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# The Crittenden Press



## 2007 high school graduation slate

Ceremonies for the graduating class of 2007 from Crittenden County High School are set for next week, with all services held at Rocket Arena. The schedule is as follows:

- Baccalaureate, 7 p.m., May 23.
- Class Night, 6 p.m., May 24.
- Commencement, 7 p.m., May 25.

## Marion offering free trash drops

Next Monday through Saturday, the City of Marion is offering a first-ever amnesty week for dumping trash. Residents will be able to drop off trash for free all week. See story on Page 9A.

## Local meetings

**TODAY**

- Marion Tourism Commission meets tonight (Thursday) at 6 p.m., at the Marion Welcome Center.

**MONDAY**

- Marion City Council meets 7 p.m., Monday at City Hall.

**TUESDAY**

- Crittenden-Livingston Water District meets 10 a.m., Tuesday at the water district office in Salem.

## Fuel prices

Reported by AAA as of Wednesday morning. Averages are for self-serve regular only.

Nation	Kentucky	Local*
\$3.10	\$3.00	\$2.90

\*Within 10-mile radius of Marion

## KSP traffic

Fatalities reported on the state's roads by the Kentucky State Police.

This year*	Last week
291	18

\*Through May 15 reporting period

## Home mortgage

Fixed rates from FreddieMac.com\*

30-year	15-year
6.15%	5.87%
0.5 points	0.5 points

\*As of May 10; other variables may apply

## Rain gauge

Reported by UK Agriculture Weather Service as of Wednesday at Paducah.

7 days	30 days	2007
0.50"	1.76"	16.52"

below average: 2.97"

## Forecast

Reported by the National Weather Service.

Thursday	Friday
Mostly sunny 70/43	Sunny 72/43

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# Election quiet, but to be costly

By **DARYL K. TABOR**  
MANAGING EDITOR

One married his high school sweetheart. Another sold "Grit" newspapers as his first job. One likes neapolitan ice cream and drives a limo. One lays claim as the only left-hander in the race. Still another unwinds with Fox News Channel.

We are talking of course, about Kentucky's gubernatorial candidates in Tuesday party primaries. While it's not the only race on the slate for Democrats and Republicans, it's the headliner. And candidate Jody Richards knows a headline when he sees one, he's got a master's degree in journalism.

Prepping Kentucky voters for next Tuesday's gubernatorial primary, Kentucky Monthly Magazine asked all of the candidates in each party's pri-

mary 20 questions. Some standard, such as "What is your birthdate?" Others a bit whimsical, like "What's your favorite ice cream flavor?"

Otis Hensley, by the way is the guy who enjoys chocolate, vanilla and strawberry ice cream all in one box. In fact, the Democrat probably shares with Scrubbs, his pot-bellied pig.

Despite such revealing information, this year's candidates seem to have had trouble rallying the troops, leading to one of the lowest-key elections for state offices in recent memory.

Local political pundit Gordon Guess said the lack of a red-hot issue or superstar on either side of the aisle has voters yawning.

"There's no one guy with any jazz,"

**Complete primary election coverage!**  
See page 8A



he said. "No John Kennedy." The county's top election official agrees.

"This is the quietest I've ever seen," said County Clerk Carolyn Byford, who has seen her share of elections as both head and deputy clerk in the county. "It bothers me that the county is out all this money and there is no more interest than there is."

And talk about money. The approximate \$10,000 cost of Tuesday's primary to the county could double if an unprecedented run-off is required for one or both parties to select their candidate for November. With six Democrats and three GOP candidates battling each other, it is possible that no one candidate will acquire the 40

percent of the electorate to move ahead to the general election. If that is the case, a run-off of the top two vote-getters in the party will be held June 26.

That will cost the county another \$10,000 or so, with the state reimbursing about \$3,600, according to Byford. The same kickback will be provided also for Tuesday's primary.

Though it's been on the books for 15 years, no gubernatorial run-off has ever taken place in Kentucky. If one is needed this year, with reimbursements, that's a combined \$13,000 the county could spend for as few as 15-percent of registered voters. (That's the turnout Byford expects Tuesday.)

Doing the math, with 6,234 registered voters in the county, that amounts to a cost of about \$10.75 per vote cast Tuesday... if Byford's crystal ball was polished clearly.

