



The Crittenden Press

Anna Boone is Regional Player of Year | Page 3

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AN INDEPENDENTLY-OWNED, LOCAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1879

ONE DOLLAR

Record Hayride ramps up band for Opry show

The spring rendition of Old Kentucky Hayride was a big hit as usual on Saturday at Fohs Hall. In fact, it was a record-setting sell-out, raising almost \$4,800 for Crittenden County Food Bank. Cutter and Cash and The Kentucky Grass host the semiannual music and variety show. At last week-end's event, the band unveiled its first Extended Play CD. The group will be performing at the Grand Ole Opry Saturday, April 6. Two chartered buses have already been filled and another is almost full to carry local fans to Nashville for the show. Tickets are \$50 for the bus ride, plus admission to the Opry, available online at varied prices.

Hunting, fishing permits no longer sold by clerk

Crittenden County Clerk's office no longer sells Kentucky hunting and fishing licenses and permits. March is renewal month for hunting and fishing licenses in the commonwealth. Hodge's Sports and Apparel on Sturgis Road sells licenses and they can be purchased online at any time by going to Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources' website at fw.ky.gov.

Free tree seedlings

Spring officially begins March 19, signaling that it is once again time to choose your free tree seedlings provided by the Crittenden County Conservation District. Distribution will begin at 10 a.m., and last until supplies run out on Friday, March 22 at the office on East Bellville Street across from The Press. This year's seedlings are bald cypress, pecan, pawpaw, white oak, persimmon, wild plum, eastern redbud, shagbark hickory and white pine. Kentucky Division of Forestry has also provided free white pines. Trees are bagged in twos with a limit of five bags (10 trees). Participating planters will support the district's goal to beautify yards and homeplaces, provide habitat and help maintain the county as a forested treasure.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- Marion City Council will meet at 5 p.m., Monday, March 18 at city hall.
- Fredonia City Council will meet at 7 p.m., Monday, March 18 at city hall.
- Marion Tourism and Recreation Commission will meet at 8:30 a.m., Tuesday, March 19 at the Marion Welcome Center.
- Salem City Council will meet at 5 p.m., Tuesday, March 19 at Deer Lakes meeting room.
- Crittenden County Fiscal Court will meet on a different day of the month than normal during March. Magistrates will meet at 8:30 a.m., on Tuesday, March 19 at the County Office Complex.
- Crittenden County Board of Education meets at 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, March 26 at Rocket Arena.
- Crittenden County Conservation District will meet at 6:30 p.m., Thursday, March 21 at its office on East Bellville Street.
- Livingston Fiscal Court meets at 5 p.m., Tuesday, March 26 at the county office complex in Smithland.

National Agriculture Week Starts Sunday



Father and son farming team Cody and Van Hunt are making a major investment in a grain leg, large-capacity bin and new drier as their hopes for a strong future for local agriculture revolves around what Van calls a "parlay bet."

Examining the State of Agriculture in Crittenden County

Despite perils of trade, future remains strong

Reading the tea leaves of Kentucky agriculture is like trying to predict springtime weather. It's a crap shoot at best, but most local farmers are holding onto high hopes that its future remains bright.

Van and Cody Hunt are a father and son team betting heavy on agriculture. They're making a large investment in their grain storage facilities, installing a new 120-foot tall grain leg, 1,000-bushel drier and a 60,000-bushel bin. Cost of the concrete alone is enough to choke a mule, but they're hoping to keep farming in the family for at least another generation.

"Hopefully, Cutler and my nephews will be interested enough to keep it going," said



National Agriculture Week is March 17-23, so The Press is getting you ready to celebrate agriculture and its role in the local economy with a 3-page special on 8, 9 and 10 of this week's newspaper.

38-year-old Cody.

His son, Cutler, is 10, but already drives a grain cart in the fields at harvest time.

While mixed signals flash in front of hopes of farming's ever changing future, the

Hunts remain steadfast.

"Farming is like a parlay bet," Van said, using some Las Vegas lingo that describes a combination of bets inside one wager.

The odds are almost always in favor of the house.

Although they have no crystal ball, farmers both old and young are trying to predict and plan for a future amid unstable prices and problematic inflation on materials, equipment and borrowing. Farm families have always lived with the pressures of feast-or-famine economics, but the outlook right now is as confusing as ever.

"The American farmer is the biggest gambler in the

See **FARM**/page 6

County proposes 2% insurance tax hike

Crittenden County magistrates met in special session Friday and proposed a tax increase on insurance premiums.

A public hearing on the proposal will be held during the fiscal court's regular monthly meeting at 8:30 a.m., Tuesday, March 19.

Because the city has its own 4% insurance premium tax, this rate increase will not affect city residents. County residents, however, would see their insurance tax double if the proposal reaches final approval at next week's meeting.

OTHERS NEARBY

Existing insurance premium tax rates in nearby cities and counties.

AREA CITIES	AREA COUNTIES
Marion 4%	Lyon none
Salem 5%	Union none
Fredonia 6%	Webster none
Providence 7.5%	Livingston none
Sturgis 12%	Caldwell none

Magistrates approved the plan by a 5-1 measure with Travis Perryman casting the only dissenting vote. A second reading of the proposal requires a roll call vote.

The county's budget committee, which has been

preparing a spending plan for FY25 that begins July 1, recommended doubling the rate from 2% to 4%. The county originally established its insurance premium in 2008. No bordering county currently has an insurance tax.

Crittenden County Judge-Executive Perry Newcom said rising costs in fuel, equipment, insurance, utilities and more is putting a pinch on the county's budget.

"The county budget committee started reviewing our budget requirements and we're obviously looking at

See **TAX**/page 6



Never know where love is hiding

For every reason there is a season. Late winter and spring is a great time to be amid nature if you're an outdoorsy person. It's typically too late for extremely cold weather and too early for tiggers and chix (that's slang for chiggers and ticks).

In Crittenden County, February and March are great months for ornament hunting. Deer antler sheds have a high value in the world of decor, even in posh boutiques of big cities. As most of you know, male whitetail deer drop their antlers in late winter when the mating season has ended. February and March are also dead periods for outdoors enthusiasts. Hunting seasons have played out and it's often not yet fishing weather for modest-mannered anglers. Shed antler hunting – shed hunting for short – is a popular outdoors ritual for naturalists, hikers, hunters, or just about anyone who craves time amid the hills and hollows instead of in front of the television.

The photograph above is a pretty good illustration of what a shed antler looks like when you walk upon one in the wild. But, examine it closely and you will find that the G3 (that's Boone and Crockett technical talk for the third vertical antler jutting from the antler's main beam) has a diamond ring on it. Wired to the antler is a tag with text: "Will you marry me?"

This is a staged scene, as you would expect. But the bride-to-be had no idea it was coming.

Twenty-six-year-old bachelorette Randi Dae Conway wandered upon this find while shed hunting with her pal JoEllen Gill near Fredonia in February. Her now fiancé Lucas Powell was hiding nearby behind a pine tree.

It was a cute proposal plan devised by Gill and Powell, and Conway had no idea they were in cahoots until Powell appeared in the forest like a phantom buck asking for the love of his life's hand in marriage.

The proposal scheme was tailor-made for this couple. They're the outdoorsy type, she the daughter of game warden Randy Conway and he a 26-year-old wildlife biologist for Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources.

Randi Dae and JoEllen have been besties for several years. JoEllen, if you

See **SHED**/page 6

The Crittenden Press

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Deaths

Cordell

Rebecca Jean Cordell, 68, of Marion, died Friday, March 8, 2024.

Surviving are her husband, Larry Cordell; four children, Michele Braden, Jesse Ferguson, Daniel Davis and Steven Cordell; eight grandchildren, Seth, Micah, Gabriel, Raven, Richard Lee, Trexler, Jaimie and Cody; and 15 great-grandchildren, Neava, LaKay, Little Richard, Natalia, Gabrielli, Luna, Cameron, Liliana, Octavia, Little Jesse, Haven, Paityn, Chevy, Jacks, and baby Trip.

She was preceded in death by her parents, David and Neva Gay.

Services were Sunday, March 10 at Gilbert Funeral Home.



Harris

Michael Harris, 51, of Salem, died Friday, March 1, 2024 at Baptist Health Paducah.

He was born April 3, 1972 to Henry E. and Peggy J (Cox) Harris. He worked as a carpenter the majority of his life and was a member of Life in Christ Church. He loved wood working and tinkering on old cars. But above all, he loved his family and friends.

Surviving are his wife, Carolyn Harris of Salem; six children, Jeremy Harris of Princeton, Jeffery (Rhonda) Belt of Salem, Nicholas (Randi) Belt of Burna, Christopher (Glenda) Belt of Salem, Dakota Belt of Salem and Levi Oliver of Marion; three brothers, Samuel (Helena) Harris of Salem, Everet (Karen) Harris of Marion and Quinton (Ashley) Harris of Paducah; a sister, Tina (Anthony) Cook of Burna; and four grandchildren, Addison, Jayla, Emma and Lyla Belt.

He was preceded in death by his parents; and



five brothers, Joseph "Dinky" Harris, Perry "Pewee" Harris, Everett Dale Harris, Terry Wayne Harris and Tony Harris.

Services are at 2 p.m., Sunday, March 17 in the chapel of Boyd Funeral Directors and Cremation Services. Burial will follow in Lola Cemetery.

Friends may visit with the family from 5-8 p.m., on Saturday, March 16.

Akridge

Nona Christine Akridge, 88, passed away peacefully in her home surrounded by her family and caregivers Sunday evening, March 10, 2024. She was born July 22, 1935 in Bowling Green to Emmett Garland and Marcella Matthews Taylor. The Taylor family soon moved to Marion where Nona grew up, graduating from Marion High School when she was 16.

