



The Crittenden Press

Salem Council Approves Payroll Tax | Page 8

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24/7 BREAKING AND LOCAL NEWS / THE-PRESS.COM

AN INDEPENDENTLY-OWNED, LOCAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1879

TWO DOLLARS

Fireworks Displays Fireworks options for Independence Day

Area residents will have several opportunities to celebrate Independence Day with fireworks displays around western Kentucky, led by two popular local events.

Tolu's annual July 4 celebration returns Saturday, July 4 featuring children's activities, food vendors, live music, raffles and fireworks after dark. Activities include wet and dry bounce houses, a cornhole tournament, patriotic entertainment and a variety of food options. Children's events are sponsored by Tolu Methodist Church.

The annual Thunder in the Valley celebration will be held Friday, July 3 at Buddy Rogers Park in Fredonia. Festivities begin at 6 p.m., with concessions, bounce houses, face painting, live music, a patriotic dress contest and a new kids' chalk art contest. Fireworks are scheduled for dusk.

Other regional fireworks displays include: July 3: Thunder Over Eddy Bay at Eddy Creek Marina, Light Up The Sky at Moors Resort & Marina in Gilbertsville, and a fireworks display at Lake Barkley State Park near Cadiz. July 4: Calvert City's Ameribration celebration.



Nominations are being accepted for Ag HoF

Nominations are being accepted for the Crittenden County Agriculture/Rural Leadership Hall of Fame, which recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to the county's agricultural community. Recipients may be farmers or others who have supported agriculture, including loan officers, government officials, ag-business professionals and farm families. Nominees may be living or deceased. Nomination packets are available at the Crittenden County Extension Office and must be returned by the close of business July 2. For more information, call 270-965-5236 or email deanna.brasher@uky.edu. Past inductees have been Virgil Cook 2021, Jack Voss 2021, Tommy Chandler 2022, Larry Parish 2023, Wade & Sue Buntin 2024 and Carol Hendrix 2025.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- Community Prayer at 10 a.m., Saturday, July 4 at Marion Commons.
- Marion Code Enforcement Board will meet at 5 p.m., Monday, July 13 at city hall.
- Livingston County Board of Education will meet at 5 p.m., Monday, July 13 at the central office.
- Crittenden County Chamber of Commerce will meet at 8:30 a.m., Tuesday, July 14, at Rocket Arena conference room.
- Caldwell County Fiscal Court will meet at 9 a.m., Tuesday, July 14, at the courthouse.
- Crittenden County Board of Education will meet at 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, July 14, for a working session at Rocket Arena.
- Crittenden-Livingston Farm Service Agency County Committee will meet at 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, July 15, at Salem Service Center.

The Crittenden Press
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Ferry suspends operation Contract impasse means no river crossing

STAFF REPORT

Cave-In-Rock Ferry suspended operations Tuesday night after the states and the ferry company failed to reach a contract compromise.

The ferry made its final crossing from the Kentucky landing at approximately 9:50 p.m., Tuesday, docking on the Illinois side around 10 p.m., before ceasing service. Owner and operator Lonnie Lewis and Crittenden County Judge-Executive Perry Newcom both said service could resume if a new agreement is reached in the coming days.

The shutdown follows a funding dispute between the ferry operator and the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet over a proposed two-year contract, for which the operator sought a pay increase.

The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet and the Illinois Department of Transportation

this week presented the Marion-based Ohio River Ferry Authority with a modified two-year agreement that would continue funding for the ferry through fiscal years 2027 and 2028. The proposal called for just over \$2 million annually, about 10% more than the \$1.878 million the ferry received during the past two fiscal years.

Kentucky Transportation Cabinet Secretary Rebecca Goodman said last week in a news release that the ferry plays a vital role as a regional transportation link.

"This is a substantial commitment to support not just the ferry but the businesses and residents who rely on it," Goodman said.

The ferry operator has rejected KYTC's funding offers, saying the proposals fail to

See **FERRY**/page 4

Going postal on papers

The Postal Service presents one of the curious contradictions of modern America.

A man can sit here in Marion, Kentucky, tap a glass screen with his finger, and within seconds communicate with someone in Singapore. He can track an Amazon package crossing three states in real time. He can summon a car, order supper, and monitor the weather in the Gulf of Mexico.

Yet if he drops a letter in the mailbox, it enters a black hole and chances of it making to hell's half acre is about as slim as Barney Fife.

The local post office still functions much as it always has. The carrier knows the roads. The mail gets sorted. Folks do their jobs. There is something reassuring about that.

The trouble begins when that envelope leaves 42064.

Somewhere between Marion and whatever vast processing center now governs its destiny, the letter, or in our case a periodical, passes from the world of ordinary human competence into a bureaucratic Bermuda Triangle. It disappears into a system of scanners, conveyors, algorithms and efficiency experts, only to emerge days, or sometimes weeks later, looking as though it has returned from a long and difficult voyage on a Pony Express fifth wheel trailer.

The National Newspaper Association recently carried this complaint to the United States Senate. Community newspapers, rural businesses and ordinary citizens are all encountering the same phenomenon. Mail costs more. Service performs worse. Confidence declines.

What is remarkable is not that the system has problems. Every institution does. What is frustrating is that in an age that prides itself on technological sophistication, we seem unable to accomplish what previous generations considered routine, carrying a letter from one American town to another in a reasonable amount of time.

The Postal Service does not suffer from a lack of theories. Washington is full of theories. It suffers from a lack of results.

Out here, people are not asking for innovation. They are asking for something far more radical.

They want the mail delivered.

There is a tendency in modern America to complain loudly to the nearest available target. When your newspaper arrives late, that target is often us. We understand. We hear from readers every week, and we appreciate it because it helps us document the problem. Sometimes we find an error in our own system.

But after you call the newspaper, please call somebody else. Call your senator. Call your congressman. Write a letter. Send an email. Let them know that reliable mail service still matters in places like Crittenden County.

The Postal Service belongs to the American people. It is not a private corporation. It is not an app. It is not some distant abstraction housed in Washington. It is a public institution supported by taxpayers and accountable to elected officials.

If enough people speak up, perhaps somebody will listen. The irony is almost too rich to



Chris EVANS
Press Editor & Publisher
About Town

TOURISM SPENDING ACROSS OUR REGION



Local figures up in 2025

STAFF REPORT

While Kentucky celebrated a fourth consecutive record year for tourism in 2025, Crittenden County posted modest growth of its own, continuing a trend of increasing visitor activity despite remaining one of the smallest tourism markets in western Kentucky.

According to the latest economic impact data released by the Kentucky Department of Tourism and Tourism Economics, visitors spent an estimated \$4.26 million in Crittenden County during 2025, an increase of 2.4% from the previous year.

The increase came as neighboring tourism-dependent counties Lyon and Livingston both experienced slight declines. Lyon

2025 TOURISM ECONOMIC IMPACT							
 County	Economic Impact by Category (in millions)					 Spending Per Visitor	 Change from 2024
	 Lodging	 Food & Beverage	 Retail	 Recreation	 Transportation		
Caldwell	\$3.8M	\$3.67M	\$3.71M	\$1.35M	\$21.01M	\$14.03M	+23.5%
Crittenden	\$1.07M	\$0.75M	\$0.90M	\$0.18M	\$1.36M	\$4.26M	+2.4%
Livingston	\$8.80M	\$5.73M	\$2.25M	\$5.05M	\$2.62M	\$23.44M	-3.2%
Lyon	\$10.36M	\$9.37M	\$3.00M	\$4.48M	\$3.97M	\$31.18M	-1.1%
Union	\$0.31M	\$0.22M	\$2.10M	\$0.45M	\$2.65M	\$5.72M	-1.0%
Webster	\$0.67M	\$0.45M	\$1.26M	\$0.15M	\$1.87M	\$4.40M	+3.2%

County, home to attractions associated with Lake Barkley and Land Between the Lakes, recorded \$31.18 million in visitor spending, down 1.1% from 2024. Livingston County with Kentucky Lake and Grand Rivers reported \$23.44 million, a decrease of 3.2%.

"Our mission is to attract

more visitors to Marion, Kentucky, generating economic benefits for local restaurants, hotel, shops and the community," said Andrea Clement, Chairman, Marion Tourism Commission, who is also a director at the Ben E. Clement Min-

See **TOURISM**/page 3

LEGACY OF LIBERTY ★ AMERICA'S 250th ANNIVERSARY ★



Early American re-enactors weathered showers and storms over the weekend to bring history to life as part of the Legacy of Liberty America 250 celebration in Marion. Despite some weather-related improvising, organizers say the event went well. See more on page 10.



See **POSTAL**/page 3

Deaths

Ramer

Michele Marie Ramer, 59, died Tuesday, June 23, 2026 at Livingston Hospital and Healthcare Services.



She enjoyed baking, fishing, animals and her job. She loved her family and being a grandmother.

Surviving are her husband, Jerry Ramer; three sons, David Scharf (Sarah Shank) of Sonora, Calif., Eric Scharf (Ashely Clark) of Prunedale, Calif., and Patrick Taylor (Kayla Young) of Prunedale, Calif.; her parents, Richard and Virginia “Ginger” Cosnowski; and a granddaughter, Dylan Scharf.

She was preceded in death by a brother, Kevin Cosnowski.

Memorial services may follow at a later date.

Boyd Funeral Directors and Cremation Services is in charge of the arrangements.

Paid obituary

James

Billy James, 83, of Marion, died Wednesday, June 24, 2026 at Salem Springlake Health and Rehabilitation Center.

He was born July

26, 1942 to Merrill B. and Margaret Franklin James. He was a lifelong resident of Marion.

James served as a volunteer on the Marion City Fire Department beginning in 1961 at the age of 19 and continued his service for many years. He also served as treasurer of the Marion Cemetery Association until May 2026. He worked as a machinist for over 45 years and was a proud member of the Machinist Union Local #1720.



He was most proud of his service to his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ at the Marion Church of God. Dedicated to his family, his favorite word was “papaw.”

Surviving are his wife of 43 years, Marlene Belt James; a son, Jonathan (Michelle) James; a stepson, Scott (Teresa) Kayse; three granddaughters, Katie Beth, Abigail and Caroline James; and two step-grandsons, Lance and Parker Kayse. Services were Saturday, June 27 at Myers Funeral Home. Burial was in Maplevue Cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be made to Gideons International with envelopes available at the funeral home.

Lynch

Daniel Wayne Lynch, 33, of Murray, formerly of Marion, died Friday, June 26, 2026 at his home.



