



The Crittenden Press

Basketball heads toward final stretch | Page 9

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

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ONE DOLLAR

I-65 most dangerous in KY, but I-24 has worst overall mark

Interstate 65 is most dangerous in Kentucky, but a stretch of I-24 ranks nationally among the deadliest stretches of highways when data from Kentucky, Tennessee and Illinois area combined.



A recent study by Assurance IQ, an insurance policy shopping platform, examined National Highway Traffic Safety Administration data to determine the most and least safe interstates across the country with regard to the number of fatal accidents.

Data show that I-65 is the deadliest in Kentucky, averaging 1.53 fatal crashes every 10 miles per year. The interstate enters the commonwealth in the north from Indianapolis and crosses Kentucky from Louisville to Bowling Green then leaves the state toward Nashville, Tenn.

Interstate 24 holds the dubious honor of being among the fifth deadliest with 18.3 fatal crashes annually per 100 miles.

Running 316 miles from near Marion, Ill., to near Chattanooga, Tenn., I-24 also passes briefly into Georgia giving it a three-state footprint. In Tennessee near Nashville, I-24 is the most congested stretch of highway in the entire state.

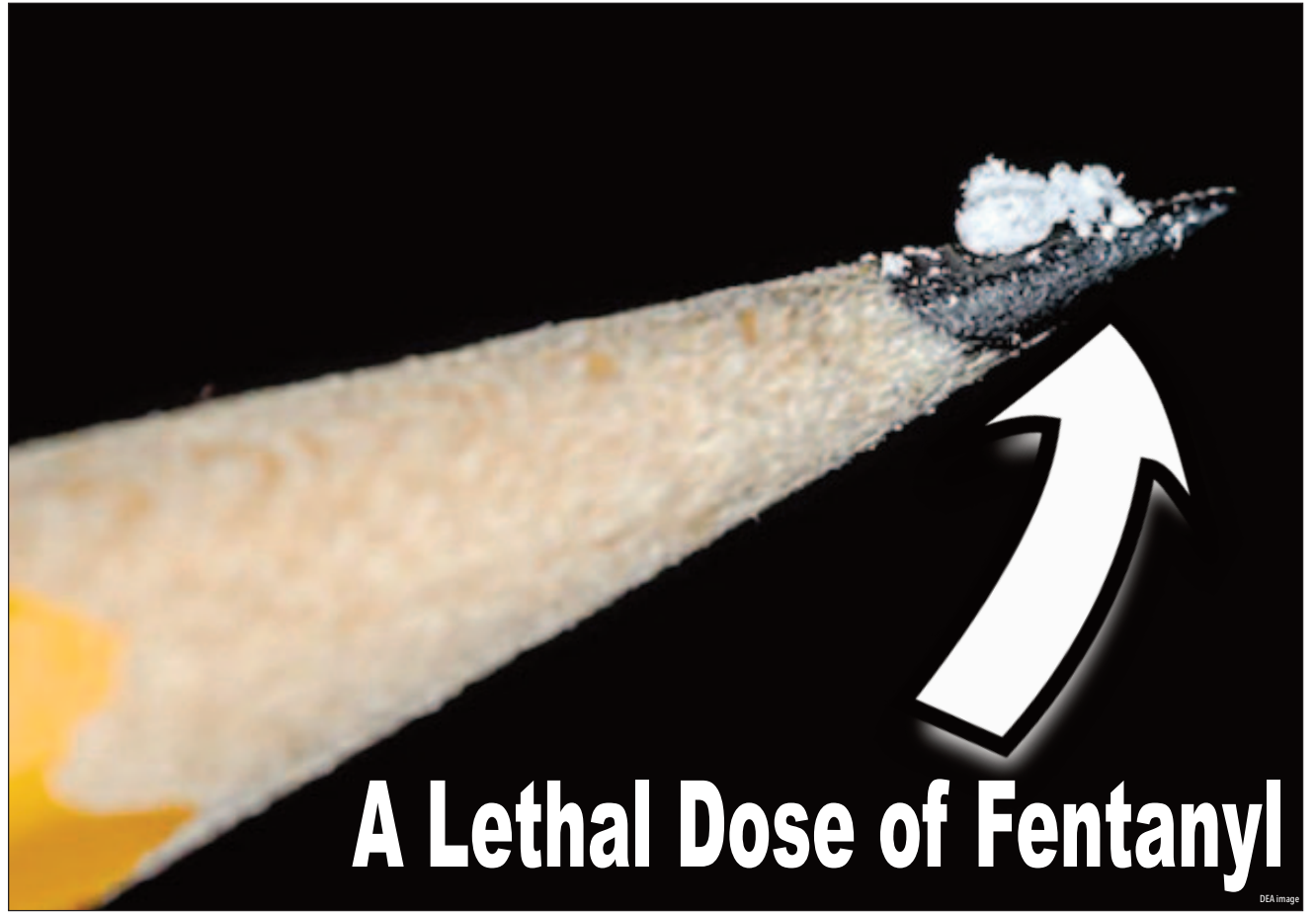
Overall, Kentucky's interstate highways rank 22nd among the nation's most hazardous.

Super Bowl Sunday

On Sunday, the Kansas City Chiefs take on the San Francisco 49ers in Super Bowl LVIII at Allegiant Stadium in Las Vegas. Kickoff is 5:30 p.m., on CBS. Halftime entertainer is Usher. Remember to never drive if you've been drinking. Kentucky Transportation Cabinet reports that 130 people were killed in crashes that involved a drunken driver in 2023.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- Crittenden County Board of Elections will meet at 3:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 9 in the county clerk's office.
- Marion City Council will meet at 5 p.m., Monday, Feb. 12 at city hall. This will be a different meeting day due to President's Day being on the council's regular meeting date, the third Monday of the month.
- Crittenden County Board of Education will meet at 5:30 p.m., Monday, Feb. 12 at Rocket Arena for a working session.
- Livingston County Board of Education meets at 6 p.m., Monday, Feb. 12 at the new central office on the Cut Off Road.
- Crittenden County Fiscal Court will meet at 8:30 a.m., Thursday, Feb. 15 at the County Office Complex.
- Crittenden County Conservation District will meet at 6:30 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 15 at its office on East Bellville Street.
- Fredonia City Council will meet at 7 p.m., Monday, Feb. 19 at city hall.
- Marion Tourism and Recreation Commission will meet Tuesday, Feb. 20 at 8:30 a.m., at the Marion Welcome Center.
- Salem City Council will meet at 5 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 20 at Deer Lakes meeting room.



A Lethal Dose of Fentanyl

Marion's OD Alarm Bell

Multiple confirmed fentanyl deaths here in less than a year

BY CHRIS EVANS
PRESS EDITOR

Considered by some as the grim reaper of recreational drugs, fentanyl has hit Crittenden County like a reaper's scythe over last few months.

Fentanyl is a highly potent, synthetic opioid drug. It has Food and Drug Administration approval for use as an analgesic to relieve pain or use as an anesthetic. However, fentanyl is becoming more prevalent as a recreational drug, gravely more deadly than heroine, methamphetamine or cocaine.

Local authorities have confirmed that fentanyl has been tied to at least four deaths here since June. Observers say small communities like Marion should raise awareness or prepare to see more deaths in their neighborhoods.

Crittenden County Coroner Brad Gilbert has had the grim responsibility of investigating recent fentanyl overdoses.