She was a dedicated, passionate teacher. After attending Western Kentucky State College (now Western Kentucky University), she taught first at Crittenden County High School. There she met a handsome young typing teacher and basketball coach named Dean Akridge and they were married on May 17, 1958. Akridge then accepted a position as an Extension Home Demonstration Agent for Caldwell and Crittenden counties, and later became a nutritionist for the Kentucky Health Department in Livingston and Crittenden counties. She began teaching home economics at Lyon County High School in the mid-1960s and taught there until she retired in 1983.



Akridge loved the women she taught with and she loved her students – all girls until she started teaching bachelor's living to boys in the late 1970s. She coached track and the cheerleaders, was class advisor, directed school plays, built floats for the Founder's Day parade... the list goes on and on. She especially loved serving as advisor for the Future Homemakers of America (FHA). There is something ironic about a woman who taught home economics to so many young women during her three decades in the high school classroom having three sons. So, not surprisingly, Akridge loved getting daughters when Jill, Michelle, and Andrea came into the family.

Nona and Dean Akridge had an amazing 63 years together – their love for each other was on display every single day. They were inseparable and everything was 'Dean and Nona'. Nona's support for Dean was a constant, whether it was a hot breakfast every morning, being a sounding board for business decisions, or hosting all the guests that Dean would invite home, many at the last minute. She did all those things on top of her job as a teacher, giving her sons early and important lessons about women as professionals.

Akridge loved to travel and she and Dean had wonderful trips to Germany, Australia, Mexico, the Rockies, New England, Florida and so many other places, traveling with friends or to visit friends. They could make an adventure out of a trip to a 4-H speech contest or a basketball tournament. She was an amazing cook. Period. She loved to cook and while her boys were in

school, few things made her happier than a big group of their teenage friends coming over to the house and devouring ridiculous quantities of her cooking. Store parties, after-prom parties, birthday parties, showers, anniversary receptions, Nona knew how to throw them all – and she did, in her own wonderful style.

Surviving are three sons, Jay (Michelle), Paul (Jill), and Lance (Andrea); seven grandchildren, Logan (Jennifer), Olivia (Luke), Sean (Liz), Samantha, Bryce, Luke, and Elise; and five great-grandchildren, Audrey, Henry, Charles, Samuel, and Jack.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Dean; her parents, Emmett and Marcella Taylor; and a brother, Donald Taylor.

The family would like to express their thanks to all who remained close to Nona as her health declined. A very special thanks to her caregivers – Melissa, Beth, Jane, Jennifer, Pauletta, Stephanie and Karen. We will be forever grateful for the loving care you provided our 'Nana' – she was blessed to have a group of angels around her who loved her like their own mothers.

Memorial gifts can be made to the Lyon County Retired Teacher's Scholarship Fund, 1808 US Hwy. 641 North, Eddyville, KY, 42038; or the Dean and Nona Akridge Family Scholarship at Murray State University payable to MSU Foundation, Office of Development, 200 Heritage Hall, Murray, KY 42071 or MurrayState.edu/give-

now.

Services are at 1 p.m., Thursday, March 14 at Lakeland Funeral Home with Eddyville Baptist Youth Minister Jay Brown officiating. Visitation is from 4-7 p.m., Wednesday, March 13 at Lakeland Funeral Home in Eddyville. Burial will follow in Fredonia Cemetery.

Lanham

Michael Thomas Lanham, 60 of Salem, died Monday, March 11, 2024 at his home.

He enjoyed caring for his animals, playing guitar and was an avid Hot Wheels collector.

Surviving is his wife of 37 years, Karen Rushing



Lanham of Salem; a daughter, Kennidy (Cass Bennett) Lanham of Fredonia; and a nephew, Casey Woodall of Marion.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Donald Perry and Sherrie Ann Turley Lanham; and a sister, Dawn Michelle Lanham.

Memorial services will be scheduled at a later date.

Myers Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

Online Condolences

myersfuneralhomeonline.com
boydfuneraldirectors.com
gilbertfunerals.com

Most obituaries in this newspaper are free. Ask your funeral director about custom, fee-based obituaries.

Community Calendar

Call (270) 965-3191 to share your organization's

- Thursday, March 14**
- Line dancing class is at 9:30 a.m., at the Crittenden County Senior Citizens Center.
 - Crittenden County High School SBDM will meet at 3:30 p.m., in the high school library.
 - Marion's VFW post located at 412 N. College St., invites veterans to attend a monthly meeting with a meal to follow at 6:30 p.m.
- Saturday, March 16**
- An Easter breakfast will be held at 9 a.m., March 16 at Crittenden County Health & Rehab.
- Tuesday, March 19**
- Crittenden County Elementary School SBDM will meet at 4 p.m., in the high school library.
- Saturday, March 23**
- An Easter egg hunt and egg decorating contest will begin at 11 a.m., at Salem Springlake.
 - Salem Masonic Lodge #81 will serve its monthly breakfast from 7-10 a.m. Cost is \$6 for the all-you-can-eat breakfast at the lodge at 237 W. Main St., Salem.



With gratitude, joy, and a bit of sadness, we are honored to announce the retirement of our friend

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for information on obituaries, funeral arrangements, pre-need arrangements and background information about the funeral home.



BASKETBALL

Boone Region 2 Player of Year

Crittenden County sophomore Anna Boone has been chosen Player of the Year in the Second Region. It's the second year in a row that a Crittenden County player has won the honor, which is selected by coaches based on regular-season play. Last season, Taylor Guess was the region's top player. Prior to Guess and now Boone, CCHS had never had someone chosen for player of the year. Boone, just a sophomore, averaged 22 points and 6 rebounds a game, and finished with 63 blocked shots, an average of 2 per contest. She scored 215 points at the foul line, the most in Kentucky. Boone was also chosen for the All-Region Regular-Season Team and the All-Region Tournament Team.

Champ is All-Region

Rocket senior Travis Champion was chosen for the All Second Region for the third year in a row despite being injured most of the season. He only appeared in six games, but the respect he'd earned in his career was apparent by his being chosen to the all-region team and the all-district team.



Refs single out CCHS

Crittenden County High School Athletic Director Bryan Qualls recently accepted the Second Region Basketball Officials Association's Hospitality Award on behalf of the school. CCHS was chosen by officials as the best host school, as defined by a clean and comfortable facility, readily available administrators and accessibility to resources, among other criteria. Pictured with Qualls are officials Matt Bell, Alfred Williams, John Travis, Ryan Reusch, and Larry Thompson.

2nd Region Tournament

GIRLS AT TRIGG COUNTY FIRST ROUND
Henderson Co. 72, Crittenden Co. 44
Christian County 56, Madisonville 51
Hopkinsville 56, Union County 47
Hopkins Central 61, Lyon County 59
FRIDAY'S SEMIFINALS
Henderson Co. 58, Christian Co. 40
Hopkins Central 62, Hopkinsville 42
SATURDAY'S CHAMPIONSHIP
Henderson Co. 55, Hopkins Central 33

BOYS AT HOPKINSVILLE FIRST ROUND
Henderson Co. 66, Trigg County 49
UHA 81, Caldwell County 60
Madisonville 67, Union County 47
Lyon County 63, Christian Co. 49
MONDAY'S SEMIFINALS
Henderson Co. 69, UHA 34
Lyon County 84, Madisonville 62
TUESDAY'S CHAMPIONSHIP
Lyon Countys 58, Henderson Co. 44

OUTDOORS

Hunting Seasons

Here are some of the most common hunting opportunities currently in season or coming up:

Youth Turkey	April 6-7
Turkey	April 13 - May 5
Bullfrog	May 17 - Oct. 31
Squirrel	May 18 - June 21
Coyote	Year Round
Ground hog	Year Round



Lady Rockets open with win over Storm

Crittenden County opened its fast-pitch softball season with a 9-6 win over Hopkins Central Monday. The game was tied at 6 for a time in the middle innings. Andrea Federico had a home run, double and 5 RBI. Hannah Jent and Morgan Piper had two hits apiece and Jaycee Champion drove in 2 runs on a double. Elliot Evans and Anna Boone shared the pitching. Boone closed out the game and got the win. CCHS hosts Mayfield on Friday then goes to Ballard



Rocket hurler Asa McCord fielded a comebacker to the mound then wheels to make a throw at first base during CCHS's scrimmage Thursday at home against Murray High.

Memorial on Saturday for a doubleheader against the Bombers and Carlisle County.

Rockets open with a bang

The CCHS baseball team opened its season Tuesday with a resounding 20-0 win

over Community Christian Academy in three innings. CCA pitchers walked 16 Rocket batters and the defense made 3 errors.

Crittenden scored 14 first-inning runs en route to a shutout as Colt Bailey led the way with 2 RBIs. Jeremiah

Foster doubled and CCHS had six hits in the rout. Chase Conyer and Tyler Belt pitched for CCHS.

The baseball team tied Murray 6-6 in pre-season scrimmage last week and beat Madisonville 5-2 in its other warmup game.



Crittenden County High School's fast-pitch softball team members are (front from left) Kayliegh Weathers, Aubre Conyer, Jaycee Champion, Jaylee Champion, (middle) Aliza Maraman, Lilly Cappello, Brodi Rich, Haley Moore, Sadie Green, Caroline Martin, Abigail Champion, Brenna Kemmer, Macibelle Hardesty, (back) coaches Matt Jent and Jamie Brown, Elle McDaniel, Georgia Holeman, Anna Boone, Elliot Evans, Andrea Federico, Morgan Piper, Hannah Jent and coaches Shawn Holeman and Chris Evans.