He was born on January 19, 1993, in Dallas TX, to the late David Lynch and Lisa Nelson Lynch. He worked as the Breakdown Coordinator for Paschall Truck Lines, Inc. He was a man of deep faith and fierce patriotism, possessing a lifelong love for God and his country. Outside of his devotion to his values, Lynch found great joy in the simpler things in life. He was an avid enthusiast of firearms and knives, and he spent countless hours surrounded by music, especially when he had a guitar in his hands.

Surviving are his fiancé, Loria Spears; his mother, Lisa Lynch; two sisters, Taylor Lynch and Amanda Lynch; an aunt, Vanessa Coleman; and uncle, Buddy (Angela) Lynch.

He was preceded in death by his father, David Lynch.

Services were Wednesday, July 1 at Gilbert Funeral Home with in Deer Creek Cemetery.



Family flees blaze, loses rural home

STAFF REPORT

A family escaped without injury after a house fire early Sunday morning on Irma White Road in rural Crittenden County.

Firefighters were dispatched to the blaze around 2:30 a.m. and found the home of Brian and Danielle Tinsley fully involved. The residence was declared a total loss.

Homeowner Danielle Tinsley said she and her family awoke just in time to escape.

"Not what you want to wake up to at 2:30 in the morning," she wrote in a social media post. "I am so thankful my husband woke up and it made me wake up. We woke up just in time to get us, the kids and dogs out. Everything else we have lost."

The Tinsley family is accepting donations of clothing and other necessities as they begin rebuilding after the loss. Clothing sizes needed include:

Danielle: Medium shirts; medium and large pants; size 7½ shoes.

Brian: XL shirts; 36x32 pants; size 10½ shoes.

Jayleigh: Girls size 14/16 clothing; size 5 shoes.

Jackson: Boys size 10/12 shirts, size 14 jeans; size 5 shoes.

Jager: Boys size 10/12 shirts, size 14 jeans; size 4 shoes.

Jazmin: Girls size 5T-6T clothing; size 12 toddler shoes.

The family has also asked for continued prayers as they recover from the devastating loss.

Community Calendar

Call (270) 965-3191 to share your organization's meetings in this free, weekly community calendar.

Monday, July 6

- Line dancing begins at 9:30 a.m., at the Crittenden County Senior Center.
- WITS Workout will start at Noon at the Crittenden County Senior Center.
- Friends Forever will meet at the Extension Annex on Monday July 6th at 5:30pm.

Tuesday, July 7

- Lunch & Learn: Avoiding Scams and Financial Abuse will begin at noon at Rocket Arena located at 519 1/2 W. Gum St.
- Ag Hall of Fame nomination packets are due at the Crittenden County Extension Office.

NEW HOURS

Crittenden County Farm Bureau
is now open 7:30 a.m.–4 p.m., Monday-Friday

Brodi Sutton
Agency Manager
(270) 965-4624
Crittenden County Farm Bureau
109 Court St. · Marion, KY 42064



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Crittenden County Animal Clinic

SURGICAL PROCEDURES

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Dr. Elizabeth A. Maddux • Dr. Michelle Hughes
3841 US Hwy. 60 West, Marion, KY 42064
(270) 965-2257

DID YOU KNOW?

LOCAL NEWSPAPERS and newspaper websites are relied on more than any other media for information about public notices and local government.

- 59% Local newspapers/newspaper websites
- 32% Local tv/cable
- 26% Word of mouth/friends/relatives
- 25% Local radio
- 24% Government websites
- 15% City newsletters
- 11% Public bulletin boards
- 7% Non-government website
- 5% Other

Source: The Kentucky State Study 2023: Conducted by Coda Ventures, Base: Total adults, multiple results

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Crittenden Press

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Visit us online at gilbertfunerals.com
for information on obituaries, funeral arrangements, pre-need arrangements and background information about the funeral home.

HELP WANTED

The City of Salem, KY is accepting resumes for a full time Water/Wastewater Operator.

The applicant must have:

- High school diploma (or the equivalent of)
- Pass Water and Wastewater testing required by the State of KY
- Obtain a CDL License
- Pass a background check and drug screening.

Pay will be comparable to other water departments and will be based on experience.

There is a 60-day probationary period.

Benefit package for full-time employees includes:

- Call in pay • Health insurance for employee and family • Retirement • Vacation, Sick, Personal and Holidays Paid.

The City of Salem does not have applications. Resumes may be turned into Salem City Hall between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday thru Friday or mailed to:

City of Salem
ATTN: Resume
PO Box 234
Salem, KY 42078



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NOTICE

We will be closed, Saturday, July 4 in observance of Independence Day



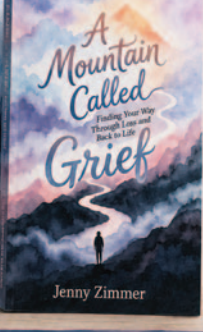
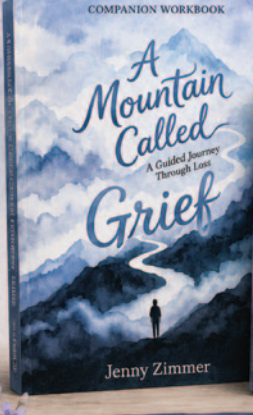
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Marion’s FY27 budget aims to invest in equipment

STAFF REPORT

Despite navigating two of the largest infrastructure challenges in the city’s recent history, Marion officials say the community is entering a new phase focused on rebuilding equipment, improving services and investing in long-term capital needs.

The Marion City Council recently approved the city’s fiscal year 2026-27 budget, which takes effect this week. The spending plan projects approximately \$7.2 million in revenues and \$8.15 million in expenditures. While the overall budget is noticeably smaller than the previous fiscal year’s plan, City Administrator Adam Ledford said that comparison is misleading because last year’s budget included millions of dollars tied to the completion of the city’s sewer rehabilitation project.

The city has been through a great deal over the past few years with the sewer project and then the water issues surrounding Lake George. Yet the city administrator said the town’s financial framework is on solid footing and it can now begin focusing on replacing equipment and making improvements that have been put off for years.

While the water situation has not been completely solved, plans are to eventually move toward buying water wholesale from Crittenden-Livingston Water District, which is building a new plant on the Cumberland River. When that



The City of Marion is preparing to rehabilitate and repaint its two clear well water storage tanks at the treatment plant, a project officials say will improve water quality while extending the life of the infrastructure. The \$443,000 project will include interior and exterior repairs and painting of the 200,000- and 110,000-gallon tanks, which have not been painted in more than two decades. Water Superintendent Jeff Black said the work will help eliminate accumulated iron and manganese deposits, allowing the tanks to “start fresh.” One tank will remain in service while the other is rehabilitated, with each phase expected to take seven to eight days.

happens, the city will mothball its owns water plant and rely solely on the two-county water supplier, which is spending more than \$50 million to increase capacity at its plant and improve the distribution system.

The city spent the past several years completing a major sewer system rehabilitation project while simultaneously confronting the water crisis after a leak was discovered in

the earthen dam at Lake George, Marion’s longtime water source. Those challenges required significant financial commitments and forced city leaders to concentrate resources on critical infrastructure.

With the sewer project complete and the city continuing to move forward with long-term plans to secure a more reliable water supply, Ledford said Marion is now in a position to

MARION CITY COUNCIL REPORT

address other needs that have accumulated over time.

One of the most visible priorities is upgrading the city’s aging fleet of equipment.

Ledford said Marion has gone years without owning a street sweeper. Likewise, equipment such as a leaf vacuum has been absent from the city’s inventory despite its usefulness in maintaining neighborhoods and storm drainage systems.

“We haven’t had some of this equipment for a long time,” Ledford said.

Such equipment, the city administrator said, helps the maintenance department do its jobs more efficiently and provide better services to residents.

“People will begin seeing some of those investments over the next few years,” Ledford said.

The city’s capital improvement plan reflects that renewed emphasis on replacing aging equipment and investing in municipal infrastructure. Among the planned purchases are a street sweeper, additional police vehicles, new firefighting equipment and self-contained breathing apparatus, park and trail improvements, and continued upgrades to the city’s water and sewer systems. Larger utility projects, include water line replacements and improvements to clearwells at the water plant. Those holding

tanks will be used now in support of the city’s water plant, but can also be used going forward when Marion switches over to Crittenden-Livingston Water District.

Those water projects are expected to rely heavily on grants and other outside funding rather than local tax dollars.

The operating budget also continues to prioritize public safety and essential city services. Funding is provided for police, fire, street maintenance, parks, planning and zoning, utility operations and tourism while maintaining debt obligations associated with previous infrastructure investments.

Ledford said city officials have worked to balance maintaining existing services while preparing for future needs.

Infrastructure isn’t something people see every day, Ledford said, but it’s critical to the community.

“Now we’re reaching the point where we can also begin replacing equipment,” he added.

While much of the city’s recent attention has focused on major infrastructure projects, Ledford said the newly adopted budget represents a transition from addressing urgent needs to planning strategically for the future. He said the city has weathered some significant challenges and now it’s time to invest in the future.

Ugandan missionary leaves mark on local churches

BY DAVID R. DRENNAN

THE CRITTENDEN PRESS

Pastor Ross Atwell and his wife Devon were preparing for just a regular Wednesday night business meeting recently at Freedom General Baptist Church when the unexpected happened. A missionary from Africa came to their church for Bible study.

“Once he learned that we would be having a quick business meeting, he decided he would leave and come back another time,” Devon Atwell recalled.

But the Atwells couldn’t just let him leave without knowing more about this seemingly random visitor.

It wasn’t just random. Atwell explained.

“Our church, Freedom General Baptist, had been discussing and praying about various missions and missionaries,” the pastor said.

Now there was a missionary literally at their door. They learned that his name was Samuel Kiguli, and that he was a pastor from Uganda. Though based in North Carolina, he had actually been to western Kentucky several times to speak at local churches about his faith and Light with Truth Ministries, an orphanage in Uganda.

“The entire congregation was in awe that everything unfolded as it did that night. We all kept saying it was a “God thing!” Atwell added.

That random meeting wouldn’t be the only time Kiguli spoke at Freedom. The Atwells have learned much more about Kiguli and the orphanage in Uganda.

“Through Light With Truth, he is able to spread the gospel near and far,” Atwell stated.

The Atwells are also excited about future opportunities with Kiguli.

“We don’t realize how blessed and

fortunate we really are and how only one person can make all the difference in someone’s life. By supporting Sam and his ministry, if even just one person accepts Jesus as their Lord and Savior, it was well worth it,” the pastor said.

