of Public Accounts Allison Ball's Commonwealth Office of the Ombudsman has announced its annual statewide drawing contest in celebration of Read Across America Day on March 2.

The contest is open to all Kentucky students ages 13 and under to participate in by creating a bookmark-sized drawing that features their favorite storybook character discovering the joy of reading.

The entry must be original artwork that is not copied from another person or generated in any way by artificial intelligence.

Entries are being accepted by the Auditor's office until Feb. 19. Students may submit their artwork by either emailing [hannah.kennedy@ky.gov](mailto:hannah.kennedy@ky.gov) or by visiting the auditor's website. After a review, the top three drawings will be selected and posted on the Auditor's social media pages for a public vote that will determine the winner.

The winning illustration will be featured on the Ombudsman's bookmarks and made available for free at public libraries across the state.

If you have any questions or need additional information about the contest, you can email [hannah.kennedy@ky.gov](mailto:hannah.kennedy@ky.gov)

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# Aberdeen delivering under duress for surging Wildcats

By KEITH TAYLOR  
Kentucky Today

LEXINGTON, Ky. (KT) — Denzel Aberdeen has been giving Kentucky a lift during its three-game winning streak in the absence of point guard Jaland Lowe.

"He's been really big," Kentucky coach Mark Pope said Tuesday. "He took a giant step last week. It's having a better sense of what we're trying to accomplish on the court. He made huge plays. His decision making was elite, his ball protection was elite, his shot making was elite."

Aberdeen scored 22 points in Kentucky's 80-78 win at Tennessee last Saturday and had 17 in an exciting 75-74 win at LSU on Jan. 14. He was equally impressive with 16 points in a 92-68 comeback win over Mississippi State on Jan. 10.

"I thought he had an incredible week," Pope said. "I don't know who in our league probably had a better week than him. I

thought he was incredible under duress. I'm really proud of him."

Pope added that Aberdeen hasn't reached his ceiling just yet and has plenty of room to grow as the Wildcats delve deeper into the conference schedule.

"I think he's still got a huge upside," Pope said. "I think he did a really good job of taking what was there (last week). I thought his reads were elite. I thought they were really good."

The Wildcats (12-6, 3-2 Southeastern Conference) return home for a pair of games this week, starting with Texas on Wednesday night. The Longhorns (11-7, 2-3) dropped a 74-70 decision to Texas A&M on Saturday, but the team's league victories were against Vanderbilt (80-64) and Alabama (92-88).

"This Texas team ... they are potent offensively," Pope said. "They just have weapons everywhere. They're one of the top



Denzel Aberdeen had a big week for the Wildcats with games of 22, 17 and 18 during a three-game winning streak. (Photo by Les Nicholson)

teams in the country getting to the free throw line. They have the No. 1 player in the country in getting to the free throw line, free-throw rate.

"They're one of the top teams in the country on the offensive glass. They can hurt you in isolation. They hurt you off handoffs and off screens. They

can hurt you in transition, and they do it from all five spots. ... (they are) a good team, and we'll have all the challenge we can possibly stand come to us and we can't wait to get to it."

## INJURY UPDATE

Kentucky forward Jayden Quaintance has missed the last

three games and won't play against the Longhorns on Wednesday night.

Pope said Quaintance is "making progress" as he recovers from swelling in the knee.

"We're super optimistic," Pope said. "He's kind of going through the process

and hopefully he'll be back soon. I know that's not very (detailed), but I'm trying to be protective of him also."

Gametracker: Texas at Kentucky, 7 p.m., Wednesday. TV/Radio: SECN, UK Radio Network.

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Contestants Under 18 Must Have a Legal Guardian Present. Contestants May Enter Both Nights In Any Event. Books Open February 2nd (4 p.m. until 9 p.m.)

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# Filbeck-Cann and Milner & Orr Funeral Homes to Host 3rd Annual Widow/Widowers Valentine's Dinner

Benton, KY—Filbeck-Cann and Milner & Orr Funeral Homes will host a free, community Valentine's dinner for anyone who has lost a spouse or significant other regardless of place or time. The evening of fun and fellowship will be held Thursday, February 12, 2026 at 5:00 pm at the Life Celebration Center

1003 Poplar Street in Benton.

"We believe in honoring the lives of those we've lost every day, but we also value the lives of those that are missing their special someone on Valentine's Day," says Mary Beth Orr. "Our hope is that we can provide an enjoyable night while remembering that special loved one."

The evening will feature a meal provided by Ralph's at Moor's Resort, fun games with prizes, and an inspiring speaker with a hope filled message. There is no cost for the event. Attendees may bring a guest. Please call our office by February 6, 2026 to reserve your seat (270) 527-3281 or (270) 534-4200.



## OCTC Workforce Solutions partners with Boys & Girls Club for Second Annual Hands-On Horizons Event

By Bernie Hale

OWENSBORO, KY—Owensboro Community & Technical College's (OCTC) Workforce Solutions Team is partnering once again with the Boys & Girls Club to host the second annual Hands-On Horizons event on Wednesday, January 28, from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. on OCTC's downtown campus, located at 1501 Frederica Street, Owensboro.

The event is expected to welcome nearly 70 Boys & Girls Club

students from Daviess, Butler, Henderson, and Ohio counties, providing them with an interactive introduction to career pathways and technical training opportunities available through OCTC.

