



The Crittenden Press

Catch Fall Sports Results on Page 8

10 PAGES | VOLUME 145 | NUMBER 35
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2026

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

AN INDEPENDENTLY-OWNED, LOCAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1879

TWO DOLLARS

Fredonia ‘Ghost’ Tour is Saturday from 2-4

Fredonia Valley Heritage Society will sponsor “A Walk Through Fredonia’s Past” from 2–4 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 5, at Old Fredonia Cemetery and Centerville Livingston Presbyterian Church Cemetery near the Caldwell–Crittenden County line off U.S. 641. The guided ghost walk will feature portrayals of Revolutionary War patriots, Civil War soldier James Byrd and other people buried in the historic cemeteries. Admission is \$5, with children 12 and younger admitted free with an adult. Parking will be available. People with disabilities may use golf carts, mobility scooters or side-by-sides.

Chamber After Hours event Tuesday at Fohs

Crittenden County Chamber of Commerce will host a Chamber After Hours networking event from 5 to 7 p.m., at historic Fohs Hall. The city’s civic and entertainment center is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year and is being spruced up for the Oct. 23–24 celebration and ball.

Board will vote on rates at Thursday’s meeting

An article in last week’s newspaper regarding the proposed Crittenden County Schools property tax rate indicated that the school board would likely vote on the rate during its regularly scheduled Sept. 22 meeting. Instead, the vote will be this week during a rescheduled working session at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 3, in the Rocket Arena Conference Room. The school district says that because of state guidelines governing dates and deadlines for tax information, other September meeting dates would not fulfill legal requirements. Therefore, the Sept. 8 working session was rescheduled for Sept. 3 to meet the statutory guidelines. It will now be a special-called meeting. The school district says public comment is welcome. The board of education received the assessment data July 27 and is obligated to formally establish the tax rate within 45 days of receiving it, thus prompting the change in the working session date.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- Crittenden County Board of Education will meet at 5:30 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 3, 2026, for a working session at Rocket Arena.
- Community Prayer will be held at 10 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 5, in The Crittenden Press empty lot.
- Crittenden County Chamber of Commerce will meet at 8:30 a.m. Tuesday, Sept. 8, in the Rocket Arena conference room.
- Caldwell County Fiscal Court will meet at 9 a.m. Tuesday, Sept. 8, at the courthouse.
- Crittenden–Livingston Farm Service Agency County Committee will meet at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 9, at the Salem Service Center. Call the office in advance to verify the meeting remains on schedule.
- Marion Code Enforcement Board will meet at 5 p.m. Monday, Sept. 14, at city hall.
- Livingston County Board of Education will meet at 5 p.m. Monday, Sept. 14.



Santiago finds rhythm in policing as CCES school resource officer

STAFF REPORT

Amy Santiago has joined the Crittenden County Sheriff’s Department as the school resource officer at Crittenden County Elementary School, becoming the department’s first female deputy.

Santiago, 45, replaces former SRO James Duncan, who accepted a position outside Crittenden County. She joins Joe Witherspoon, who is also serving in his first school

year as the district’s other SRO at the high school and middle school.

A native of Griffithsville, W.V., Santiago began working in law enforcement in Danville, W.V., but moved before attending the police academy after meeting her husband. His military career later took the family to Alaska, Korea, Romania, Colorado and now to Kentucky.

While living in Colorado, Santiago began working in

armed security through Allied Universal, a large contract security company. She assisted local police by securing public buildings and helping provide security around the city during periods when law enforcement response times were particularly long.

After moving to western Kentucky, Santiago continued with Allied Universal under a contract with the

See **SRO**/page 9

How will county’s 2026 rates touch your household?

STAFF REPORT

Crittenden County property owners whose assessments have not changed should see little difference in their 2026 tax bills, despite rate increases by the school, Extension and Tradewater taxing districts.

For a home assessed at \$100,000, the combined state and countywide taxes will total \$861, exactly the same as last year. Increases adopted by the

Evolution of Local Property Tax Rates

TAX DISTRICT	Change from '25	2026	2025	2024	2023	2022
State of Kentucky	(-0.3)	10.3	10.6	10.9	11.4	11.5
City of Marion	(-0.2)	*22.7	22.9	22.9	22.5	22.4
Crittenden County	-0-	11.4	11.4	11.4	11.8	11.6
School District	+0.2	*51.8	51.6	51.4	51.6	49.0
Extension	+0.1	4.6	4.5	4.4	4.3	4.1
Health Tax	-0-	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Public Library	-0-	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Tradewater	+0.807	37.097	36.29	34.9	33.6	33.7

*Proposed Rates. Values are shown as cents per \$100 of assessed value

Crittenden County School District and Extension District are offset by a reduction in the state property tax rate.

A Marion homeowner

with a \$100,000 assessment will pay another \$227 in city taxes. That brings the combined state, coun-

See **TAX**/page 9

What’s to do close to home?

Anyone looking for something to do over the holiday weekend need not travel far. Marion and the surrounding countryside offer plenty of opportunities for recreation, relaxation and a little exploration.

Pickleball courts are available at Marion-Crittenden County Park and indoors at the Crittenden County Recreation Center in the former National Guard armory. The recreation center requires a membership. The park also features an 18-hole disc golf course, playgrounds and Goose Pond, where anglers can wet a line without leaving town.

A short drive north leads to Riverview Park at the former Lock and Dam 50. The seasonal courtesy dock is expected to be returned to the Ohio River before the weekend. The park has a boat ramp, playground, picnic pavilions, seven full-hookup RV campsites and primitive tent camping. RV sites are \$30 nightly and primitive camping is \$5.

Boaters can also find a makeshift river park along Hurricane Island, a favorite spot for pulling ashore, relaxing and enjoying the Ohio.

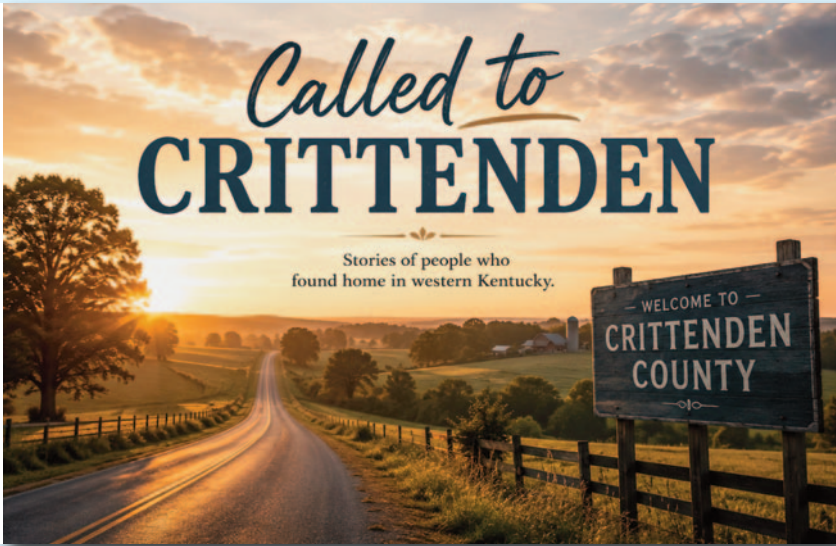
Those who would rather travel under their own power can bicycle the county’s lightly traveled rural roads. One favorite loop begins at Tolu, follows the river country through Carrsville to Joy and then circles back to Tolu.

Northern Crittenden County is home to Big Rivers Wildlife Management Area and State Forest, offering thousands of acres for hiking, hunting, fishing and wildlife watching. Its observation area overlooking the Ohio River provides one of the best views in the region and is worth the drive even for those who do not plan to venture far from their vehicle.

Across the county line, Mantle Rock Nature Preserve in Livingston County offers an



Chris EVANS
Press Editor & Publisher
About Town



The Heins

Californians attracted to Southern charm

BY JENNY ZIMMER
THE CRITTENDEN PRESS

Shortly after I moved back to Marion in 2023, I met Alicia and Gordon Hein and learned they had recently moved here from California. I couldn’t help but wonder how and why they had chosen Marion as their new home. When I asked about their relocation to Kentucky, they were happy to sit down with me to talk about their transition from

California to Kentucky, two very different states located about 2,000 miles apart.

They explained that, after weeks, even months, of having conversations and making exhaustive lists of the pros and cons of relocating, they came to a definite conclusion: It was time for them to leave California. Both had been born and raised in that state but felt it was now time for them to relocate. But where would they go?

They both worked from home, so that gave them lots of leeway in choosing a new location. Gordon often traveled for his work and had found himself traveling to the Southern states several times. He liked the South and especially liked Mississippi and Missouri.

After spending some time looking around those two states, they hadn’t found

See **HEIN**/page 3

This is the third in a series by Jenny Zimmer featuring individuals and families who have made Crittenden County their home. A retired human resources executive, Zimmer returned to her hometown of Marion in 2023 after living in Cincinnati for 53 years. She is a contributing writer for The Crittenden Press.

The Crittenden Press

USPS 138-260 / Marion, Ky.



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Deaths

Belt

Billy Joe Belt, 79, of Calvert City, died Thursday, Aug. 27, 2026 at the Calvert City Convalescent Nursing Home.

His lifelong occupation was farming.

Surviving are four daughters, Terri Patch, Brenda Jackson, Darlene Freeman and Sara Belt; three sons, Ron Harris, Eric Davis and Darren Davis; four sisters, Frances Jones, Irene Moss, Edna Waters and Flo Fondaw; a brother, Louis Jackson; 18 grandchildren; and 21 great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Charlie and Rhoda Jackson Belt; his wife, Leona Harris; a sister, Elsie Mae Sharpe; a son, Mark Belt; and three grandchildren, William Belt, Donnie and Joey Martin.

Funeral services were Saturday Aug. 29 at Myers Funeral Home with burial in Lola Cemetery.

Ordway

Bruce Ordway, 93, a Korean War Veteran, has transitioned peacefully to be with the Lord. He was surrounded by his family and friends and left filled with their love on May 13 at Halifax Health Medical Center in Port Orange, Fla.

He was born on June 7th, 1932, in Marion to Imogene (Baird) Ordway and Robert Ordway.

He was a star basketball player at Crittenden County High School and graduated April 3, 1952. He met the love of his life, Charlotte Ellen Dycus,

and the two eloped at a young age and were married for 65 beautiful years before her passing on Aug. 1, 2017. Bruce Ordway was inducted into the Crittenden County Basketball Hall of Fame in 2008.