Kiguli has also spoken at Emmanuel Baptist Church three times since coming to America.

“His spirit is contagious. Our congregation was encouraged and inspired by his presence and message,” said Emmanuel Baptist Pastor Kirk Greenfield.

Hearing from people like Kiguli is a great reminder of the Great Commission, Jesus’ instruction to take the gospel to all nations, the pastor said.

That Great Commission is something Kiguli takes seriously, as that is the reason why he is here. Since his arrival in America in 2017, he has preached in various states, including Kentucky, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, Ohio, and Alabama.

“Wherever the doors open...” Kiguli stated.

Kiguli will also tell you that living out the Great Commission also requires sacrifice. He hasn’t seen his family, including his wife and daughter, since he left Uganda in 2017. Despite missing his family and home, Kiguli keeps his focus on serving the Lord. He described it as “a calling, a command to go no matter what.”

“God is always there to take me through,” Kiguli added.

In addition to preaching the Gospel, Kiguli tells congregations he speaks to about the ongoing ministry in Uganda that he and his wife founded. Light with Truth Ministries serves 350 orphaned children by providing them clean water, food

and healthcare. The children attend classes as well as church.

“We assist families and reach people for Christ,” Kiguli explained.

Kiguli notes that being a Ugandan missionary in America has some distinct challenges.

“The challenge is to go where no one knows you, to get established and do what God is telling you to do,” he said.

Kiguli has worked to build trust with churches and leaders here, particularly emphasising that he is not just here after money. Kiguli explained,

“I am here to promote salvation and God’s grace. I go to many churches with different names, but I just preach Jesus,” he said.

As far as funding, Kiguli says many churches and associations have blessed him while he has served in the area. This included the Ohio River Baptist Association allowing him to stay at their office. These blessings have allowed him to continue his ministry both here and back home in Uganda.

“God is faithful. When you need money for food or gas, you have it. If you don’t have it, wait till tomorrow,” Kiguli said.

He considers every opportunity to share Christ with others – whether in Marion or anywhere else – a privilege.

“It is an opportunity I don’t want to lose. I do it with all my heart,” he said.

Kiguli also noted that his ministry here was an opportunity to say “thank you” in person as he recalled how American missionaries travelled to Uganda and shared their faith. That was how he became a Christian.

“The Bible changes lives,” he stated.



Missionary Samuel Kiguli and Freedom General Baptist Pastor Ross Atwell stand inside the church’s sanctuary.

Auditions open Monday for CAF’s outdoor play Macbeth in September

STAFF REPORT

Auditions for the Community Arts Foundation’s production of *Macbeth* will be held Monday, July 6 at Fohs Hall. According to the CAF, the classic Shakespearean tragedy has been abridged and adapted for younger audiences. Auditions are open to students in fourth through 12th grades.

The production marks the CAF directorial debut of Marion native Katie Keene, a Hollywood actress best known for her role as Galina in Netflix’s *Rogue Warfare* trilogy.

CAF officials Kim Vince and Braden Locke said the choice of *Macbeth* was intentional.

“It’s recognizable, has an interesting storyline and is seasonably appropriate,” Vince said, noting the play’s witches and ghosts make it a good fit for the fall season.

“We’ve been growing our youth program through musicals,” Vince said. “This gives local youth a different platform to showcase their on-stage talents.”

Students interested in participating can register and obtain audition materials at communityartsfoundation.org.

The production opens Sept. 19 and is free to the public. Performances will be held outdoors on Hayward Lawn, across from Fohs Hall at the site of the former hospital. The show serves as CAF’s pilot project for an annual outdoor production at that location.

POSTAL

Continued from page 1
ignore. Here we are asking people to use the mail to save the mail. Yet that may be exactly what is required.

The next time your newspaper shows up three days late, don’t just shrug and assume that’s the way things are now. It doesn’t have to be. Delayed service is not progress. It is not modernization. It is simply poor service.

Uncle Sam needs to hear from the people who are paying the postage and waiting by the mailbox.

For years, Washington has debated postal policy as though it were an accounting exercise. Out here, it is much more personal than that. It is prescriptions. Paychecks. Bills. Family letters. Legal notices. And yes, your hometown newspaper.

When those things fail to arrive on time, the problem isn’t ours alone.

It belongs to every American who still expects the simple promise made by the mailbox at the end of the driveway: put it in here, and it will get there.

That promise is worth fighting for.

Chris Evans, a newspaperman since 1979, has been editor of The Press for more than 30 years and is the author of South of the Mouth of Sandy, a true story about crime along the Tennessee River. You can find it on Amazon or wherever books are sold.

TOURISM

Continued from page 1
eral Museum in Marion.

Among neighboring counties, Caldwell County posted the region’s largest increase, with visitor spending rising 23.5% to \$14.03 million. The state’s figures came with no explanation for increases or decreases in each county.

Regional rankings for total visitor spending placed Lyon County first at \$31.18 million, followed by Livingston County at \$23.44 million, Caldwell County at \$14.03 million, Union County at \$5.72 million, Webster County at \$4.40 million and Crittenden County at \$4.26 million.

Within Crittenden County, transportation-related spending accounted for the largest share of visitor expenditures at \$1.36 million, followed by lodging at \$1.07 million. Retail purchases totaled \$900,000, while food and beverage spending reached \$750,000. Recreation spending was reported at \$180,000.

The figures come as Marion’s Tourism and Recreation Commission continues to invest in community events, heritage tourism and local attractions. The commission is funded through a 3% restaurant and lodging tax, and local officials have noted that tax collections have shown steady growth in recent years.

“Marion and Crittenden County offer unique visitor experiences,” said Michele Edwards, executive director of the Marion Tourism Commission. “With limited lodging availability our travelers are typically day users. They are visiting our Amish Community, the Marion-Crittenden County Park and attractions such as the Clement Mineral Museum and the Cave-In-Rock Ferry.”

Edwards said Marion Tourism and Recreation Commission’s newly approved budget for FY27 offers an opportunity to increase marketing for attractions, event funding and quality-of-life projects such as Community Arts Foundation, city-county park and city beautification.

“We plan to expand our downtown mural trail and possibly add a new Christmas event,” she said.

Statewide, tourism generated a record \$14.6 billion economic impact in 2025 and supported nearly 97,000 jobs. Gov. Andy Beshear said 81.1 million travelers visited Kentucky during the year, spending a total of \$10.4 billion across the state.

“Kentucky has the best experiences,” Gov. Andy Beshear said while announcing the report. “From climbing and hiking at the Red River Gorge, to witnessing the rare moonbow at Cumberland Falls State Resort Park.”



Tammy Doom and Chris Tilley, President of KAPT

Livingston’s Doom is Driver Trainer of Year

Livingston County Schools transportation employee Tammy Doom has been named the Kentucky Association for Pupil Transportation’s Driver Trainer of the Year.

The award is presented annually to recognize individuals who demonstrate exceptional leadership, professionalism and dedication to the training and development of school bus drivers. The honor highlights those who have made significant contributions to student transportation safety and excellence across Kentucky.

Doom has worked for Livingston County Schools for more than 22 years and serves as driver trainer for the district’s transportation department. During her tenure, she has been responsible for preparing and supporting school bus drivers, helping ensure they have the skills and knowledge necessary to safely transport students.

Livingston County Transportation Director Stacey Kirkham said Doom’s experience and commitment have made her a valuable resource for the district.

“Tammy has demonstrated a long-standing commitment to excellence in student transportation,” Kirkham said. “Her experience and knowledge make her an invaluable asset to our district, and she consistently uses that expertise to train and support drivers at the highest level.”

Known for her hands-on approach and supportive leadership style, Doom has helped strengthen the professionalism and preparedness of transportation staff throughout the district. School officials said she remains committed to staying current with safety standards, regulations and best practices in pupil transportation.

“Tammy leads with integrity, dedication, and a genuine passion for student safety,” Kirkham said. “Her work has made a lasting impact not only on our driv-



ers but also on the students and families we serve.”

Livingston County Superintendent Amy Ramage said the award reflects Doom’s dedication to students and her commitment to excellence.

“This honor is a reflection of Tammy’s unwavering commitment to our students and her dedication to excellence in everything she does,” Ramage said. “We are incredibly proud of her accomplishments and grateful for the positive impact she has had on our transportation department and our entire school community.”

Doom was recognized by the Kentucky Association for Pupil Transportation for her contributions to driver training and student transportation safety throughout her career.

Perryman on honors list at Mississippi U.

Katie Perryman of Marion has been named to the University of Mississippi’s Chancellor’s Honor Roll for the Spring 2026 semester.

Perryman, who is pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in Integrated Marketing Communications, earned the distinction by achieving a semester grade-point average between 3.75 and 4.0.

She was among students recognized by the university for outstanding academic achievement. To qualify for the Chancellor’s Honor Roll, students must complete at least 12 graded credit hours during the semester and cannot be on academic probation.

Also recognized was Ella Gough of Morganfield, who is pursuing a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in Entrepreneurship and also earned Chancellor’s Honor Roll recognition.

Chamber lunch event open to all; session is on scams and fraud

Crittenden County Chamber of Commerce will host a Lunch & Learn event entitled “Avoiding Scams & Financial Abuse.” It will be held at noon Tuesday, July 7.

The event is open to members and non-members. First United Bank is sponsoring the luncheon at Rocket Arena. This informative session is billed as a great opportunity to learn practical ways to protect yourself and your loved ones while connecting with fellow Chamber members.

The Chamber is also asking members to complete its annual member survey to help guide future programming, networking opportunities and educational events aimed at supporting local businesses. It can be found online at the Chamber website.

Dr. Maddux earns Fellow

Dr. Jonathan Maddux of Family Practice Clinic in Marion has been named a Fellow of the American Academy of Family Physicians (FAAFP), one of the organization’s highest professional distinctions.

The fellowship recognizes family physicians who have demonstrated excellence in patient care, lifelong learning, leadership and service to their communities while maintaining high professional standards.

In announcing the honor, Family Practice Clinic congratulated Maddux and thanked him for his dedication to the community and his patients.

Dr. Maddux practices at Family Practice Clinic, 518 W. Gum St., Marion.



Maddux

Fiscal Court signs out of budget year 25-26

Crittenden Fiscal Court completed several end-of-year administrative actions during a special called meeting Tuesday ahead of the start of the new fiscal year on July 1.

Magistrates approved second reading of a fiscal year 2025-26 budget amendment increasing appropriations by \$137,457, along with appropriation fund transfers.