Hands-On Horizons is designed to expose students to a wide range of high-demand, hands-on careers through engaging demonstrations and activities led by OCTC Workforce Solutions faculty and staff.

Participating programs will include Veterinary Technology, Healthcare,

Commercial Driver's License (CDL), I-TEC, Carpentry, Welding, and additional workforce-focused training areas.

"Our goal is to help students see what's possible and begin imagining themselves in careers they may not have considered," said Sheri Plain, Vice President of Workforce Solutions. "By giving them hands-on experiences and real conversations with instructors, we hope to spark curiosity and confidence at an early age."

The partnership with the Boys & Girls Club reflects OCTC's continued commitment to community engagement and workforce development, particularly in introducing young students to viable career options that align with regional workforce needs.

"Hands on Horizons represents the power of partnership in action. By working alongside Owensboro Community & Technical College, the Cliff Hagan Boys & Girls Club is giving our teen

members meaningful, hands-on exposure to career pathways and real-world skills that prepare them for life after high school. Together, we are helping young people envision their future and take confident steps toward it" added Ryan Bib, COO at the Boys & Girls Clubs.

"This event is about opportunity and exposure," said Becky Barnhart, Workforce Solutions Director. "Hands-On Horizons gives the students a chance to explore

careers in a fun, supportive environment while connecting them with people who want to see them succeed."

Hands-On Horizons is the second annual event of its kind and continues to grow as a collaborative effort to inspire the next generation of skilled professionals across the region.

For more information about OCTC Workforce Solutions and community partnerships, email becky.barnhart@kctcs.edu.

## Severe blood shortage: Red Cross blood supply drops 35%

KENTUCKY—The American Red Cross is facing a severe blood shortage as requests from hospitals exceed the available supply of blood, leading to about a 35% drawdown of blood products in the past month. Individuals are urged to give now so patients don't face delays in lifesaving care. The shortage is especially serious for platelets and types O, A negative and B negative blood.

High flu activity in nearly every state may be sidelining donors, slowing efforts to rebuild the Red Cross national blood supply. At the same time, hospitals already feeling the strain of the worst flu season in nearly 20 years are now also forced to triage critical blood products. Without immediate action, patients who count on transfusions—including trauma victims, mothers in childbirth and people with sickle cell disease or cancer—face serious risk.

There's no time to wait—book an appointment to give blood or platelets now by using the Blood Donor App, visiting RedCrossBlood.org or calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

As a thank-you to donors for helping tackle the blood shortage, those who come to give through Jan. 25, 2026, will be automatically entered for a chance to win a trip for two to Super Bowl LX in the San Francisco Bay Area. The winner and guest will receive two tickets to Super Bowl LX, access to day-of, in-stadium pregame activities, tickets to the official

Super Bowl Experience, round-trip airfare, three-night hotel accommodations (Feb. 6-9, 2026), plus a \$1,000 gift card for expenses. See RedCrossBlood.org/SuperBowl for details.

All who come to give Jan. 26-Feb. 28, 2026, will receive a \$20 e-gift card to a merchant of choice. See RedCrossBlood.org/Heart for details.

Weather disrupts vital donations

About 400 blood drives were impacted due to extreme winter weather last month alone—more than three times the number of blood drives impacted during the same time the previous year. As a result, thousands of blood donations have gone uncollected. With intense winter weather and freezing temperatures expected across much of the country in the coming weeks, more blood drives could potentially be delayed or canceled at a time when every unit of blood could be the difference for doctors facing difficult choices about which patients receive blood transfusions and who will need to wait.

"Winter always puts pressure on the blood supply, and this year widespread flu and rough weather are making it even tougher," said Paul Sullivan, senior vice president of Red Cross donor services. "If you're able, now's a great time to make and keep blood donation appointments, during National Blood Donor Month. Every donation can be a lifeline for a patient who isn't able to hold off on critical care."

Upcoming blood donation opportunities Jan. 20-Feb. 3:

CFSB Benton Banking Center, 221 W. 5th St., Benton, KY 42025

1/27/2026: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

First Christian Church, 415 Audubon Drive, Paducah, KY 42001

2/2/2026: 11:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

His House Ministries, 1250 State Route 303, Mayfield, KY 42066

1/21/2026: 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Lone Oak Middle School, 260 Bleich Road, Paducah, KY 42003

1/28/2026: 12:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Lyon County Convention Center @ Lee S Jones Park, 172 Lee S Jones Park, Eddyville, KY 42038

1/20/2026: 10:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Marshall County Technical Center, 341 High School Road, Benton, KY 42025

1/23/2026: 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

McCracken County Public Library, 555 Washington St., Paducah, KY 42003

1/26/2026: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Morgantown Mission, 109 S. Main St., Morgantown, KY 42261

1/29/2026: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Murray Middle School, 801 Main St., Murray, KY 42071

1/22/2026: 1 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Murray State University Curris Center,

1400 Chestnut St., Murray, KY 42071

2/3/2026: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Northside Baptist Church, 611 W. Lockridge St., Mayfield, KY 42066

1/22/2026: 12:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Paducah Blood Donation Center, 4635 Falconcrest Drive, Paducah, KY 42001

1/20/2026: 12:30 p.m. - 7:15 p.m.

1/21/2026: 11 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

1/22/2026: 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

1/23/2026: 12:30 p.m. - 7:15 p.m.