GILBERT
Coroner

"These are the first I have ever seen here," Gilbert said.

Dr. Christopher Kiefer at the Kentucky Medical Examiner's office in Madisonville describes Crittenden County as a "quiet" community when it comes to autopsies. He calls fentanyl's rise a terrifying situation that has only recently appeared in far western Kentucky. Three overdose cases in Crittenden County in about seven months is stark testimony to the reality of the pervasiveness of this building crisis.

"Fentanyl wasn't even a problem here when I started as the medical examiner seven years ago," Kiefer said. Fentanyl comes in various forms, hard-core users inject it with a needle, but it can be smoked or snorted. Kiefer says the pill form is perhaps the scariest because lethal doses of fentanyl can be hidden in a tablet.

"High school age kids might be swapping pills. That's not uncommon. They might think they're getting a mild painkiller pressed in a lab. They might think it's Oxycodone or Lortab, but it ends up being fentanyl," he said. "You don't have to be using a needle



WEST
Police Chief

STREET NAMES FOR FENTANYL

■ "Blues" is the most common local name for fentanyl, say Marion authorities, but it can also be called Apache, China Girl, China Town, Dance Fever, Friend, Goodfellas, Great Bear, He-Man, Jackpot, King Ivory, Murder 8, and Tango & Cash according to the DEA.

HOW IT IS CONSUMED

■ Marion police say fentanyl is seen here in the form of a blue pill. However, the drug can be snorted/sniffed, smoked or spiked onto blotter paper. It is sold alone or sometimes in combination with heroin and other substances. Fentanyl has been identified in fake pills, mimicking pharmaceutical drugs such as Oxycodone.

THE FENTANYL HIGH

■ The high is similar to other opioid analgesics. Fentanyl produces effects such as relaxation, euphoria, pain relief, sedation, confusion, drowsiness, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, urinary retention, pupillary constriction and respiratory depression.

WHAT AN OD CAN LOOK LIKE

■ Fentanyl overdose can cause stupor, changes in pupil size, clammy skin, cyanosis, coma, and respiratory failure leading to death. The presence of a triad of symptoms such as coma, pinpoint pupils and respiratory depression strongly suggests opioid intoxication.

See DEATHS/page 10

Community leaders are in Frankfort this week

STAFF REPORT

Leaders from Crittenden and Livingston counties are in Frankfort this week on a crusade of sorts, seeking to impart some influence on decision making during the current session of the Kentucky General Assembly.

In scheduled meetings with elected policymakers and government administrators, Crittenden County Judge-Executive Perry Newcom and newly appointed Livingston Judge Teris Swanson hope to make their cases for awareness of, and funding for, various issues and projects in



their communities. Water is among the most prominent on their minds, and Marion Mayor D'Anna Browning will be among those visiting the capitol this week.

With her city approaching the second anniversary of a

water crisis that has threatened to cripple Marion, Browning says her visit is mostly about financial assistance and continued response to the crisis.

"It is an opportunity to advocate for our community needs in a variety of areas, whether it is water infrastructure, transportation or other needs and hopefully result in additional resources being directed to the area," the mayor said. "The pending CDBG application for the water district is on our list."

Marion has already been approved by the state for

about \$4 million in emergency spending to shore up Lake George's levee so it will continue to hold enough water to be a viable reservoir until a long-term solution can be developed. The levee began weeping in April 2022 and it was purposely breached to avoid a catastrophic failure. Since then, Marion has been trying to figure out how to mitigate the lake's problems.

The CDBG application Browning cites was made months ago yet questions

See TRIP/page 10

We simply don't have the stomach to do what's right

This week's commentary piece is going to be short, if not sweet, because with our regional recycling program in idle we don't want to kill any more trees than necessary.

Like prohibition, recycling and battery operated vehicles are great ideas. Making them work is another story.

Over the last couple of weeks, the five-county West Kentucky Re-

gional Recycling Corporation has been delivered a blow by the state corrections system. Seems as though we didn't plan too well years ago when government decided that recycling was the way to go, the way to slow growth of expensive and unsightly landfills across our landscape.

Much like the plan to save the planet with battery-operated pas-

senger vehicles, the idea for recycling may have been a bit ahead of its time.

Local leaders say the recycling system is burdened by a supply and demand issue. Too few companies are interested in repurposing old plastics and cardboard. They'd rather have new, crisper



CHRIS EVANS
Press Editor & Publisher
About Town

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The Crittenden Press

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Deaths

Parker

Donna Sue (Lindsey) Parker, 65, died Wednesday, Jan. 31, 2024 at Salem Springlake Health and Rehabilitation Center.



She was a homemaker. Surviving are a daughter, Angela (Josh) Whitt of Marion; two sisters, Patricia (Tim) Bowling of Greenville and Rena Lindsey-Coerver of Arnold, Mo.; two brothers, Jimmy Lindsey of Fulton, and Rudi (Kathy) Heim of Summerfield, Fla.; two grandchildren, Austin Whitt and Cole Whitt. She was preceded in death by a son, Joseph Wayne Parker; two sisters, Kay McWorthy and Marylan Lindsey Trail; a brother, Tommy Lindsey; her parents, Lowel "Kurt" Lindsey and Rosemary (Campbell) Farmer.

Services were Sunday, Feb. 4 in the chapel of Boyd Funeral Directors and Cremation Services. Burial was in Maplevue Cemetery.

Vasseur

A celebration of life for Russell Wayne Vasseur, 32, will be held at 1 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 10 at Fohs Hall. Friends may visit with the family from 11 a.m., until service

Champion

Linda Sue Champion, 76, of Salem, died Monday, Feb. 5, 2024 at her home.

She enjoyed spending time with her family, cooking, watching her grandchildren play ball. She loved her sister Martha and had fond memories of growing up on the family farm in Crayne.



Surviving are two sons, Stephen (Eugena) Champion and Scott Champion, both of Salem; four grandchildren, Taylor (Masa) Champion, Lane Champion, Madison Champion and Trent Champion; a great-grandchild, Jameson Champion; and a sister, Martha Smith of Salem.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Cecil and Gyneth (Guess) Strong; a sister, Donna Jean Strong; and a brother-in-law, Carroll "Smitty" Smith.

Services are at 11 a.m., Saturday, Feb. 10 in the chapel of Boyd Funeral Directors and Cremation Services. Burial will follow in Pleasant Grove Cemetery.

Friends may visit with the family from 5-8 p.m., Friday, Feb. 9 at the funeral home.

Sherer

Mary Kathryn Nesbitt Sherer, 91, of Marion, died Wednesday, Jan. 31, 2024 at Crittenden Community Hospital.



She was retired from Potter and Brumfield Manufacturing and was a longtime member of Deer Creek Baptist Church. She loved her family, her church family and friends. She also loved working in her yard and attending to her flowers.

Surviving are two sons, Dwight (Mayree) Sherer and Jim Sherer, both of Marion; a sister, Naomi Jamison of Marion; and several nieces nephews and cousins.

She was preceded in death by her husband of 71 years, Doyle Sherer; her parents, Clarence and Verona Nesbitt; and two brothers, Buddy and Glen.

Services were Saturday Feb. 3 at Gilbert Funeral Home with burial in Maplevue Cemetery. Memorial contributions may be made to St. Jude's Children's Hospital or the Alzheimer's Association.