The court also approved the second reading of amendments to the county’s administrative code, raising the formal bid threshold for procurements from \$20,000 to \$50,000. The administrative code requires three price quotes for purchases between \$5,000 and \$50,000.

In other action, the court approved claims since the previous meeting, end-of-year financial settlements and the property tax settlements.



Throwback Thursday From 1976

Does anyone remember when, at 1 p.m. on July 4, 1976, 14-year-old Gregory Joe Crider rang the Presbyterian Church bell 200 times to celebrate America’s Bicentennial? That same bell is now on display at the Crittenden County Historical Museum in Marion. When Crider rang the bell during the Bicentennial celebration, it had been placed on a wagon and brought to the courthouse lawn for the ceremonial ringing.

50 YEARS AGO

July 1, 1976

■ Crittenden County 4-H Senior English Horse Judging Team earned second place at the State 4-H Horse Judging Contest in Lexington. Donna Kirk received seventh-place High Point Individual honors. Team members were David Hodges, Donna Kirk, Donna Robinson and Wade Buntin. Kenneth Kirk served as coach.

■ The county’s Junior English Horse Judging Team placed third in the state competition in Lexington. Team members were Kevin Heady, Shannon Todd, Perry Brookshire and Curt Buntin. Coaches were Kenneth Kirk and Sue Buntin. Kevin Heady also earned third-place High Point Individual honors.

■ Eulis Phelps landed a 31 1/4-pound blue channel catfish from the Ohio River below Dam 50. The giant fish was caught on a worm using a No. 6 bluegill hook with 14-pound-test line.

25 YEARS AGO

June 15, 2001

■ Marion Una Pizza received the Crittenden County Chamber of Commerce’s First Dollar Award. Owner Wade Steward accepted the ceremonial dollar from Chamber Executive Director Jeanne Hodge.

■ Youth baseball players from Marion and Sturgis formed a travel team known as the Ohio River Pirates. Team members included Dustin Fox, Josh Ipock, Marcus George, Kyle Newcom, Darrian Smith, Tyler Cullen, Dakota Fletcher, Travis Conway, Zach Cosby and Dax McBride. Coaches were Troy Conway and Donnie Newcom.

■ The team of Jason Guess, John Tyner, Brad Guess and Ryan Perry captured the Paul E. Mick Memorial Golf Tournament championship with a 17-under-par score in the 18-hole event.

10 YEARS AGO

June 23, 2016

■ Crittenden County Elementary School teacher Tiffany DeBoe received the Crittenden County School District’s ROCKET WAY Teamwork Award for her work as a classroom teacher and curriculum and instructional coach.

■ Audrey Croft and Carly Travis of the BRD Junior Dance Troupe competed at Talent on Parade in Nashville and Showstoppers in St. Charles, Missouri. Their troupe earned Diamond and Platinum awards at the St. Charles competition.

■ The following Marion students were named to the spring Dean’s List at MSU: Kaci Beard, Melia Capello, Taylor Fritts, Casey Hamby, Robert Knox, Jenna Lynn, Jeremiah Markham, Cody Pinson, Samantha Quisenberry, Emily Shewcraft and Sabrina Stokes.

FERRY

Continued from page 1 account for sharply increasing operating costs.

In a letter addressed to Crittenden County Judge Newcom and members of the Ohio River Ferry Authority, the ferry operator said the original proposed agreement provided no increase in funding over the amount approved two years ago despite significant increases in expenses.

A subsequent proposal that increased

funding by about 10% also was declined.

KYTC said the ferry operator requested a 47% increase in funding without proposing additional services. The cabinet also noted state reimbursements for the ferry have more than doubled since 2018, increasing from about \$804,000 to \$1.878 million annually during the past two fiscal years. The agency added that Kentucky’s other state-supported ferries have experienced much smaller increases in operating costs and that

some also charge tolls in addition to receiving state subsidies.

The idea of charging a toll has been discussed, but no serious negotiations on that front have materialized, largely because an acceptable administrative mechanism for collecting it has not been identified.

The current state-funded agreement expired Tuesday, June 30. The Ohio River Ferry Authority, created by the Crittenden County Fiscal Court, oversees management of the ferry, which is privately

owned and funded equally by Kentucky and Illinois.

Lewis has operated the Cave-In-Rock Ferry since purchasing it in 1994. The ferry provides a free crossing between Crittenden County and Hardin County, Illinois, carrying more than 200,000 vehicles each year.

Newcom said negotiations will continue, and he is hopeful the impasse can be resolved within the next few days, allowing ferry service to resume.

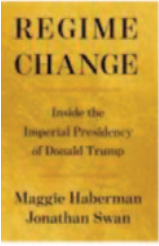
Crittenden County Public Library

Crittenden County Public Library is giving area readers plenty of reasons to pick up a new book this summer, with dozens of recently added digital titles ranging from bestselling fiction and children’s favorites to self-help, history and cookbooks.

Political nonfiction leads this week’s list of new library arrivals with the release of Regime Change by veteran reporters Maggie Haberman and Jonathan Swan. The book offers an inside look at President Donald Trump’s second administration and examines how the White House has changed since his first term, drawing on extensive reporting and access to key figures.

Among the week’s notable fiction releases is Whistler, a new novel from bestselling author Ann Patchett that explores family, memory and unexpected reunions after a chance encounter at a museum. Thriller fans may want to check out The Divorce, which follows a woman whose seemingly perfect life unravels after a bitter split, and Ironwood, featuring a detective on Catalina Island confronting a growing threat to his community.

Other new arrivals include We the Women: The



Hidden Heroes Who Shaped America, which highlights overlooked women who helped shape the nation’s history, and The U.S. Constitution: A Comprehensive and Annotated Guide for the Modern Reader, an accessible guide to understanding the Constitution and its relevance today. Readers can contact the library for availability and borrowing information.

The Crittenden Press

USPS 138-260

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Revisiting Crittenden’s first Farmers of the Year

Let’s revisit some past Farmers of the Year, the first from 41 years ago – 1985. The Crittenden County Chamber of Commerce’s fourth annual Farm Festival would be presenting awards to Robert Lee White of the Tolu community and Reed James of Piney. White is being recognized by the Chamber as a livestock producer and James as a grain farmer.

The Chamber sponsored the festival each year to give recognition to the role farming plays in the economy of Crittenden County. From the archives of The Crittenden Press, Sept. 12, 1985.

White is Top Stock Producer

Between the land he owns and what he rents or leases, Robert Lee White of the Tolu community farms between 1,100 and 1,200 acres. And that effort involves a hog and cow/calf operation.

White, 68, and his wife, Ada, a retired school teacher, are to be honored Saturday by the Crittenden County Chamber of Commerce in ceremonies at the courthouse as one of the county’s top livestock producers.

White normally markets about 600 or so acres of grain he raises each year, with the assistance of three full-time employees, for the livestock operation.

Of the several facets of his farming, White remains most partial to the hogs.

“Hogs have been better to me over the years than cattle,” he acknowledged, “although both have made some money at times.”

White’s hogs are for market – not show. They’re just hogs,” he said. While he keeps registered boars, he has experimented over the years with several varieties, and at present has both Yorkshires and Hampshires. And he laments the fact that he recently didn’t buy a “good looking Chester White.”

White said he strives to produce a good bacon-type, marketable hog from his 345 sows. He farrows 15 at a time in a continuous operation that has given him about 500 head of hogs on the farm at all times. He averages about eight pigs per litter.

His is a start-to-finish operation with hogs fed

out to about 220 pounds. Most are sold, he said, at the Heinold market at Marion.

Although he at one time fed out his calves to fat weight, he no longer does. “I can’t compete with those feed lots out West,” he explained, “but I can sell them about a 600-700 pound started calf.”

White says it takes him a year to 14 months to produce finished calf. His cows calve in March or April, and except for what replacement heifers he keeps, he sells the others the next spring.

With the more frequent pig litters, a farmer can achieve an adequate cash flow, but calves are slower, he noted.

White maintains two herds, plus about 40 replacement heifers. His “good herd” is about 60 polled Herefords. The other is about 70 Angus-Hereferd crossbreds. For breeding stock, he

uses mainly registered polled Hereford bulls.

To feed the stock, White raises about 250 acres of corn a year, of which only a little is sold to market. About 35 acres is usually harvested for silage for cattle feed. He also grows about 100 acres of wheat and 250 acres of soybeans.

While much of White’s crop is grown on Ohio River bottom land, suitable only for continuous row-cropping, on the hill ground he utilizes a rotational program of corn, wheat, soybeans, wheat followed by hay for two or three years. For his hay, White prefers a fescue-clover mix.

Robert Lee White passed away at 101 years of age on Feb. 18, 2019 and is buried in Mapleview Cemetery.

James is Crop Producer

With assistance from his son, Ricky, and his wife, Mary C. “Dolly,” Reed James for the past several yeas has been raising between 850 and 1,000 acres of grain. Most of it is usually within a five-mile radius of his Piney Road home.

This year, the Jameses have about 1,070 acres of crops, including about 125 acres in Livingston County. That is divided between about 400 acres of corn and 350 acres of grain sorghum with the remainder in soybeans.

James said he usually



Robert Lee White became Top Stock Producer for the year 1985. He is pictured with his wife, Ada, on their farm near Tolu.



Reed James became Top Crop Producer for the year 1985. He is pictured with his wife, Dolly, on their farm on Piney Road.

raises about 150 acres of popcorn but has none this year because he, along with other Kentucky farmers, could not get a contract from the Illinois based company he usually grows for. The company cut contracts because of carry-over stock from last year, he explained.

James had an average yield of about 110 bushels per acre last year on his

regular corn, but because of this year’s increased rainfall during the growing season, is expecting to average between 125 and 130 bushels this year. He normally averages about 30 bushels per acres on soybean crops.

“We all think we’re wearing out this Crittenden County ground cropping it,” James said, “but 15 years ago if we got 75 to 80 bushels per acres,

we thought we were doing good. Now everybody wants 110 to 120.”

James, who owns an elevator complex on the Princeton Road with a 45,000 bushel storage capacity, probably has the most on-farm storage of any farmer Crittenden County.

He stores only corn and milo, though, because of the difficulty of handling soybeans in bins. Those he combines and stores at area elevators. That storage capacity enables him to get crops out of the field at the proper time in the fall and to sometimes hold past harvest for the normally higher winter market prices.

James said he makes efforts to protect the ground on land he rents and leases. He usually rotates crops on an annual basis and tries to get waterways seeded with wheat in the fall.

Additionally, he no-tills some of his crops. No-tilling, he said, helps to hold the soil, but he feels he gets better yields from conventionally tilled fields because they have a better plant population.