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# WESTERN KENTUCKY Business Journal

★ 2026 FINANCIAL OUTLOOK ★ KENTUCKY AGRI-BUSINESS ★

## New bill would exempt KY churches from sales tax

STAFF REPORT

WESTERN KENTUCKY BUSINESS JOURNAL

**State Rep. James Tipton has filed a bill that would exempt churches from having to pay sales taxes.**

(File photo)



A Kentucky lawmaker has filed a bill to exempt churches and other religious institutions from collecting sales tax on certain transactions.

Rep. James Tipton, R-Taylorsville, is sponsoring House Bill 101, a narrower version of a proposal he unsuccessfully advanced in 2025 that would have applied to all non-profits. Tipton said the measure would ease administrative burdens on churches and allow them to focus on ministry and community service.

Tipton argued that many churches are unaware they are required to collect sales tax when charging set prices for meals or events, and said the requirement is impractical and burdensome. He also dismissed concerns that the exemption would create unfair competition with private businesses, noting church events typically serve members who would attend regardless.

Tipton said the financial impact on the state's \$16 billion budget would be minimal, adding that little tax revenue is likely being collected now.

The bill has the backing of Kentucky Baptists, whose 2025 convention passed a resolution urging lawmakers to eliminate sales and use taxes on churches. KBC Executive Director Todd Gray called the tax an unnecessary burden on ministry.

Tipton said the bill has strong interest among House members and may be folded into a larger revenue or budget measure rather than passed on its own. He encouraged supporters to contact their legislators, noting messages can be left through the Legislative Message Line at (800) 372-7181.

## Dr. Andrea Tooley: A national leader in Ophthalmology, Education and Innovation

By Greg LeNeave  
Publisher, KPI Newspaper Group

PADUCAH, KY — The greater Paducah area has landed a top-notch Doctor that has a Mayo Clinic background in Eye Care. When it comes to your appearance such as droopy eyelids or bags under your eyes, you are in luck. I have found the perfect doctor to help you with your needs. It could be medically necessary or you may just want to look younger and more refreshed. Dr. Andrea Tooley is located right here in Paducah at Innovative Ophthalmology. Dr. Barbara Bowers and Dave Hoffman were instrumental in bringing a world-class doctor to the region.

People that need help with the way their eyes look and work can get help from a world-class doctor and a first-rate human being. By adding Dr. Andrea Tooley, Innovative Ophthalmology brings a nationally recognized ophthalmologist and educator to western Kentucky.



**Andrea Tooley M.D.**  
Oculoplastic &  
Aesthetic Facial Surgery

Please see Dr. Tooley page 3

Tooley serves as a consultant in the Department of Ophthalmology at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, where she also served as residency program director and an associate professor at Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Science. She is board certified by the American Board of Ophthalmology and specializes in ophthalmic plastic and reconstructive surgery.

She earned dual bachelor's degrees in chemistry and English literature from Butler University and received her medical degree from Indiana University School of Medicine.

She completed her internship and ophthalmology residency at Mayo Clinic, followed by a fellowship in ophthalmic plastic and reconstructive surgery at NYU's Manhattan Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital. Tooley spent over two years in New York working on a fellowship at Cornell and Columbia.



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# WAVE River Counties AG Initiative hosts annual partnership luncheon:

*“WAVE AG... Building Bridges”*



Pictured not in order: Dr Brannon, Phillip Bean, Joel Reddick, Lucas Goodman, Collin Cooper /Madi, Jonathan Reynolds (not pictured) for their membership in Ag Launch LLC and participation in Farmer Trials.

Photo submitted

By Laurna Todd  
WKBJ Writer

The WAVE River Counties AG Initiative recently held its annual Partnership Luncheon on Friday, January 16th at the West Hickman Baptist Church, honoring the partners and supporters who help strengthen regional agriculture.

The 2026 luncheon carried the theme “WAVE AG...Building Bridges,” highlighting the Initiative’s mission of connecting farmers, partners, and the waterway region through collaboration and shared growth. Each sponsor was recognized during the event, and attendees

received updates on regional agriculture.

The keynote speaker, USDA Deputy Secretary Stephen Vaden, shared insights from his career, including his journey from Union City High School to law school at Vanderbilt and Yale, and his service as General Counsel to the USDA during President Trump’s first term.

In 2020, President Trump appointed Judge Vaden to the United States Court of International Trade.

Deputy Secretary Vaden also discussed ongoing USDA programs, including the Farmer Bridge Assistance (FBA), a program projected to bring upwards of \$13

million to the river counties.

A highlight of the luncheon was the recognition of Ag Launch. CEO Pete Nelson joined Dr. Brannon in honoring local farmers Phillip Bean, Joel Reddick, Lucas Goodman, Collin Cooper, and Madi Jonathan Reynolds (not pictured) for their membership in Ag Launch LLC and participation in Farmer Trials.

The WAVE AG Initiative continues to celebrate the dedication of its partners and farmers while building bridges for the future of agriculture in the region.

**MSU's Construction Management and Architecture program brings in industry experts**

MURRAY, Ky. — Murray State University's Construction Management and Architecture program is giving students a unique, real-world perspective this semester with John Hale, vice president of Bill Adams Construction, Inc., teaching CMA 480: Construction Contracting.