After serving in the US Navy during the Korean War, Ordway attended Purdue University Northwest in Hammond and began a long career as a chemist at DuPont in East Chicago. It was there Bruce and Charlotte started their family and raised their two children, Faye Renee Ordway and Gregory Bruce Ordway.

Ordway proudly served as Honor Guard representing the Merrillville American Legion Post 430 in numerous parades and community processions. Bruce was honored to be a Grand Marshall in the Daytona Beach Shores Holiday Parade in 2016.

As an ordained Deacon of the Presbyterian Church of Merrillville, Ind., Ordway was a devoted Christian and dedicated his life to service and to helping others in every way possible. He was an avid golfer, bowler, fisherman, boater, and loved playing checkers.

He was dedicated to his family and served as a dependable light in the darkness. He was quick with a joke and could make anyone smile. He was slow to anger, but quick to show off his dance moves with his lovely wife, Charlotte. They became snowbirds in 2000 and spent six months in their condo in Daytona Beach Shores, Fla., and six months on their homestead farm in Marion.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Imogene (Baird) Ordway and Robert Ordway; and three siblings, Bobbie Jean Foster, Pete Ordway, and Martha Jane Fletcher.

He is survived by his children, Renee Connelly (fiancé, Paul Puskar) and Greg (Sharon) Ordway; five grandchildren, April (Rick) Spangler, William Connelly, Brenton (Mon-

ica) Connelly, Rebecca (Dylan) Becraft, and Camden (Becca) Ordway; nine great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews. He will forever hold a special place in their hearts as their idol, role model, and one of the greatest grandfathers and great-grandfathers (AKA Pops!). He taught kindness and respect, work ethic, and to love your family unconditionally.

Paid obituary

Pierson

Kenneth Wayne Pierson, 82, died Aug. 30, 2026 at his residence in Fredonia. He was born Oct. 30, 1943 to Richard and Susie Pierson in Caseyville. Kenneth was a member of St. Mark Church in Fredonia as well as being a member of St. Francis Church in Sturgis. He worked 30 years at Peabody Coal, was a part of the UMW, served in the US Air Force and was a veteran of the Vietnam war. Pierson loved fishing, gardening and was a loving father who was passionate about his family. He was very proud of his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Pierson is preceded in death by his parents Richard and Susie Pierson; son Kevin Pierson; and brothers George, Don, and Gerald Pierson.

Surviving are his loving wife of 63 years Maggie Pierson; three sons, Billy Pierson of Fredonia, John Pierson of Marion and Tim (Kim) Pierson Mantou; 10 grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

Funeral services will be 11 a.m., Friday Sept. 4 at St. Francis Borgia Church. Father Joyr and Father Brad Whistle will officiate. Full military rights will follow the service.

Burial will follow in St. Ambrose Cemetery in St-

urgis, KY.

Memorial contributions may be made to St. Mark Church and St. Francis Church.

Cowen

Daniel Lee Cowen, 74, of Salem, died Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 at Livingston Hospital and Healthcare Services.

He enjoyed the simple pleasures in life. He loved spending time sitting on the porch, working in his flower beds, and keeping his yard looking nice by mowing the lawn. He also enjoyed cooking and took great pleasure in the quiet moments spent at home doing the things he loved.

Surviving are a son, Charles Cowen of Salem; two sisters Sandy (Kenneth) Guess of Eddyville and Diana (Dennis) Jones of Smithland; three brothers, Jimmy Cowen of Lake Superior, Wisc., Mikey (Wendy Doom) Ramage of Tiline and Ronnie (Frances) Ramage of Smithland; three grandchildren, William (Emma) Cowen, Marlena (Jared) Rolley, Macie Cowen and four great-grandchildren, Preston Levi Cowen, Laniey Cowen, Jolena Rolley and Josiah Rolley.

Daniel was preceded in death by two sisters, Pam Cowen Guill and Liz Henson; two brothers, Gary “Gabby” Cowen and Kenny Cowen; and his parents, Harry Neal and Carnelia Ramage (Anglin) Cowen.

Funeral services are at 2 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 3 in the chapel of Boyd Funeral Directors and Cremation Service with Bro. Howard Jones officiating.

Friends may visit with the family from noon until the funeral time in the chapel of Boyd Funeral Directors and Cremation Services.

Community Calendar

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

Thursday, Sept. 3

- Line dancing begins at 9:30 a.m., at the Crittenden County Senior Center.

Tuesday, Sept. 8

- The Hooks & Needles Homemakers Club will meet at noon at the Crittenden County Public Library. Anyone who is interested in sewing, quilting, crocheting or knitting is invited to join.
- The Lego Club for grades 1-5 meets at 3:30-4:30 p.m. at Crittenden County Public Library.
- Afterhours Homemakers Club begins at 5 p.m. at Crittenden County Extension Office.

Wednesday, Sept. 9

- Challengers Homemakers Club will meet at noon at Crittenden County Extension Annex.
- Line dancing begins at 9:30 a.m., at the Crittenden County Senior Center.
- The Virgil Jones VFW in Marion will have a meeting at 6:30 p.m. at the VFW

Thursday, Sept. 10

- Line dancing begins at 9:30 a.m., at the Crittenden County Senior Center.

building at 412 North College St. Refreshments will be served.

- New Era Homemakers Club will meet from 5:30-7 p.m. at Crittenden County Extension Annex.

Monday, Sept. 14

- A Life Skills class will begin at 7 p.m. at the Crittenden County Extension Annex. This is a mandatory class required for the Community Christmas program.

Wednesday, Sept. 16

- Life Skills 101 will be from 9-10 a.m. at the Crittenden County Extension Annex. This is a mandatory classes required for the Community Christmas program.
- Code Red - Universal Safety Plan begins at 10:30 a.m. at the Crittenden County Extension Annex. This is one of the classes for the Community Christmas program. Registration is required. For more information call 270-965-5236

Hunting opportunities available through KDFWR

Hunters may apply throughout September for Kentucky's fall quota hunts for deer, waterfowl, pheasants and sandhill cranes.

The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources will accept applications from resident and nonresident hunters through midnight CT Sept. 30. Applications must be submitted through the MyProfile portal at fw.ky.gov and will not be accepted by phone. The minimum fee is \$3 per application.

Results of the randomized drawings will be available through MyProfile by 4 p.m. CT Oct. 9.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife is offering 38 deer quota hunts at wildlife management areas and state parks, waterfowl

hunts at five public-land locations, pheasant hunts at three WMAs and statewide permits for sandhill crane hunting.

Some events are mentored hunts for youths and accompanying adults, while others are limited to hunters with mobility impairments. No more than 10% of those selected for each deer quota hunt may be nonresidents.

Only hunters whose names are drawn may participate. Successful applicants must purchase the required licenses and permits.

Hunt dates, locations and regulations are available at fw.ky.gov or in the Kentucky Hunting and Trapping Guide. Questions may be directed to 800-858-1549.

Kentucky Soy announces Niki Ellis as next executive director

The Kentucky Soybean Association and Kentucky Soybean Promotion Board have selected Niki Ellis as their next Executive Director. Ellis will officially begin the role on Jan. 1, 2027, following an intentional transition period designed to position her, the staff team, and farmer leaders for success.

Ellis will succeed Debbie Ellis, who has provided nearly 40 years of service to Kentucky Soy. The transition marks a significant moment for the organizations, building on a strong foundation of farmer leadership, an experienced staff team, and a clear strategic direction.

The soybean check-off plays a critical role in supporting Kentucky soybean producers through investments in research, promotion, education, and market development. Effectively managing these producer-funded dollars requires a strong understanding of finance, budgeting, and accountability to ensure every investment provides meaningful value to farmers. Leadership of the checkoff requires balancing long-term strategic priorities with responsi-

ble financial stewardship, while ensuring that producers can see the impact of their contributions.

“We were looking for someone who understands farmer-led organizations, can build strong relationships, and has the vision to continue strengthening Kentucky Soy’s leadership in the state and at the national level,” said Fred Sipes, Chairman of the Kentucky Soybean Promotion Board. “Niki brings that combination. She understands agriculture, has experience working with producer-led boards, and brings a strong record of leadership and collaboration. We are excited about what she will bring to Kentucky Soy while building on the strong foundation already in place.”

Ellis currently serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the Kentucky Pork Producers Association, where she oversees strategy, governance, finance, communications, advocacy, and operations. Her experience includes representing Kentucky agriculture before the Kentucky General Assembly, Congress and federal agencies; guiding board strat-

egy and producer-funded investments; and building partnerships among commodity organizations, universities, agribusinesses and government agencies.

A fourth-generation Kentucky farmer, Ellis has spent her career working with producer-led agricultural organizations. Before joining Kentucky Pork Producers, she served as Director of Education for the Kentucky Cattlemen’s Association. She has also held leadership roles at the national and regional levels, including founding the Southeastern Pork Alliance, a six-state collaboration designed to strengthen organizational capacity while maintaining each state organization’s autonomy.

Ellis brings significant experience in agricultural policy and industry representation. She has advocated for producer priorities with state and federal policymakers and served on national committees addressing research, leadership development, long-range strategy, and other issues affecting production agriculture. Her experience also reflects a commitment to collaboration

across Kentucky agriculture and to maintaining a strong producer voice at both the state and national levels.

“Advocacy is an important part of the Association’s work, and Niki brings both experience and strong relationships to that role,” said Jonathan Reynolds, President of the Kentucky Soybean Association.

Ellis earned a Bachelor of Science in Career and Technical Education from the University of Kentucky.

The Kentucky Soybean Association serves as the advocacy voice for the state’s soybean producers, representing farmers at the state and federal levels and engaging with policymakers, agricultural organizations and industry partners on issues affecting soybean production and farm profitability. Together, KSB and KSA work with universities, agricultural organizations, in-

dustry partners, and other stakeholders to strengthen Kentucky’s soybean industry, promote the interests

of soybean farmers, and ensure producers have a strong voice in the future of agriculture.



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Cave Springs has storied history in wooded valley setting

BY DAVID R. DRENNAN
THE CRITTENDEN PRESS

Christian songwriter Jon Mohr once described the legacy of faithful believers and how they inspire other believers with their testimony. Our community has many church congregations that are among “that great cloud of witnesses.” These are their stories.

Cave Springs General Baptist Church might be nestled in a secluded part of Crittenden County, but its remote location has not stopped it from being a beacon of faithfulness for 91 years. First organized as a nondenominational church in 1934, the church would eventually be built on land donated by Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Crowell. A cave above the church would help name the new church. The first services were held the second Saturday night and Sunday morning of January 1935, with the building constructed that same year.