“Of course, it doesn’t matter how old you get or how long you’ve been farming, you learn something every year,” he said.

Over the years, James had experimented with most varieties of soybeans but has pretty well settled of Essex because of the higher yields it offers.

Like many bean farmers, James says he’s not able to produce the high yields he got a few years ago. He attributes most of that reduction in yield to increases of vegetation

problems in the fields, especially from Johnson-grass.

James expects to see improvements again, though, in a few years because of new herbicides which allow farmers to kill the grass in bean fields.

“Johnson-grass is a problem all over Crittenden County,” he said. “We’re going to be fighting it from now on. We just may as well get used to it.” With the newer chemicals, he predicted that if all farmers worked together, the Johnson-grass could be controlled.

With grain predicted to be so cheap this fall, he said probably a lot of it, including some of his, will be going into government commodity loan programs.

James uses his 167-acre farm for hay and pasture for the dairy cattle and raises the grain on leased land.

James, who has been farming all of his life, sees no bright future for grain farmers because of increasing production cost and lower prices for the crops. The way the trend is going, there won’t be many grain farmers left in Crittenden County three years from now.

Reed James passed away at 90 years of age on May 28, 2020 and is buried in the Piney Fork Cemetery.

(Brenda Underdown is chair of Crittenden County Historical Society and a member of Crittenden County Genealogical Society. Much more local history can be found at OurForgottenPassages.blogspot.com).



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247 Guess Dr. - \$249,000

4 BR, 2 Bath

102 Leland Ct. - \$99,000

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599 Levias Rd. - \$249,000

3 BR, 1 Bath

331 Lily Dale Rd. - \$244,000

4 BR, 2 Bath

314 Poplar St. - \$79,000

3 BR, 2 Bath

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BUDGET ORDINANCE SUMMARY			
ORDINANCE 26-006			
AN ORDINANCE RELATING TO THE ANNUAL BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS.			
Be it ordained by the Crittenden County Fiscal Court of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:			
WHEREAS, the proposed budget was tentatively approved by the fiscal court on the 28 th day of May, 2026 and approved as to form and classification by the State Local Finance Officer on the 3 rd day of June, 2026.			
SECTION ONE:			
The following budget is adopted for the Fiscal Year 2026 – 2027 and the amounts stated are appropriated for the purposes indicated:			
01 – GENERAL FUND			
5000	GENERAL GOVERNMENT		1,333,262.00
5100	PROTECTION TO PERSONS AND PROPERTY		847,150.00
5200	GENERAL HEALTH AND SANITATION		330,525.00
5300	SOCIAL SERVICES		32,910.00
5400	RECREATION AND CULTURE		2,150.00
7000	DEBT SERVICE		131,934.00
9000	ADMINISTRATION		565,896.00
	TOTAL 01 – GENERAL FUND		3,243,827.00
02 – ROAD FUND			
6000	TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES AND SERVICES		19,350.00
6100	ROADS		3,084,050.00
6400	OTHER TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES AND SERVICES		1,878,060.00
7000	DEBT SERVICE		480,770.00
9000	ADMINISTRATION		461,900.00
	TOTAL 02 – ROAD FUND		5,924,130.00
03 – JAIL FUND			
5100	PROTECTION TO PERSONS AND PROPERTY		2,420,175.00
7000	DEBT SERVICE		482,924.00
9000	ADMINISTRATION		629,485.00
	TOTAL 03 – JAIL FUND		3,532,584.00
04 – LGEA FUND			
5000	GENERAL GOVERNMENT		4,700.00
9000	ADMINISTRATION		100.00
	TOTAL 04 – LGEA		4,800.00
14 – PARKS AND RECREATION FUND			
5200	GENERAL HEALTH AND SANITATION		800.00
5400	RECREATION AND CULTURE		20,950.00
9000	ADMINISTRATION		750.00
	TOTAL 14 – PARKS AND RECREATION FUND		22,500.00
31 – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND			
5000	GENERAL GOVERNMENT		125,000.00
	TOTAL 31 – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND		125,000.00
74 – OPIOID SETTLEMENT FUND			
5000	GENERAL GOVERNMENT		23,000.00
5100	PROTECTION TO PERSONS AND PROPERTY		35,000.00
9000	ADMINISTRATION		179,000.00
	TOTAL 74 – OPIOID SETTLEMENT FUND		237,000.00
75 – MCC911 FUND			
5100	PROTECTION TO PERSONS AND PROPERTY		373,600.00
9000	ADMINISTRATION		75,900.00
	TOTAL 75-MCC911 FUND		449,500.00
78 – ASAP BOARD FISCAL AGENT FUND			
5100	PROTECTION TO PERSONS AND PROPERTY		40,000.00
	TOTAL 78 – ASAP BOARD FISCAL AGENT FUND		40,000.00
80 – SB 135 STORAGE FEES FUND			
5000	GENERAL GOVERNMENT		18,075.00
	TOTAL 80 – SB 135 STORAGE FEES FUND		18,075.00
82 – CHILD SUPPORT FUND			
5000	GENERAL GOVERNMENT		184,000.00
	TOTAL 82 – CHILD SUPPORT FUND		184,000.00
Adopted by the Crittenden County Fiscal Court on this 18 th day of June, 2026.			
 County Judge/Executive			
NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY			
All interested persons and organizations in the County are hereby notified that a copy of the County’s adopted budget in full is available for public inspection at the office of the County Judge/Executive during normal business hours.			

Classifieds The Crittenden Press

The Press Online
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All phone numbers listed for ads on this page are within the 270 area code unless otherwise noted.

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NEW! Crittenden County, KY – 5 Acres - \$299,900
Well-kept Marion, Kentucky home on 5 acres featuring an unfinished basement, 2-car garage, open layout, pool, covered deck, fireplace, and beautiful country views.

NEW! Livingston County, KY – 168.0144 - \$850,000
This 168+/- acre tract features 120+/- acres of tillable ground with strong soils, Tennessee River frontage, and a wooded portion with a slough, supporting waterfowl, deer, and turkey hunting.

REDUCED! Crittenden County, KY – 0.31 Acre - \$284,000
Brick 3-bedroom, 2-bath home in Marion, Kentucky with attached 2-car garage, formal living and dining rooms, kitchen island, utility room, and large detached shop. Utilities onsite.

REDUCED! Crittenden County, KY – 5.10 Acres - \$274,900
This 3BR/2BA country home with finished basement, shop, timber, open ground, and hunting sits on 5.10+/- acres.

REDUCED! Livingston County, KY – 53 Acres - \$450,000
Quiet country living with this updated 4BR home on 53 acres of hardwood timber, brushy fields, and a small creek. The property adjoins a 367-acre protected nature preserve for added privacy and views.

Crittenden County, KY – 20.50 Acres - \$100,450
This 20.5+/- acre tract in Crittenden County, Kentucky offers diverse timber, food plot potential, established trails, and excellent deer and turkey hunting habitat with build site opportunities.

Crittenden County, KY – 30.91 Acres - \$151,459
This 30.91+/- acres in Crittenden County, Kentucky offers prime deer and turkey hunting with food plot potential, diverse timber, trail system, and build site opportunities.

Crittenden County, KY – 70 Acres - \$244,900
Located less than a mile from the Ohio River, this exceptional hunting property offers a diverse blend of habitat types, making it ideal for deer, turkey, and waterfowl hunting.

Livingston County, KY – 147.7043 Acres - \$565,000
This exceptional hunting tract serves as a main travel hub for wildlife, featuring an extensive creek network that enhances its habitat diversity. Features an established trail system throughout!

Livingston County, KY – 77 Acres - \$252,175
Livingston County, KY – 88 Acres - \$288,200
Livingston County, KY – 102 Acres - \$334,050
REDUCED! Livingston County, KY – 105 Acres – \$309,750
REDUCED! Livingston County, KY – 129 Acres - \$380,550
Livingston County, KY – 139 Acres - \$472,600
Livingston County, KY – 159 Acres - \$520,725
Livingston County, KY – 161 Acres - \$547,400
Livingston County, KY – 353 Acres - \$1,129,600
Livingston County, KY – 718 Acres - \$2,243,750
Livingston County, KY - 989 Acres - \$3,016,450

These tracts are part of a trophy-managed hunting community designed for like-minded hunters dedicated to growing and hunting mature deer.

PENDING! Crittenden County, KY – 16.41 Acres
This 16.41+/- acres near Marion features a 3 bed/2 bath, 1,760 sq. ft. home with new metal roof, open concept, stainless steel appliances, partial covered deck, 3-car garage, two ponds, and pasture and woods mix.

PENDING! Crittenden County, KY – 1,600 Acres
With various landscapes, fantastic habitat variations, proven history, and various improvements, this is your chance at a once in a lifetime opportunity!

PENDING! Crittenden County, KY – 880.38 Acres
This diverse property features a beautiful lodge, marketable timber, fields, food plots, and an extensive trail system; this property is a great investment and ideal for both commercial and private use.

SOLD! Crittenden County, KY – 12.42 Acres
This 12.42+/- acre tract features a brick 3 bed/2 bath one-level home with stainless steel appliances, island kitchen, covered porch and back patio. Also includes a barn, fenced pasture, workshop, and mixed use opportunities.

SOLD! Crittenden County, KY – 108.82 Acres
This 108.82+/- acre all-timber hunting tract includes a cabin, food plots, blinds, trail system, rock-bottom creek, and proven big buck history.

SOLD! Crittenden County, KY – 149.90 Acres
This 149+/- acre tract in Crittenden County, Kentucky offers a diverse blend of open ground, timber, and live water, creating an ideal layout for both deer and turkey hunting. Includes build-site potential!

SOLD! Crittenden County, KY – 300.15 Acres
Turn-key 300.15+/- acre hunting property with a fully furnished custom log cabin, stocked lake, creek frontage, established food plots, wetlands, and premier deer, turkey, and waterfowl habitat.



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Can we rescue “happiness”?

According to Ipsos, 73% of Americans who were asked, “Taking all things together, would you say you are very happy, rather happy, not very happy, or not happy at all?”, answered they were happy or very happy. Our founding fathers would find this a ridiculous question. I am not certain they would even understand what was being asked.



Sean NIESTRATH
Faith-based columnist
Guest Columnist

According to the latest Gallup “world happiness report”, the United States ranks 23rd in world happiness. It is based on the question, “Imagine a ladder from 0 (worst possible life) to 10 (best possible life). On which step do you personally feel you stand?” These surveys bring out great admiration for the Nordic nations – which consistently land in the top ten. Aristotle would have no idea what that question was asking. Those words, “personally feel you stand” in relation to “happiness” would not make any sense at all.