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CCES' Academic Team received the Katherine C. Hume Sportsmanship Award during district Governor's Cup action Saturday, Feb. 3. Pictured clockwise from top left are Colton Duncan and Conner Partee; participants (from left) Fiona Miller, Bryan Curnel, Mattie Moss, Colton Duncan, Peyton Lanham, Keegan Roberts and Kynslee Shepherd; and Elijah Taylor and Duncan discussing a question during the quick recall portion of the competition.

SUBMITTED & STAFF PHOTOS

CCES hosts Cup, sends students to region

Two Crittenden Elementary students won first-place and several others placed in the top five in Governor's Cup competition Saturday in Marion.

Elijah Taylor was first place in social studies; Colton Duncan, first place in arts & humanities; Conner Partee, second place in science; Colton Duncan second place in social studies; Wil Myers, third place arts & humanities; Bryan Curnel, fourth place in math; Fiona Miller,

fourth place language arts; and Kayleigh Duvall, fourth place composition.

CCES' quick recall team placed third.

Students placing in the top five in written content assessment or composition advance to the Regional Governor's Cup in March.

High school action

Regional high school Governor's Cup competition is Saturday, Feb. 12 and Saturday, Feb. 17 at Cal-

loway County High School.

Several Crittenden County students will compete with a chance to advance to the state finals March 8-11 in Louisville.

Participants and their categories of competition are Marley Phelps, composition; Aaron Adams, arts and humanities; Brooklyn Stinnett, language arts; and Aria Kirk science.

CCHS' quick recall team will also compete Feb. 17.

Chess team members earn accolades

Crittenden County's Blue Knights chess team earned accolades in their returning season after not having a team last year. At the Quad A Regional Scholastic Chess Tournament at Living-

ston Central High School Saturday, the Blue Knights secured two placements as a team and a trio of placements as individuals.

CCES' team of Russell Vince and Carly Mardis

placed second, and CCMS students Bella Walston, Mason Gibson, Wyatt Cartwright, Aiden Butts and Alex Hewitt placed second as a team.

Individually, Vince tied for fifth place in the K5

section; Cartwright fourth in the K8 section; and eighth grader Alex Hewitt third in the K8 section.

CCES and CCMS students are now qualified for state competition.

Community Calendar

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

Thursday, Feb. 8

- Line Dancing Class begins at 9 a.m., at the Crittenden County Senior Citizen Center.
- A goals-setting vision board class is at 5:30 p.m., at Crittenden County Public Library. Call the Crittenden County Extension office to register at (270) 965-5236.
- Pesticide Applicator Training begins at 6 p.m., at the Crittenden County Extension Annex. Call the Extension office to register at (270) 965-5236.

Saturday, Feb. 10

- The Shady Grove Cemetery Association will hold its annual meeting at 10 a.m., at the Shady Grove Fire Department.

Tuesday, Feb. 13

- Crittenden County Extension Service hosts the Kinship Care Support Group at 11 a.m., at the Crittenden County Extension Office and at 5:30 p.m., at the Extension Annex.
- Crittenden County Extensions' Quilt Club will meet at 1 p.m., at the Extension Annex.
- Crittenden County's After Hours Homemakers Club will meet at 5 p.m., at the Extension Office.

Wednesday, Feb. 14

- Challengers Homemakers Club will meet at noon at the Crittenden County Extension Annex.

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Structural issues in Salem prompts visit by state inspectors

State fire marshal and building inspectors were expected in Salem this week to investigate a partial collapse of a couple of buildings in Salem.

Inspections will be required to determine whether the structures can be salvaged or condemnable.

Mayor Gary Damron said it appears that recent weather conditions, including heavy freeze, thawing and more than three inches of rain were likely responsible for the aged buildings to begin crumbling.

He said the owners of Cathy's Canine Cuts had noticed some structural issues in

their building days ago and had begun to remove equipment and other assets from it. The mayor was walking his dog early Saturday morning and noticed that the rear of another nearby building had collapsed. It was being used as a warehouse by owner Gary Hardesty.

Both buildings are on the north side facing Main Street. They are not connected.

Sidewalks in front of both buildings have been cordoned off, the mayor said, out of an abundance of caution.

No one was occupying or injured in the collapse of the second building Saturday morning. Both buildings share common walls with other property owners, which is typical of most towns where late 19th Century or early 20th Century structures still exist.



Former ag agent is honored for work

Former Crittenden County Extension Agent Curt Judy has been recognized with an honor celebrating his long career, which began in Marion.

At the University of Kentucky Winter Wheat Meeting last week, Judy was applauded for his work with all grain crops during his extension career, which ended after 44 years when he retired from Todd County Extension. He had also worked as an agent in Christian County.

Last year, Judy received the Kentucky Extension Association's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Get ready to spring

Daylight Saving Time is about a month away. If you're ready for additional evening daylight hang on until March 10. That's when the time springs forward one hour. Spring actually begins on March 19.

Youth Soccer sign up event is Feb. 24; deadline March 1

Spring registration is underway by the Crittenden County Youth Soccer Association.

A registration event will be held from 9-11 a.m., Saturday, Feb. 24 at H&H Home and Hardware and from 5-7 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 29 at Crittenden Elementary.

Registration forms are available at The Crittenden Press. Deadline to register is March 1, and payment must accompany forms.

Cost is \$45 for 4u and 6u and \$55 for 8u, 10u and 12u players. All players must have shin guards, cleats and a ball.

Practices for 4u and 6u begin the week of March 18, with the season concluding the week of May 6. Players in 10u and 12u will begin practice the week of March 11, and the season-ending tournament will be May 11.

Call Bridgett Tharp for more information 270-625-4634.

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STOMACH

Continued from page 1 material to manufacture whatever they're making. Americans are throwing away 35 billion water bottles a year and recycling 12 percent of them.

Remember prohibition worked best for those who didn't need a drink. Problem was that speakeasies kept the oil coming and America's appetite for costly enforcement and lost tax revenue finally led to repeal of the 18th Amendment in late 1933.

Likewise, doing away with carbon-emitting gasoline engines will prove more challenging than some of us believe. Already, automakers who invested billions in EV development have found that Americans would like to try the hybrid flavor first. Manufacturers are back peddling, trying to adapt to the real demand.

Let's be clear, the world would undoubtedly be a better place without fossil fuel exhaust, heaps of garbage and 100 proof. We simply cannot handle it - at least not right now, not all at once, maybe never.

As grandma would say, "Our eyes are bigger than our stomachs."

We can see what needs to be done. We just don't have the stomach for making it happen.

Where's your Love going this Valentine's Day?

Ask my 9-year-old granddaughter what she loves and she will say that she loves my horses, Chip and Penny. In fact, she loves them so much that I installed a web cam in our horse barn, then wired up a light that stays on 24/7 so she can see the horses at her house any time she wants to do so.

She and her brother both love staying the weekend with us so they can spend time with the horses, barn cats and baking with Grandma.

Ask my 15-year-old grandson what he loves, and he will tell you (in no particular order) that he loves baseball, fishing, golf, playing his guitars, Johnny Cash and riding 4-wheelers with me.

But isn't it amazing how our "loves" change over time? If you had popped the question to me when I was 5 years old, I would have said that I love Roy Rogers, and Trigger, of course; Ford backhoes (Daddy operated Ford backhoes for 30 years) and playing Cowboys and Indians.