Dedicated in June 1935, the initial “little white building” housed only the church sanctuary. Since that time, many additions have been made to the church. A foyer, Sunday school rooms, a dining hall, restrooms and a kitchen were added from 1958 to 1992.

In 1949, the church was organized as a General Baptist church, joining the Union Association with 18 members. The Revs. Herman Capshaw, C.A. Travis and Thomas Wilson were part of that organizational process. J.W. Wilson, Virgil Drennan, J.G. Brantley,



Above left is the church’s first pastor, Roy Rideneour and his wife, during the early 1960s. Above right is Rev. David Winders, his wife Dottie and their family.



Leslie Orr, Pat Alvin Duffy, M.K. Owens, G.O. Woodward, Lenard Brantley and Dallas Little were trustees at the time of the organization. Several of these men were also deacons within the church. The last charter member, Bernadine Orr, died in 2009.

The church has had a myriad of pastors over the years,

including the Revs. Clyde Dempsey, O.L. Duncan, Lona Lutz, Guthrie Quertermous, Thomas Wilson, Herman Capshaw, Alvin Childers, B.A. Crowell, Roy Rideneour, Gendall Ramage, David Winders, Bill Perkins, Cecil Buckingham, Bill Chambliss, Clifton Vandiver and Robert Phillips. The current pastor is Heath



Martin.

In 1964, the church established its chapter of the Women’s Missionary Union as well as Youth Hour. Both groups remain active within the church.

Sharon Martin has been going to Cave Springs for over 50 years. Some of her “favorite memories” are from Vacation Bible School.

“We used to have anywhere from 100-120 kids attend our VBS,” Martin recalls.

She would even pick up a few neighborhood children to go to VBS. One particular VBS she recalled was when a bad storm rolled in, knocking out electricity and closing the winding road into the church. With no one leaving for a while, it was up to the volunteer teachers to keep the children busy until the storm passed.

“The kids were all troopers, though, for the most part. We just tried to keep them busy, playing games, singing and singing and some more singing!” Martin recalled.

Martin added that “everyone

made it through, no injuries, and the kids were all safe and sound.”

Situated on Pigeonroost Creek, the church has seen its fair share of unpredictable Kentucky weather and accompanying flash floods. The creek often closes Cave Springs Road during heavy rain.

“Good Lord willing and the creek don’t rise’ started in Cave Springs Valley!” Martin added.

Martin has a significant family history at the church as well. She and her husband, Johnny, were married there 51 years ago. Her dad, Robert Phillips, pastored there for many years. The Martins raised their son Heath there, and Heath and his wife, Yvette, were married there. Heath, the current pastor, has raised his family there, too. Martin expressed gratitude for her family as well as the church.

“We are so thankful God has blessed us with such a nice facility to come to for worship and fellowship,” Martin explained.

HEIN

Continued from page 1

anything that especially excited them, so they decided to just drive around other Southern states. When they drove from Missouri through the western part of Kentucky and then through the Crittenden County-Marion area, they were excited and impressed with it.

They found a house listed for sale that they loved, and it was perfect for them, but it wasn’t in their price range, so they continued looking at housing in the area. They had decided that this was where they wanted

to move. Then, as if it were meant to be, the price of the house was reduced, and they bought it immediately.

I asked them what they were most surprised about when they moved from California to Kentucky. They quickly answered that they were surprised at how seamless it felt and that they never felt like outsiders. People were authentically nice and sincerely wanted to be friendly and helpful; they were also kind and sincere.

The most difficult thing they faced was getting used to the weather and the changing seasons. Alicia also said

they were pleasantly surprised by how inexpensive things such as licensing a car were in Kentucky after living in California, where costs were high for everything.

They agreed that what continues to please them most about this area is the beauty; their home in the Mattoon neighborhood is surrounded by fields and trees, and Alicia has a beautiful flower garden at the back of their home, which she tends faithfully.

They enjoy their home and the area. They have good neighbors, and they both are active in Repton Baptist Church.

When I asked if they

would recommend this area to others, they told me they definitely would. They would recommend Marion, Crittenden County or anywhere else in Kentucky for several reasons, with the people here being a primary reason. They also felt this is a wonderful community in which to retire and would recommend it highly because of the beauty, safety, comfort and proximity to larger cities.

They expressed that their favorite things about living here are the beauty of the area and the authentic quality of the people. Their least favorite things are the ticks

and poison ivy that are so prevalent here. Alicia added that she also doesn’t like the bugs and poisonous plants.

Since both work from home, I asked about their internet coverage and whether that had been a factor in choosing this location. They have Starlink and have had no internet issues that would have interfered with their work. They are also looking forward to the fiber-optic service that is coming to the area.

I asked how they would describe Marion to others, and they replied that it is a perfect kind of small town, much like

Mayberry or the kind of small town you’d see on television; people are friendly and incredibly interesting.

As our conversation ended, Alicia mentioned that since she and Gordon both travel for their jobs and their family is still in California, making travel arrangements can be challenging. She also expressed that she would like to see some transportation options available in the community for seniors, people with disabilities or people who are poor and do not generally have reliable transportation and must depend on the generosity of neighbors and friends.

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Lawsuit continues in inmate’s 2025 case

A lawsuit stemming from serious burns suffered by a Crittenden County Detention Center inmate remains pending in Crittenden Circuit Court after a judge reviewed the case last month.

David Oliver alleges he was participating in the jail’s work-release program May 13, 2025, when he became soaked with fuel while filling lawn equipment and was subsequently directed by a jail employee to light a charcoal grill. The resulting fire caused burns over about 16.5% of his body and required treatment at Vanderbilt Medical Center, according to the complaint.

Oliver is suing the detention center, Crittenden Fiscal Court, Jailer Athena Hayes, unidentified jail employees and an unidentified fuel supplier. He seeks compensatory and punitive damages and has asked to add a federal civil-rights claim.

Attorneys for the county defendants deny that Oliver’s allegations support a constitutional violation and have asked the court to reject the amended complaint and dismiss the case. They argue the incident amounted, at most, to negligence and that immunity and the



statute of limitations bar some claims.

Oliver’s attorney contends the case should proceed to discovery so evidence can be gathered concerning employee conduct, training and supervision. The allegations have not been proven, and the matter remains pending in Crittenden Circuit Court.



Idle ferry is drawing area TV attention

WPSD Local 6 was in Marion Monday interviewing local officials, business owners and residents about the continuing impasse over the Cave-In-Rock Ferry operating contract. Among those interviewed

were Marion Mayor D’Anna Browning, City Councilman Dwight Sherer and Crittenden County Chamber of Commerce Director Rebecca Woodall. Other local residents and stakeholders also spoke with the television station about the impact of the prolonged closure.

The ferry has been idle since its previous operating agreement expired June 30 and the states of Kentucky and Illinois and the ferry operator were unable to reach terms on a new contract.

The television interviews come just days after both Marion City Council and the Crittenden County Chamber of Commerce adopted resolutions urging state leaders and the ferry operator to resume negotiations and find a solution.

The resolutions emphasize the ferry’s importance to commerce, tourism, employment, commuting, health care access and everyday travel between western Kentucky and southern Illinois.

The Cave-In-Rock Ferry has now been out of service for two months.

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Throwback Thursday From 2001

25 YEARS AGO — The Crittenden County Rescue Squad earned first-place recognition in a quarterly national Rescue of the Year competition after submitting photos of its efforts to free a motorist trapped when the Johnson’s Furniture Store building collapsed. The award made the local squad a finalist for national honors and lifesaving equipment. Pictured standing are Barbara Aflack, Brian Kirby, Phyllis Wright, Rescue Chief Donnie Aflack, Stephanie Montalta, Orman Hunt, Red Howton and Billy Aflack. Kneeling are Mike Harris, Larry Brown and Mike Crabtree.

50 YEARS AGO

August 26, 1976

■ Down-home music was a big hit at the Crittenden County Senior Citizens Center as Claude Cruce, Harold Bennett, Earl James, Vernon Fralick, Gustiva McDonald, Allie Kirk, Carlos Baker and Edwina Bennett entertained throughout the afternoon.

■ Mrs. Louise F. Biggs, assistant county supervisor for the Farmers Home Administration in Marion, was selected as the Most Outstanding Woman Employee in the Kentucky program. The award recognized outstanding women for their job performance and community accomplishments.

■ The Crittenden County School Board hired Lynann Woodall as a full-time first-grade teacher at Tolu Elementary when enrollment climbed from seven to 21. The class previously had been taught by a teacher who divided her time between the first and second grades with assistance from an aide.

25 YEARS AGO

August 30, 2001

■ The Leadership Crittenden County class toured Turner & Conyer Lumber Co. as part of its Business and Industry Day. Bobby Martin explained how lumber was processed in the newly expanded facilities. Other sites toured included Par-4 Plastics, Farmers Bank and Henry & Henry Monuments.

■ Nicky Winders and his son, Blair Winders, won the annual Sports Against Cancer Golf Tournament at Marion Country Club.

■ Crittenden County Elementary School teachers Depeka Croft and Julie Dally hosted two Japanese teachers who learned about the United States and the use of technology in schools and witnessed their first football scrimmage. Sakomoto Hiroaki and Hideki Okamoto spent Tuesday through Friday at the school through a Murray State University InSTEP grant.

10 YEARS AGO

September 1, 2016

■ Two Crittenden County 4-H’ers performed well at the Kentucky State Fair. Dylan Harper became the Junior Division Grand Champion for the entire state in the tractor-driving competition, and Colyn Caraway earned a blue ribbon.

■ Local golfer Jeremy Shoulders won the Sycamore Hills medal-play golf tournament at The Heritage Golf Course at Marion Country Club. Shoulders shot even par to capture the club’s signature tournament title.

■ Four members of the Crittenden County FFA chapter traveled to the Kentucky State Fair in Louisville to participate in the State FFA Welding Contest and came home with \$2,000 in vocational scholarships. Members were Ryan Belt, Dustin Collins, Cruce Collyer and Catherine Hutchison. They were required to run three weld beads in various positions using E-6011 electrodes.

Read Brenda Underdown’s
Forgotten Passages column at The Press Online

The Crittenden Press

USPS 138-260

125 E. Bellville St. | P.O. Box 191 | Marion, KY 42064 | 270.965.3191 |

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The Crittenden Press (USPS 138-260) is published weekly by The Crittenden Press Inc., P.O. Box 191, 125 E. Bellville St., Marion, KY 42064. Periodicals postage paid at Marion, KY and at additional mailing offices. Subscriptions \$45 to \$86 per year. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Crittenden Press, P.O. Box 191, Marion, KY 42064. Online subscriptions start at \$32 a year.