The signatories of the Declaration of Independence, too, would have had something very different in mind when they read, “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” Sometime between then and now the powerful social contract of “pursuing happiness” lost is ethical and commu-

nal force. It has become a subjective feeling, disconnected from morality. It is possible to answer the question, “Are you happy?” in the affirmative and be a wretched human being.

This matters. When we think of the Declaration of Independence and the pursuit of happiness and layer onto it our current understanding, we will end up with populist politicians who want to help us be happy. We will begin to

see rights as means to our happiness and might even become polarized in our thinking. We will see those that stand in the way of our happiness as not just political opponents, but rather bigoted hatemongers. I hope that never happens...oh, never mind.

The signers of the Declaration and those that ratified the Constitution and Bill of Rights were steeped in Ancient Greco-Roman philosophy and the Enlightenment. If we are to rescue the idea of “happiness”, starting with what the ancients meant is helpful.

In Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle teaches that “happiness” is virtuous pursuit over one’s whole life, “...Human good turns out to be activity of soul in accordance with virtue, and if there are more than

one virtue, in accordance with the best and most complete. But we must add ‘in a complete life.’ For one swallow does not make a summer, nor does one day; and so, too, one day, or a short time, does not make a man blessed and happy.” I.7 (trans. W.D. Ross).

Cicero lines up well with “pursuit of happiness” as a communal (national) pursuit that supersedes individual pursuits. This means seeking a society that frees us as much as possible from fears, anxieties, pains, and diseases. This is a project, not a state of being or a passing feeling.

“For he who is subject to the greatest anxieties and fears cannot be happy; nor he who is tormented by pains and diseases; nor he who is in want of the necessities of life, or dependent on the bounty of others. But when a man is free from these evils, and is furnished with the greatest and most numerous advantages, then he is in that condition which we call happy.” —Cicero, On the Ends of Good and Evil, (trans. H. Rackham).

In 1725, Francis Hutcheson wrote, “In comparing the moral qualities of actions, in order to regulate our election among various actions, we are led by our moral sense of virtue to judge that that action is best, which procures the greatest happiness for the greatest numbers; and that the worst, which, in like manner, occasions misery.” An Inquiry into the Original of

Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue, Treatise II, sect. III.

These ideas remind us that happiness was not a detached personal pursuit. It is true that individuals pursued happiness, but it was not to be gained at the expense of society – and ideally not of others.

We have veered from this thinking and turned the feeling of happiness into a marker of a successful life. There is some good advice given that indicates our happiness is not found in pursuing it for its own sake, but rather through service and kindness toward others. But this still misses the mark of our founders because, at its root, it is still self-serving. Our founding fathers desired a society where people can build a life of relative security and enough wealth not to be concerned with the necessities of life.

Jeremiah 29:7 tells the people in exile, “Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you... for in its welfare you will find your welfare.” Proverbs 11:10-11 says, “When the righteous prosper, the city rejoices... By the blessing of the upright a city is exalted.”

When we begin to look not only to our own “happiness” but also the “happiness” of others we will be a little closer to the “pursuit of happiness” again.

Dr. Sean Niestrath is a minister in Madisonville, Ky. He holds a doctoral degree in ministry. You may contact him at sean.niestrath@outlook.com.

Let God’s love flow through your life

Question: I’m new in church. I’m surprised about the amount of gossiping, lying, and betrayal among church people. It seems like people outside the church do a better job of showing love than Christians do. Why aren’t people in the church more loving?

Answer: Your observation of negative talk and actions is spot on. There’s far too much contention among church people. When we cause hurt feelings, it is not Christlike. The devil is pleased when Christians

ASK the PASTOR
By Bob Hardison

harm one another. All contention in the church is a negative witness for Christ in the community.

God’s Word tells us, “Love one another, because God is love” (1 Jn. 4:7). God’s very nature is love. When we express genuine love to others, we are exhibiting God’s nature.

God not only gives His

children His nature of love, He gave them His Son, Jesus, to live out His love through them. His Word explicitly affirms this truth, “God sent his one and only Son into the world so that we might live through him” (1 Jn. 4:9). If you are having a hard time loving someone, remember you live through Christ. Ask Jesus, who lives in you, to help you love that person. You have the capacity to love that person because it is Christ in you doing the loving.

Every Christian needs

to become more loving to everyone and particularly to one’s Christian brothers and sisters in the church. Strive to be a growing Christian who is becoming more like God and to exhibit His nature of love every day. It may be a slow process, but the very fact that He hasn’t given up on us and that we are becoming more loving, more patient, and more kind as we learn from Him is proof of His unconditional love for us.

Send your questions to: bob@bobhardison.com

Religious Outreach

■ Suicidal thoughts? Stop! Email dbrantpc@tds.net and request a video link that hopefully will change your mind.

■ Salem Baptist Celebrate Recovery meets Monday’s 5:30 p.m. with a meal at 6 p.m., at 209 Highland Street, opposite side of the building from the Thrift Store.

■ A blessing box containing non-perishable food and household goods is located on the Bellville Street entrance of Marion United Methodist Church.

■ Old Salem Baptist Church has a Blessing Box located next to the church at 117 Old Salem Church Rd. Everyone is welcome to take items or place them in the box for others to enjoy.

■ First Baptist Church of Fredonia food pantry is open from 4-5:30 p.m., third Wednesday of each month in Coleman Hall of the church.

■ Cave Springs Baptist Church between Lola and Joy in Livingston County offers food 24 hours a day, 7 days week at its outdoor Blessing Box in front of the church.

■ Salem Baptist Church Thrift Store is open 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Tuesday and Saturday at 209 Highland St., Salem.

■ The Clothes Closet of the First Baptist Church in Fredonia is open to serve the area with free clothes. The Clothes Closet is operated from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. each Thursday. The Clothes Closet will be closed in case of severe weather.

■ Fredonia Unity Baptist Church’s clothes closet is open from 9 a.m. to noon on the second and fourth Saturday of every month.

■ The clothes closet at Mexico Baptist Church is open from 9 to 11:30 a.m. each Monday.

Western Kentucky Regional Blood Center
BLOOD DRIVE ON THE BLOODMOBILE MONDAY, JULY 6 NOON-6 P.M. @ CRITTENDEN COMMUNITY HOSPITAL 520 GUM ST. MARION KY
2 BLOOD DRIVES ON THE BLOODMOBILE MONDAY, JULY 20 2-4 P.M. @ KENERGY IN MARION, KY
5-8 P.M. @ BYLER'S CABINET SHOP IN MARION, KY

Marion Baptist Church WELCOME FAMILY LIFE CENTER
Open to the Public
9am to 3pm
Monday thru Friday
Walking Track Gymnasium

Use QR Code to Search Kentucky Public Notices or go to kypublicnotice.com

WORSHIP

with us this week

Visit one of our area churches for worship and fellowship

EMMAUS BAPTIST CHURCH

315 Emmaus Church Rd., Salem, Ky.
Rodney Phelps, Pastor
(270) 704-2400
emmausbaptistsalem@outlook.com
Follow us on Facebook

St. William Catholic Church

Sunday Mass 11 a.m.
Father Jojy Joseph
860 S. Main St. Marion, Ky.
(270) 965-2477

Mexico Baptist Church

Ken Cummins, Interim Pastor
Mike Crabtree, Minister of Music
Sunday Worship Services: 10 a.m., 7 p.m.
Sunday Bible Study: 9 a.m.
Sunday Discipleship Training: 6 p.m.
Wednesday Worship Service: 7 p.m.
175 Mexico Rd. (270) 965-4059
MexicoBaptist.org

DEER CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

Sunday Bible Study: 10 a.m.
Sunday Worship: 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study: 7 p.m.
Approx. 5 miles from the intersection of Hwy. 60 & Hwy. 297
Phone: (270) 965-2220
"Whatever It Takes"
Bro. Jamie Baker

Emmanuel Baptist Church

108 Hillcrest Dr., Marion | (270) 965-4623
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.
Sunday Worship: 10:45 a.m., 6 p.m.
Wednesday Adult Bible Study, Children and Youth Activities: 6 p.m.
Captured by a vision...

Tolu Methodist Church

Pastor: David Brown
We invite you to be our guest
Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.

Barnett Chapel General Baptist

Sunday School: 10 a.m.
Sunday Worship: 11 a.m.
Sunday Night Service: 6 p.m.
Barnett Chapel Rd., Marion, Ky.
Barnett Chapel... where everyone is welcome.

Freedom General Baptist Church

87 Freedom Church Rd., Marion (about 1 mi. from Marion off Ky. 91)
CHURCH TIMES:
Sunday School 10 a.m. Sunday Evening 6 p.m.
Sunday Worship 11 a.m. Wed. Bible Study 6 p.m.
Pastor: Ross Atwell

Marion Baptist Church

College & Depot streets, Marion • (270) 965-5232
Pastor: Bro. Aaron Brown • Children's & Youth Pastor: Bro. Shawn Holeman
SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES: 9 a.m. & 11 a.m., ONLINE 11 a.m., SUNDAY SCHOOL: 10:05 a.m.
WEDNESDAY: BIBLE STUDY/PRAYER 6 p.m., AWANA FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH GROUPS 6 p.m.
CHOIR PRACTICE: 6:45 p.m., PRAISE TEAM: 7:30 p.m.

Crooked Creek Baptist Church

261 Crooked Creek Church Rd., P.O. Box 442, Marion, Ky. • (270) 704-0914
Sunday School: 10 a.m.
Sunday Worship: 11 a.m.
Pastor, Hank Cayce
"Come and Worship with Us"

Crayne Community Church

Crayne Cemetery Road, Crayne, Ky.
Bro. James Driver, Interim Pastor
Sunday Worship 9 a.m.

FIRST CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

224 W. Bellville St., Marion, Ky.
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Sunday Worship 10:45 a.m.
David LeNeave, Pastor

PLEASANT GROVE General Baptist Church

growing in grace 2 Peter 3:18
Located on Ky. 723, 4 miles north of Salem
Sunday School 10 a.m. | Sunday Worship 11 a.m., 6 p.m. | Wed. 7 p.m.

Marion Church of God

334 Fords Ferry Road, Marion, Ky.
Morning Service 11 a.m.
Sun. Evening 6 p.m. • Wed. Evening 6 p.m.
"Where salvation makes you a member."