Tougher schedule awaits defending district champs

STAFF REPORT

Crittenden County opened its high school fast-pitch softball season this week facing one of the most challenging schedules in school history. The defending Fifth District champion Lady Rockets were regional semifinalists a year ago and expectations are even greater this season. The beefed up schedule excludes bunnies and includes McCracken County, Marshall County, Ballard Memorial, Madisonville and Tilghman – all among the best teams in their respective regions. The Fifth District is arguably the best in the Second Region from top to bottom, said CCHS second-year coach Chris Evans, with Livingston, Trigg and Lyon all in the mix. Returning for the Rocket girls are all-district performers from last spring, Anna Boone, Elliot Evans and Elle McDaniel. All three hit over .400 last season. McDaniel had successful shoulder surgery during the offseason to repair a softball throwing injury suffered last summer with her travel team. Boone and Evans will handle most of the pitching chores, but sev-

CCHS Roster

Athlete	Grade	
Jaycee Champion	Sr	OF
Aubre Conyer	Sr	SS
Jaylee Champion	Sr	OF
Kayleigh Weathers	Jr	2B
Anna Boone	So	P
Elliot Evans	So	P
Andrea Federico	So	OF
Georgia Holeman	So	OF
Elle McDaniel	So	C
Hannah Jent	Fr	3B
Morgan Piper	Fr	C
Macibelle Hardesty	Fr	1B
Aliza Maraman	8th	OF
Haley Moore	8th	OF
Ayanna Mathews	8th	OF
Abigail Champion	7th	SS
Brodi Rich	7th	2B
Brenna Kemmer	7th	OF
Sadie Green	7th	1B
Caroline Martin	7th	OF
Lilly Cappello	7th	OF

enth graders Brodi Rich and Brenna Kemmer will get some innings in the circle. Back on the infield are senior shortstop Aubre Conyer and freshman third sacker Hannah Jent, whose bat is showing more pop this spring. First base will be handled by Boone or sophomore slugger Andrea Federico and newcomer Macibelle Hardesty has been working out there, too, during preseason, as has

middle-schooler Sadie Green. Second base will be handled by committee with freshman Morgan Piper, Rich, seventh-grader Abigail Champion and junior Kayliegh Weathers getting the most reps in camps. The outfield will be anchored by centerfield senior Jaycee Champion. Federico and Evans will be out there at times, and so could Boone. Senior Jaylee Champion was close to nailing down a starting role at a corner outfield spot before an elbow injury sidelined her. Her status remains unclear as the season gets underway, but she's almost certainly out for the first week or two. Returning sophomore Georgia Holeman, who has begun to work on slap hitting, is a candidate for a regular role in the outfield and so are Rich and Kemmer. A couple of other middle schoolers, Caroline Martin and Lilly Cappello, show signs of promise in the grass and eighth-grader Aliza Maraman continues to project as a good hitter. Rounding out the junior varsity roster are Haley Moore and Ayanna Mathews, who both play outfield.

SOFTBALL

March 11 Hopkins Central (W)
March 15 Mayfield
March 16 Carlisle County
March 16 at Ballard Memorial
March 18 at Trigg County
March 22 Tilghman
March 25 McCracken County
March 26 Madisonville
March 28 Lyon County
March 30 at Livingston Central
April 5-6 Clarksville, Tenn. Tourn.
April 11 Caldwell County
April 12 at Madisonville
April 15 Trigg County
April 16 Livingston Central
April 18 at Union County
April 20 at Calloway County
April 22 at Lyon County
April 25 at Marshall County
April 27 Webster County
April 27 Hickman County
April 29 Henderson County
May 2 Christian County
May 3 at Mayfield
May 6 at Webster County
May 9 Union County
May 10 at Murray
May 13 at Caldwell County
May 16 at Hopkins Central
May 17 Ballard Memorial
May 18 at Tilghman



CCHS Track Roster

Athlete	Grade
Belt, Shelbi	9
Bloodworth, Kylie	9
Cambell, Lizzie	12
Duncan, Jayden	11
Geary, Ella	10
Gilchrist, Layken	9
Grau, Aubrey	10
Hardesty, Macibelle	9
Maness, Payton	12
Martinez, Mary	11
Peak, Ruby	9
Penn, Ashton	8
Potter, Preseley	9
Potter, Karsyn	12
Rich, Callie	8
Starkey, Cheyenne	10
Suggs, Aerie	10
Whitney, Ella	10
Belt, Colt	9
Byford, Noah	9
Carr, Devon	10
Chaney, Bryan	11
Duncan, Brayden	9
Duncan, Jaxton	7
Hazel, Bobby	10
Henry, Seth	11
Jones, Jayden	8
Markham, Gaiqe	9
Martinez, Noah	7
McCord, Asa	11
Musser, Aiden	9
Nesbitt, Cameron	8
Riley, Ayden	8
Rogers, River	9
Starkey, Landon	10
Starkey, Glenn	10
Topp, Gunner	9
Travis, Reece	7
Valentine, Mathew	11

Track Schedule

March 16 at Caldwell County
March 19 CCMS at McCracken
March 23 at Inv. of South at Marshall
March 26 at Ballard All Comers
March 28 at Caldwell Quad
March 30 at Calloway Invitational
April 13 at Owensboro Invitational
April 13 at Mayfield Fast Times
April 16 CCMS at Ballard Memorial
April 19 Gullo Relays at Marshall
April 23 Crittenden Quad
April 27 at Murray Invitational
April 30 CCMS at Murray All Comers
May 4 Area 1 at Paducah
May 7 Crittenden Quad
May 11 at Caldwell Final Flight

STAFF REPORT

Track and field coach Sandra Martinez predicts a strong season from a host of talented female athletes on the Crittenden County High School team this spring. However, male numbers are thin in the upper grades. School-record shot put holder Karsyn Potter in her senior campaign is expected to continue her rise in the shot and discus. And, the girls' 4x800 should pick up where it left off last year with everyone returning. Mary Martinez, Aubrey Grau, Ella Geary and Presley Potter set a school record over and over last spring in that relay and the coach thinks they will continue to improve. A deep 4x400 squad featuring the Potter sisters, Payton Maness, Martinez, Geary and

Grau will give the coach some flexibility to chalk up team points in that relay. Martinez will be strong in the 1,600 and 3,200, Geary is a good 800 meters soloist and Maness is the team's top 400 runner. Geary is also within striking distance of a school record in long jump and Maness is a good high jumper. CCHS hall of famer Jeremy Croft is helping the team as a volunteer coach, Martinez says. Juniors Brian Chaney, who throws in field events, and Matthew Valentine, a sprinter, are the only upperclassmen on the boys' side of the roster. Underclassmen Noah Byford, Gaiqe Markham and River Rogers are promising runners.

County moves to surplus items at former courthouse

County officials last week okayed a plan to donate shrubbery around the former courthouse to the Phyllis Sykes Reading Garden at Crittenden County Elementary School.

Sykes, a former teacher and city councilwoman, tragically drowned in her backyard pool almost two years ago.

Volunteers plan to dig up the ornamental plants and reuse them at the school.

In others business during a special fiscal court meeting last week, magistrates gave their blessing to a contract to hire Buntin Auction Service to sell furniture, fixtures and any other valuable metals or items from the former courthouse in a public auction tentatively planned for April 20.

The courthouse in the center of town will soon be torn down to make room for a nearly \$20 million justice center.

•The court also approved a move to make Jason Singleton administrator of the county dog shelter.



KDFWR prescribed burning at Big Rivers wildlife area

Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources is planning to conduct several prescribed burns on the Big Rivers Wildlife Management Area in Crittenden and Union counties this week.

During this period, the public may notice smoke arising from the Wildlife Management Area.

Temporary road closures on Bells Mine Road may also be experienced.

Bridge south of Dycusburg closed, traffic rerouting

Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) has closed a section of KY 295 at the Lyon-Crittenden County Line between Eddyville and Dycusburg to ensure public safety after engineering inspections identified structural issues on a bridge. The section will be closed to traffic until further notice while engineers determine if the bridge can be repaired or replaced.

An inspection team found deterioration of structural beams at the Livingston Creek Bridge. The bridge is located between Joe Peek Road in Lyon County and Millie Peek Road in Crittenden County. Motorists should avoid the area, use an alternate route and plan more travel time for commutes. Signage and barricades will be posted miles ahead of the bridge to restrict travel.

Approximately 675 vehicles a day travel this section of KY 295 on average.

All Kentucky bridges get a detailed inspection every two years, with long-span river and lake bridges getting an extra walk-through inspection annually. KYTC certified inspectors are responsible for inspecting bridges on all public roads in the Commonwealth.

Amish with ties to county perish in Wisconsin crash

Former members of Crittenden County's Amish community perished in a tragic traffic accident Friday in what is being called the second deadliest crash in Wisconsin history.

Seven of nine people killed in the wreck had either lived here or have relatives still residing in Crittenden County. Also dead was the driver of the van carrying the Amish family group from Virginia to Wisconsin to visit other family. The crash occurred in Clark County, Wisc., at an intersection of a rural two-lane highway.

Those who died were driver James McCoy of Pounding Mill, Va. The Amish were Linda Byler, 44; Lydia Byler, 24, Linda's daughter; Ellen Schrock, 23, also Linda's daughter; Orlah Schrock, 24, Ellen's

husband; Judy Rose Schrock, 6 months old, who is Ellen and Orlah's daughter; Delilah Schrock, 21, Orlah's sister; and Suzanna Hertzler, 18. All were from around Burke's Garden, Va., in Tazwell County.

The driver of the tractor-trailer that collided with the van is also dead, according to reports from a Wisconsin television station. The only survivor was two-year-old Micah Schrock. The news report said his grandparents from Virginia had arrived in Wisconsin to be with the hospitalized child.

What to know about auto registration system still experiencing problems

Kentucky County Clerks Association has important information for the public as it continues to work through the implementation of the state's new vehicle registration system known as KAVIS. County clerks are processing an increasing number of transactions each day; however, there are still significant delays and problematic transactions.