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The Smith family takes off from the Riverside Lodge in Elizabethtown, Ky. to head east on Illinois highway 146 toward Cave-In-Rock.



Family re-routes after finding ferry idle

Editor’s note: This article comes to us from Jennifer Lane, who is editor of the Hardin County Independent in Elizabethtown, Ill. She encountered this family, which had planned to cross the Cave-In-Rock Ferry before finding it idle due to a contract dispute. The ferry has not operated since late June.

By Jennifer Lane

For Melinda and Craig Smith and their three children, summer break has looked a little different this year. Instead of spending the season at home in Portland, Ore., the family of five has been traveling across the country by bicycle.

I had been notified the day before by a friend that there was a family enjoying ice cream at the Riverside Mercantile in Elizabethtown, and they were talking about their cross-country bicycle trip. Though I could not find them that day to ask for an interview, I happened to see the Smiths and children Emilia, 11, Isabel, 9, and Josiah, 7, the next day at the Riverside Lodge. Lucky for me and my readers, they stayed overnight while passing through southern Illinois.

The family left June 22, 2026, from Walla Walla, Wash., and expects to finish near the end of September in Yorktown, Va. Their route has included both the Lewis and Clark Trail and the TransAmerica Bicycle Route.

“We started in Walla Walla, which is technically not the TransAmerica,” said Melinda. “It’s called the Lewis and Clark Trail.”

The family followed the Lewis and Clark route to Kooskia, Idaho, where they joined the TransAmerica route and continued east.

Before beginning this larger trip, they completed three training rides over the previous year to test their gear and prepare for the demands of long-distance bicycle travel. Those training rides took the family from Astoria, Ore., to Walla Walla.

Many combine the Lewis and Clark Trail with the TransAmerica, as both originate or end in Astoria, Ore.

Emilia and Isabel ride their own bikes, while Josiah rides tandem on a two-seater bike with Melinda. Craig brings up the rear, probably to keep a close eye on his precious family.

When asked whose idea it was to bicycle across the country, the kids admitted they and their mom had to talk Dad into it!

Their planning began with a

simple estimate: If they averaged about 40 miles a day for 90 days, they could make it from Walla Walla to Yorktown by September.

Craig said not every day has matched that average. Some days are shorter, while others are longer, depending on distance, weather, available lodging and places the family wants to experience along the way.

Though they are goal-directed, they took time to visit Yellowstone National Park and the Grand Tetons. They got to see wonderful sights, including Old Faithful. Melinda commented on how beautiful this area was as they crossed the Mississippi River into Illinois and reached the Ohio River in Elizabethtown.

Because the Smiths homeschool their children, the trip has become part of their education. Reading, journaling, geography, history and daily problem-solving are all part of the experience. They are currently reading the book “Where the Red Fern Grows.”

“This is school,” said Melinda.

For the Smith children, the journey carries special significance as they experience America during the nation’s 250th birthday year. Traveling from the Pacific Northwest toward the Atlantic Coast, they are seeing the country much the same way early travelers and explorers would have encountered it, one community at a time. Along the route, they have visited iconic landscapes, including Yellowstone National Park and the Grand Tetons, met people from rural towns and larger cities, and learned firsthand about the geography, history and culture that connect the country from coast to coast. Rather than reading about America’s semiquincentennial in a textbook, the children are experiencing it from the seats of their bicycles.

Imagine the memories they are making along the way!

When asked if they had been interviewed by other newspapers or media outlets, Melinda said no, this is a first. I will be sending them their very own copies, which they will surely cherish as a bonus of the trip.

One of their favorite experiences so far was stopping at a turnout in Yellowstone after spotting a bison near the roadside. They rode right past it.

“We got to see a bison five feet away,” said Isabel. “He was on the side of the road!”

Craig said it was more like 15 to 20 feet away, but it was still uncomfortable close. The family watched from a safe distance as the animal lingered nearby. What an experience!

The family has learned to adapt to everything the journey has thrown their way, from rain and summer heat to traffic, road construction and unexpected detours. On extra-hot days, they left very early, around 4 a.m., for a cooler trip.

One disappointment came when they learned the Cave-In-Rock Ferry had closed, forcing them to alter their route. Because the detour added 40 to 50 more miles to their trip, they bypassed Tower Rock and the village of Cave-In-Rock altogether to save time. From Elizabethtown, they stayed on Highway 146, then traveled north on Route 1 to cross the Shawneetown bridge into Kentucky.

Another reason added to the list of why we need to get that ferry back in operation.

Crossing the mighty Ohio River aboard the historic ferry had been one of the experiences the children were most excited about before leaving home. Rather than dwell on the setback, Melinda said the family shifted its focus to another adventure ahead. Now, their attention is fixed on exploring Mammoth Cave, one of the highlights still awaiting them on their cross-country journey.

At the time of my interview with them, it was day 66 of their trip. Melinda said they carry camping gear, but at that point, they had only stayed in hotels or lodging establishments. The shower and comfortable beds are just the rewards they need to end each day.

Melinda admitted that another reward was ice cream. She said they are always on the lookout for places like the Riverside Mercantile to get a cold, sweet treat. She admitted that morning was never too early for ice cream. I’m sure they burn enough calories that it doesn’t even cross their minds.

Already having passed through nine states, the Smiths continue east, one day and one leg of the journey at a time. Once they reach their destination and 11th state, they plan to take the train back home to Portland. That sounds too easy, but it is another great reward.

Follow the Smith family’s journey through their Instagram account, @smith5.brakingcycles.

Every story has a motive

Human beings are story tellers. We all love good stories. The best ones age well and are told across generations. They shape our lives and our culture. But it is important to remember a couple of things about stories. First, every story ever told is told for a reason. The one telling the story has a motive for telling it. Second, every story told is pointing to something else. The story tells us something about how we see and interpret the actors in the story. Third, it is dangerous when the story becomes the object because it loses its moorings.

In a world where tens of thousands are scrambling to be seen and heard for the sake of being seen and heard, it is more important than ever to understand the motives behind the stories we encounter and headlines we read. The more dramatic the headline, the less trustworthy the motive of the source.

Media educator Neil Postman in his book, *Amusing Ourselves to Death* (1985) said, “The news is a commodity, a product to be packaged, marketed, and consumed.

Its purpose is not to describe reality but to attract viewers. And so the news becomes a story, and the story becomes the event. What is important is not what has happened, but what can be made interesting. The public comes to know the world not as it is, but as it is presented to them. In time, the presentation becomes the reality.”

We see this play out every day. We see tragedies that have nothing to do with us presented as crisis for the nation without regard to the people the story is about. Having personal experience with this, I can tell you, it is unpleasant. Especially when the truth gets set aside for a narrative. When this happens, the story is no longer pointing back to the people affected. They are but the grist for what the storyteller wants us to see. The people do not matter one bit – that narrative becomes the object. A society sold entirely on competing narratives will chew its citizens to shreds – in the name of morality, or law and order, or equality.

If we want to present

competing narratives, fine. I think it is actually a good thing. What must happen is to be honest about it. Be honest about where we imagine the story to end. In other words – why are we telling the story. To sell? To attract likes and comments? To point to how clever we are? To incite hatred? Or maybe we could tell stories to encourage each other. Maybe we could tell stories to learn how to forgive and be gracious.

There is, of course, the greatest story ever told. We read about the object of this story in the Gospel accounts in the New Testament. If I understand this correctly, Jesus is the gospel. The gospels are the story of what happens when the truth of Jesus’ kingdom breaking in to this world forces a decision. It is still possible for us to confuse the story and the object. It is possible to use that story for our own ends.

Gregory of Nazianzus (329 – 390) wrote, “We are not playing with words, nor weaving subtleties, nor telling stories about God. We are dealing with God Himself, the Object of our worship. And when the Object is lost, the words become empty, the subtleties vain, and the stories dangerous. For the mystery is not in the telling, but in the One who is told.” (Oration 29:18)

English reformer and

martyr, Hugh Latimer (1487 – 1585) in his Sermon on the Plough (1548) reminds us of the importance of not letting the story become greater than the object of the story, “Many there are who delight in the tale, but not in Him of whom the tale is told. They hear the story of Christ, but they do not hear Christ. They busy themselves with the words, but not with the Word. And so they plough, but they do not sow; they preach, but they do not feed.”

N.T. Wright succinctly says in *Jesus and the Victory of God*, “The story is the vehicle; Jesus is the reality to which the story points.”

It is important to keep in mind what we are pointing toward, whether the story is about God or about what’s going on in the world. Know the storyteller’s motives. Be certain to remember that every story you have ever heard has affected real people in real ways. Even fairy tales and fiction. Let’s keep telling stories. But can we tell them for each other’s good in order to make each other better?

Sean is always interested in feedback and conversation. He can be reached at sean.niestrath@outlook.com. He publishes a daily devotional via Substack at seanniestrath.substack.com.



Sean NIESTRATH
Faith-based columnist
Faith, History, and Public Life

Is there still a need for missionaries to be sent out?

Question: With the advance of technology, the gospel can be shared instantaneously with people around the world by videos, text messages, emails, radio, and television. It seems to me, there is no longer the need to send missionaries to share the gospel with people of different cultures. Is there still a need for missionaries to be sent out?

Answer: Technology continues to advance with AI, but that doesn’t negate the call for us to send mis-

ASK
the
PASTOR

By Bob Hardison



sionaries to share the gospel throughout the nations. In the world today, there are more than seven thousand unique people groups that are less than two percent Christian. Of those, roughly three thousand remain unengaged with the gospel. The church in Antioch understood the need to

send out workers to spread the Good News that Jesus saves. The Holy Spirit said to them, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” Then after they had fasted, prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them off” (Act 13:2, 3).

Still today we have the privilege of being a part of sharing the gospel with people who have never heard. The tools of technology, no matter how advanced will never take the place of

people sharing their faith in Jesus with others. Every follower of Jesus is called to be a part of praying for missionaries and their work, giving generously to support missionaries as they serve, sending forth workers to unengaged people who need salvation and going to tell of God’s love and forgiveness and the abundant life Christ gives. As we do, we will impact eternity.

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.

In Loving Memory
of our Parents:



PERRY
EUGENE
BROWN
May 11, 1921 -
August 31, 2001

IVA LEATHA
BROWN
June 20, 1923 -
January 6, 2021

You'll never be forgotten
but cherished from year to year.
It broke our hearts to lose you
but you did not go alone.
A part of us went with you
The day God called you Home.