If you had asked me the same question when I was 11, the answers would have been vastly different. At that time I also loved baseball, just like my grandson.

We had a nice ballfield behind Salem School, located just up the street from our house. My buddies and I would ride our bikes around town and get enough boys together to have us a good game. I loved watching the St. Louis Cardinals play baseball on TV. I also loved everything about the NASA Apollo program.

With great enthusiasm I watched the July 1969

Apollo 11 mission as it lifted off from Kennedy Space Center, broke the bonds of Earth's gravity and flew into orbit. I watched as the lunar module touched down on the surface of the moon in the Sea of Tranquility, followed by the words of Neil Armstrong, "The Eagle has landed."

I was still watching six and a half hours later when Armstrong set foot on the lunar surface and uttered those immortal words: "That's one small step for man... one giant leap for mankind."

My teachers at Salem School allowed me to carry my little 12-inch black and white television to school and hook it up for our class to watch the liftoff and splash-down of each Apollo mission, even though the picture was way too small to see much of what was occurring. Nonetheless, we were seeing history being made.

I also loved horses. It was during the summer of 1969 that I flew out to the panhandle of West Texas on my first flight ever where my Uncle Windy lived and worked on a real ranch. This was when I bought my first real pair of cowboy boots, my first real cowboy hat, and had my first real horseback ride. That ride came on the day we went to the huge canyon in neighboring Crosby County to round up the cattle.

He put me on a horse he trusted, pointed me toward a huge outcropping of rock in the canyon, and told me to go in that direction and see if I could find the cattle. If I found them, I was to get around behind them and push them back toward the truck where we had just set up a large corral. The last thing I heard as I rode away was, "Watch out for the rattlesnakes!" That didn't phase me one bit; I

was having the time of my life on that three-hour horseback ride... Yee-Haw!

When I was 17, I discovered a new love... girls! Especially a certain brown-eyed doll with long brown hair from Bayou Hill whom I later married.

In my mind, I can still see her smiling at me, revealing those cute dimples, and hear her singing those Loretta Lynn love songs on that hot August night in 1975 at Catilla's Restaurant in Salem. I was totally smitten. True love at first sight.

To say "I love my wife" is quite an understatement; I absolutely adore

her. This April we will celebrate 47 years of glorious wedded bliss.

Why do I mention this? Valentine's Day, of course, which we will celebrate next week on Feb. 14.

By the way, as much as I love my wife, my kids, and my grandkids, there is someone I love even more... my Jesus! Believe it or not, He loves you more than you can ever think of loving your spouse, your kids, or your grandkids. In fact, we love Him because He first loved us... Wow!

Don't forget your sweetheart this Valentine's Day. Don't just say, "I love you." Prove it!



50 YEARS AGO

February 7, 1974

■ Dr. E.B. Howton, chairman of the Agriculture Department of Murray State University from 1969-1973, believed "A school of veterinary medicine would be a sound investment for Kentucky, the region, and the nation." Kentucky at present has no such school. SB 69 was introduced in the Kentucky Senate by State Senator Pat McCuiston for the establishment and location of a state Veterinary School at MSU. Professor Howton said it is not a question, "Can Kentucky afford to?" but rather "Can Kentucky afford not to?"

■ Three Crittenden County High School students were honored by the James Franklin VFW Post 5486 for their participation in the Voice of Democracy program. Those individuals were Ardith Thornton, first place; Wanda Priest, second place; and Alan Stout, third place. The 1974 theme was "My Responsibilities as a Citizen," and students were given the opportunity to voice their opinion on a patriotic theme and to convey their thoughts via broadcasting media.

■ Debbie Brantley and Teresa Gipson learned office skills in the vocational business program and William Todd, agrusiness instructor at CCHS, demonstrated a small engine to his class.

25 YEARS AGO

February 11, 1999

■ Unusual springlike weather was the ideal time for Dylan and Delanie Gipson to clean up their toy jeep out in the yard.

■ Three students in Larry Duvall's landscaping class got some practical experience while planting a flower bed near the U.S. 60 entrance to Crittenden County Middle School. Those students were Jason Brown, Joey Rich and Randa Poindexter

■ The Community Arts Foundation presented "The Soapy Murder Case," the modern version written by Tom Kelly. The production was centered around Horatio Tucker, played by David Foster.

■ Rocket senior Doug Campbell pushed the ball quickly down the court against a trailing Fort Campbell defense during Crittenden County's victory over the Falcons at Rocket gym.

10 YEARS AGO

February 6, 2014

■ Winners in the upper and lower elementary school divisions of the annual West Kentucky Regional Recycling trash sculpture contest were Holden Cooksey, first place and overall winner; Ian Ellington, second place; and Seth Taylor, third place in the upper elementary division. In the lower elementary division, Layla Winn earned first; Jeremiah Brantley, second; and Adrinne James third.

■ James Crider enjoyed a slide down a hill at the Marion-Crittenden County Park as Sawyer Towery cheered him after about four inches of snow fell, which resulted in a school cancellation.

■ Three Crittenden County High School students were named county winners in the NRCS Water Essay Competition. First place went to Cole Foster; second place went to Jessi Brewer; and third place to Kelsey Lucas.

The Crittenden Press

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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 91.99 - \$236,869 - Property has a diverse mix of habitat types, irrigation system, numerous entry points along road frontage, hunter-friendly topography, a creek, and planted pines.

CRITTENDEN COUNTY, KY 55.78 - \$275,000 - This tract has the right blend of habitat types for turkey, 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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See and be seen

I have a good friend who made a couple of signs with posterboard and sharpies. They were nice looking signs given the material. He put them on a support and set them next to a sidewalk in front of his house. Sometimes he would go downtown and sit in a park with one of these signs. One said, "I will listen." Another was printed, "I will pray with you." He would sit for an hour or two at a time.



Sean NIESTRATH
Faith-based columnist
Guest Columnist

There was, according to him, never a time when someone didn't stop and talk. There were a lot of stories told in those encounters. A lot of pain. A lot of joy. Most of the people he never saw again. Some became regulars for the time he did this. Just for a moment, people who often had no one who cared to talk to were seen and heard. And they knew it.

There is another man that I know that spends his time between Oklahoma and his home, in the Philippines. He is a friend to the homeless in Oklahoma City. They know him and some have come to trust him. He gives them what they need for the day, or the night, and he doesn't try to "fix" them. If they want more help he's there, but he doesn't press. He has seen remarkable change in the lives of some of them. One who is much better because he got the help he needed, is now able to help others. He still lives in a tent.

These two men and those like them are gifted

to do what they do. Not everyone can sit in a public space with a sign and talk to whoever walks by. Not everyone has the disposition and courage to walk with the homeless and lift them up with humility and mercy. However, I do believe that all of us have some capability of seeing others and letting them know that we see them.

There is, in my experience, a quality that helps us to see others more clearly.

That is allowing oneself to be seen by others. There are various ways to think about this. It might be learning how to feel at ease with yourself or removing any pretense when approaching others. For those who are believers in God, there is a Psalm that addresses being seen clearly by God. "O LORD, you have searched me and known me."

You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away.

You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways.

Even before a word is on my tongue, O LORD, you know it completely.

You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it.

Where can I go from

your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence?" (Psalm 139:1-7, NRSV)

If I am to be able to see others, it is important that I am open enough for others to see me. This creates enough humility in me to gain the trust of others. Being seen by God is not really a choice. It is more a matter of how comfortable we can get with it. Once we have come to terms with not being able to hide anything we are able to relax a little and let our guard down enough to be genuine with other human beings.