KCCA leadership has expressed concerns and frustrations with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) on behalf of customers and motor vehicle staff. KYTC shares that the KAVIS team is working seven days a week to correct programming errors that continue to plague KAVIS. In addition, too often, inconsistent information is being shared with clerks by KYTC's Motor Vehicle Licensing Division (MVL) about transactions, potential workarounds and even MVL's level of assistance with problematic transactions. This slows down service for customers.

Kentucky county clerks continue to call on KYTC officials to resolve the issues within MVL and restore dependable support. The group asks customers to be as prepared as possible when they visit the clerk's office. The following steps will make the visit more efficient:

- Bring your driver's license or state issued identification card.
 - Bring your renewal notice and previous year's registration.
 - Bring your Kentucky proof of insurance printed or refer to your County Clerk if there is an insurance email address or fax number available for your county.
 - Be prepared to wait longer than normal. It takes time to work through each customer's account and merge vehicles for each customer.
 - Check your County Clerk's Holiday Hours for March 29 and March 30.
 - For any transaction by mail, online or drop-off include a contact phone number so you can be reached.
 - KYTC's web portal drive.ky.gov is available for renewals with verified proof of insurance and the customer is current with all taxes owed.
- March is the busiest month of the year in the County Clerks' motor vehicle departments. Currently, 963,462 renewal notices were mailed all with a March 2024 expiration date, compared to 310,019 in January and 296,490 in February. March renewals include all farm tags, campers, trailers, March birthdate renewals, fleets, heavyweight plates, and the start of boat renewal season.

3 local students on EKU list

Three Crittenden County students were named to the Dean's List and President's List at Eastern Kentucky University for the fall 2023 term.

Will Perkins was named to the Dean's List; and Kady Parrish and Lili Newcom were named to the President's List. Parrish is studying police studies and Newcom criminal justice.

To achieve Dean's List honors, students attempting 12 credit hours must earn a 3.75 GPA, students attempting 13 credit hours must earn a 3.65 GPA, and students attempting 14 or more credit hours must earn a 3.5 GPA. All grade point averages are out of a possible 4.0.

*Between Printed Editions
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of Marion earned a 5-star superior rating, its 40th in a row, according to Bauer Financial Reports, Inc., Coral Gables, Fla., the nation's leading independent bank research firm.

10 YEARS AGO

March 13, 2014

- For the second year in a row, Erin McDonald was selected to perform the national anthem at the Kentucky High School Athletic Association's Girls' Sweet 16 basketball tournament on the campus of Western Kentucky University.
- Crittenden County two-sport standout Brenden Phillips signed a letter of intent to play baseball at Brescia University in Owensboro. Phillips was a catcher who hit. 250 as a junior for the Rockets and was second on the team for on-base percentage and third in hits, among other impressive statistics.
- Colby Davis earned high marks for the creative proposal he choreographed in asking Bethany Heaton for her hand in marriage. Using a giant puzzle he ordered online and the handiwork of his co-workers at National Railway Equipment Co, in Paducah, Davis led Heaton on a scavenger hunt for puzzle pieces before popping the question on the dock of his uncle's McCracken County pond.

*Read Brenda Underdown's
Forgotten Passages column
at The Press Online
between newspaper issues.*

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It is important

Crittenden County Clerk's Office has your current address so you will receive notice of your new voting precinct following redistricting.



You may also call
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MARK WILLIAMS (270) 836-0819**

LIVINGSTON COUNTY, KY 118.1 - \$299,000 - This property has the right habitat for deer and turkey hunting, with the added bonus of a rustic one-room hunting cabin. Located in a qdm neighborhood and has plenty of deer sign throughout!

LIVINGSTON COUNTY, KY 91.29 - \$36,869 - Property has a diverse mix of habitat types and a pond system, numerous entry points along road frontage, hunter-friendly topography, a creek, and planted pines.

CRITTENDEN COUNTY, KY 55.78 - \$25,220 - This tract has the right blend of habitat types for deer and turkey to grow and hold big bucks with the added bonus of a fully furnished pole barn cabin! Includes a Redneck hunting blind and feeders!

LIVINGSTON COUNTY, KY - 113.44 ACRES - \$269,422 - All timber hunting tract. This tract is located in an area known for big bucks and has timber diversity.

LIVINGSTON COUNTY, KY - 119.44 ACRES - \$235,906 - Mostly timber hunting tract geared toward turkeys and whitetails. This tract has a diverse topography with dynamic terrain features and timber diversity.

LIVINGSTON COUNTY, KY - 189.63 ACRES - \$501,265 - All timber hunting tract. This property is a timbered ridge top with food plots and a natural saddle.

LIVINGSTON COUNTY, KY - 427 ACRES - \$918,237 - Timbered ridge top hunting tract! This tract has the ideal blend of habitat types for mature whitetails and wild turkeys.

CRITTENDEN COUNTY, KY - 201.98 ACRES - REDUCED! \$759,000 - This property has a diverse blend of habitat types and topography with a home, outbuildings and a proven history of big bucks. The home has 2,025 square feet of living space with three bedrooms and two bathrooms.

CRITTENDEN COUNTY, KY - 0.9 ACRES - REDUCED! \$105,000 - This rustic cabin with storage buildings provides the ideal base camp for your hunting adventures! This cabin has 1,192 square feet of living space with three bedrooms and one bathroom, a spacious living area with a fireplace, a full kitchen with plenty of cabinet space, a full bathroom and laundry room.

CRITTENDEN COUNTY, KY - 265.67 ACRES - \$742,500 - Diverse hunting tract with waterfowl potential! This tract has the ideal habitat types for deer, turkeys and waterfowl hunting! This river bottom farm has approximately 1.5 miles of frontage along the Tradewater River.

LIVINGSTON COUNTY, KY - 139.95 ACRES - \$318,386 - Great hunting tract with dynamic hunter friendly topography, mast producing timber, security cover, open areas for food plots and a good trail system.



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50 YEARS AGO

March 14, 1974

- A taste of summer had visited the county in early March as temperatures soared high enough to cause a tulip tree in the lawn of Bob Crooks to burst into full bloom.
- John May, president of the West Kentucky Cattlemen's Association, presented awards to 4-H members Jimmy Boone and Joan Sanders for their participation in the 4-H Graze-More-Beef project. The presentations were made at the 4-H Achievement banquet at Marion Methodist Church.
- The arrival of warmer weather came just in time to accompany the purchase of new playground equipment for Tolu Elementary school. The Tolu PTA purchased nine swings and six see-saws which provided a great deal of fun and exercise for students.
- The Crittenden County Lions Club participated in testing the eyes of the students in all schools in the county. Through the donated time of local optometrist Dr. Howard Mathis and some members, the Lions Club met its objective to complete examinations for all Crittenden County students.

25 YEARS AGO

March 18, 1999

- From 1980 to 1982, Shannon Weaver's father, Norm, was the head boys' basketball coach at Crittenden County High School. Shannon was a good player on his dad's teams for two years as both a small forward and an off guard. He played as a Rocket during his sophomore and junior season before finishing his high school career at Edmonson County, after his dad left to coach there. In 1997 he accepted a job at Auburn University as the assistant men's basketball coach under head coach Cliff Ellis. The Auburn Tigers were the number one seed heading into the NCAA tournament and therefore, Weaver would be on the sidelines for an NCAA sweet 16.
- The Cumberland River Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation named two recipients of FFA scholarships during its annual banquet. Jamie Hunt and Corey Payne were awarded \$250 scholarships. The local NWTF chapter named the annual FFA scholarship for long-time state fish and wildlife employee Doug Travis.
- Farmers Bank and Trust Company

The Crittenden Press

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Newsprint is a renewable resource. Recycling bins are located at the county's convenience center on U.S. 60 east of Marion.

Community enjoys events provided by schools

Schools today are so much different today than they were in my school days, there is no comparison. In some ways they are better, in other, maybe not. It is all in the way we judge values and the way life-styles have changed.

The school day would start at 8 o'clock each morning with the bell sounding for "books." Nobody liked to be tardy and usually everyone was there. The bell was either mounted on a pole, or at Crayne, the teacher carried a hand bell which she would stand on the porch and ring. Everybody lined up and marched into the schoolhouse in an orderly fashion.

Most school-houses were built with the door or doors on one end of the building with the blackboard on the wall at the other end. At the beginning of the school day first order of the morning would be roll call by the teacher, some days we would answer with a Bible verse. "Jesus saves," was always a favorite.

From the archives of The Crittenden Press come these fond memories of school days and activities gone by. Remember these days of a simpler time and a slower pace of life.

May 23, 1947, Frances School Hosts the Grand Ole Opry

Appearing in person at Frances High School gym are WSM Grand Ole Opry entertainers, including Grandpa Jones and his children, featuring Lonzo and Oscar, Lillie Bell, pretty singer of songs, Ramona Champion, old time girl fiddler, Clyde and Marie Dilleha, the Tenn. Sweethearts, Loyd George and Rollin Sullivan.

June 6, 1947, County Spring Rally Day Winners

The four high scoring 4-H winners of Spring Rally Day Contests will accompany County Agent O. M. Shelby and Miss Roberta Croft, leader of the Tolu 4-H Club, to Lexington June 9 to enter various Farm and Home Contest and to enjoy the fine programs scheduled for work, fun and fellowship of all Kentucky 4-H members attending.

Miss Jackie Lee Mile of Tolu Club will represent Crittenden County in the Kentucky Style Revue Contest, Miss Mildred Underdown of Hebron Club will be our Canning Judge Contestant, and Virgil Cook, Jr. of Hebron and Jimmie Brown of Shady Grove will represent the county in the Water Management Contest. The trip of these 4-H contestants and leader was sponsored by the Crittenden County Farm Bureau.