With love until we meet again,
Bobby and Sue, Fred and Minnie Lou,
Barbara, Ricky and Linda,
Grandchildren,
Great Grandchildren

WORSHIP

Visit one of our area churches for worship and fellowship

with us this week

EMMAUS BAPTIST CHURCH



315 Emmaus Church Rd., Salem, Ky.
Rodney Phelps, Pastor
(270) 704-2400
emmausbaptistsalem@outlook.com
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St. William Catholic Church



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

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.

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

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. Barnett Chapel Rd., Marion, Ky.
Sunday Worship: 11 a.m. Barnett Chapel...
Sunday Night Service: 6 p.m. 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.

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

growing in grace



2 Peter 3:18
PLEASANT GROVE General Baptist Church
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!

PINEY FORK



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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



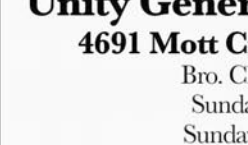
Bro. Butch Gray, Missionary Discipeler
Worship service:..... 11 a.m.
Children's Church ages 3 & up... 11 a.m.
"The little church with a big heart"

Hurricane Church



Hurricane Church Rd. off Ky. 135 West
Sun. School, 10 a.m. • 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. Chris Collins, 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 -



Mr. Russell attended church services at Rosebud church with his wife while they visited the area.



The old Baker School House was located where the Baker Church is today. Church and prayer meetings were held in the school house.

A visit to the Nunn’s Switch, Rosebud and Baker, Bells Mines area

Mr. Gervas M. Russell worked for The Crittenden Press in the early years of 1885 to 1900. He would write interesting articles about people and places he visited and shared them with the readers of The Press. Through his articles we can revisit with him some of our old communities and the people that lived there and some of the activities that were taking place. Mr. Russell would sign his articles “Nemo.”

In this article we visit Nunn’s Switch, Rosebud Church and the Baker-Bells Mines area.

August 26, 1896 - Visit to the Bells Mines Precinct

On Friday evening last, in company with my better half, Mrs. Narcissus Russell, we boarded the train at the Marion Depot and headed for Nunn Switch. Nunn Switch, at an earlier period of its history, was one of the hardest holes in the state, but is now one of the most quiet, God-fearing and respectable places around. Uncle John Gilbert and Mr. Pritchett have stores there, and are both genial gentlemen.

Saturday morning we took a leisurely stroll over the hills to the heart of Bells Mines precinct near Baker school house, and had a very pleasant visit at the home of Mr. Lynn B. Phillips. Here we not only received a warm welcome, but plenty of spare ribs, backbones, baked ‘possum, and other good things to eat. The Baker school has just been supplied with 24 new and handsome patent desks, which were badly needed.

Mr. Phillips, one of the directors, informs me that it is in contemplation to erect a larger building, which is needed. Miss Cordie Wheeler is the teacher and is very popular in that section. A prayer meeting is being held in the building at the present time.

Visit to Poor House

The day was still young and as I had never visited the county poor house, Mr. Phillips and I started out for a visit, taking the road “Over the Hill to the Poor House.” The poor farm is rightly named, for as it now stands it is about the poorest specimen of a farm I ever saw, consisting principally of a 15- or 20-acre field of gullies without any fence around it, adjoining the garden on the north, and a small fenced field of beautiful yellow clay opposite the house.

I learn that the farm of some 200 acres was originally purchased by the county for \$2,200, that some \$500 or \$600 worth of timber has been realized from it, and that 150 acres were sold to Eli Nunn for \$450.

The land purchased by Mr. Nunn lays well and is the only part of the farm worth shucks. Mr. Phillips tells me that Mr. Nunn offered two mules for the remainder of the farm, including the buildings. The dwelling on this land is beautifully located, and appears to be in a fair state of preservation.

Two Churches

Saturday ended with us being at the home of our old friend Robert C. Lucas, or “Uncle Bob” as his friends call him. Sunday morning we attended Rosebud Church with Uncle Bob and his two daughters, Miss Ida and Mrs. Wayne Phillips. There are two churches in this section, Rosebud and Meadow Creek, Meadow Creek belong-

ing to the Cumberland Presbyterians. The two churches are working together as one band of brothers and sisters.

After church service we returned to the residence with our old friend for some more visiting. Uncle Bob owns a beautiful farm of some 170 acres, which he and his sons literally hewed out of the wilderness. He has been living on it about 48 years, and there still stand in his yard the original small, hewn log cabin in which he first lived after his marriage nearly half a century ago. The tail of the big cyclone of 1890 brushed his farm and its effects are still visible.

On to the east I noticed a bare trail, like a public road, winding up the side of a steep hill or mountain, rather, and was told that was where the tail of the cyclone dragged itself along, and that since then no green thing had ever grown along that pathway.

Uncle Bob has been a mighty hunter during his day, and has slain many a deer and turkey in those hills. He showed me the gun with which he killed his last deer. It is a double barreled muzzle loader, stub and twist, of English make, and is still in fine condition.

The Sneed Mines

A mile or so from his farm lies the old Sneed’s Mines tract, containing some 400 acres. I am told this entire tract is under laid with a four-foot vein of the finest coal in the state besides a large body of valuable timer. More than 40 years ago my brother-in-law, Dr. Wm. C. Sneed, and his brother, James Sneed, of Frankfort, purchased this property and my sister, Mrs. Sarah H. (Russell) Sneed, of St. Louis, now owns the controlling interest in it.

For a great number of years this property has been considered the legitimate “spoil of the Egyptians,” and large quantities of valuable timer have in late years been cut and sold from the tract, while free mining for coal is now being constantly carried on, no one knowing or caring who owned the property.

Uncle Bob showed me through his fine garden and I selected at random two turnips from his patch, one of them weighing 11 and the other 9 pounds.

John W. Phillips

Another other old time veteran of this section is Mr. John W. Phillips, who is still hale and hearty in the 79th year of his age.

Mr. Phillips at one time owned a large body of land in Bells Mines. He told me that 60 years ago he hauled coal from the Sneed tract to the old Lamb blacksmith shop and to old Salem. The coal cost 12 ½ cents a bushel at the mine and he was paid the same for hauling it. Mining in those days was evidently in its infancy. The dirt was first dug from the top of the coal with a pick and the coal then cut out with an ax and measured up in a bushel basket.

Pinnacle Point

While the weather was still fine we made a short trip to Pinnacle Point, where we could behold all of Crittenden and the hills of other counties more remote.

On this point and under the rocks we found many names that were written many years ago. We also found here many kinds of plants and greens; for instance the Persimmon tree, and

also the Jimson weed, which seemed to flourish on top of the point, which was almost solid rock, with now and then a crevice which allows the growth of the things above mentioned.

Our day ended with a glorious view from the apex of Pinnacle Ridge, with the sun slowly sinking amid a bank of fire, a soft fleecy haze shrouding the earth like a bridal veil, and a stillness as of death surrounding all.

I will close with the remark that our visit to the Nunns Switch, Rosebud and Baker, Bells Mines area was one of pleasure and enjoyment. We hope to visit again soon. Nemo.

Thankful for these old articles written so many years ago, as they recall places, people, and history that have long disappeared into our forgotten passages of time.

(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).

NOTICE

We will be **CLOSED** Monday, Sept. 7

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legal notices

Last week's article regarding the proposed property tax rate indicated that the school board would likely vote during the Sept. 22 regularly-scheduled board meeting; however, due to state guidelines with dates and deadlines for tax information, the Sept. 8 working session was rescheduled to Sept. 3, in order to meet the statutory guidelines. The board of education received the assessment data on July 27, and they are obligated to formally establish the tax rate within 45 days of receiving it; thus, the change in date of the working session. The Sept. 3 working session of the Crittenden County Board of Education, at which the formal vote of the tax rate will occur, is set for 5:30 p.m., in Rocket Arena Conference Room. Public comment is welcomed. (1t-36-c)

Notice is hereby given that on August 26, 2026 Kristi Tischer of 1509 N. Minnesota Ave., Shawnee, OK 74804 was appointed executrix with will annexed of Thomas Stephen Jones, deceased, whose address was 3271 Mott City Rd., Marion, KY 42064. Rebecca Johnson, P.O. Box 415, Marion, KY 42064, agent for service of process. All persons having claims against said estate are hereby notified to present the same properly proven as required by law to the Agent

for Process with will annexed on or before the 26th day of February, 2027 and all claims not so proven and presented by that date shall be forever barred.

All persons indebted to the estate of the above-named decedent, will please call and settle said debts immediately.

Crittenden District Court
Melissa Guill, Clerk (1t-36-c)

I, Melissa Guill, Clerk of Crittenden County District Court, Marion, KY do certify that the following has filed notice of Final Settlement: Scott E. Tabor of 727 East Depot Street, Marion, KY, executor of Helen Cullen, deceased.

The foregoing settlement is to be heard at the regular session of Crittenden District Court on September 30, 2026. All persons having exceptions to said settlements are to file same at once.

Melissa Guill, Clerk
Crittenden District Court (1t-36-c)

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Notice of Public Hearing Zoning Map Amendment

A request for a Zoning Map Amendment for the property located at 503 South Main Street, identified as PVA Parcel Number 058-20-26-002.00, has been filed with the Marion Planning Commission. A request to rezone the properties from C-2 General Business District to I-2 Light Industrial District will be considered. A public hearing will be held at 6:00 PM on September 24, 2026 before the Marion Planning Commission in Council Chambers at City Hall, 217 South Main Street, Marion, Kentucky. For further information contact the City of Marion at (270) 965-2266.

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SOCCER

Lady Rockets get district victory

The Lady Rockets were busy week on the pitch last week, first beating district rival Lyon County 5-2 on Tuesday night. Junior captain Adri Berry's unstop-pable attack garnered all five of Crittenden's points. Kylie Bloodworth led in assists with 2. Haley Moore, Ruby Peek, and Isabel Geary each had an assist also. Macibelle Hardesty also had a strong performance on the other end of the field, putting up 12 saves in the contest.

The Lady Rockets also hosted McLean County on Thursday night, tying the Lady Cougars 3-3, to ad-vance to 3-2-2 on the young season. Berry scored two, and Bloodworth scored one and had one assist. Hardesty had eight saves on the night.

On Monday of this week, CCHS lost 10-3 at Chris-tian County. Berry scored all 3 CCHS goals and Bloodworth had an assist.