Hale brings decades of industry experience in residential, commercial and light industrial construction experience to the classroom. Over the course of his career, he has served in key roles including designer, estimator, project engineer and project manager. His presence in the classroom provides students with practical insights into contract negotiation, project management and industry best practices while highlighting the

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see **MSU**,  
page 7

**Dr. Tooley continued from front page**

Another noteworthy topic concerning Dr. Tooley is her magnificent speaking engagements. She has been the featured speaker for many events around the globe. As a nationally recognized ophthalmologist and educator she has spoke in Argentina, Prague and Singapore; in the United States she will be the main speaker for 50,000 ophthalmologists this year in New Orleans. In addition, she will be the commencement speaker for the graduating classes of NYU (May 30th) and University of Kentucky (June 5).

What's more gratifying about Dr. Andrea Tooley is a sweet countenance. She exemplifies what it is to be a successful working mother. She has three children ranging from a 4-year old, a 3-year old and baby just 1-year old. She mentioned how important family is to her and that she leaves work at work and makes dinner for her family every night.

Here's the main thing that caught my eye, was when asked how she managed to get to Paducah, she said "It was a GOD THING." She is a devout Christian and attends First Baptist Church in Paducah. It's obvious that she is a kind and caring doctor that possesses a terrific problem-solving nature when it comes to helping her patients. Tooley stated "I get instant sat-



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### RYAN HARPOLE M.D. GENERAL OPHTHALMOLOGY

Dr. Ryan Harpole was born and raised in Western Kentucky. He is a graduate of the University of Kentucky School of Medicine and is currently finishing his final year of Ophthalmology residency at the University of Kentucky Department of Ophthalmology. Dr. Harpole will be practicing general ophthalmology with a special interest in cataract and refractive surgery. He will begin seeing patients in July of 2026.



### DR. ANDREA TOOLEY'S: notable accomplishments:

#### Education and training

Bachelor's degrees in chemistry and English literature, **Butler University**

Medical degree, **Indiana University School of Medicine**

Internship and ophthalmology residency, **Mayo Clinic**, Rochester, Minnesota

Fellowship in ophthalmic plastic and reconstructive surgery, **NYU Manhattan Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital**

#### Professional roles

Consultant, Department of Ophthalmology, Mayo Clinic • Residency program director, Mayo Clinic Department of Ophthalmology  
Associate professor, Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Science • Former assistant residency program director, Mayo Clinic

#### Educational leadership and accomplishments

Developed innovative residency training programs, including hands-on surgical and emergency procedure curricula  
Founder of a national virtual ophthalmology mentorship program connecting medical students with academic physicians  
Mentor to medical students, residents and fellows pursuing academic and clinical careers  
Frequent national and international lecturer on ophthalmic surgery, medical education and physician leadership

#### Research and recognition

Author of dozens of peer-reviewed scientific publications • Participant in nationally funded clinical trials

Named one of The Ophthalmologist magazine's "Top 50 Rising Stars"

Recipient of leadership awards from **Women in Ophthalmology** and the **American Academy of Ophthalmology**

# Trigg County Chamber of Commerce announces new membership director



Karen Sue C. Stanfield

Cadiz, KY – The Trigg County Chamber of Commerce is pleased to announce the hiring of Karen Sue C. Stanfield as its new Membership & Events Director. Stanfield will officially begin her role on January 5, 2026.

Stanfield brings more than 25 years of experience in program development, organizational leadership, and community engagement. Known for her collaborative and people-centered approach, she has a strong background in building partnerships, supporting small businesses, and creating opportunities

that connect communities.

A former small business owner, Stanfield created and facilitated multiple farmers markets, including iPICKHERE.com, a large online farmers and vendors marketplace that expanded access for producers and consumers alike. Her work reflects a commitment to innovation, local enterprise, and sustainable community growth.

A newlywed and new resident of Cadiz, Stanfield relocated to Trigg County with her husband, Pastor Sean Stanfield. Since

arriving, she has been actively involved in the community through volunteer service, including coordinating the November Mobile Food Distribution and the Diaper Bank Ministry at LifeBridge UMC.

Together, the Stanfields are the parents of seven children and share their home with several pets.

Formerly a specialty chicken farmer, Stanfield now enjoys maintaining a country retreat, attending Bluegrass and Americana music festivals, and hiking or camping in the outdoors.

"We are excited to welcome Karen Sue to the Chamber team," said Kara Allen, Chamber President.

"Her experience, energy, and heart for community make her an excellent fit for supporting our members and strengthening connections throughout Trigg County."

The Trigg County Chamber of Commerce looks forward to the leadership and enthusiasm Stanfield will bring to the Membership Director role as the organization continues to serve local businesses and the broader community.