Aug. 8, 1947 – Owen School News

Mrs. Edna Hodge, instructor at Owen, gave her pupils, patrons and friends an ice cream supper on Saturday night. A large crowd attended. Miss Jean Tabor was awarded the cake for the prettiest girl, and \$17 was cleared and will be used for the benefit of the district and library books for the school. A prize of a watermelon was given to the man having the dirtiest feet. A man from Marion was awarded the watermelon.

Nov. 7, 1947, Dycusburg School

The box supper at the school building Friday, Oct. 24, was quite a success. The fish pond was a novelty for the little folks.

A pair of socks was given to Milley Peek for being the "worst hen-

pecked man" present. James Polk was winner of the cake which was raffled off, and a cake was given for the most beautiful girl.

The proceeds were \$87.91, which will be used for some very much-needed improvements for the school.

Feb 11, 1949 – Copperas Springs School Winner In Improvement Move

The Copperas Springs School won first place and a prize of \$30 for making the most improvements on buildings and school grounds for the present school year. A total of \$52.27 per pupil enrolled was used



Brenda Underdown
County Historian

Forgotten Passages

for making the improvements. Mrs. Arrie Joyce is the teacher.

Lily Dale School, with Mrs. Nellie Stallions as teacher, won second place and a prize of \$25. This school expended \$27.15 per pupil for school improvement.

Tolu won third place and a prize of \$20. Tolu contributed \$17.48 per pupil for improvements. Mrs. Cleo Croft is principal.

Fourth place and a prize of \$10 went to Forest Grove school. Mr. George Wofford is teacher. Improvements were \$10.68 per pupil.

Other schools reporting and their rating were as follows: Frances with sixth place; White Hall

Ice Cream Supper At Crayne

The Crayne School P. T. A. is sponsoring an ICE CREAM SUPPER on FRIDAY NIGHT, AUGUST 21, at the Crayne School Building starting at 7:00 o'clock.

SANDWICHES, COLD DRINKS, HOMEMADE CAKES AND PIES AND ICE CREAM WILL BE SOLD

EVERYONE INVITED ————— BE SURE AND COME

THERE WILL BE MUSIC AND FUN FOR EVERYONE

FALL FESTIVAL

TO BE HELD AT
MEXICO SCHOOL
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1953
AT 7:00 P. M.
Box Supper, Food and Drinks
Free Entertainment

PUBLIC CORDIALLY INVITED

Advertisements tell of fun events taking place at two small county schools. Everyone looked forward to these fun school get-togethers. The whole community would take part in the festivities, and in doing so, they supported their community schools.

with seventh place; Piney Fork eighth place; Glendale ninth place and Boaz tenth place.

Feb. 25, 1949, Crayne School Hold Closing Exercises

Commencement exercises for the eighth grade were held at Crayne school Friday morning, Feb. 18, at 10 o'clock.

The invocation was conducted by Rev. Felix Sanders, pastor of Marion Methodist Church. His message was on "Things Necessary to Obtain Happiness" which was inspirational to all present.

Principal speaker of the hour was County Attorney D. H. Postlethweighte. The subject of his address was "Value of Effort." Diplomas were presented by the teacher, Hayden Harpending, to the following students: Carol Ruth Perryman, valedictorian of the class; salutatorian

port a successful school term. Many improvements were added to both school building and the grounds.

March 4, 1949, Lilly Dale

Our school closed last Friday with a small program. Those present besides the parents were Mr. and Mrs. Harry Haynes and Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Loyd.

The children receiving diplomas from the eighth grade were Marvin Ordway, Reuben Parmley and Jimmy Stallions.

Those receiving certificates and awards for perfect attendance were Eugene Sutton, Leon Sutton, Donna Fay Rushing and Donald Ray Rushing.

Those receiving prizes for the most headmarks for the entire years were as follows: Grade II – Katherine Parmley; Grade III – Donna Fay Rushing; Grade IV – Gladys Parmley; Grade VI – Jackie Stallions; Grade VII – Eugene Sutton, and Grade VIII – Marvin Ordway.

March 1949. Piney Fork School closed at Piney Fork on Feb. 25, with Mrs. Dorothy Booker, teacher. Parents and friends took a basket dinner and games were played in the morning and lunch was served at noon. It was voted unanimously for Mrs. Booker to return another year as teacher.

Eighth grade students that passed their exams were Martha Jean Alexander, Beauton Corley, Wendell Ordway and Carlos Bond.

I am thankful I grew up in the time period I did and was able to attend the one and two-room school at Crayne. I often reminisce about the "good old days," and one of my favorite topics is the old school days.

(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).

Pentecostals of West KY

invites you to join us for a special day of worship & ministry

March 17, 2 p.m.

Special presentation from
Teen Challenge of Dickson, KY

Special Speaker
Jeremy Moore

Free meal following service

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2024 REPUBLICAN MASS MEETING

6 p.m., March 21

200 Industrial Drive, Marion

All Crittenden County Republicans registered by 12/31/23 are invited to vote on the delegations to the KY 1st District Nominating Convention!

Photo identification required.

OIF, OEF, Desert Storm and Desert Shield Veterans

Your Local VFW NEEDS YOU!

Come join us
6:30 p.m., March 14
at our monthly meeting.

Veterans enjoy a free meal to follow.

412 N. College St., Marion

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Call Crittenden County Clerk at (270) 965-3403 to inquire.

Marion Baptist Easter Egg Hunt

Hop on over to our annual Easter Egg Hunt! With thousands of eggs to find, and divided age groups, every child in the family will have a blast!

The Egg hunt will begin at 10AM!

30 March 10AM

City County Park Soccer Fields

SHED

Continued from page 1
recall, was the subject of an article we had in the paper a few years ago about her wounded-deer-tracking dog. So, now you know why they are all friends. There was no hint of a conspiracy when JoEllen invited Randi Dae to go shed hunting one sunny day.

“She stepped perfectly right over my purposefully placed trap,” said JoEllen. “She lit up like a Christmas tree! Lucas then came out of nowhere and got down on one knee.”

She said, Yes!
The couple met about four years ago when a young wildlife technician from eastern Kentucky ended up on an official KDFWR excursion banding wood ducks. Lo and behold, there was Randi Dae tagging along with her conservation officer father. About a year ago, the two officially began dating.

It’s truly a natural match made in heaven.



Lucas Powell and Randi Dae Conway

TAX

Continued from page 1
cost increases across the board on everything,” Newcom said.

By law, county insurance tax rates must be submitted to the Department of Insurance by the end of March. That’s why the county is working earnestly to determine whether there’s an appetite among magistrates to raise the rates.

Taxable under the ordinance are insurance premiums on fire and allied perils, liability and casualty, automobile, inland marine and other risks. However, there will be no tax on life insurance or health premiums.

Last year from its two-percent tax rate, Crittenden County Fiscal Court received \$145,557 in insurance tax revenue. Oddly, that figure was just

more than \$180,000 in 2022 and about \$165,000 in 2021. Through three quarters of 2023, the county’s revenue was \$160,577, so it’s back up after a decline last year, likely due to hefty increases on insurance premiums as companies work to recoup millions spent on claims from recent storms.

Ken Brown, a retired Kentucky Farm Bureau insurance agent, was at the meeting last week. He pointed out that insurance rates for customers are going up 15 to 35% in some cases because of recent widespread hail and other storm claims.

The insurance tax increase will be added on top of those increases.

County revenue should organically increase based on higher premiums, even without a rate increase.

Magistrates discussed an option that would raise the insurance rate 1%, but if

the county settled on a 3% insurance premium tax it might then opt to raise the occupational tax. Also, known as a payroll tax, the county’s rate is .05 percent. Most employers are required to withhold that tax from its employees’ checks then remit it to the county treasurer quarterly. Some employees, such as those who work for the federal government, are supposed to self-report and pay the occupational tax.

If you pay annual premium of \$500 on an auto or home, you’ve been paying just over \$10 for your county insurance premium tax. On your premium bill, it’s slightly higher than \$10 because the Department of Insurance takes a fee to collect and administer the tax, making the actual effective rate slightly above 2%. If this proposal passes on second reading, your tax will go to just over \$20.

FARM

Continued from page 1
world. They can say what they want to about those guys out in Vegas, but the American Farmer is the biggest gambler,” said 62-year-old Stephen Hill, who’s lived and worked among Kentucky agriculture his entire life.

Hill, who is currently a sales consultant for Kentucky American Seed, says farmers are big risk takers who must process a remarkable business sense, understand marketing and government programs and be hard working.

“Then they have to rely on the Good Lord above to make it all happen for them,” said Hill, who is also a member of the Crittenden County Farm Bureau Board of Directors.

Developing a glimpse of contemporary conditions down on the farm, one would need to examine banking and lending trends, commodity and livestock prices, input costs, land prices and other sometimes volatile data. The good news is farming is largely cyclical, according to Philip Parish of P&H Farms, one of the largest operations in the region.

Now in his 50s, Parish is no longer counted among Kentucky’s young farmers, but his son Rhett is, and he tries to make sense of where it’s going for his family’s sake. A multi-generational farmer, Parish remembers when times were just as tough. He’s seen the highs and lows and has faith in the industry.

“People preach gloom and doom like it’s never going to get better. This thing is cyclical. Around 2015 and 2016 it got pretty tough. We were making good crops, but commodity prices were low and it was tough,” he said.

Parish says projections are indicating a three-year retreat in commodity prices. Right now, he says corn prices for delivering next fall are slightly above \$4 a bushel. Last year, it was around \$7. Beans are down, too, and July wheat has tanked to a point it is paying around \$2 less than a year earlier.

Steve Watson, branch manager at C-Plant Federal Credit Union and a director on the Chamber of Commerce board, is hearing that some farmers are converting acreage from row crops to pasture in order to take advantage of higher beef prices just as corn and beans are falling.