Berry has tied single-match record

It was reported last week that CCHS junior Adri Berry had set a new single-match scoring record for Lady Rockets with 7 goals. Further research has de-termined that she actually tied the record, which was originally set in 2016 by Francesca Pierce.

MIDDLE SCHOOL FOOTBALL

Young Rockets blast Caldwell 43-22

Kevin Little scored on touchdown runs of 7, 60 and 33 yards, and Noah Moss had an 82-yard kickoff return and a 15-yard scoring catch on a pass from Brady Polk to help Crittenden County Middle School blast Caldwell County 43-22 on the road Monday. Polk also rushed for a touchdown and multiple PATs. The team is now 2-2 on the season.

VOLLEYBALL

Lady Rockets beat Trojans, Storm

The Lady Rockets volleyball team took on Webster County in Dixon last Thursday night, winning in 5 sets: 25-23, 25-19, 14-25, 20-25, 10-15. Grayson Travis and Braelyn Merrill led the Lady Rockets in the attack. Travis had 13 kills and Merrill had 11. Also, Maeson Martin, Emerye Pollard and Maddie Hearrell each had 4. On the defensive side, Pollard led with 26 digs. Other noteworthy defenders were Ava Tabor, who had 21 digs and Merrill, who had 15. Martin also had four blocks.

The Lady Rockets hosted Throwback Night at the old Fredonia High School gymnasium on a rare Fri-day night matchup with the Lady Tigers of Princeton. The Lady Rockets lost in four sets: 25-18, 25-12, 25-21, and 26-24. Merrill and Travis led again in offen-sive stats, each with nine kills in the matchup. Defensive leaders were Layken Gilcrest and Travis, who had a pair of blocks apiece, as well as Tabor, who put up 22 digs throughout the contest.

On Monday, CCHS won in straight sets on the road at Hopkins Central.

CROSS COUNTRY

Crittenden wins invitational race

Crittenden County's cross country team opened last weekend at the New Covenant Christian Acad-emy Invitational in Hardin. Coach Sandra Martinez noted, "It was a tough course. All but four-tenths of a mile was a hilly trail run in the woods." The Rockets won the event. Rocket runner Noah Martinez fin-ished first among 19 runners with a time of 19:25.00. CJ Nelson was right behind him, placing second with a time of 19:27.00, and River Rogers placed fourth at 20:18.11. Aiden Musser was sixth at 21:43.00, and Miles Yates was eighth at 22:33.11. Barrett Brown also competed for the first time with the Rocket team and finished his race in 27:54.00. Presley Potter fin-ished sixth in the girls race with a time of 29:51.78. Potter was the only Crittenden County female run-ner.

GOLF

Brown 2nd in home victory

Crittenden County's boys golf team improved to 5-2 in match play with a 170-187 victory over Lyon County Monday at Marion Country Club. Mitchell Brown led the Rockets with a 41. Bentley Rushing and Jaxton Duncan each shot 43, Hudson Stokes finished at 45 and Cameron Nesbitt carded a 48. Lyon County's Landon Mitchell was the match medalist with a 40. In girls competition, Abby Ko-rzenborn shot 57 and Katrina Scott finished at 76 for Crittenden County.

Crittenden Sports Schedule

Sept. 3 CCMS football vs James Madison
Sept. 3 Soccer at Lyon County
Sept. 3 Volleyball at Todd County Central
Sept. 4 CCHS football at Webster County
Sept. 5 Cross country at McCracken County
Sept. 8 CCMS football at Webster County
Sept. 8 Volleyball vs Lyon County

OUTDOORS

Hunting Seasons

Here are some of the most common hunting opportuni-ties currently in season:

Squirrel	Aug 15 - Nov 13
Dove	Sept 1 - Oct 26
Canada Goose West Zone	Sept 1-15
Deer Archery	Sept 5 - Jan 18
Turkey Archery	Sept 5 - Jan 18

Another close call in defeat for Rockets

STAFF REPORT

For the second straight week, Crittenden County reached into its hat for some last-second magic. Once again, the Rockets nearly produced a rabbit, but couldn't quite finish the trick.

Crittenden scored on the game's final play but failed on a 2-point conversion, allowing Union County to escape with a 21-20 victory Friday in the Braves' home opener.

"I hate it for our guys. They just work so hard," sixth-year Rocket coach Gaige Courtney said. "They're hurting, and I'm hurting. Everybody puts so much into it, and to come up short hurts. But just like last week, I am proud of them. I just want them to be rewarded with wins."

CCHS lost 22-15 on the final play of its home opener a week earlier to Marshall County.

In this one, trailing 21-14, Crittenden took pos-session with less than a minute remaining. From Union's 33-yard line, quar-terback Conner Poindexter heaved a final pass into a crowd in the left corner of the end zone.

Union intercepted the pass and was flagged for interference, but senior Davis Perryman punched the ball loose. Sophomore Hayden Hughes recovered it in the end zone for a touchdown, pulling the Rockets within 21-20.

Crittenden declined the penalty and, without hesi-tation, went for the win. The Rockets called a time-tested rollout pass that



Rocket QB Conner Poindexter on a gainer at Union

has delivered plenty of magic through the years, giving the quarterback multiple options. This time, however, the pass fell incomplete.

The game had an old-fashioned flavor until the final minutes. Crittenden led 7-6 at halftime on Poindexter's 27-yard touchdown pass to Eli Lovell. Union then turned to a straight-ahead, smash-mouth rushing at-tack and carried a 14-7 lead into the fourth quar-ter.

Poindexter and Lovell connected again for a 38-yard touchdown to tie the game with 5:24 remaining. Lovell caught four passes for 105 yards.

Union answered with a long drive, highlighted by Chris Grissom's 37-yard run to the two. Landon French scored from there on a QB sneak with 42 sec-onds left. Grissom finished

with 198 yards on 28 car-ries as Union rushed for 264 yards.

The Braves fumbled four times and Crittenden did-n't have a turnover in the contest. So, despite trailing significantly in total yards, CCHS managed to keep it close.

"We will hurt together and continue to grow," Courtney said. "This team is going to win some foot-ball games. They are grow-ing and getting better."

The Rockets will be at Webster County Friday. The Trojans are 0-2 with losses to Calloway County 56-14 and Muhlenberg County 63-0.

SCORE BY QUARTERS

Crittenden Co.	7	0	0	13
Union County.	0	6	8	7

SCORING PLAYS

CC-Eli Lovell 27 pass from Conner Poindexter (Mitchell Brown kick) 7:03, 1st
UC-Landon French 3 run (run failed) 4:56, 2nd

UC-Carsyn Arnett 7 run (pass good) 2:19, 3rd
CC-Lovell 38 pass from Poindexter (Brown kick) 5:24, 4th
UC-French 2 run (kick good) :42, 4th
CC-Hayden Hughes fumble recov-ery in end zone (pass failed) :00, 4th

TEAM TOTALS
First Downs: CCHS 6, UCHS 15
Penalties: 7-51, UCHS 8-60
Rushing: CCHS 24-65, UCHS 42-264
Passing: CCHS 7-17-0, 117, UCHS 7-13-0, 48
Total Yards: CCHS 182, UCHS 312
Fumbles/Lost: CCHS 0-0, UCHS 5-4

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

Rushing
CCHS-Lovell 3-19, Joel Bumpus 5-17, Azariah Rich 13, Logan Nolan 1(-2), Poindexter 13-29. UCHS- Chris Grissom 28-198, Carsyn Ar-nett 6-49.

Passing
CCHS-Poindexter 7-17-0, 117. UCHS-French 7-13-0, 48.

Receiving
CCHS-Lovell 4-105, Davis Perry-man 1-15, Noah Byford 2-(-3). UCHS-Gavyn Black 2-27, Cole Ed-wards 3-7.

Defense
Byford 3 solos, assist; Logan 3 solos, 2 assists; Perryman, 3 solos, assist, caused fumble, roach; Bla-zina solo, 2 assists, fumble recovery; Curnel 4 solos, 2 assists, 2 roaches; Lovell 6 solos, assist; Nash 2 solos, 2 assists, sack, fumble recovery; Phillips 3 assists; A.Rich 5 solos, 3 assists, caused fumble; Bumpus 17 solos, assist, 3 TFLs, caused fumble; Counts 4 solos, assist; Herrington solo, as-sist; Hughes 4 solos, fumble recov-ery; Sherer 3 assists, caused fumble, fumble recovery.

Players of the Game: Defense Joel Bumpus, Offense Eli Lovell, Lineman Hunter Curnel, Special Teams Mitchell Brown.

Records: CCHS 0-2, UCHS 1-1



Rocket golf team members (front from left) are Mitchell Brown, Cutler Hunt, Carter Tyner, Hud-son Stokes, Levi Quertermous, Abby Korzenborn, Katrina Scott, coach Aaron Brown, (back) Gun-ner Topp, Bentley Rushing, Cash Sing-leton, Jaxton Dun-can, Dawson Johnson, Cameron Nesbitt and coach Shawn Holean.



Photos by Maddie Ryan



Crittenden County Middle School dominated South Hopkins 46-0 Thursday at home behind a balanced offense and a stout defensive performance. QB Brady Polk accounted for six touchdowns, rushing for three and throw-ing three. He connected with Bode Merrill for one score and Noah Moss for two. The Rockets intercepted three passes. Axel Topp returned his in-terception for a touchdown, while Cam Cornwell and Conley Palmer also recorded picks as the defense preserved the shutout. Pictured at left is Topp making a catch and above is Polk handing off to Moss.



Photo by Ashley Morries

Lady Rocket junior soccer player Addie Morries concentrates on the ball as the Rockets take on Owensboro Apollo in a recent match. The girls started play this week with a 3-2-2 record. At right is Lady Rocket senior Layken Gilchrist making a shot at the net during the Throwback match Fri-day at the old Fredonia Gym. The volleyball girls entered play this week with a 5-5 mark on the season.



Photo by Greg Perryman

Wetland Initiative Looking For Local Participants

BY DAVID R. DRENNAN
THE CRITTENDEN PRESS

The Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Department (KDFWR) is currently looking for landowners to participate in the Livingston and Crittenden County Wetland Wildlife Initiative, a targeted conservation effort designed to help agricultural producers install and manage seasonal wetlands on suitable cropland. To be eligible, landowners must have cropland in Crittenden or Livingston County within a 3 mile buffer of the Ohio River. The program also requires poorly to very poorly drained soils capable of holding shallow water.