The Gospel of John is full of stories of what it looks like when Jesus sees people. He could see the struggle of a religious legalist (a Pharisee) in Nicodemus. He could see the embarrassment of a wedding host and could hear the pleas of his mother on their behalf. He could see a Samaritan woman who was a victim of harsh marriage laws and allowances. He could see a blind man who longed for sight. He sees us!

Learning to see better is one of the ways to think about faith. Walking faithfully in one's religion (the better meaning of the word) is a constant process of learning and acting in ways that lifts up others. The first thing that happens when we begin to see better is getting a clearer picture of what is in the mirror. Come to terms with that and we are ready to begin our walk with God.

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

Religious Outreach

- West KY Association's annual Women's Conference is from 9 a.m.-noon, Saturday, March 9. Registration is from 8:30-9 a.m. with light breakfast and lunch. Speakers will be Rhonda Horack and Teenie Murray. Located at Camp David, 134 Hwy. 1668, Marion.
- 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.
- Suicidal thoughts? Stop! Email dbrantpc@tds.net and request a video link that hopefully will change your mind.
- 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 1-3 p.m. each Thursday. The Clothes Closet will be closed in case of rain.
- Fredonia Unity Baptist Church's clothes closet is open from 9 a.m. to noon on the second and fourth Saturday of every month.
- First Baptist Church of Fredonia food pantry is open from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. the third Thursday of each month in Coleman Hall of the church.
- The clothes closet at Mexico Baptist Church is open from 9 to 11:30 a.m. each Monday.
- 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.

God gives resources to help us avoid compromising

Question: I am a Christian teen. I am struggling to not compromise my faith in the overwhelming pressure kids in my high school put on me and the world's values presented through social media. What can I do to withstand the pressure I face to conform to this world's standards of culture?

Answer: Christ called us to follow Him in all the ways we live; Satan tempts us to compromise our standards. You are in a spiritual battle for who controls your heart and actions. Here's some resources God gives you to live a Christlike life:

1. Depend on the Holy Spirit, who resides in every believer, to bring clarity and conviction concerning the way we should live (Jn. 14:16).
2. Read your Bible every day (particularly the New Testament) to know God's truths and commands (2 Tim. 3:16).
3. Stay close to God by talking to Him in prayer throughout each day (Eph. 3:20).
4. Regularly participate

ASK the PASTOR

By Bob Hardison



in a church where Christ is preached. God intends that our faith be lived out in community (Heb. 10:25).

5. Carefully choose who you hang out with. They will

either cause you to be tempted to compromise or encourage you not to yield to cultural pressures (Eccles. 4:9-10).

6. Establish your conviction against ungodly and immoral behavior before you face moments of decision (Dan. 1:8).

Send your questions to: bob@bobhardison.com

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Pastor: Ross Atwell
87 Freedom Church Rd., Marion
(about 1 mi. from Marion off Ky. 91)

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Sunday Worship 11 a.m. Wed. Bible Study 6 p.m.

Speaker: Greg Rushing

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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.

Sugar Grove

Cumberland Presbyterian

585 Sugar Grove Church Rd., Marion, Ky. (270) 704-2455
Pastor Jesse Thornton (618) 200-0884
Sun. School: 10 a.m. | Sun. Worship: 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.

Mexico Baptist Church

175 Mexico Rd., (270) 965-4059
MexicoBaptist.org

Minister of Music Mike Crabtree
Pastor: Tim Burdon
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.

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The People of the United Methodist Church

WED: Bible Study 5:30 p.m. Bro. James LAIBEN
SUN: Sun. School 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:45 p.m. South College St.

DEER CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

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Wednesday Bible Study: 7 p.m.
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growing in grace 2 Peter 3:18

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Fords Ferry grew in the '20s

The little community of Fords Ferry, located on the Ohio River in northwest Crittenden County, is now just a piece of deserted ground, overgrown weeds and fallen trees cradled by the Ohio River and Crooked Creek.

Quite often history seekers will roam the area, imagining how it used to be when James Ford had his ferry house and his Ferry Ohio located there in the early 1800s. Where did his ferry house set and where did the ferry landing enter the river? Where did he sit on his porch and watch and plan the daily activities of his business? It's easy to picture it all if you have the love of history in your heart.

Several years after the James Ford era ended, a community grew up just a short distance from where Ford's business occupied the area. Houses, stores, a hotel and a post office would occupy the space.

This article was shared with us by the late Helen Carter Springs. Her memories of going to school at Fords Ferry are truly a glance back into yesteryear. It's nice to have these facts and memories from the history of a later-day Fords Ferry town after the out-laws years.

Memories of the past

Helen tells us we must not let it be said that Fords Ferry is only remembered by Jim Ford, his robbing, his killings and his own death. Many stories and books have been written about the notorious Ford.

It is time to recall other activities as remembered and experienced by a few remaining people of the area. We know that the school was operating as early as 1880 with an enrollment of 30 pupils.

The next information about that school is from stories told to this writer by her mother, Ruth Cook Carter. She taught there in 1914-1915. She lived in the Hebron community and rode her favorite horse there daily.

One day as she rode on her side saddle past Mr. Elijah Franklin's house, his pet tom turkey came from the barnyard and jumped upon her horse and began clawing her back and tore her new red sweater into shreds. Such a shock – the fright, pain and loss of her sweater. She was told that the turkey hated red, which caused the attack.

She also told about Gleaford Rankin, an older student of her large enrollment, saving many of them from a fierce fire. It seems their noon-time activities were spent constructing a log cabin. One day after it had been caulked with sagebrush to keep the wind out, some of the children were smoking rabbit tobacco, or life everlasting, as the native weed was called. The caulking caught fire and almost became a disaster. Thus the playhouse became a pile of ashes and Gleaford became an instant hero. (Gleaford Rankin would later in life become one of the popular pharmacists that owned The City Drug Store on Main St.)

Dam 50 revives the area

Soon after the middle of the 1920s the little riverboat town became a ghost town as most people moved away and the empty schoolhouse sat as only a memory until the Government Corps of Engineers began to build Dam 50 just a few miles upstream.

The influx of workers caused this sleepy village to wake up to supply housing for the many workers. Every available structure was turned into housing, and the popula-



Pictured from right is a family dwelling, the middle building was the community store, post office and living quarters and the last building on the left was a millinery shop.

tion grew.

There suddenly was a need for fresh milk and butter. My father, Tom Carter, filled that need by carrying 5 gallon cans of milk and Mom's hand-churned butter across the swinging Crooked Creek bridge to the work site. I helped him hand-

milk 6 or 7 cows twice a day.

The moving in of families created a need for the Fords Ferry School to open its doors again. Records show that its later operation lasted from 1925 to 1928 when the dam was completed.

A disabled retired teacher was employed and classes began.

He was a caring person and wanted us to be happy – so much so that we took advantage of his disabilities and found ways of turning much of our learning time into fun time.

Many times we turned our extended lunch time into fun time by building projects. There were many engineers among us with exciting ideas, and we used these ideas and cleared a large area in the woods.

We sneaked our parents' tools, which included saws, axes, hoes and shovels, off to school. With these we would build roads through the woods. Our coaster wagons would seem to fly down the hill on our homemade runways.