## Teacher of the Year

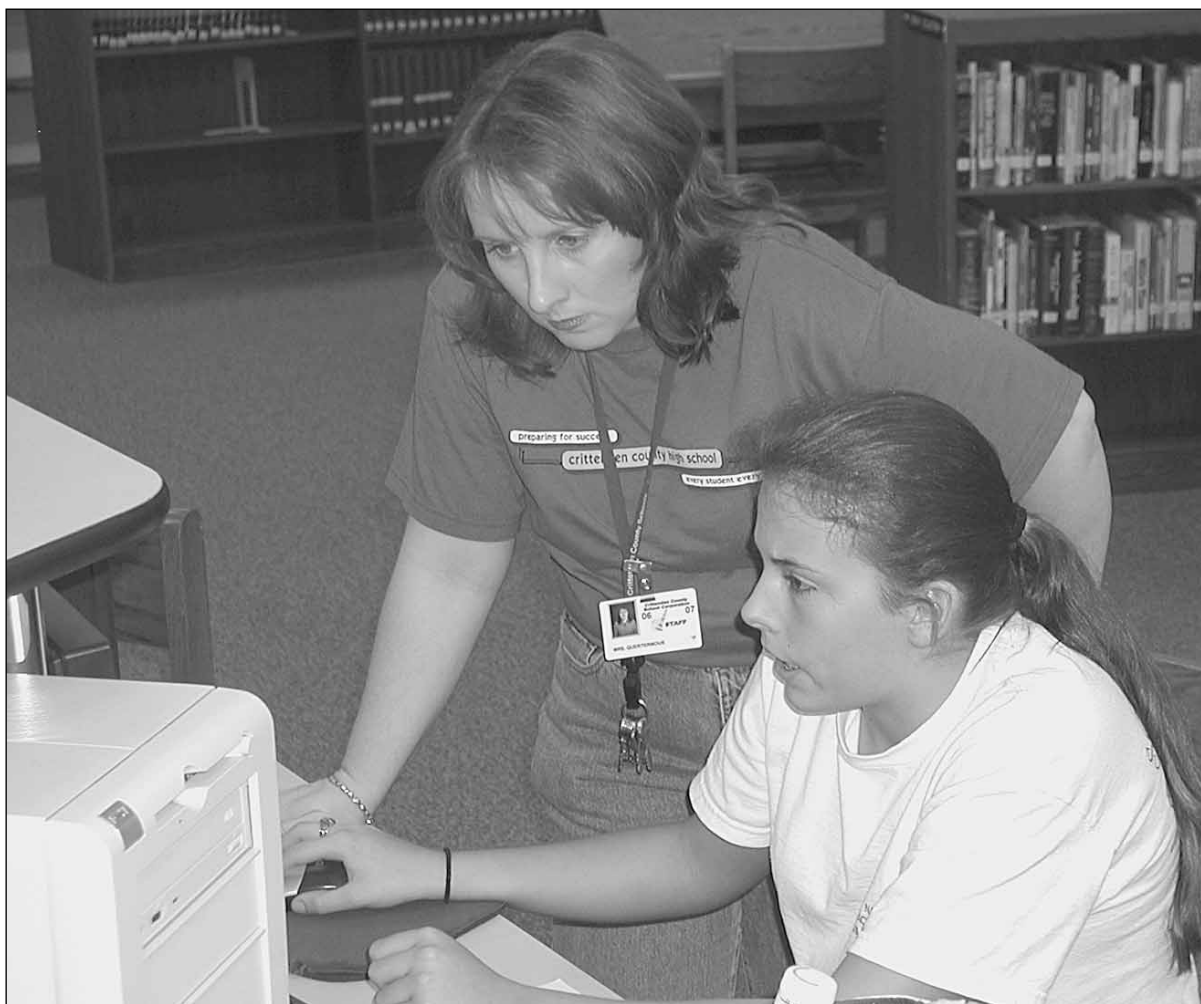


PHOTO BY DARYL K. TABOR

Melissa Quertermous, a Crittenden County High School English teacher, reads over the shoulder of Wendy Thurmond in the high school library. Thurmond, a senior, was completing her final paper in the Teacher of the Year's Advanced Placement language arts course.

# 'Mrs. Q' recognized for making a difference

By **JERRITT HOVEY**  
PRESS REPORTER

Rocket Arena was swarming with busy bodies as students and faculty filed into the gym for a special assembly last Thursday to hear the announcement of Wal-Mart's annual Teacher of the Year.