Riley Dollenbacher is the KDFWR/USDA Private Lands Biologist Liaison who is working with prospective landowners who are interested in the program. She explained that the wetland initiative is part of the larger work of Kentucky's State Wildlife Action Plan. The state plan includes 12 Conservation Opportunity Areas. One of those, the Ohio River Floodplain, runs from Daviess to McCracken County along the banks of the Ohio. While the smallest COA in the state action plan, it includes nearly 187,000 acres. "Although small in acreage, the floodplains, forests and bluffs along the Ohio River corridor hold a vast importance for both terrestrial and aquatic life. Remaining natural areas in this



COA provide critical habitat for many 'Species of Greatest Conservation Need,'" Dollenbacher explained.

The impact of this initiative on migratory birds is especially significant. "These counties also lie on the outer edges of the heaviest used parts of the Mississippi Flyway," Dollenbacher reported. The flyway is a major migratory route for birds in North America. It roughly follows the Mississippi River and its tributaries, and is used by roughly 40% of the continent's shorebirds and waterfowl. Dollenbacher added that the flyway is "particularly important for migrating birds as it offers a relatively unobstructed path with ample re-

sources for resting and refueling."

The KDFWR wetland initiative is also meant to increase "duck use days." The wetlands created would provide food and shelter for migrating ducks. "Duck use days" is the department's way to quantify the amount of habitat available to support ducks. "Specifically, a duck-use day represents the amount of habitat needed to provide adequate food and energy for one duck for one day. It's a way to assess the carrying capacity of a habitat for waterfowl and is often used in the context of conservation and habitat management," Dollenbacher explained.

In addition to positively im-

pacting waterfowl, Dollenbacher also explained how increased wetlands could improve water quality.

"Wetlands function as natural water filters, helping improve water quality by removing pollutants, excess nutrients, and sediment before water reaches rivers, lakes, and groundwater," the biologist stated. Wetlands allow for the gradual release of water as well, which reduces how fast and how much runoff water and accompanying pollutants reach downstream bodies of water.

"While this project is focusing on restoring some parts of a natural wetland, it focuses more on shallow water areas which have similar functions to a wetland but allow for seasonal management through moist soil management or in the case of this project, a continued cropping rotation," emphasized Dollenbacher. She noted that natural wetlands have become degraded and overrun with invasive species because water levels can't be managed easily. "These invasives do not provide the nutrient richness that native species and some crop species can provide to migratory birds," Dollenbacher added.

It all comes down to soil when gauging prospective participants for the initiative. "This program targets landowners that have proper soils necessary to impound

water behind a levee," Dollenbacher stated. Soil testing may be required to see if a specific property qualifies. "We use Web Soil Survey as a base for areas that may work best for landowners but if there are areas on their property that naturally hold water after a rainfall, that is generally a good place for us to start looking," Dollenbacher explained.

If a participant is without the existing infrastructure on their property, they can also receive cost share assistance to install structures for water control. Once complete, Dollenbacher and the wetland initiative give participants a wildlife habitat management plan that will include specific flooding and dewatering dates and elevations. "Landowners in this program receive both technical guidance and cost share to implement and manage for the agreed upon practices," Dollenbacher explained.

Dollenbacher noted also that this initiative was meant to "keep working lands working." She stated, "The dates we have chosen for this project are based around cropping practices here in KY that allows them to have the area dried out before crops need to be planted but late enough that it serves the migratory waterfowl during their peak migration seasons." KDFWR wants this to be a tool for landowners, serving wildlife and agriculture concurrently.

WESTERN KENTUCKY
UNEMPLOYMENT

JULY 2026

COUNTY	Labor force	Employed	Jobless	July '26	June '26	July '25
CALDWELL	5,741	5,469	272	4.7	5.3	5.1
CALLOWAY	16,752	15,758	994	5.9	6.4	6.0
CHRISTIAN	23,913	22,374	1,539	6.4	7.2	6.5
CRITTENDEN	3,467	3,268	199	5.7	6.1	5.5
HENDERSON	19,586	18,606	980	5.0	5.6	5.1
HOPKINS	19,347	18,375	972	5.0	6.1	5.4
LIVINGSTON	3,955	3,748	207	5.2	6.2	5.2
LYON	3,323	3,164	159	4.8	5.6	5.0
MARSHALL	13,890	13,130	760	5.5	5.8	5.5
MCLEAN	3,991	3,785	206	5.2	5.9	5.1
TRIGG	5,895	5,568	327	5.5	6.2	5.5
UNION	6,090	5,798	292	4.8	5.3	5.0
WEBSTER	4,966	4,721	245	4.9	5.6	5.4
U.S. COMPARABLE RATE 4.4%				KENTUCKY STATEWIDE RATE 5.1%		

Rates are percentages and are not seasonally adjusted. Source: Kentucky Center for Statistics, preliminary July 2026 estimates.

SRO

Continued from page 1

state Department for Community Based Services in Hopkinsville. Much of that work involved supervising displaced children who were temporarily housed in hotels and cabins because permanent placements were unavailable.

She said some of the children were at risk of harming themselves or others, making the assignment challenging but rewarding.

"That to me was one of the best positions I could have ever had," Santiago said.

The experience helped steer her toward becoming an SRO and working directly with children. She has also worked for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Santiago was most recently a deputy with the Trigg County Sheriff's Department. She completed law enforcement training while serving in Trigg County.

Santiago looks forward to learning students' names and becoming part of the elementary school community.

"I see nothing but fun, really," she said. "I'm excited to see everyone and learn everyone's names and faces and come in here and see what good works I can do through this school and then hopefully through the community as well."

Santiago grew up in a small West Virginia community where she spent much of her childhood working and playing around tobacco and hay fields. Raised by her father, she described herself as a tomboy who was comfortable "running around in the mud and dirt."

As the sheriff's department's first fe-



New SRO Amy Santiago poses with student Holyn Riley in front of the elementary school.

male deputy, Santiago said she hopes her presence will encourage girls at the elementary school to pursue their own ambitions.

"I'm really hoping to put that positive outlook there for the girls here, to inspire them to break those barriers and fight through things that most people don't think they are able to do," she said.

river and remains a popular destination for campers, anglers and travelers. RV sites rent for \$30 per night, while primitive tent camping is available for \$5 per night.

The dock has not yet been placed in the river because rapidly falling water levels left driftwood and mud that had to be cleared to make the area accessible.

Newcom said those is-

sues appear to have been resolved. County equipment needed for the installation is being used on a large road-base repair project but should be available later this week to return the dock to the river.

Reservations and payment for camping at the park can be made online at crittendencountyky.org.

Check-in time is 1 p.m., and check-out is 11 a.m.

Candidate Withrow's year-old report case is on court docket this week for final judgement

STAFF REPORT

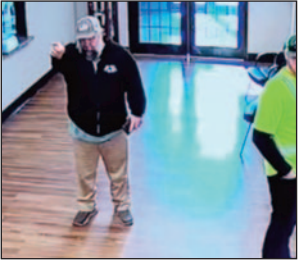
A case involving Kent Withrow, who recently filed as a write-in candidate for Crittenden County judge-executive, was scheduled for final disposition Wednesday of this week in Crittenden District Court.

The case involves a misdemeanor false-report conviction from a year ago.

Court records show Withrow entered an Alford plea Sept. 3, 2025 to falsely reporting an incident to law enforcement. An Alford plea allows a defendant to maintain innocence while acknowledging that prosecutors have sufficient evidence to obtain a conviction. It carries the same legal effect as a guilty plea.

Special District Judge Brandon Knoth of Edyville has presided over the case, with special prosecutor Lee Riddle of Madisonville representing the Commonwealth. No appearance by Withrow, Knoth or Riddle was expected this week because the final order had been prearranged, barring further issues in the case. Details of the judge's final order were unavailable at press time Tuesday.

Kentucky State Police



A surveillance video from the county office complex did not support Withrow's assault accusation in the 2024 incident.

charged Withrow in March 2025 after investigating his claim that Crittenden County Attorney Bart Frazer grabbed him by the neck during an encounter at the Crittenden County Office Complex in December 2024.

Withrow also faced charges of criminal coercion, harassing communications and harassment without physical contact involving another man and woman. Court records show prosecution of those charges was deferred for two years as part of the September 2025 disposition.

Withrow has recently used the social media identity "Jebediah Yoder" to criticize local officials, government and other individuals. He publicly

connected himself to that identity when the account announced that Kent Withrow, "Jeb Yoder," had filed as a write-in candidate.

The Crittenden Press has not independently confirmed that Withrow controls every account or authored every post attributed to assumed identities, including a previous social media page named Crittenden County for Change, which apparently no longer exists.

Crittenden County Jailer Athena Hayes also has named Withrow and others as defendants in a pending defamation lawsuit.

Withrow previously sued the county over the awarding of a roofing contract, but Circuit Judge Daniel Heady dismissed that case. A separate open-records lawsuit filed by Withrow against the county concerning records related to the office-complex incident remains pending in Crittenden Circuit Court.

For more coverage, visit The Press Online to view surveillance footage from the 2024 county office complex incident and hear Withrow's 911 call recording it.

TAX

Continued from page 1

tywide and city taxes to \$1,088, which is \$2 less than last year.

Property within the Tradewater taxing district is subject to an additional tax. On a \$100,000 assessment, that tax will be \$370.97, an increase of \$8.07 from last year.

The calculations apply only when a property's assessed value remains unchanged. Some owners could see a larger difference because their property was reviewed and reassessed during the past year. The Property Valuation Administrator is required to review at least one-fourth of the county's property annually.

Property taxes are calculated by dividing the assessed value by \$100 and multiplying the result by the tax rate. Because rates are expressed in cents per \$100 of assessed value, each one-cent change in a rate adds or subtracts \$10 from the annual tax on a \$100,000 property.

For 2026, the state rate declined from 10.6 cents to 10.3 cents per \$100 of assessed value, while

Marion's proposed rate would decrease from 22.9 cents to 22.7 cents. The city will have a hearing and final consideration of its proposed tax rates at 4:45 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 17 at city hall.

Crittenden County's rate remains 11.4 cents. The Health Department rate remains 3 cents, and the Crittenden County Public Library rate stays at 5 cents.

The school district's rate would increase from 51.6 cents to a proposed

51.8 cents, while the Extension District rate rose from 4.5 cents to 4.6 cents. The Tradewater district posted the largest increase, climbing from 36.29 cents to 37.097 cents per \$100 of assessed value.

The school district's proposed rate will be considered for final approval during a special-called meeting at 5:30 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 3 at Rocket Arena's conference room.