We also built playhouses, and even started a log cabin. The larger boys chopped down the sassafras trees and the smaller children would drag them to the site while others stacked them, but time ran out on us and our cabin wasn't finished.

School Memories

The school had a pot-bellied stove, we would gather crab apples and place them in the rim around the stove to roast. Apples never tasted so good.

At times the cistern, our water supply, would be low and we would take turns carrying a bucket of water from the spring to last for the day. We used the common dipper for drinking.

There was excitement along the way to and from school. Our dad cut the underbrush through the woods, creating an arch that was formed overhead. On cold, early mornings the heavy frost, sleet or "hoar" frost would cover the arch and would glisten in the sunlight like diamonds in the sky. A



Sitting on the steps of the Fords Ferry Post Office in the early 1920s are Virgie (Sellars) Price, Getie Price and Elsie Price.

natural beauty not to be repeated again elsewhere and a sight many would never be lucky enough to see.

There was a gate across this path which was so much fun to swing upon, back and forth. One day it could take our roughness no longer and the post broke. We soon discovered that a swarm of yellowjackets lived in the post and many of us were covered with the fighting bees and were stung severely. An experience not so soon forgotten.

We had box suppers in the evening to which our parents came. Our fancy covered boxes were auctioned off. It was fun to see who would get our boxes. Many times we were too shy to eat with the person that bought our box supper.

One night the desks were pushed to the outside walls and the center of the floor became a dance floor. I shall never forget how beautifully my uncle and aunt, Jim and Kittie Carter, would glide across the floor. I had never seen dancing before and with Buck Brewer playing the fiddle, the evening became unforgettable.

Times Changed Things

When Dam 50 was completed and the large workforce moved on the site, a school was built on the reservation for the children of the permanent operational crew and surrounding neighborhood. The students on the west side of the district returned to Hebron School, thus ending the need for the Fords Ferry School.

Students went on the Mattoon or to Marion High School and then beyond to become professional people with memories of their days at good old Fords Ferry School.

Through the years these good times would be recalled by Willard Walker, Pauline James, Charlene James Lamp-

ing, Jim Carter and Helen Carter Springs.

Some of the other families that attended Fords Ferry School during this time were Agent, Walker, West, Winders, Rankin, Truitt, James, Brewer, Jones, Darnell and Carter. Some teachers remembered were Peter Samuels, Jewel Spencer, George Wofford and Willie Turner.

From the archives of The Crittenden Press dated Nov. 7, 1930: Meeting in regular session Monday, in the office of Edwin Hadden, Superintendent of Crittenden County Schools, the County Board of Education accepted the bid of John Arflack for the old school building at Fords Ferry. The Board received \$40 for the school house. Mr. Arflack is to remove the building from the lot on which it now stands.

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

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bid notice

The Crittenden County Board of Education invites you to submit sealed bids for the 2024-2025 yearbook and school pictures. Please submit bids to: Crittenden County Board of Education, 601 West Elm Street, Marion, KY 42064. Bids will be accepted until February 22, 2024 at 2:00 p.m., at which time they will be opened. Any interested party may attend; however, no immediate decision will be made. For bid specifications, please contact Bridgette Porter at 270-965-3525 or email: bridgette.porter@crittenden.kyschools.us. (2t-07-c)

The Crittenden County Board of Education will be accepting sealed bid(s)

for a 2023 Ram Promaster 2500 ADA-Compliant conversion (call Wayne Winters 270-965-3866 for spec list). All bids must be received by Monday February 19th 2024 at 1:00PM at which time they will be opened. Bids will be received at the Crittenden County Board of Education, 601 West Elm, Marion, KY 42064 and must be marked "SEALED BID". The Crittenden County Board of Education reserves the right to decline any or all bids. Please contact Wayne Winters with any questions at 270.965.3866, or wayne.winters@crittenden.kyschools.us (1t-06-c)

legal notices

Graciela Bruce, 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 9, 2024. The business to be licensed will be located at Morningside Drive, Marion, Ky. 42001. Doing business as La Cantina LLC. 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 2NE33, Frankfort, Ky. 40601-8400, within 30 days (KRS 243.430) of the date of this legal publication. (4t-09-c)

I, Melissa Guill, clerk of Crittenden County District Court, Marion, Ky. do certify that the following has filed notice of Final Settlement: Kathy Perryman of 120 Conway Dr., Marion, Ky. 42064 of Michael Perryman, deceased, whose address was 633 East Depot St., Marion, Ky. 42064.

The foregoing settlement is to be heard at the regular session of Crittenden District Court on March 6, 2024 at 8:30 a.m. All persons having exceptions to said settlements are to file same at once.

Melissa Guill, Clerk Crittenden District Court (1t-06-c)

Notice is hereby given that on January 31, 2024 Patsy Hamilton of 140 Romeo Dr., Hopkinsville, Ky. 42240, Ralph Hamilton of 621 Old Shady Grove Rd., Marion, Ky. 42064 and Robin Hamilton-Folks of 908 E. Moran Rd., Brentwood, Tn. 37027 was appointed co-executors of Louise Hamilton, deceased, whose address was 115 Clark St., Marion, Ky. 42064. Rebecca Johnson, P.O. Box 415, Marion, Ky. 42064, attorney.

All persons having claims against said estate are hereby notified to present the same properly proven as required by law to the co-executors before the 1st day of July, 2024 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-06-c)

Notice is hereby given that on January 31, 2024 Hailey Nola of 7005 Haldeman Ave., Louisville, Ky. 40206 was appointed executrix of Gerald Lee Ford, deceased, whose address was 728 Fords Ferry Rd., Marion, Ky. 42064.

All persons having claims against said estate are hereby notified to present the same properly proven as required by law to the executrix before the 31st day of July, 2024 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-06-c)

Notice is hereby given that on January 31, 2024 Michael Loveless of 1984 US Hwy. 60 East, Salem, Ky. 42078 was appointed executor of Robert W. Loveless, deceased, whose address was 9189 US Hwy. 60 West, Salem, Ky. 42078. William F. McGee, Jr., P.O. Box 39, Smithland, Ky. 42081, attorney.

All persons having claims against said estate are hereby notified to present the same properly proven as required by law to the executor before the 31st day of July, 2024 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-06-c)

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
CRITTENDEN CIRCUIT COURT
CASE NO. 23-CI-00023
FEDERAL HOME LOAN MORTGAGE CORPORATION,
AS TRUSTEE FOR FRED-DIE MAC SLST
2022-1 PARTICIPATION INTEREST TRUST
PLAINTIFF
v.

JAMES KEMPER AKA JAMES M. KEMPER, ET AL
CAPITOL ONE BANK (USA), N.A.
COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY, WORK-FORCE DEVELOPMENT CABINET EX REL DIVISION OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE
COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY, COUNTY OF CRITTENDEN
DEFENDANTS
NOTICE OF SALE

Pursuant to a Judgment and Order of Sale and to satisfy the judgment of the Plaintiff in the above styled action, the Commissioner will offer for sale on or about the hour of 10:00 a.m., Tuesday, February 27, 2024, at public auction to the highest bidder at the Crittenden County Office Complex at 200 Industrial Drive, Marion, Kentucky, the following described property:

PROPERTY ADDRESS:
420 Sturgis Road, Marion, KY 42064

MAP NO.: 070-60-07-015.00

FOR COMPLETE LEGAL DESCRIPTION SEE THE JUDGMENT AND ORDER OF SALE.