Crittenden County High School English teacher Melissa Quertermous, known to several students as Mrs. Q, was chosen as Teacher of the Year.

No one, including fellow teachers, knew the recipient of the award, and it came as a big surprise to Quertermous.

As her name was called out, a roar of applause and cheering broke out amongst the students and faculty. Quertermous, who was seated in the bleachers next to her class, was stunned for a few seconds before realizing that it was her name who Allen Dixon, the store manager of Wal-Mart in Princeton, had just called.

Dixon presented Quertermous with a \$1,000 check for the school, as well as a Teacher of the Year polo shirt, \$100 gift card so that her class can throw a party and an eMachine computer complete with a printer and a digital camera with a memory card.

Accepting the gifts, Quertermous had tears in her eyes as she faced the high school students and thanked them.

"I'm shocked but honored to have received this acknowledgment," Quertermous said. "I am proud of my students and moved to know that I have helped them in some way in their lives. I'm moved to tears."

Teacher of the Year is an annual selection that Wal-Mart awards in the Caldwell, Lyon and Crittenden area. For the entire month of February, there was

See **HONOR**/page 3A

# Simple math

## School system forced to slash \$310,000, jobs

By **DARYL K. TABOR**  
MANAGING EDITOR

The pain is going to be felt from the top down.

That was Superintendent John Belt's caveat as he announced cuts in the school system's staff and programs in order to close a \$310,000 gap in Crittenden schools tentative \$7.9 million budget for the new fiscal year.

Belt, who volunteered a \$3,000 reduction in his own salary to help balance the budget, aired the list of cuts at Tuesday's Crittenden School Board meeting. The emotion on his face was obvious as the saving measures were announced. Those include:

- Elimination of 3.5 teaching positions;
- Elimination of middle school librarian and assistant principal;
- Ceasing the alternative night school;
- Restructuring school nursing services;
- Reduction in funding to extra-curricular activities;
- Cutting 104 extended days for certified, classified and administrative staff; and

See **BUDGET**/page 7A



BELT

## Personnel moves

STAFF REPORT



**Middle school principal exits after one year.**

Jeremy Suchman, a 1992 Crittenden County High School graduate, will be leaving his job as principal at the middle school after one year at the helm.

Suchman's resignation was announced at Tuesday's school board meeting. He notified the board of his decision on April 13, but will finish out the remaining days in the 2006-07 school year.

Suchman plans to return to Alabama with his wife, Kelley, who is a teacher at Crittenden County High School.

The principal did not give a reason for his decision.

# Cherokee culture revived with song, dance here this weekend

STAFF REPORT

It's not your same old song and dance. Native American song and dance will be the featured attraction this weekend at Redbird's Intertribal Gathering at the Native Education and Cultural Center in Marion.

The event kicks off with a grand entry at 1 p.m., Saturday and also includes a free concert on Saturday night. All of the events will be held at the new center at the former Shouse Animal Clinic on Sturgis Road next to Pamida.

This will be the first tribal gathering held at the new facilities.

The grand entry will be followed by dancing

and drums by Medicine Eagle. A special ceremony to honor local Kentucky National Guardsmen serving in Iraq with Bravo Company will be held early Saturday evening with a free concert by Spirit Wing at 7 p.m.

Sunday's events start with a grand entry at 1 p.m., and continue into the afternoon.

There will be activities with Naven "Little Bear" Brown, Beth Ann "Moonfeather" Huotari, David "Night Hawk" McDaris,

Bill "Brother of Wolves" Simmons and more.

Admission is free for children under 12. Cost is \$3 for adults. The public is encouraged to bring their own lawn chairs. For more information, call 994-6237.

The Indian Removal Act of 1830 was enforced against the Cherokee Nation in 1838. That winter, the last party of Cherokees was encamped at Mantle Rock in Livingston County.



PHOTO BY SGT. LEO A. SALINAS/USMC

Displays of Native American culture are growing in popularity throughout the Americas, as witnessed by this child's display at a powwow in Canada last year. The Native Education and Cultural Center in Marion will host a similar attraction this weekend.