Riverview Park boat dock in by weekend

STAFF REPORT

The seasonal courtesy dock at Riverview Park is expected to be installed before the upcoming Labor Day holiday weekend, Crittenden County Judge-Executive Perry Newcom said.

The park's boat ramp is used by pleasure boaters and anglers accessing the Ohio River. The park also features seven full-hookup RV sites overlooking the

river and remains a popular destination for campers, anglers and travelers. RV sites rent for \$30 per night, while primitive tent camping is available for \$5 per night.

The dock has not yet been placed in the river because rapidly falling water levels left driftwood and mud that had to be cleared to make the area accessible.

Newcom said those is-

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING			
Pursuant to KRS 132.027, the City of Marion will hold a public hearing, Thursday, September 17 th , 2026, at 4:45 PM CT/5:45 PM ET, City Hall, 217 South Main Street, Marion, Kentucky, to hear comments from the public regarding proposed 2026 Tax Rates on Real Property.			
As required by state law, this notice includes the following information:			
			Tax Rate Per \$100 Assessed Valuation
1. Prior Year Tax Rate and Revenue Produced from Real Property	0.2290	\$249,234	
2. Tax Rate Proposed for Current Year And Expected Revenue from Real Property	0.2270	\$257,433	
3. Compensating Tax Rate and Expected Revenue from Real Property	0.2198	\$249,268	
4. Revenue Expected from New Property	0.2270	\$-0-	
5. Prior Year Tax Rate and Revenue Produced from Personal Property	0.2710	\$36,118	
6. Tax Rate Proposed for Current Year and Revenue Produced from Personal Property	0.2900	\$36,696	
7. Compensating Tax Rate and Expected Revenue from Personal Property	0.2857	\$36,156	
Revenues in excess of the revenue produced in the preceding year will be spent in the general areas of City Government.			
THE KENTUCKY GENERAL ASSEMBLY HAS REQUIRED PUBLICATION OF THIS ADVERTISEMENT AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN.			
D'ANNA BROWNING, MAYOR			

County explores hazardous duty pay for deputies

STAFF REPORT

An ad-hoc committee of the Crittenden County Fiscal Court met Friday, Aug. 28, to consider placing sheriff's deputies under hazardous-duty retirement coverage, but officials reached no decision after raising concerns about the program's cost and its reduced value for newer employees.

The central questions were whether the county can afford the higher employer contributions and whether the benefit would substantially improve retirement prospects for deputies hired under newer Kentucky Public Pensions Authority (KPPA) tiers.

Sheriff Evan Head said hazardous-duty coverage would help his department recruit and retain qualified deputies. He noted that an officer's duties and exposure to danger do not change based on the county where the officer works. He cited various other nearby counties that have the benefit.

The sheriff has been particularly persistent over the last couple of years about the county taking a serious look at adopting hazardous pay. The matter has been brought up many times in the past, too, well before Head became sheriff. Marion city policemen do not have the added benefit ei-



ther.

Head noted that he had previously asked that he be excluded from hazardous-duty coverage to reduce the county's cost and focus the benefit on deputies. At this time, Head would be the only sheriff's department employee that could qualify for anything beyond what the system calls Tier 3, which has the least attractive benefits.

County Treasurer Yvette Martin estimated the change would cost approximately \$8,000 more annually for each road deputy and about \$10,000 for a school resource officer, depending on which positions were approved. The ini-

tial annual cost was estimated at approximately \$35,000, but officials noted that figure would increase with future raises and changing retirement contribution rates.

For the fiscal year that began July 1, County Employees Retirement System (CERS) employers pay 34.72% of hazardous employees' payroll toward retirement, compared with 17.43% for nonhazardous employees. Hazardous employees generally contribute 10% of their pay, compared with 6% for nonhazardous employees.

Judge-Executive Perry Newcom said he supports providing the benefit if a reliable funding source can be found,

but the county's General Fund property tax rate of 11.4 cents per \$100 of assessed value does not generate enough additional revenue to easily absorb the expense.

"I'm not against it," Newcom said. "The question is whether we can afford it."

Newcom noted that only about \$16,000 remained in the sheriff's budget at the end of the previous fiscal year. Martin said the department remained within budget partly because it was not fully staffed and that no reserve has been included for a transfer into the sheriff's budget this year.

Other upcoming expenses include court security officers for the new judicial center and the eventual replacement of sheriff's department vehicles. Officials also said continuing financial problems at the county jail are limiting the county's flexibility.

"If jail stabilization happens, it makes this an easier conversation," Newcom said.

Magistrate Matt Grimes expressed support for hazardous-duty coverage but agreed that the committee had not identified how to finance it.

"I am 100% for it," Grimes said. "What will it cost, and where are we going to get it from? Those are questions we cannot answer right now."

Hazardous-duty coverage offers greater benefits to qualifying law enforcement officers, but the value varies by the employee's retirement tier, which is based on when they began their law enforcement career. Tier 1 members could retire after 20 years of hazardous service, while Tier 2 and Tier 3 members generally require 25 years. Tier 3, which covers employees entering the system since 2014, is a hybrid cash-balance plan rather than the traditional defined-benefit plan available under the first two tiers.

Officials also noted that death benefits for an officer killed in the line of duty are available regardless of whether the position is classified as hazardous.

Once the county enters eligible positions into hazardous-duty coverage, it cannot later withdraw them from the program, officials said.

Committee members attending were Newcom, Martin, County Attorney-elect Chad Nelson, magistrates Chad Thomas and Grimes, Head, Deputy Matt Chandler and Office Deputy Ashley Farmer.

The committee adjourned with plans to meet again in about three months, yet no date was set.

HOLIDAY

Continued from page 1

easy-rated, 2¾-mile loop through a landscape rich in natural beauty and Trail of Tears history. Livingston County WMA and State Natural Area and the Ohio River Islands WMA provide still more opportunities for hiking, hunting, fishing and nature watching.

For something with a historical flavor, the Fredonia Valley Heritage Society will host "A Walk Through Fredonia's Past" from 2-4 p.m. Saturday at Old Fredonia and Centerville Livingston Presbyterian cemeteries. The guided tour will highlight Revolutionary War patriots buried there. Admission is \$5, while children 12 and younger are admitted free with an adult.

And how about the lakes area. Even if you don't have a boat there are plenty of drive-up options, including the beach and swimming area at Old Kuttawa and Kentucky Dam.

Land Between Lakes National Recreation Area has hiking, camping and wonderful programs at the Nature Center and Planetarium. Moss Creek is a good place for swimming in the lake.

One my family's favorite is Maggie's Jungle Golf on US 641 just south of Kentucky Dam State Park.

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.

FINANCIAL FOCUS®

September 3, 2026

Common Social Security myths debunked

Social Security is often one of the most important income sources in retirement. Yet widespread myths about how it works can lead to confusion, unnecessary worry and poor planning decisions. Here's the truth behind five of the most common misconceptions.

Myth 1: Social Security is going broke. You've probably heard this one, but the full picture is more nuanced. According to the 2026 Social Security Board of Trustees Report, if Congress does nothing, the program would need to reduce benefits starting in 2032, paying roughly 78 cents for every dollar owed.

But that's just one scenario. Congress could raise the combined payroll tax from 12.4% to 16.65%, which the trustees estimate would secure full benefits through 2100. Other options include eliminating the earn-



ings cap subject to payroll tax or adjusting retirement ages. Lawmakers have tools to address this.

Myth 2: Social Security will cover all your retirement needs. Think of Social Security as a financial foundation, not the full building. According to the Social Security Administration, benefits replace only about 40% of pre-retirement income for a median earner. That means you'll likely need to account for most of your retirement income yourself. Building a strong personal savings strategy now can help close that gap.

Myth 3: You lose benefits permanently if you keep working. Not true. Social Security does have an "earnings test" that can

temporarily reduce benefits for people who claim early and keep working. If your earnings exceed a set annual cap – which changes each year – Social Security will withhold a portion of your benefits. But once you reach full retirement age, the Social Security Administration adjusts your monthly check higher to repay those withheld amounts over time.

Myth 4: An ex-spouse's benefits come out of your own. If you were married for at least 10 years and are currently unmarried, your former spouse may be eligible to collect on your earnings record, or you may be able to collect on theirs. Divorced spouse benefits can be up

to 50% of the other person's full retirement benefit. But those payments don't affect yours. Your monthly benefit is not reduced by anything paid to an ex-spouse or even a current spouse.

Myth 5: Social Security benefits are no longer taxed. Recent legislation caused some confusion here. The One Big Beautiful Bill Act did not eliminate taxes on Social Security benefits. If your combined income exceeds certain thresholds, you'll still owe taxes on a portion of your benefits.

The law also created a temporary deduction (available through 2028) for people 65 and older. Eligible taxpayers can deduct \$6,000 per qualifying



Grant Rogers
Financial Advisor

filer if their modified adjusted gross income is \$75,000 or less for singles or \$150,000 for couples. The deduction phases out at \$175,000 for singles and \$250,000 for joint filers.

The more you understand Social Security, the more control you have over your retirement outcome. Grounding your decisions in facts rather than assumptions can make a meaningful difference in your long-term financial security.

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H&H Home and Hardware

C-Plant Federal Credit Union in Marion

Grant Gardner Seal Coating

Gilbert Funeral Home

Hodge's Sports and Apparel

Dr. Johnny Newcom, Chiropractor

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING ROCKET FOOTBALL

ELECTED COUNTY JUDGE-EXECUTIVE | MAGISTRATES

Crittenden County Fiscal Court

Fiscal Court meets in regular session at the courthouse at 8:30 a.m., on the third Thursday of each month

Judge-executive



Perry Newcom (R)
107 S. Main St.
Marion, KY 42064
270.965.5251 (c)
270.704.0457 (c)

District 1 Magistrate



Dave Belt (R)
308 Chandler Farm Rd.
Sturgis, KY 42459
270.704.0199 (c)

District 2 Magistrate



Matt Grimes (R)
301 State Route 297
Marion, Ky. 42064
270.704.9832 (c)

District 3 Magistrate



Robert Kirby (R)
1698 Chapel Hill Road
Marion, KY 42064
270.889.1504 (c)

District 4 Magistrate



Chad Thomas (D)
701 Hebron Church Rd.
Marion, KY 42064
270.965.9727 (h)
270.339.4949 (c)

District 5 Magistrate



Travis Perryman (R)
1700 Jackson School Road
Fredonia KY 42411
270.969.1168 (c)

District 6 Magistrate



Scott Belt (R)
397 Fishtrap Road
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