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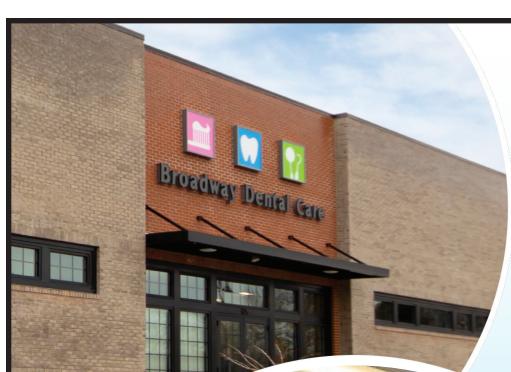
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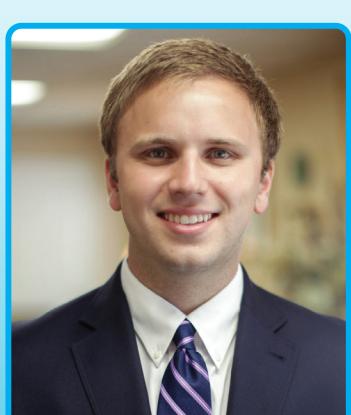


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[broadwaydentalcarepaducah.com](http://broadwaydentalcarepaducah.com)



Dr. James Hunt



Dr. Ethan Shelton



Dr. Allison Reed

# More than the Winter Blues

[PADUCAH, KY] — Shorter days, colder temperatures, and less sunlight can quietly affect your mood. If you notice feeling more tired, unmotivated, or down during the winter months, you're not alone. For many people, this is known as the winter blues, but for others, it may be Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).

"Seasonal Affective Disorder is more than just disliking winter," said Dr. Allan Wells, Baptist Health Medical Group Primary Care. "It's a form of depression that follows a seasonal pattern and can significantly impact a person's daily life if left unaddressed."

The winter blues often involve mild symptoms, such as lower energy or wanting to stay indoors more. SAD, however, is more persistent and may include ongoing sadness, changes in sleep or appetite, difficulty concentrating, and withdrawing from others.

"When symptoms

last for weeks and start interfering with work, relationships, or daily responsibilities, that's when we encourage people to seek help," said Dr. Wells. "You don't have to wait until you feel overwhelmed."

*Simple self-care to get ahead of symptoms:*

Spend time outdoors or near windows during daylight hours to get more light.

Regular exercise can improve mood and energy.

Get consistent sleep and maintain daily schedules to support mental health.

Eat balanced meals to help stabilize mood.

Social interaction is a powerful mood booster so stay connected with family and friends.

"Self-care isn't about doing everything perfectly," said Dr. Wells. "It's about building small, consistent habits that support both your mental and physical well-being."

If symptoms last more than two weeks

or begin affecting your quality of life, professional support can help.

"Seasonal depression is very treatable," added Dr. Wells. "Reaching out for help is a sign of strength, and often the first step toward feeling better." Winter may be unavoidable, but struggling through it doesn't have to be.

Important note: For more information about our Behavioral Health services, please call our Behavioral Health Resource Connection line at 800.395.4435, seven days a week, 7 a.m.—7 p.m. If you are struggling with a mental health condition and have thoughts of harming yourself or someone else, you should seek help immediately by calling the National Suicide Line at 988 or by going to a hospital emergency room.

To call or schedule an appointment with Dr. Wells, call 270.415.4645.

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# Gov. Beshear announces nearly \$2.3 million to strengthen Kentucky's public riverports

*Awards will fund eight projects to enhance safety and support economic growth*

Gov. Beshear Announces Nearly \$2.3 Million To Strengthen Kentucky's Public Riverports

Awards will fund eight projects to enhance safety and support economic growth

FRANKFORT, Ky.

— Today, Gov. Andy Beshear announced funding to enhance Kentucky's riverports and increase economic opportunities, efficiency and connectivity for Kentucky industries. Over \$2.3 million in awards will benefit eight projects at six of Kentucky's public riverports.

"Kentucky's riverports are critical economic engines that connect us to national and global markets," said Gov. Beshear.

"These awards invest in port efficiency with new equipment and further develop operations at riverports to help our businesses compete and grow."

Kentucky Public Riverport Construction and Maintenance (KPRCM) program funding invests \$7.5 million per fiscal year to improve riverport facilities and infrastructure for new construction, major replacement or repair projects. This round of awards, administered by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, supports eight projects at six of Kentucky's public riverports.

The Paducah-McCracken County Riverport Authority



received two awards totaling \$730,000. A \$520,000 project will replace a deteriorating scale house with a new 1,366-square-foot building, and \$210,000 will replace a fertilizer conveyor system. The scale building is critical to

bulk yard operations, which account for approximately 55% of revenue.

The Eddyville Riverport and Industrial Development Authority was awarded nearly \$460,000 for a project to replace and modernize an undersized and aging building. The new facility will support its expanded boat-repair operations and enable more efficient use of the port's lift.

The Hickman Fulton County Riverport Authority award of nearly \$354,000 will go toward the purchase, engineering, and installation of a new, safer, and more efficient barge-moving system.

The Henderson County Riverport Authority will receive over \$320,000 to replace a mobile conveyor system with a new electric material handler.

A \$250,000 award will go to the Western Kentucky Regional Riverport Authority to excavate Fort Jefferson to develop a new 19-acre inland riverport.

The Owensboro Riverport Authority won two awards totaling more than \$200,000 to purchase a new yard tractor and a new forklift. The acquisition will modernize its warehouse and improve loading and unloading operations.

Collectively, the projects modernize

equipment, expand capacity, and improve safety across Kentucky's riverport system, strengthening the state's role in regional and national freight movement.

"Team Kentucky is focused on strategic, targeted multi-modal investments that improve how goods move across our commonwealth," said KYTC Secretary Jim Gray. "These enhancements are vital for commercial and industrial users who rely on strong and efficient riverports."