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY CONVEYED HEREIN WAS PROVIDED TO THE DRAFTSMAN BY THE PLAINTIFF AND THE DRAFTSMAN DOES NOT CERTIFY THE ACCURACY OF THE SAME NOR ANY EXISTING EASEMENTS

Terms: The following terms are in effect unless otherwise mentioned above:

At the time of sale, the successful bidder shall either pay full cash or make a deposit of ten percent (10%) of the purchase price with the balance on credit for thirty (30) days. If the purchase price is not paid in full, the successful bidder shall execute a bond at the time of sale with sufficient surety to secure the unpaid balance of the purchase price. The bond shall bear interest at the rate the judgment bears, from the date of sale until paid. In the event the successful bidder is the plaintiff, then in lieu of the deposit the plaintiff shall be allowed to bid on credit up to the judgment amount. To the extent applicable, the property will be sold subject to the statutory right of redemption. The purchaser shall be responsible for ad valorem taxes for the year 2023 and subsequent years. The sale may be canceled and any announcements made at the sale take precedence over printed matter contained

herein. The Master Commissioner does not have access to the inside of any property and does not warrant title. The Master Commissioner only conveys pursuant to the Judgment and Order of Sale. The successful bidder has 10 days after the sale to examine title and file exceptions.

Dated this _____ day of _____, 2024.

REBECCA J. JOHNSON
MASTER COMMISSIONER

217 WEST BELLVILLE STREET
P.O. BOX 415
MARION, KENTUCKY 42064

270-965-2222
CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a true copy of the foregoing was electronically filed with the Clerk's office and mailed on this the _____ day of _____, 2024,

to the following:
Christopher M. Hill
Christopher M. Hill & Asso-

ciates, LLC
P.O. Box 817
Frankfort, KY 40602
James Kemper aka James M. Kemper
420 Sturgis Road
Marion, KY 42064
Robert B. Frazer
Crittenden County Attorney
P.O. Box 364
Marion, KY 42064
REBECCA JOHNSON
MASTER COMMISSIONER (3t-07-c)

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INVITATION FOR SEALED BID FOR REAL ESTATE LOCATED AT 73 NICHOLS AVENUE

The City of Marion, Kentucky, a City of the Home Rule Class, has declared as surplus property the real estate located at 73 Nichols Avenue consisting of approximately 1.43 acres with improvements and identified as PVA Parcel Map 058-20-17-031.00 and being the same property conveyed by the Crittenden County Fiscal Court, by Deed dated October 19, 2021, and of record in Deed Book 244, at Page 188. Crittenden County Court Clerk's Office.

Sealed bids will be accepted in person at City Hall or by US Mail, postage prepaid, at 217 South Main Street, Marion, Kentucky 42064. Sealed Bids must be received at City Hall no later than **12:00 P.M. (Noon) Central Standard Time February 21, 2024**. The bid opening shall occur in public at 12:05 P.M. Central Standard Time same date. Bidders or an authorized representative must be present at the bid opening. In the event the bidding is successful, the prevailing bidder must be prepared to deposit no less than 20% of the bid to the City on February 21, 2024 and to close and tender balance of funds in full to the City by March 21, 2024. The prevailing bidder is responsible for all closing costs, including deed preparation, transfer tax, and recording fees and should have a title examination performed at their own expense prior to closing. The City of Marion reserves the right to reject any and all bids and a reserve is set in the amount of \$125,000.00.

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At left is J.D. Gray rushing and above QB Sean Thompson with Coach Al Starnes.

HALL OF FAME INDUCTION CEREMONY



J.D. Gray became the Rocket QB as a sophomore.

Two former student-athletes will be enshrined in the Farmers Bank Marion-Crittenden County Athletics Hall of Fame during a ceremony Friday night at Rocket Arena. There will be a memory room for new inductees of the Hall of Fame, their families, friends, well-wishers and former coaches and teammates and a come-and-go reception in the Rocket Arena meeting room. It will be open from 6 p.m., until the end of the boys' varsity game. Friday is also the annual basketball homecoming game. Crowning of a queen and king and recognition of the court will be prior to the varsity game against Tilghman. Hall of Fame induction ceremony will be at half-time of the varsity basketball game.



Sean Thompson



J.D. Gray

Thompson, Gray enshrined by Hall on Friday

Sean Thompson 2000-2004

Rocket football occupies a place in Sean Thompson's heart and soul that goes unrivaled. His experience as a young boy growing up amid the Big Blue football program shaped him mentally and physically and set him on a career path almost certain to last a lifetime.

Thompson in 2018 became the first Crittenden County graduate to return as head football coach. It was no surprise at the time that Thompson was selected for the job. He had basically been hand-picked, recruited back to Marion and groomed to take over the program before 27-year coach Al Starnes retired.

In high school, Thompson played quarterback. He remains among Rocket career leaders in rushing touchdowns, passing yards and passing completions. He was all-conference as a junior and senior, and was also team MVP those seasons. Upsetting Murray High 18-8 in the 2002 playoffs and beating Caldwell County three out of four years he was in high school are among his greatest memories.

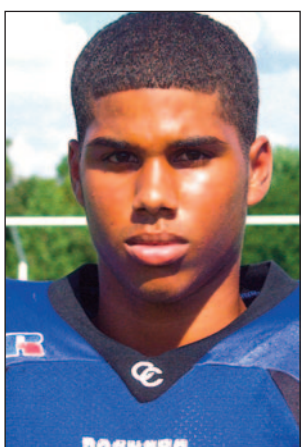
A 2004 graduate of Crittenden County High School, Thompson, 37, says that when he moved here in elementary school, his mother enrolled him in Junior Pro Football, which was an obvious path. His ability wasn't a surprise back then either as his father, Sheldon, had played defensive end at Florida State.

"Crittenden County athletics made me the man that I am today," Thompson said as he contemplated enshrinement. "Every time I have been to a place in my life when I didn't really know what to do, football was the answer."

After playing receiver four years at Campbellsville University, Thompson hopped into coaching at nearby Union County, and his former high school had an eye on Thompson.

"I knew we had to get him back here," said Starnes, who now lives on the lake with a retirement gig in real estate.

The old ball coach said



Sean Thompson during his playing days

Thompson's love for the game and his deep understanding of it has made him one of the best coaches in Kentucky.

"He was always a student of the game and that helps him now in coaching," Starnes added.

Thompson was head coach at CCHS for three seasons, compiling a record of 28-8 with three district championships and three trips to the state Class A quarterfinals, before accepting the job at Paducah Tilghman after the 2020 season. He was First District Class A Coach of the Year two times. At Tilghman, he's continued to be successful, playing in a state championship game, a state semifinal and a state quarterfinal in his first three seasons. He has also been chosen First District Coach of the Year and Purchase Region Coach of the Year while at Paducah.

Friday nights at Rocket Stadium, he says, are among the greatest feelings he's experienced on earth and to this day Thompson has a profound gratitude for those opportunities along with his tutelage under Starnes and mental and physical mentoring from former coach Denis Hodge.

The Rocket football team was 29-18 during Thompson's years in high school and he was also a member of the basketball and track and field teams. He still holds the school discus record and was a member of a record-setting 4x200 meters squad.

Thompson and his wife, Brittany, live in Paducah with their son, Avery, who is an eighth-grader, and who is already being courted by



Sean Thompson was Crittenden County's first spread offensive, shotgun-style quarterback.