# Calling it quits

## Courthouse fixtures Shewmaker, Ordway retiring at end of month

By CHRIS EVANS  
PRESS EDITOR

Roberta Shewmaker figured she'd seen the last of hardware when she gave up a job bookkeeping for Cochran's Supply on South Main Street in Marion in the late 1960s.

Little did she know that hardware and software would once again become a major part of her professional career.

Shewmaker, Crittenden County treasurer for the last 23 years, and Karen Ordway, deputy circuit court clerk for the last 13, are retiring at the end of the month. Both say that technology has dynamicaly changed the landscape of the courthouse over the last two decades.

Shewmaker graduated from Crittenden County High in 1956, then spent a short time clerking for attorney David Postlethweight before a 13-year stint with Cochran's Supply, a former hardware store in downtown Marion.

The hardware she worked with back then was far from the bytes and megahertz machines that made her life easier, and sometimes more stressful in later years as the county's chief financial officer.

"Adapting from the old way to the new way has changed things for the better," Shewmaker said, sitting at her desk stacked with check binders, piles of bills and requisition orders.

Keeping up with the county's business is a daunting task. Millions of dollars pass across her computer screen annually and she says the reporting and check writing is made simpler by today's hardware.

"When I went to school, we learned shorthand, typing and took a class called office practices. Most of my classes were under Mrs. Louise Allen Watson. She was a great help to me."



said Shewmaker, who admits that most of those educational fundamentals of the 1950s are now obsolete.

Through the years, Shewmaker has tried to stay out of the political morass that sometimes engrosses courthouse life. She has worked with four judge-executives, nine finance officers and countless magistrates.

"I just did my work and I was loyal

to each one of them," she said about the different administrations she served, some Republican, some Democrat. "Nothing ever left the office. There are some thing you just shouldn't talk about."

Shewmaker started out in the county judge's office in January of 1984 after moving back to Marion from St. Louis, when her husband Arzie retired. Arzie passed away last year and Shewmaker turned the family farm over to her son, Bill. Her daughter, Judy Gargus, is director of the American Cancer Society in Owensboro.

"I plan to spend more time with my five grandchildren," she said, pointing out that retirement will also give her more time to spend with her 91-year-old mother Ruth Drury, who still lives in the same place where Roberta grew up on Fords Ferry Road.

For Ordway, retirement will mean turning her attention to things she loves to do, like bird watching and quilting.

"Indigo buntings, grosbeaks, cardinals, bluebirds, gold finches and even pileated woodpeckers, I love them all," she said. "My daughter-in-law says she wants quilts, quilts, quilts. So I plan to work on those for the grandkids."

Ordway started out in the courthouse in 1994. By that point, she'd



PHOTOS BY CHRIS EVANS

Roberta Shewmaker (above) will be leaving her post as Crittenden County treasurer at the end of May after 23 years in the judge-executive's office. At the same time, Karen Ordway (at left) will be giving up her position in the circuit clerk's office after 13 years.

held other public jobs with the school system. There, she worked in the cafeteria, bookkeeping, central office, middle school, high school and was secretary for Superintendent Dr. Dennis Lacy.

In the clerk's office, she has largely been in charge of bookkeeping but also crosses over into the other areas, processing and filing court documents, issuing driver's license and keeping track of fines and other court records.

Shewmaker and Ordway have both worked through a time of great change in the way offices are operated. From typewriters to laserwriters and from spreadsheets to postscript files, they've adapted, improvised and overcome.

"Since we started using computers, we've gone through three differ-

ent ones for court documents and now we're getting ready to change again," Ordway said. "Driver's licenses have changed from a time when we could issue them with a minimum of information to now when we're required to have proof of address, a birth certificate and social security card. There's a whole lot more security."

Retirement for Ordway will also mean more time with her husband Ronnie and grandchildren Jeremy and Ashley. The Ordways have two boys, Chris, who is a newspaper publisher, and Jared, a medical researcher.

"I'm excited about it. When people ask what I'm going to do now, I say, 'Probably drive my husband crazy,'" Ordway says with a wide smile.



PHOTOS BY DARYL K. TABOR

Recognizing Elder Abuse Awareness Month, Crittenden County Judge-Executive Fred Brown signed into proclamation the declarator for Crittenden County. Joining Brown in the signing of the proclamation Tuesday at the senior citizens center in Marion were (from left) Wilma Robertson, Pennyryle Allied Community Services Aging Coordinator Mona Manley, Sharon and Phillip Giltz, Nelda Phelps, Jenny Sisco, Ann Cooper, Charlie Sisco and Margaret Gilland. Last year, more than 9,387 vulnerable adults were victims of abuse, neglect or exploitation in Kentucky. The county has appropriated \$135,000 for the center in the coming fiscal year.