This is the final round of KPRCM grants to be announced before the next budget is set this legislative session. The funding comes from a grant program established by the 2024 General Assembly and approved by Gov. Beshear.

To date, Gov. Beshear has awarded \$12.7 million for 17 projects through the new program.

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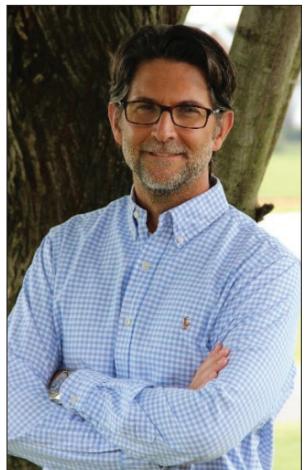
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**MSU**  
from page 2

program's commitment to bridging academic learning with professional experience.

"The construction industry is fast-paced and constantly evolving," said Kevin Perry, program coordinator. "While our curriculum provides students with a strong foundation in theory and contracting principles, the classroom can't always capture the complexities and realities of the field. That's why we're excited to welcome seasoned professional John Hale to our teaching team. His decades of hands-on experience bring invaluable real-world insight, something



core Construction Management classes and Mr. Hale is just the first. Without the support of our local industry and the AGC (Associated General Contractors) of Western Kentucky, our program would not be as sought after and well thought of as it is."

The future of this initiative is made possible through the AGC Danny Claiborne Professorship, which supports the inclusion of industry experts in Murray State courses and allows the program to expand adjunct, industry-led instruction in future semesters. To donate to the Danny Claiborne Professorship, contact Kevin Munsey in the Office of Development at [kmunsey1@murraystate.edu](mailto:kmunsey1@murraystate.edu) or 270-809-3406.

no textbook can fully convey. The students will benefit greatly from his knowledge and examples he brings to the classroom. This is just the start of bringing in industry professionals to supplement and enhance our curriculum. The plan is to bring an experienced professional in each semester to teach one of our



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# KFAC approves more than \$4 million in loans

*Financing bolsters beef, horticulture, poultry, and grain farmers across the state*

FRANKFORT – The Kentucky Agricultural Finance Corp. (KAFC) approved 20 agricultural loans totaling \$4,003,087 for projects across the Commonwealth today at its monthly board meeting.

#### *Agricultural Infrastructure Loan Program (AILP)*

Five Agricultural Infrastructure loans totaling up to \$1,193,750 were approved. Loan recipients were in Calloway (\$250,000), Christian (\$250,000), Graves (\$250,000), McLean (\$193,750), and Union (\$250,000) counties.

KAFC participates with lenders to provide financing to

producers making capital expenditures for agricultural projects through the AILP. Eligible projects include permanent farm structures with attached equipment that improves the profitability of farming operations. Producers may be eligible for up to \$250,000 not to exceed 50 percent of the project.

#### *Agricultural Processing Loan Program (APLP)*

Two Agricultural Processing loans totaling up to \$500,000 were approved. Loan recipients were in Bell (\$250,000) and Calloway (\$250,000) counties.

APLP is designed to provide loan opportunities to

companies and individuals in Kentucky interested in adding value to Kentucky-grown agricultural commodities through further processing. Agricultural processors may qualify for financing for acquisition of equipment, construction of new facilities, renovation/expansion of existing facilities and permanent working capital up to 50 percent of the project cost.

#### *Beginning Farmer Loan Program (BFLP)*

Twelve Beginning Farmer loans totaling up to \$2,196,837 were approved. Loan recipients were in Bourbon (\$104,987), Christian (\$250,000),

Daviess (\$116,500), Graves (\$250,000), Grayson (\$250,000), Madison (\$250,000), Marion (\$150,350), McLean (\$250,000), Meade (\$250,000), Nelson (\$45,000), Pulaski (\$250,000), and Washington (\$30,000) counties.

The BFLP is designed to assist individuals with some farming experience who desire to develop, expand, or buy into a farming operation. Beginning farmers may qualify for financing to purchase livestock, equipment, or agriculture facilities; to secure permanent working capital; for the purchase of farm real estate; or to invest in a partnership or LLC.

#### *Diversification through Entrepreneurship in Agribusiness Program (DEALP)*

One Diversification through Entrepreneurship in Agribusiness loan totaling \$112,500 was approved. Loan recipient was in Mercer County.

DEALP is designed to assist agri-entrepreneurs with the purchase, establishment, or expansion of a business that sells agricultural products or services to farmers or consumers. For more information on KAFC participation loans, contact your lender or Bill McCloskey at Kentucky Office of Agricultural

Policy at (502)382-6093 or email [kafc@ky.gov](mailto:kafc@ky.gov).

The Kentucky Office of Agricultural Policy (KOAP), a division within the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, provides staff support to the Kentucky Agricultural Finance Corporation (KAFC) and the Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund (KADF). The KADF is administered by the Kentucky Agricultural Development Board. KOAP ensures Kentucky is being good stewards of dollars from the 1998 Tobacco Settlement Agreement by overseeing the boards' investments into diversifying and supporting Kentucky agriculture.

## UK project aims to help Kentucky hay producers, horse owners meet in the middle



Hay is especially important to horse owners, though finding the best product for the best price can sometimes be difficult.