Marion General Baptist Church
341 West Bellville St., Marion, KY
Sunday School 10 a.m.
Worship Service 11 a.m.
Evening Service 6 p.m.
Wednesday Evening 6 p.m.
Pastor: Bro. Wesley Lynn
Come Worship With Us!

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CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
A new beginning, going forward and looking to the future
Ky. 506 | Marion, Ky.
SUNDAY School 10 a.m. Worship 11 a.m. Bible study 6 p.m.

Sugar Grove
Cumberland Presbyterian
585 Sugar Grove Church Rd., Marion, Ky.
Sun. School: 10 a.m. | Sun. Worship: 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.

Marion Methodist Church
We love intensely, believe deeply, and pray zealously
SUN: Sun. School 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:45 p.m.
South College St.

Frances Community Church
Bro. Butch Gray, Missionary Discipler
Worship service:..... 11 a.m.
Children's Church ages 3 & up ... 11 a.m.
"The little church with a big heart"

Hurricane Church
Hurricane Church Rd. off Ky. 135 West
Pastor: Bro. Danny Hinchee
Sun. School, 10 am. • Worship, 11 a.m.
Sun. Evening services, 6 p.m.
Wed. Evening services, 7 p.m.

Unity General Baptist Church
4691 Mott City Rd. • Marion, Ky.
Bro. David Perryman, Pastor
Sunday School 10 a.m.
Sunday Worship 11 a.m.

Marion Church of Christ
546 West Elm Street • (270) 965-9450
Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.
- The end of your search for a friendly church -

Routine end-of-year business conducted by board

BY DAVID R. DRENNAN
FOR THE CRITTENDEN PRESS

The Crittenden County Board of Education met Thursday, June 25 at the Rocket Arena Conference Room after its regularly scheduled June 16 meeting was postponed. Board members approved a lengthy list of action items to close out the current fiscal year and prepare for the new fiscal year that begins July 1.

The board recognized recent Crittenden County High School graduate Madison Walker for her election as the 2026-27 Kentucky FFA Pennyrile State vice president.

"I am very blessed, and it is a pleasure to serve the agriculture community as well as the schools in my district," Walker told the board. She also thanked those who had supported her along the way.

Board member Ryan McDaniel praised Walker, saying, "We could not have a better ambassador for Crittenden County." CCHS Principal Josh Cook, agriculture teacher Marlee Lanham and Board Chairman Chris Cook also congratulated Walker on the achievement.

Director of Public Relations Tiffany Blazina gave the board a preview of the district's upcoming presentation at the National Model Schools

CRITTENDEN COUNTY Board of Education

Conference in Orlando, Fla., next week.

"The district was selected as one of eight districts nationwide to present as a model school district," Blazina said.

The presentation will highlight the district's emphasis on building strong student relationships and community partnerships while showcasing recent positive data from the high school.

"When you get the culture right, things start happening," Blazina said.

Joining Blazina at the conference will be district leaders Diana Lusby, Josh Cook, Laura Kinder, Laurie Holcomb and Stephanie Hargrove.

Superintendent Tonya Driver reported on personnel changes and recent accomplishments. She also announced the district received \$2,800 through Ideal Market's "Spirit Pump" program, which donates 1 cent from every gallon of fuel sold at the designated pump to district athletics.

Driver said the board's next working session is scheduled for July 14, when members will review district policies and procedures.

Chairman Chris Cook also announced he will participate

in the Kentucky School Boards Association Summer Conference July 10-11 in Lexington, where he will serve on a panel with a superintendent and chief finance officer from other Kentucky school districts.

Many of the board's 39 action items involved routine end-of-year business and preparations for the new fiscal year. Members approved extended-day contracts, memorandums of agreement for mental health counseling and dual-credit programs, and several final payments related to the middle school construction project.

Driver noted many of the construction payments represented the final invoices associated with the project.

The board also approved increased wages for summer workers and a higher price for adult school meals beginning this fall.

Several items previously discussed during the June working session also received final approval. Those included stipends for CCHS bookkeeper Bree Brown, Athletic Director Austin Berry and district employees who obtain a commercial driver's license to operate school buses.

The board also approved the district's commercial insurance, workers' compensation coverage and student accident insurance.

During the earlier working session, board members reviewed insurance quotes, premiums and deductibles before selecting providers. Student accident insurance received the most discussion after board members requested an additional quote from the district's insurance agent.

Driver said some parents had expressed concerns that last year's policy provided insufficient coverage. The revised plan includes several services covered at 100%.

Board member Bill Asbridge encouraged the district to reopen the bidding process for student accident insurance next year, saying he was uncomfortable negotiating coverage with the current agent during the working session. District officials agreed the process could begin around December.

The board also formally approved the purchase of a new elementary mathematics curriculum, Eureka Math, which had been discussed during the working session.

The \$142,000 curriculum is classified as a High Quality Instructional Resource, or HQIR,

designed to meet at least 80% of Kentucky's academic standards. Driver said the purchase will be funded through a combination of general funds and grants, with the district saving approximately \$29,000 by purchasing the curriculum outright.

CCES Principal Laurie Holcomb said elementary teachers selected the curriculum and are eager to begin using it.

Board members also recognized longtime mechanic and transportation coordinator Wayne Winters, who is leaving the district for a new career opportunity. Winters will remain for a transition period to help train his replacement.

"You have been a leader in our district and the state when it comes to transportation issues," Chairman Cook said.

Asbridge recalled working alongside Winters to champion the district's propane-powered school buses, while McDaniel said Winters had "left his mark" on the transportation program.

Following Winters' resignation, the board approved combining the district's digital learning coach and transportation coordinator positions.

"It's hard to find a transportation coordinator and mechanic together," Driver said.

Let's celebrate: We've never done this one before

My dad was almost 94 when he departed this "land of the free and home of the brave" and went to his Heavenly reward. He was an amazing guy! His quest, right up to his last day in February 2015, was to learn something new each and every day. He was still reading the Paducah Sun every day and The Crittenden Press every Thursday. He was also reading several magazines each month, including National Geographic, Biblical Archaeology Review, Air & Space Smithsonian, along with his favorites, Reminisce and Popular Science. He loved reading about the past, but he also loved to read about new things, new research, and new discoveries.

Although he was very intelligent, this computer age/information age was very difficult for him to wrap his head around. He sometimes felt like a foreigner in his own land. He didn't even know how to turn on a computer. Although he had a cellphone, it was a typical old Nokia with no internet access. Even though he loved learning about new things, he preferred to live



Chris CLARKE
Press Columnist
Happy Trails

the old, familiar way of life. His house was built in 1957. His newest vehicle was 16 years old with about 340,000 miles, while his old 1981 F-150 had over 400,000 miles. Still, he enjoyed life and looked forward to every single day. He also loved his country, and he proudly served his country in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He strongly felt that our freedoms were worth fighting for and defending.

As we think of the old versus the new, let's think about our nation. We're about to celebrate America's semiquincentennial... Happy 250th Birthday, America! (We've never done this before.) Our nation is a wonderful mixture of the old – the wonderful heritage of the past 250 years – and the new, as we look toward the vast new opportunities ahead of us.

Things have changed a great deal over the past 250 years, yet the basic idea of FREEDOM is still something to be cherished, pursued, and defended. The citizens of the original thirteen colonies had lived in dreadful conditions under the tyranny of England for far too long. Finally, they had experienced enough. Their rebellion resulted in military action by England against the colonies, leading to the Battles of Lexington and Concord in April 1775, which are considered to be the first battles of the Revolutionary War. Interest-

ingly, the colonies never declared war on England. As I understand it, neither side declared war on the other. King George III simply sent his troops to America in order to crush the rebellion of the fledgling colonies, which were openly defying the directives of Parliament. The Second Continental Congress convened in Philadelphia in May 1775. Delegates began to further unite the various colonies as they moved the country toward total FREEDOM from England. The Lee Resolution of July 2, 1776, declared that the 13 colonies were, in fact, free and independent states, totally separate from the British Empire. The much more well-known Declaration of Independence passed unanimously on July 4, outlining 27 grievances and openly declaring our independence from England.

I strongly believe that we should be reminded regularly about this vital part of our nation's history and the fact that FREEDOM was so desired and cherished that the colonists were willing to lay down their lives, if necessary, in order to obtain it. Let's be reminded once again of those opening words of this larger-than-life document upon which our great nation exists:

In CONGRESS, July 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,

"When in the Course of human

events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

It is my belief that these words should inspire, unite, and challenge us to cherish the wonderful FREEDOMS we hold so dear. We acknowledge those who so bravely and tirelessly sacrificed and worked together to set in motion those things which have propelled us forward to this moment in time as we observe this momentous SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL of our great and glorious republic... "one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

Let us always continue to cherish, pursue, and defend our FREEDOMS. God bless America, my home, sweet home.

Author Chris Clarke grew up in Crittenden and Livingston counties and has an equestrian ministry, Happy Trails.

The Fourth & Flag from a young soldier's view

The Fourth of July, Independence Day, is always a special day but this year it is even more exciting because our country is celebrating its 250th birthday!

Unfortunately, we see people who either do not know much about our country's history, or they know and just do not care. We frequently see reports of flags being burned, or otherwise defaced. It hurts to see this kind of disregard for the flag which is the face of the United States Of America; a flag that has seen many struggles and sacrifices to make this country the greatest in the world.

But that aside, there are many both in this country and around the world who revere the flag and its symbolic meaning.

In July 2001, my husband received a birthday gift from our grandson who was in the Marine Corps and stationed in Washington, DC while awaiting assignment. In the package we found an American Flag folded in a triangle and encased in a glass fronted frame. On the front was a plaque which read, "Flown over the Washington Navy Yard and Marine Barracks, 8th and I on July 4, 2001."

Also in the package was a handwritten letter which read:

Grandpa Al,

When I started to think about what I wanted to give you for your birthday I couldn't think of what you would want. So, I narrowed it down to three categories. I wanted the gift to be something you would like, I wanted it to be special, and I wanted it to be something that you would remember for a long time.

So, one day I was walking down



Jenny ZIMMER
Point of View

by the Capital and there it was! It was the most beautiful thing...it was an American flag. The red, white, and blue strikes fear in our enemies. And it also gives people hope when they see it because they know that American troops are present and will protect them.

Every time I see the American flag blowing in the breeze it makes me proud. The 50 stars and the 13 stripes stand for Honor, Courage, Loyalty, Sacrifice, and Determination. I am sure that when you see it you have similar thoughts.

I just want to personally thank you for what you have done for the United States of America and for all the things that you have taught me about life. I feel honored to present this gift to you.

Happy birthday!!!