Hill and Watson both agree that interest rates are also creating concern for row croppers. Hill said chemical and seed companies that were offering zero-percent financing on input materials in recent years can no longer meet those very generous terms.

“It takes Fort Knox to put out a crop. Input prices for these farmers are incredible. I saw one report that it costs \$400 to \$500 acres to put out a crop,” said Watson,

who has a history in farm lending.

Conventional operating loans that farmers could get for three-percent not long ago are now fetching eight or more percent.

“Interest rates have been good to us for a long time,” Parish said. “But now, we’re seeing rates that we haven’t seen in 20 years.”

According to a study by Purdue University, input prices for fertilizer elements such as anhydrous ammonia, potash and diammonium phosphate were up 20 to 30 percent from 2018 to 2022.

Additionally, diesel and agricultural chemicals were both up more than 10 percent.

Parish says those farm input prices have stabilized, even dropped a bit since 2022, but interest rates continue to have a choke hold on farmers, no matter the size of the operation.

While Kentucky data from 2022 Ag Census released about three weeks ago show a large growth in agricultural production – at \$8 billion, up nearly 40 percent from 2017 figures – there are mixed observations about the future of farming in the commonwealth.

In late February, Kentucky Farm Bureau President Eddie Melton of Webster County, in the bureau’s Across Kentucky report, said disturbing trends can be found in those census figures.

“From 2017 to 2022, we lost 7,500 farms and 500,000 acres of farm land. That’s a lot in my mind,” Melton said, pointing out that making a living, working hard and buying land is the hope of all young farmers.

Meanwhile, land prices have skyrocketed. Recreational demand for undeveloped land has driven the price of an acre of Crittenden County land to more than \$3,000 in some cases, says Property Valuation Administrator Todd Perryman.

The Hunts are looking to rent more farmland, but aren’t willing to travel too far to find it.

“We would like to have more in our circle,” Cody said, pointing to areas of the county where he and his father grow grain and cattle.

“You can buy a little ground, and try to get it paid down, then get another piece, but you have to go slow,” said Van Hunt, who is 64 and knows any debt now will be a burden on the next generation.

Paying for expense farmland is a ticklish operation.

“Four-dollar corn isn’t pretty,” Van adds, pointing out that renting can be just as risky as buying.

Profitability is the key to improving farming’s future, Melton said in that Farm Bureau report, but finding financial security amid today’s high input costs, big interest rates and incredible land prices is difficult.

Still, Kentucky’s mar-

ket value of livestock and poultry sold in 2022 was \$4.2 billion and the market value of crops sold was nearly \$3.8 billion. Net cash farm income in 2022 was \$2.4 billion, a 56 percent increase over 2017. The state ranks eighth in the nation in beef cattle inventory, having the highest number of beef cattle for any state east of the Mississippi River.

Agriculture remains strong in Kentucky – a state devoted to remain-

ing agrarian through statutes and regulations – but there’s a new threat to farming. It’s recreation.

Out-of-state money is lifting land prices. In Crittenden County, undeveloped land was fetching less than \$1,000 an acre. It’s tripled in price. The whitetail deer is a double-edged sword for farmers. The pursuit of game animals like the deer is largely responsible for the supply-and-demand pressures on

acreage, but the animals eat a fair share of the profit.

“We lose far more to deer than we do to drought or flooding,” Parish said. “They eat up a whole lot of acreage.”

Hill says other land uses are also taking a toll on farming, from housing complexes to solar energy sites.

“Over in Fredonia, some of the best production ground in this part of the country is being converted into a solar

farm,” he said. “Honestly, there are not that many young people getting into farming. Farms are just getting bigger and bigger.”

On one hand, Hill says he can count almost all of the family farmers left in the county. Many of the larger-scale regional farmers are also here. Unless you inherit property, buying into the farming sector is challenging. So is leasing and renting.

CITY OF MARION

The following tax bills for the year 2023, being unpaid, I will offer for sale on April 1, 2024 at 1 p.m to the highest bidder for cash. The following delinquent tax claims upon which a real assessment appears (the amount includes penalty, interest and advertising cost).

Tax Year Range 2023 To 2023
Calculated As Of 03/04/2024

Bill Number	Account Name	Unpaid Tax	Bill Number	Account Name	Unpaid Tax
7	ABEGGLEN RANDALL L & DEBORAH L	\$246.18	854	JOE DAVIS ENTERPRISES INC	\$43.27
22	ALBEN WILLIAM BARKLEY II TRUST AGREEMENT	\$61.60	855	JOE DAVIS ENTERPRISES INC	\$17.91
23	ALBEN WILLIAM BARKLEY II TRUST AGREEMENT	\$57.36	866	JOHNSON JAMES EST	\$13.69
25	ALBEN WILLIAM BARKLEY II TRUST AGREEMENT	\$63.00	868	JOHNSON NICHOLAS & LEEANN	\$122.18
27	ALBEN WILLIAM BARKLEY II TRUST AGREEMENT	\$65.82	875	JONES BRAD LEE	\$3.82
28	ALBEN WILLIAM BARKLEY II TRUST AGREEMENT	\$61.60	894	KENTFIELD JONATHON	\$102.45
29	ALBEN WILLIAM BARKLEY II TRUST AGREEMENT	\$72.87	938	LANHAM ROBBIE	\$29.19
30	ALBEN WILLIAM BARKLEY II TRUST AGREEMENT	\$82.72	941	LARUE JAMES D & SHARON	\$233.50
31	ALBEN WILLIAM BARKLEY II TRUST AGREEMENT	\$99.64	942	LATHAM RONALD WAYNE & ANDREA DANIELLE	\$34.82
32	ALBEN WILLIAM BARKLEY II TRUST AGREEMENT	\$51.73	950	LEWIS JERRY & SHERRI	\$10.87
34	ALBEN WILLIAM BARKLEY II TRUST AGREEMENT	\$71.45	957	LINDER TAKEKO	\$99.64
45	ANDREWS REILLY B	\$289.87	1032	MASON LISA M	\$9.46
77	BARNES LEONARD	\$6.64	1039	MCCAIN J C	\$22.14
107	BELL LANELL EASLEY	\$6.64	1041	MCCLURE TROY EST	\$15.09
108	BELL LANELL EASLEY	\$17.91	1042	MCDANIEL BELINDA D	\$71.45
109	BELL LANELL EASLEY	\$6.64	1057	MCGOWAN GEORGE D & ASHLEY L	\$8.05
110	BELL LANELL EASLEY	\$8.05	1058	MCGOWAN GEORGE D & ASHLEY L	\$225.05
157	BLAINE AARON	\$85.55	1062	MCKINNEY DUSTIN & MCKINNEY JUDITH	\$93.43
158	BLAINE AARON	\$15.09	1063	MCKINNEY JANUARY MONIQUE	\$64.42
161	BLAZINA JOSEPH J	\$60.18	1064	MCKINNEY JUDY & MCKINNEY DUSTIN	\$64.83
181	BRADFORD CHARLES	\$16.51	1065	MCKINNEY TYLER & KAITLYN	\$82.72
187	BRONOSKY TERRI	\$127.81	1081	MILLIKAN BRENDA & PAUL DEBOE JR	\$26.36
206	BUSH CHARITY DAWN	\$184.18	1082	MILLIKAN CHANTEL ET AL	\$156.00
215	CALE PHILLIP	\$29.19	1083	MILLIKAN CHANTEL ET AL	\$141.91
220	CAMPBELL MICHAEL & DONNA	\$409.63	1100	MORRIES TIMOTHY & ASHLEY	\$50.33
248	CLEARWATER SUSAN	\$141.91	1108	MORRIS JILL	\$5.24
251	CLIFFORD BRIAN	\$8.05	1122	MOXLEY LYDAWN	\$20.73
252	CLIFFORD BRIAN	\$17.91	1128	MYERS JASON SCOTT	\$98.65
254	COFFER STORES INC	\$629.44	1133	NEEDLER KIP & RHONDA	\$192.63
278	CONNER MELBURN & MELISSA	\$99.64	1134	NELSON ANGELA DON	\$15.09
281	CONYER ROBERT M & IMOGENE	\$19.89	1144	NEW HAVEN ASSISTED LIVING	\$12.27
290	COOPER PEGGY DEMOSS	\$82.72	1145	NEWCOM JAMES EDWARD	\$36.65
297	COSBY TIM	\$105.27	1161	NUCO2 SUPPLY LLC	\$7.60
298	COSBY TIM & JASON	\$119.37	1203	PEMBERTON JESSICA & ANDREW	\$29.19
299	COUNTS DANIEL KEN & CATHERINE	\$99.64	1230	PERRYMAN MICHAEL R	\$5.24
305	COX MARY ANN	\$141.91	1234	PHILLIPS BEVERLY	\$20.73
318	CRIDER KENNETH O	\$353.26	1253	PRECISION PLUMBING & SEPTIC INC	\$71.45
370	CRUCE HERBERT EST	\$4.39	1260	PRYOR KENNETH R JR	\$57.36
374	CURNEL RICKY EST	\$147.54	1273	REDBOX AUTOMATED RETAIL LLC	\$7.96
388	DAVIDSON BARRY	\$33.41	1292	RILEY CHARLES TERRY &	\$635.08
404	DEBOE LARRY R & SADIE E	\$68.64	1315	ROBERTS DARLENE	\$17.91
411	DICKEY BRADLEY	\$22.14	1328	ROBERTSON MICHAEL	\$6.64
413	DICKEY DARREN	\$6.64	1329	ROBINSON BETTY J	\$3.82
414	DICKEY DARREN	\$6.64	1330	ROBISON AUSTIN	\$274.36
415	DICKEY DARREN	\$6.64	1339	RODRIGUEZ GAGE & JULIE	\$395.27
418	DILLINGHAM MATTHEW	\$18.00	1350	RUSHING JAMES M & KELLY	\$99.64
426	DOLLAR TREE STORES INC	\$642.59	1352	RUSSELL AUSTIN SHANE	\$217.99
427	DOLLAR TREE STORES INC	\$3.00	1358	SCHETHE LISA & RITCHIE ROBERT L	\$5.24
450	DUNCAN JUNIOR EARL & DEBRA	\$82.72	1380	SHIELDS HAZEL OR	\$6.07
451	DUNCAN JUNIOR EARL & DEBRA	\$3.82	1387	SHUECRAFT JANET	\$6.64
464	DUPASS DANIEL	\$6.07	1399	SISCO CHRISTOPHER	\$79.91
512	FETTEROLF THADDEUS THOMAS JOSEPH	\$113.73	1416	SMOCK MARVIN & REBA	\$113.73
580	GERHARDT CRAIG	\$12.27	1417	SMOCK MARVIN DAVID	\$57.36
596	GIPSON DENNIS	\$17.91	1434	STEPHENS BONNIE	\$50.34
597	GIPSON DENNIS DUANE & SARAH ROSE	\$98.23	1445	STOLL CORI LYNAE	\$99.64
598	GIPSON KEITH	\$12.27	1457	SUBCARRIER COMMUNICATIONS INC	\$101.20
599	GIPSON SHELBY EST	\$99.64	1460	SUN INDUSTRIES INC	\$105.27
600	GIPSON SHELBY EST	\$3.82	1461	SUN INDUSTRIES INC	\$9.46
608	GRAHAM NATHAN & STEFANIE	\$196.87	1462	SUN INDUSTRIES INC	\$9.46
609	GRAHAM NATHAN EARL & STEPHANIE	\$51.73	1463	SUN INDUSTRIES INC	\$9.46
635	GUGENHEIM INC	\$5.94	1464	SUN INDUSTRIES INC	\$9.46
642	HACKNEY EDDIE	\$9.46	1465	SUN INDUSTRIES INC	\$9.46
649	HAKE KATRINA & MICHAEL	\$119.37	1466	SUN INDUSTRIES INC	\$9.46
650	HAKE KATRINA & MICHAEL	\$15.09	1477	T & A PROPERTIES OF MARION LLC	\$232.09
651	HAKE KATRINA & MICHAEL	\$15.09	1478	T & D ENTERPRISES LLC	\$282.81
663	HAMLET JO ANNA	\$46.09	1489	TABOR MELODY & TERRY	\$9.46
670	HARDESTY KENNETH JR	\$36.80	1495	TAX EASE LIEN SERVICING LLC	\$15.09
671	HARDIN BOBBY & CRISSY	\$68.64	1513	THOMAS DONALD & MELISSA	\$6.64
678	HARRIS ALMA JEAN & JERRY LANHAM	\$51.73	1514	THOMAS DONALD & MELISSA	\$3.82
687	HATHAWAY KEVIN BRUCE	\$16.51	1518	THOMPSON S D & MARY LOU	\$8.05
703	HAZZARD PATRICIA & WILSON DWAYNE	\$556.74	1560	TYRIE SHELLY S	\$96.54
708	HEALTHQUEST WELLNESS CENTER PSC	\$22.09	1561	TYSON CYNTHIA	\$19.74
729	HENRY CECIL	\$158.82	1566	UNKNOWN OWNER	\$6.64
734	HERRIN JODY & JULIE	\$176.71	1567	US BANK	\$88.36
792	HUGHES DOUG & MILLER KELSEY	\$10.87	1568	US BANK	\$12.27
794	HUGHES LACY EST	\$8.05	1580	WALKER ROCKY	\$9.46
796	HUGHES RONALD D	\$12.27	1595	WATSON MARY ELIZABETH	\$12.27
822	HURT DANIELLE	\$24.96	1602	WESMOLAN JENNIFER	\$50.33
823	HUTCHESON ROBERT & LINDA	\$113.73	1710	WOODWARD THOMAS	\$78.92
837	JACKSON ALVIE G	\$29.19	1734	YATES VALINA	\$17.91
838	JACKSON RUTH ESTATE	\$8.05			