Photo by Matt Barton

By Jordan Strickler

Lexington, Ky.— A University of Kentucky team consisting of Bob Coleman, Ray Smith and Krista Lea, along with the support of many county agents around the state, is starting a two-year research and educational effort to help hay producers sell more “horse-quality” hay and horse owners

buy hay with fewer surprises.

Kentucky has approximately 35,000 horse operations, affecting more than one million acres of farmland. Many of those farms buy hay, and project leaders say better communication between sellers and buyers can keep more hay dollars in Kentucky.

The Department of Animal and Food Sciences and

Department of Plant and Soil Sciences partnership grew out of an earlier grant and a simple idea: Connect the people who grow the commodity with the people who use it.

“What you’re trying to do is bring together the commodity producers with the commodity users,” said Bob Coleman, associate professor in the Department of Animal Sciences at Martin-

Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment. “I believe that is extremely important.”

A key part of the project is helping hay producers describe their product in ways horse owners can trust and compare. Coleman said buyers often rely on advice and may reject hay that is safe

see PROJECT, page 11



## 30<sup>th</sup> Annual 2026 Spring Farm Equipment Consignment Online Auction

**SATURDAY, MARCH 7th @ 10 AM CST**  
 Warrick County 4-H Center • Boonville, IN  
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The 30<sup>th</sup> annual Spring Farm Consignment Auction will be an online auction through DASONLINEAUCTIONS.HIBID.COM. All equipment will be lined up and staged at the Warrick County 4-H Center as usual. We will not be accepting small items: hand tools, boxed lots, tires, or small barn and garage related items that are usually lined up along the barn. DAS has the right of refusal of any merchandise. Items will be lined up and staged outside in the order they come in. The commission is on a sliding scale per each item and a \$15 fee will be charged for each item with a title.

DAS will take consignments from Saturday Feb. 28<sup>th</sup> through Thursday March 5<sup>th</sup> from 7 AM till 5 PM. **NO CONSIGNMENTS TAKEN ON FRIDAY MARCH 6<sup>th</sup> OR ON AUCTION DAY!** Please bring a list and good description of items being consigned. Each day, items will be updated and available for the online auction. Items can be viewed at the 4-H Center Friday March 6<sup>th</sup> and on auction day, March 7<sup>th</sup>. The staff will be present if you have any questions. For more information, please call or look on our website at <https://dasonlineauctions.hibid.com>.

**TERMS:** A 10% buyer's fee will be charged. A credit card is required to sign up to bid through Dasonlineauctions.hibid.com. When the online auction closes, you will receive an invoice by email (about 30 minutes after the conclusion of auction) for items you win. When you pick up your items, you can **pay with cash, check, or credit card (3% charge)**. Indiana 7% state sales tax will be charged (Exemption forms will be available). All items need to be paid for by Monday March 9<sup>th</sup>. If items are not paid for on Monday, March 9<sup>th</sup> your credit card will be charged. Items can be picked up 1 hour after the auction is completed and invoices are emailed (loaders will shut down at 5:15 PM - NO LOADING IN THE DARK) and Sunday March 8<sup>th</sup> through Tuesday March 10<sup>th</sup> from 9 AM to 4 PM. Loaders will be available.

If you need assistance signing up with Hibid, let us know and we will email you a instruction sheet.



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# Comer and hemp industry leaders push bipartisan legislation to support America's hemp farmers

WASHINGTON – Last week in Washington, Congressman James Comer (R-Ky.) joined hemp industry leaders and farmers to host a press conference focused on the future of the U.S. hemp industry and the need for a responsible, workable regulatory framework. Congressman Comer emphasized that Congress must remain committed to advancing bipartisan solutions in partnership with fellow lawmakers and industry stakeholders, while opposing any actions that would undermine the hemp industry or create additional uncertainty and economic hardship for America's hemp farmers.

On Wednesday, Congressman Comer joined Representative Jim Baird (R-Ind.), House Agriculture Committee Ranking Member Angie Craig (D-Minn.), Representative Tim Moore (R-N.C.), and Representative Gabe Evans (R-Colo.) to introduce the bipartisan Hemp Planting Predictability Act. The bill would grant a two-year extension of the hemp provision included in the FY2026 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act that restricts the definition of legal hemp. This extension would give Congress additional time to develop and enact comprehensive hemp policy that supports farmers, strengthens the industry, and protects consumers.

Below are Congressman Comer's press conference remarks as prepared.

Good morning. Today, I am proud to join so many leaders, advocates, and supporters of the hemp industry here in Washington, D.C.

I want to thank my friend, Jonathan Miller, and the U.S. Hemp Roundtable for convening so many advocates to support hemp farmers and the businesses that cultivate it.

This is an issue near and dear to my heart.

The hemp industry is facing significant challenges and growing uncertainty, and it is long past time for Congress to provide farmers and business owners with the clarity they need to succeed.

This uncertainty is not abstract—it is impacting real people, real jobs, and real communities across the country, particularly in rural America.

The hemp industry's impact on my home state of Kentucky, and nationwide, is substantial.

Hemp supports 320,000 American jobs, generates \$28.4 billion in market activity, and contributes \$1.5 billion in state tax revenue.

I am proud to be a long-time supporter of the hemp industry, dating back to my service as Kentucky's Commissioner of Agriculture. I led the charge to make Kentucky the very first state to legally grow hemp.

Today, as it did then, hemp offers farmers the opportunity to diversify, innovate, and remain competitive in an evolving agricultural economy.