Your grandson

This was such a meaningful gift! The flag has occupied a prominent place in our home ever since it was received. The accompanying letter lets us see the flag through the eyes and heart of a 20-year-old.

The letter has been shared many times with friends and family and every time it is read we are reminded to count our blessings and to be grateful for America, for our freedoms, and for those who have made great sacrifices throughout these past 250 years.

Happy Birthday America!

Author Jenny Zimmer is a retired Human Resources Executive who, after living in Cincinnati for 53 years, moved back to Marion, her home town, in 2023. She is currently involved with The Friends of the Library. She is a published author with a fourth book coming out in April 2026. She loves to paint, read and play Mahjong.



Rocket Baseball Celebrates Season

Crittenden County High School's baseball team recently held its annual award ceremony and post-season celebration. Among those honored were varsity and JV players (front from left) Zack Rustin, JV Defensive Player of the Year; Eli Herrin; Drake Young; Jett Champion; Cameron Nesbitt, JV Offensive Player of the Year; (back) assistant coach Trace Adams; Eli Lovell, Defensive Player of the Year; Jaxton Duncan, Pitcher of the Year; Quinn Summers, Most Valuable Player and Offensive Player of the Year; Brady Dayberry, JV Pitcher of the Year; Davis Perryman, Most Improved Player; Hudson Stokes and coach Javy Jones. Not pictured Darryl Sherer, Teammate of the Year. The Rockets finished the season with a 14-18 record, tied for the regular-season Fifth District championship and finished runner up in the district tournament.

Salem adopts citywide payroll tax

STAFF REPORT

Salem City Council approved a 1% occupational payroll tax Tuesday that city officials say will provide a dedicated funding source for future needs while avoiding increases to property taxes and water and sewer rates.

The tax will apply only to wages earned by employees working within the Salem city limits for businesses or independent contractors. City officials emphasized the ordinance does not establish a business license fee or a net profits tax.

Revenue generated by the occupational tax will be earmarked for specific purposes, with 60% dedicated

to sewer improvements, 30% to water line projects and 10% general fund.

Mayor Gary Damron said the city is taking a proactive approach to avoid the financial challenges facing some neighboring communities.

"We have to do something to be prepared for coming expenses in infrastructure like water and sewer," Damron said.

Officials said the city has intentionally designated how the revenue will be spent to ensure the funds address long-term capital needs.

The occupational tax becomes effective in the fourth quarter of 2026, with the

first payments due to the city in January. The revenue, estimated at \$115,000 to \$130,000 annually, will be included in the city's fiscal year 2026-27 budget, which begins this week.

City leaders said the payroll tax spreads city operational and infrastructure costs beyond Salem residents by applying to anyone who works within the city limits, rather than relying solely on property owners or utility customers to fund future infrastructure improvements.

Livingston County also has a 1% occupational payroll tax.

Soap honors daughter, and supports CAF

BY DAVID R. DRENNAN
THE CRITTENDEN PRESS

Marion natives Travis and Chasity Allcock may have a small business in downtown Hopkinsville, but they still have a heart for the Crittenden County community. They recently began an initiative within their small business to not only give back to the community they call home, but to honor their child who died of medical complications.

The Allcocks started with a cottage bakery and then added homemade soaps to their small business "adventure."

"We are learning as we go," Travis Allcock stated.

While Chasity continues to operate the bakery side of things, Travis makes homemade goat milk soaps. Grizzly Up Soap Company took on a new life when the Allcocks found a Hopkinsville soap business for sale on Facebook Marketplace. They moved to that location in August of last year.

While being active members of the downtown Hopkinsville community, the Allcocks have reached out to help community endeavors and promote small businesses. But home was on their minds, too.

"We knew we wanted to do something at home," Chasity explained.

While giving back was a strong motivation, the Allcocks also wanted to give back in a way that honored their child, Bella, who died in 2023 at only 3 years old.

"Bella loved music, and we always had music playing at home," Chasity



Bella Allcock is the namesake for the Beautiful Bella product line that the Allcocks are making. A portion of the sales are benefitting Marion's Community Arts Foundation.

recalled.

The Allcocks also shared on their business Facebook page that music made Bella's eyes sparkle and that she loved to clap along to every song. It was Bella's love of music that prompted the Allcocks to consider Marion's Community Arts Foundation as the recipient of their outreach.

"It's a good way to honor her," Travis explained.

Both parents agreed that Bella would have undoubtedly participated in Community Arts Foundation activities to further her love of music.

So the Allcocks put their plan into action, creating their Purchase With a Purpose Program. Their first product was Beautiful Bella Goat Milk Soap. According to the Grizzly Up Facebook page, "this soap was designed with our Bella



Travis Allcock is always hard at work at the Grizzly Up Soap Company in Hopkinsville.

girl's beautiful, little soul in mind and the joy she brought to everyone who knew her. The yellow butterflies on top are a small reminder that her light still shines even now."

Chasity further described the soap as a popular scent that was "bright, floral and feminine."

For every Beautiful Bella soap purchased, the Allcocks will donate \$3 to the Community Arts Foundation. Travis explained that was a good amount, but also intentional because Bella lived only three years.

The Grizzly Up store features a display about Bella and the details of the Purchase With a Purpose initiative. Customers can learn about the Community Arts Foundation, including its website address. They can even make a donation directly to the program to support arts and music education. Travis explained that one customer made a donation

after reading about the efforts.

"It's a great conversation starter," he added.

"Every purchase made in Bella's honor feels like a celebration of her life and the joy she brought into the world," Allcock explained on the Grizzly Up Facebook page.

Beautiful Bella has since grown to include not only a soap, but also a perfume, sugar scrub and car diffuser. In addition to the store in Hopkinsville, the Allcocks take their products to shows, festivals and local Community Arts Foundation events. At those events, the Allcocks also give an additional 15% of sales to the Community Arts Foundation's Student Support Fund.

"It is a lot of fun," they explained.

One of those local Community Arts Foundation events is the Legacy of Liberty Festival later this month. The Allcocks and Grizzly Up Soap will have two booths at the event.

Fourth of July Holiday Closings

Government offices and services in Crittenden County will close in observance of the Independence Day holiday.

The Crittenden County Office Complex, Crittenden County Road Department, Marion Convenience Center and Crittenden County Animal Shelter will be closed Friday, July 3.

Marion Convenience Center and Crittenden County Animal Shelter also will be closed

Saturday, July 4, reopening Monday.

Marion City Hall will be closed Friday, July 3, and will reopen Monday.

The U.S. Postal Service will observe the Independence Day holiday on Saturday, July 4. Post offices will be open and regular mail delivery will occur Friday, July 3.

The Press office will close at noon Thursday and remain closed through the extended holiday weekend.

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Salem Class of 56

Salem High School Class of 1956 celebrated its 70th Class Reunion June 13 at Deer Lakes Golf Course. Pictured are (front from left) are Geraldine Loyd Barnes, Anna Sue Croft Jennings, Shirley Grimes, Shirley Faye Williams, Tommy Wring, Doris Croft Belt, Vivian Mitchell Monroe, (back) George Malcolm, Dean Wilson, William Chittenden and Neil Ramage.

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Local girls qualify for national gymnastics

BY DAVID R. DRENNAN
FOR THE CRITTENDEN PRESS

Legendary gymnast Simone Biles once said, "Don't wait until you've reached your goal to be proud of yourself. Be proud of every step you take toward reaching that goal."

Three Crittenden County girls took that advice to heart recently when they competed at the 2026 Amateur Athletic Union Gymnastics National Championships in Knoxville, Tenn., in June.

Tinley Smith, 10, placed first in every event, scoring 9.65 in vault, 9.95 in bars, 9.925 in beam and 9.8 in floor, and finished first overall in her age group. Smith also received the AAU All-American Award for having the highest overall score in her level. She will take those accolades to Des Moines, Iowa, in a few weeks for the Junior Olympics. Smith trains with Big Dogs Gym in Providence and has competed in gymnastics for two years. Her mother, Ashley Smith, said



Tinley Smith



Sadie Gobin



Leighton Oliver

they were excited as they prepared for the trip to Iowa in early August.

Also qualifying for the Junior Olympics were Sadie Gobin and Leighton Oliver, who began training together at Big Dogs Gym in Providence just a year ago. Their performances

in their respective age groups placed them among the top 10 competitors overall, earning berths in the Junior Olympics.

Gobin competed in the 9-year-old age group and finished second overall. She scored a 9.75 in vault, 9.475 in bars, 9.9 in beam and 9.5 on

floor.

Oliver competed in the 7-year-old age group and finished first overall. She scored a 9.425 in vault, 9.575 in bars, 9.825 in beam and 9.775 in floor.

"She's always been a little flipper," Savannah Oliver said

of her daughter. Oliver added that Leighton began going to Big Dogs Gym once a week for training and later was asked to join the competitive squad.

Big Dogs Gym has built a strong reputation at national events. Ten girls, including the three from Crittenden County, qualified for the Junior Olympics from the Providence gym.

Coach Kristen Fisher does not set specific goals for her competition team as they train in the former "Dog House" at Providence High School. Instead, she concentrates on individual growth.

"From meet to meet, what can you improve?" Fisher said.

Fisher teaches that a positive attitude and perseverance in the face of adversity are critical skills.

"How do you react when you fall off the bar?" Fisher asked. "We love it when they hit everything, but what was the attitude in getting there?"



Marion's Legacy of Liberty America 250 event was hampered by rain and wind, but the spirit of the celebration prevailed with cannon fire, Revolutionary War and Civil War encampments, history lectures, contests and other festivities, including Gilbert Funeral Home's 50th anniversary celebration.

Barb Arflack won the Apple Pie Contest. At top right, she is pictured with (from left) Woman's Club member Caroline Belt, Arflack, Cutter Singleton portraying Gen. Francis Marion, for whom the city is named, and Woman's Club member Nancy Hunt. The contest was sponsored by the Woman's Club of Marion. Second place went to Renee Sizemore, and third place went to Rachel Pears. At right, Marion's Foxes – Carole Guess, Aubrey Grau, Kathleen Guess, D'Anna Browning and Katie Greenwell – won the History Trivia Contest.



Crittenden County Chamber of Commerce recognized Gilbert Funeral Home for its 50th anniversary celebration. Pictured are (from left) Chamber Director Charlie Day, Gilbert Funeral Home's Chase Mitchell and Joseph Gray, Sandy and Terry Gilbert, Chamber President Rebecca Woodall, Brad and Valerie Gilbert, Gilbert's Billy Arflack and Chamber Vice President Dana Hayes.