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for sale

Natural gas fireplace, 1,500 BTU, 43" height, 44 1/2" wide, 16 1/2" deep. Can text pics. \$1,000. (270) 704-5047 (2t-12-c)ks

3,000 BTU propane logs. \$1,000. (270) 704-5047. (2t-12-c) ks

7 ft. tall oak pantry, 18" wide, 24" deep. \$100; oak pedestal table, \$75. Can text pics. (270) 704-5047 (2t-12-c)ks

Antique Victorian bedroom suite, burl walnut, full size bed with tall headboard carved dog heads on ends, wash stand, dresser with mirror, both have marble tops, complete with Sleep Number mattress, all in great condition, \$4,000. Sturgis (270) 333-4638. (2t-10-p)

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Looking for hay ground/pasture ground. Will pay by the bale and/or by the acre. Call or text (270)

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Springtime is here! Do you need a job done? Big

or small, give us a call, (270) 704-1888. Better Built Home Solutions: Decks, pressure washing, window washing, roofing, painting, tree trimming/cutting, general maintenance jobs and much more! Free estimates! (8t-19-c) ks

Weekend remodeling. Flooring, decks, small carpentry work. Call Ben Evans and Gabe Mott (270) 704-6572 or (270) 704-6158. (TfC)

CONCRETE WORK: Parking lots, garages, steel buildings, walls, sidewalks, driveways, room additions, rock driveways, clean ditches. Call for quote (270) 724-4672, Joe Mattingly Concrete Construction. (20t-9-p)

notice

Notice is hereby given that the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, #1 Sportsman Lane, Frankfort, Ky 40601 is planning to conduct several prescribed burns on the Big Rivers Wildlife Management Area in Crittenden and Union Counties. The burn period is expected to occur between March 11 through

April 15, 2024. During this period, the public may notice smoke arising from the Wildlife Management Area and temporary road closures on Bells Mine Rd. (1t-11-c)

The Regular Session of Crittenden County Fiscal Court has been rescheduled to Tuesday, March 19th at 8:30 am due to a conflict with associational annual conference. This meeting will be held as a Special Meeting agenda. All parties interested in addressing the fiscal court must notify the Office of Judge Executive by Noon on Monday, March 18, 2024 in order to be placed on the agenda. (1t-10-c)

Advertise your job opening, event, items for sale, auction etc. in this newspaper plus 83 other Kentucky newspapers including The Paducah Sun, Kentucky New Era (Hopkinsville), The Sturgis News, The (Princeton) Times Leader, The (Providence) Journal-Enterprise, The Union County Advocate, The Henderson Gleaner, The Livingston Ledger and The (Madisonville) Messenger and for only \$250. Save time and money by making one call for all! For more information, contact the classified department at (270) 965-3191 or email us at advertising@the-press.com.

legal notice

LaDelicia Mexican Restaurant, dba La Cantina with an address of 109

Morningside Drive, Marion, KY 42064 hereby declares intention(s) to apply for a NQ2 retail drink license(s) and special Sunday sales license no later than March 15, 2024. The business to be licensed will be located at 109 Morningside Drive, Marion, Ky. 42064. Doing business as La Cantina. The owner, Graciela Bruce of 346 Rail Road Hill Road, Grand Rivers, Ky. 42045. Any person, association, corporation, or body politic may protest the granting of license(s) by writing the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control, 500 Mero Street 2NE3, Frankfort, Ky. 40601-8400, within 30 days (KRS 243.430) of the date of this legal

publication. (4t-12-c)

LEGAL NOTICE
Commonwealth of Kentucky
Crittenden Circuit Court
Marion, KY 42064
Case No. 24-CI-00016

WILMINGTON SAVINGS FUND SOCIETY, FSB, NOT IN ITS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY, BUT SOLELY AS LEGAL TITLE TRUSTEE FOR BCAT 2019-22TT, Plaintiff v. UNKNOWN SPOUSE, IF ANY, OF BETTY WALKER; UNKNOWN HEIRS, LEGATEES, DEVISEES, EXECUTORS, ADMINISTRATORS AND ASSIGNS AND THEIR SPOUSES, IF ANY, OF BETTY WALKER; CRITTENDEN COUNTY; Defendants;

Notice is hereby given that an action has been filed against UNKNOWN SPOUSE, IF ANY, OF BETTY WALKER; UNKNOWN HEIRS, LEGATEES, DEVISEES, EXECUTORS, ADMINISTRATORS AND ASSIGNS AND THEIR SPOUSES, IF ANY, OF BETTY WALKER; CRITTENDEN COUNTY; Defendants. The subject of this action is the following tract of land situated in Crittenden County, Kentucky, and more specifically described as follows:

A certain tract or parcel of land lying and being in Crittenden County, Kentucky, on the water of Hoods Creek, and bounded and described as follows:

Beginning at a stake on the west side of KY 365, said stake being 30 feet from center of road and 36 feet North of the center of an 18 inch concrete pipe crossing said road, also being about 0.7 miles North of Baker Church and about 2.5 miles North of US 60 and being a new corner; thence with said Highway S 40-3/4 E 306 feet to a stake, being 45 feet from the center of the Highway and on the East side of an old road and corner to J.D. Russell; thence with the East side of the old road and Russell's line due South 232 feet to a stake, S 15 1/4 E 208 feet to a stake, S 29 1/2 E 288 feet to a 12 inch hickory on the West side of the od road and corner to E.O. Phillips; thence with his line N. 86 1/4 W passing said Phillips and Orbie Walker's corner then continuing with Walker's line 428 feet to a stake, a new corner and in the East line of A 40 feet R.E.A. power line easement; thence with said easement N 9 W 700 feet to a stake on the Northern side of a draw, a new corner; thence with another new division line N 36 1/2 E 243 feet to the beginning containing 6.04 acres by survey, as surveyed by Billy J. May, surveyor, LS 878, on March 9, 1974, and a plat as made by said surveyor is attached to this Deed and made a part hereof, and to be recorded herewith.