Hemp is a major crop for our Kentucky farmers, and nearly every farmer I know who grew hemp last year was a former tobacco

farmer. So, hemp is doing exactly today what I predicted. It has become an alternative crop to tobacco for Kentucky farmers.

Since coming to Congress in 2016, I have

worked to ensure the hemp industry receives strong support at the federal level.

That work was especially critical during negotiations on the 2018 Farm Bill, which laid

the foundation for the industry's growth over the last few years.

I made it a priority to be one of hemp's strongest advocates during those negotiations.

As a result, the 2018

Farm Bill unleashed the industry and supported jobs, small businesses, and entrepreneurs across the country.

see COMER,  
page 11



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# A look back at USDA rural development's impact in 2025



By Travis T. Burton,  
Kentucky State Director,  
USDA Rural Development

As we close out the year and welcome a new one, this is a great time to review what we've accomplished at the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development agency, and I can tell you 2025 was a record year for us here in Kentucky! Since President Trump took office, we secured over \$1.265 billion in federal resources for the

commonwealth.

Our agency exists to improve the economic prosperity and quality of life in rural America, and we do that through three overarching funding categories – affordable housing, business development, and community infrastructure.

## Affordable Housing

Through our various affordable housing programs, we helped over 1,500 families buy,

build, or repair their home.

Homeownership is not just part of the American dream; it's the best way to build generational wealth. Our direct and guaranteed loan programs are a great way to realize that dream.

That's exactly what Brian W. did. After being displaced by the historic flooding in July 2022, he found himself and his two pugs living with friends and family. But he worked with one of

our housing non-profit partners and now owns a home in a higher ground development.

We also helped over 100 families make necessary repairs to their homes, including 50 through our disaster repair grant programs.

## Business Development

Small businesses play a vital role in the economic prosperity of rural Kentucky. From multi-million dollar guaranteed loans to small energy efficiency grants, we're here to help rural businesses grow, create jobs, and be profitable. We also have programs to help trusted non-profits provide technical assistance to small businesses.

In 2025, we invested over \$63.5 million, saving and creating over 200 jobs across the commonwealth. Some of these investments will have a long-lasting impact, like the grant awarded to Kentucky Community & Technical College System's Hazard campus. That grant will be used to help establish a mobile plumbing training program to good paying jobs in our state.

## Community Infrastructure

Communities can't exist without infrastructure and essential services like law enforcement, health care and emergency response.

We recently announced a \$73.8 million investment in Livingston Hospital, which will be used to create 56,000 additional square feet of treatment space and improve access to quality care in that region.

That's just one of over 40 infrastructure investments we made in rural Kentucky totaling over \$893.6 million.

## Looking Ahead to 2026

We're just getting started! I can't wait to see what 2026 brings us to rural Kentucky. President Trump and Secretary Rollins are committed to ushering in a new era of prosperity for rural American and my team and I will spend every day making sure we are doing just that here in Kentucky.



## 12th Annual PRODUCTION SALE MARCH 8, 2026

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**PROJECT**  
from page 8

and useful because it does not match a checklist they found online. He said basic details can change a buying decision, including the bale's weight.

"You might have a 50-pound bale for \$10 and a 40-pound bale for \$8," Coleman said. "That makes a huge difference. Horse owners need to know what they are getting. Also, you need to feed your horses high-quality hay, but what is that? Hay with the highest nutrient numbers is not always the best fit for every horse."

The project will work through county Extension personnel, who often know local hay producers better than they know horse owners. The plan includes demonstration farms, publications and popular-press articles, educational programs and six regional field days.

The project also plans to work with the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, the UK Regulatory Services Hay Testing Program and the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's hay marketing efforts.

Early work has focused on outreach and hay sampling, including proper sample collection. The team also expects to teach about weed issues that show up in horse hay, such as foxtail, and to help horse owners recognize problem plants when they open a bale.

The effort comes at a time when hay prices and marketing opportunities matter for farm budgets. USDA data show Kentucky farmers received an average of \$176 per ton for hay excluding alfalfa in 2024, a figure Coleman said can look very different when hay is packaged and marketed for the horse market.

"The goal is not to turn Extension agents into hay brokers," Coleman said. "I don't want to be the broker, and I know the agents don't want to be the broker. But if we can come up with a way that makes it really easy and very user-friendly, I think that will help."

The two-year project is funded by a \$147,000 grant through the Kentucky Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy.

**COMER**  
from page 9

Now, we must act swiftly to pass legislation that protects jobs, eliminates bad actors, standardizes labeling, and requires third-party testing.

These steps are essential to providing certainty for business owners and confidence for consumers.

Today, American farmers are facing serious headwinds. The last thing they

need is inaction from Washington that puts a growing, multi-billion-dollar industry at risk.

That is why I am proud to stand here today in strong support of the hemp industry.

I appreciate the leadership of my colleague from Indiana, Congressman Jim Baird, who has introduced the Hemp Planting Predictability Act.

I am proud to be an original cosponsor of this legislation, which would give Congress an additional two years to

enact comprehensive hemp policy that supports farmers, strengthens the industry, and protects consumers.

This is not a partisan issue.

I urge both Republicans and Democrats to come together and support this commonsense extension.

I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues in Congress and industry stakeholders to get this bill to the President's desk as quickly as possible.

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