# County spending plan up \$1.5 million over '07

STAFF REPORT

Increases in pay for county employees and rising insurance costs are among the reasons Crittenden County's 2007-08 budget has increased from \$3.6 million last year to \$5.1 million in the coming fiscal year, which starts July 1.

Of course, the new jail and other capital improvement projects had the greatest impact on the new spending plan, which was unveiled at Tuesday's regular fiscal court meeting.

Magistrates gave their preliminary approval to the budget, which calls for a 3-percent increase in salaries, a 2.98-percent increase in retirement benefits and a big increase in worker's compensation insurance. Separate from the budget, magistrates approved signing a three-year agreement to keep its insurance through the Kentucky Association of Counties. The deal freezes the rate for the term of the contract. The new annual premium will be \$136,351. Of that total, \$43,535 is for worker's compensation insurance. The policy includes all lines of insurance, including earthquake protection.

The county had recently considered dropping the earthquake provision on some of its older buildings, but based on virtually no cost-savings decided not to do it Tuesday.

The county budget includes a half-million dollars for a new health department. Judge-Executive Fred Brown said a

grant had been approved in that amount. Now, the county must find a means for matching it before construction will begin.

The new \$7 million jail, which is currently under construction, was a big factor in preparing this year's spending plan, Brown said. The FY 07-08 budget will fund the old jail half of the year and the new jail the last six months. It is scheduled to open in late December.

"There's a whole lot of guesswork that goes into something like that," Brown said.

The jail portion of the county's operating budget will go from roughly \$290,000 to \$956,937. The new facility, which will be capable of housing 129 inmates, will be able to recoup much of its expense through payment plans for state prisoners or those from other counties, and perhaps other states. The current jail is certified to hold 20 prisoners.

The jailer's salary will go from \$30,620 to \$51,281 next year. The salary is set by the state based on the size of the jail.

The new spending plan is based on last year's tax rates. The new tax rates will be set next month after the state completes its calculations for possible rates for the new

year.

The proposed budget also calls for an increase in the county judge's salary from \$64,388 to \$66,038 and a 3-percent increase for magistrates. Last year, magistrates voted against accepting a similar pay hike.

Retirement is a big expense for the county. The rate has gone up steadily over the past seven years. In 2000, the county's share to the state retirement plan was 6.34 percent of each employee's salary. The new rate is going to 16.17 percent in two months. It was 13.19 percent last year. That rate is mandated by state law.

Some capital improvement projects reflected in the higher budget include \$80,000 for Dam 50, \$135,000 for the PACS Senior Citizens Center expansion and more money from the state to operate Cave in Rock Ferry.

Magistrates also discussed how county fire departments are funded. There has been an ongoing debate about whether the volunteer fire departments should be able to raise their own taxes. So far, that option has not been well received by elected officials. Magistrates discussed the county helping fire departments by mailing fire dues or invoices to residents. Dues are generally around \$25 a year. If a resident has a fire and has not paid those dues, the fire department will charge \$500 for the run. Otherwise, paying fire dues is voluntary at this point.

## HONOR

Continued from Page 1A

a drop box set up where students could nominate their choice teacher.

However, the teacher isn't selected by how many nominations they receive or how "cool" a student may make

them sound. Instead, a teacher is selected by how meaningful the student's nomination is.

"The student who nominated Mrs. Quertermous explained how she had made this particular student who they were today," Dixon said. "We look for teachers who make a difference in their

students' lives."

Quertermous is now eligible for the state level of Teacher of the Year. The winning teacher will receive a \$10,000 check and go on to the national level. The national Teacher of the Year will receive a check for \$25,000 for their school.

# RETIREMENT Reception

The Peoples Bank  
Will Host A  
Retirement  
Reception For  
Former Bank  
President,

Gordon  
Guess

FRIDAY, MAY 25  
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

The Bank Board of Directors and Staff Invite  
You To Celebrate Gordon's 34 Years of Service!  
1973 - 2007

Thank you Gordon for your  
dedication to The Peoples Bank.

Refreshments will be served.



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