If the right of way for highway 365 is 60 feet in width all along the frontage of this property, then it would appear that as the first call is 30 feet from the center of the highway and the second call is 45 feet from the center of the highway, if there is any land belonging to first parties between the said highway and the first line of this survey which is 306 feet long, and if first parties own any land between the highway and this line of 306 feet long, then first parties do hereby convey any and all land which they own between the highway and this boundary line of 306 feet.

Being the same property conveyed from Aubrey Phillips and his wife, Sue Phillips, to Bobby Walker and Betty Walker, husband and wife J/T/R/S, by deed recorded 03/30/74, in book 115, at page 494, in the register's office of Crittenden County, Kentucky.

Tax Map or Parcel ID NO. : 077-00-000-002.03

Anyone interested in this action should contact Cobie D. Evans, Attorney at Law, P.O. Box 99, Smithland, Kentucky (270) 928-4620.

ONLINE ONLY AUCTION

STARTS TO CLOSE: Mon., March 25 @ 5:30 p.m. cst

Tools-Furnishings-Etc will start to close at 6 p.m. cst

Location: 835 Wright Rd, Salem, KY

(From Hwy 60 in Salem take Lola Rd. (133) 4.5 miles turn left onto Wright Rd go 1.5 miles propert on the right)

This is a 1999 Fleetwood Lake Point manufactured home with approximately 1,792 square feet of living space including 3 bedrooms and 2 full baths. Master bedroom with sitting area and walk-in closet and soaking garden tub, 16.8 acres in rural Crittenden Co.

near the Livingston Co. line, Large eat-in kitchen, spacious laundry room, living room with gas fireplace, propane tank 70% full, blacktop road frontage, large private yard with garden area, 8 + acres open for pasture or tillable acreage, metal roof, AC unit new in 2020, Detached building, abundant wildlife, private and secluded area.



**PREVIEW: Wed., March 20
11 a.m.-1 p.m. cst**

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*Kentucky State Study 2023; conducted by Coda Ventures



Ag Tag program helps Crittenden Co. 4-H and FFA

In 2013, Kentucky Commissioner of Agriculture James Comer asked farmers across the Commonwealth to step up and make an extra donation to the future of agriculture when renewing their farm plates. It was then that the “Ag Tag” program was born.

Every year since, when farmers renew their farm license plates, they have the opportunity to donate \$10 to the “Ag Tag” fund. The donation may seem

small, but the impact on the state’s agriculture youth is not.

Ag Tag donations are equally divided among Kentucky 4-H, Kentucky FFA, and the Kentucky Department of Agriculture (KDA) for Kentucky Proud and youth development and promotional programs.

Each of the organizations uses these funds to invest in future leaders. Specifically, KDA funds support programs like

the Kentucky Ag Athletes of the Year scholarship, the Kentucky Agricultural Leadership Program (KALP), Kentucky Women in Agriculture annual conference, and AgLand at the Kentucky State Fair. Kentucky FFA uses their funds to support more than \$20,000 in agriculture program grants to make capital investments in curriculum or facilities, as well as providing funds to each of the 12 FFA regions for educational pro-

gramming and student recognition. The Kentucky 4-H Foundation uses its portion to support statewide programs such their annual Teen Conference, the 4-H Teen Summit and state officer scholarships.

Also, half of the 4-H and FFA donations are returned to local councils and chapters, meaning when you donate, our community uses those funds to cover the cost of 4-H and FFA camps and other youth leadership programs.



CCHS 4-H and FFA members are (from left) Emme Lynch, Taylor Haire, County Clerk Darin Tabor, Gavin Grimes, Gracie Orr, (middle) Macie Conger, Kailyn Stokes, Caden De-Boe, Karsyn Potter, (back) Haylee Perrin, Josh Marshall, Cutter Singleton, Mollie Blazina

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Career opportunities in the agricultural sector

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Individuals approach their careers in various ways. Some may aspire to climb the corporate ladder, while others may pursue a career that affords them ample personal time to spend how they see fit. Many individuals look for careers that afford them ample opportunities to work in the great outdoors, which could make the agricultural sector an appealing industry. Talented individuals with an array of diverse skills dot the agricultural sector landscape, and the following are just a few of the many careers to consider within this vital industry.

■ Equipment technician: Data from the career experts at Indeed indicate agricultural equipment technicians earn an average salary around \$65,000 per year. Agricultural

tural equipment technicians maintain and repair existing machines and install new ones, among their many responsibilities.

■ Purchasing agent: An agricultural purchasing agent buys products and raw materials at wholesale. Indeed notes that purchasing agents often must meet specific purchasing quotas for processors and work with various clients who supply an array of agricultural products. The national average salary for agricultural purchasing agents is around \$51,000 annually.

■ Warehouse manager: The receiving, shipping and storage of agricultural materials is overseen by a warehouse manager. Indeed notes that these professionals now routinely utilize artificial intelligence products to manage inventory. Warehouse

managers must know and adhere to safety procedures and guidelines that dictate how materials and products are stored. The average salary of a warehouse manager is around \$52,000 per year.

■ Sales: Like every industry, the agricultural sector requires talented sales personnel. Agricultural sales reps sell materials and products and identify the needs of potential customers. Agricultural sales reps may spend ample time on the road at trade shows. Doing so allows them to identify customers as well as their needs and wants, and promote their own products and services. An ability to foster strong and trusting interpersonal relationships is invaluable for agricultural sales reps, who Indeed reports earn an average of about \$60,000 per year.

■ Environmental engineer: Environmental engineers play pivotal roles within the industry, and could become even more vital in the decades ahead as the effects of climate change become more apparent. Environmental engineers design and im-

plement solutions that occur on agricultural sites, helping to address issues such as unhealthy soil, insufficient drainage and inefficiencies, among other concerns. A career as an environmental engineer within the agricultural industry can be rewarding

and lucrative, with Indeed noting that the average annual salary for this position is a little more than \$77,000. These are just some of the career paths individuals can consider as they explore the agricultural sector.

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Polk builds company with team approach

BY ALLISON EVANS
THE CRITTENDEN PRESS

Taylon Polk is used to playing quarterback.

The 2007 Crittenden County graduate was the signal-caller of his high school football team.

Today he’s quarterbacking a well-established company that expanded into Crittenden County last fall.

High yields is how he keeps score today for his new team, Kentucky American Seed.

As the Agriculture selection of The Crittenden Press’ 2024 10 Under 40 community recognition program, Polk is celebrated for his dedication to the community and influence he had to help bring the company to Crayne.

At 34, he is germinating relationships with farmers while growing Kentucky American Seed, which sells seed and specializes in liquid fertilizer through its custom spraying and spreading operations.

Polk went to work in the coal mines right after high school and joined the agriculture industry in 2015 after Highland Mine in Waverly abruptly closed.

Drawing on his experience working on farms as a teenager, Polk went to work as a spray applicator and joined Kentucky American Seed’s Hopkins County location in 2021.

Kentucky American Seed began in the 1970s as a seed conditioning operation, treating soybean and wheat seeds and began a retail sales division in 2019.

The company serviced Crittenden County customers out of the Madisonville location, and opened the local location in a newly developed facility in the fall of 2023.

Kentucky American Seed employs eight in Crittenden County and services about 80,000 acres in one form or another.

The Crayne operation helped to expand the company’s customer base,



and owners are pleased with that growth, Polk said.

A lifelong Crittenden Countian, Polk is glad to be working in his community where he grew up playing baseball and football. Today he coaches his sons, Brady, 11, and Davis, 8, and he is a member of the Crittenden County Lions Club and Mexico Baptist Church.

“The company was a need for this county and it’s very nice to be able to work in the county I grew up in,” he said. “I had good coaches growing up and I’m glad to be able to pass on the knowledge that I was taught.”

Polk is equally humble about his managerial role at Kentucky American Seed and his selection in the 10 Under 40 recognition program. “I’m very proud obviously, we just try to do the best job we can for the customer.

“I couldn’t do what I do without everybody else,” he said. “It’s a team effort, but most importantly I see all sides of the business and run a sprayer some. I don’t ever want to ask someone to do something that I haven’t done, and running a sprayer is a really enjoyable part of the business.”

He also credits his wife Cassie, a first-grade teacher in Crittenden County, for her encouragement.

“She has always stood by me and been very supportive,” he said.

Polk said seeing high yields from one of his products is the measuring

stick. When the farmer wins, Kentucky American Seed wins, he said.

“The reward is when the customer has an exceptional yield or a good harvest, that’s what we really want to hear at the end of the season – that’s the win, when somebody else wins,” Polk said.

Crittenden County acreage will join others in the western part of the state as test plots this spring for some of Kentucky American Seed’s fertility combinations.

“The research plots we do all over the western part of the state is a big help in how we sell,” Polk said. “Nobody around here cares what a plot in Iowa did, so we use plots in Crittenden, Livingston and Union counties to test different combinations of potassium, phosphorus and sulfur in different ratios. We’ll use the same seed, just different fertilizer.”

David Hunt, who nominated Polk for the 10 Under 40 recognition, said Kentucky American Seed, under Polk’s leadership, is providing a path for success for local farmers.

“His personal approach of ag sales has been appreciated by area farmers who are used to dealing with ag giants,” Hunt said.

Polk said Kentucky American Seed delivers 90 percent of what it sells, helping him to achieve his goal of making customer service one of the most important aspects of the business.

“We start relationships, and those grow into really good friendship,” Polk said. “There is a lot



of trust in this game where honesty is the best policy.”

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