"I can't say enough about the character of both of them. They were great players, but more importantly they are also great people, great family men with such character. They're the kind of guys you want in your Hall of Fame."

— Former CCHS Coach Al Starnes on Sean Thompson and J.D. Gray

Division I college football teams, including Kentucky and Tennessee.

J.D. Gray 2006-2010

For a kid who never actually lived on Crittenden County soil, J.D. Gray sure bled a bright blue.

A lifelong resident of Princeton, Gray came to Crittenden as a middle schooler and became a full-fledged Rocket team leader and a three-sport athlete who excelled in football and baseball. He became the basketball starting point guard as a senior newcomer in 2008-09, well after establishing himself in the record books in the two other sports.

To this day, Gray, 32, holds the Rocket record for career walks with 91, runs scored with 151 and stolen bases with 99. The runs record is also listed among KHSAA career bests, tied for 30th all time in Kentucky baseball. Gray is among the top 10 in school history in home runs, career hits, at bats, triples and RBIs.

His is a unique story because baseball actually brought him to the halls of Crittenden County High School, but it was

football that almost certainly secured his enshrinement.

Gray enrolled in school in Marion as an eighth grader because he wasn't allowed to tryout for the high school baseball team in his home county. It's a move he never regretted.

"When I came to school there it was a big change. I was scared. I didn't know but a couple of people in the school, but after being in the community and around the people I wanted to stay," he recalls.

As a football player, Gray's career started in the defensive secondary and as a receiver, but he became quarterback as a sophomore and Crittenden County rolled off some of its most successful seasons in history, including a 2008 regional championship and berth in the state semifinals where CCHS lost to Beechwood on a bitterly cold day in northern Kentucky. In that season, Crittenden beat storied Mayfield twice in one season, reportedly the only team to ever do that.

Gray was the Kentucky Football Coaches Association Player of Year 2008,



J.D. Gray was the greatest base stealer in Rocket history and his career runs scored remains among the top 30 all-time in Kentucky.

was a member of the All Purchase Team in 2009, all conference in 2007, 2008 and 2009, Rocket Offensive MVP his last three seasons and team MVP as a senior when he scored 27 all-purpose touchdowns. He'd been just as good in 2008, scoring 26. In the record book, Gray is No. 2 all-time for touchdowns scored with 72 and second in points scored at 304.

Gray says the 2008 season sticks out in his mind because of the victories over Mayfield, but he also points to the Rockets' road win at Louisville Holy Cross that year among the hardest fought in his career.

"We didn't have a whole lot of depth. Nine of us went both ways, but we had a lot of talent with guys like Rodney Robertson, Gaige Courtney and Dylan Clark. We had a lot of guys who really cared about being there and cared about winning," Gray said.

"He absolutely loved Rocket football," Coach Starnes adds. "Nobody deserves to be in the Hall of Fame more."

In the day, with Gray at running back alongside other greats like Courtney and Robertson, Crittenden County was a powerhouse on the ground.

"People always thought J.D. was faster than he was because he was so elusive and tough, one of the toughest players I ever coached," Starnes said.

Because Gray was capable of doing damage with his legs, Starnes said he was installed as the team's punter. Not for kicking, but for running. That's when Crittenden left the traditional punt style and moved to the rugby kick.

"He had the option to run it every time. There were a few times he should have run, but punted," Starnes said with a chuckle. "He's the reason went to (rugby punting), because he was so elusive."

Starnes also praised Gray's leadership and results.

A father of two, Gray lives in Princeton with his wife and he commutes to work at ALCOA in Newburgh, Ind., a 90-mile one-way trip each day where he's a crane operator.

About six months ago, Gray was diagnosed with a rare, but slow-growing form of lymphoma. He's taking cancer treatments, which will be completed in the coming days, and appreciates the prayers and concerns from Rocket Nation.

Farmers Bank Hall of Fame Roll Call

Player, Year Inducted, Sport

Andrews, Josh - 2005 - Football
Belt, Bruce - 2001 - Basketball
Austin Berry - 2022 - Football, Track
Beverly, David - 2007 - Football
Brasher, Don "Sucky" - 2002 - Basketball
Bridwell, Lynn "Lefty" - 2009 - Baseball
Brown, Nicky - 2009 - Basketball
Champion, Jamie - 2006 - Football
Conyer, Roy - 2001 - Football
Courtney, Gaige - 2021 - Football, Basketball
Cozart, David - 2019 - Football, Baseball, Basketball
Cozart, Spencer - 2004 - Basketball
Jeremy Croft - 2022 - Track, Basketball
Croft, Jimmy - 2013 - Basketball
Daniels, Markeata Brown - 2009 - Basketball
Davidson, Glen "Ace" - 2003 - Basketball
Morgan Dooks - 2015 - Basketball
Easley, Clinton - 2005 - Football
Elder, Houston "Hound" - 2001 - Football
Faith, Leonard - 2008 - Basketball
Franklin, W.A. - 2006 - Basketball
Gates, Pat - 2002 - Football
Grady, Orville "Soupy" - 1998 - Football
Gray, JD - 2003 - Football, Baseball
Gray, Vanessa - 2011 - Basketball
Green, Don - 2001 - Basketball
Hart, Brad - 2017 - Football, Basketball
Hart, George - 1998 - Basketball
Head, Frank - 1998 - Football
Hicklin, Robert "Hickie" - 2002 - Football
Highfill, Hugh - 2002 - Basketball
Hill, Tim - 2016 - Basketball, Track
Hinchee, Jeanee - 2007 - Basketball



Hodge, Denis - 2006 - Football
Hodge, Shannon Collins - 2008 - Basketball
Hopper, Jimmy - 2005 - Football
Hughes, Charles "Turkey" - 1999 - Football
Johnson, Tom - 2001 - Football
Kirk, Melissa - 2021 - Soccer
Knott, Curtis "Gig" - 1998 - Football
Litchfield, Louis - 2007 - Basketball
Little, Dwight - 1998 - Basketball
Little, Ercei - 2003 - Basketball
Martin, Turner - 2012 - Basketball
Mathieu, Jessica - 2018 - Basketball
McChesney, James "Burlap" - 2003 - Football
Mills, Jim Fred - 1999 - Football
Moss, Ronnie - 2003 - Football, Basketball, Track
Mott, Chad - 2006 - Football
Mott, Dennis - 2010 - Football
Myers, Kyle - 2017 - Basketball, Football
Myers, Ronnie - 2021 - Support Staff
O'Leary, Angie Hobbs - 2019 - Basketball, Track
Ordway, Bruce - 2008 - Basketball
Perryman, Chad - 2011 - Baseball

Phillips, James - 2000 - Basketball
Rich, Joey - 2014 - Football
Rushing, Woodson "Chuck" - 1999 - Football
Shadowsen, Lige - 2003 - Basketball
Sherer, Dwight - 2021 - Support Staff
Shewcraft, Jeff - 2004 - Basketball
Simmons, Ellis - 2005 - Basketball
Smith, Bennett - 1999 - Basketball
Starnes, Al - 2004 - Football
Starnes, Angela - 2018 - Track Coach
Stewart, Wompie - 2007 - Football
Summers, Von - 2014 - Football
Swisher, Bob - 2000 - Football
Tabor, Charles "Bill" - 2003 - Football
Tabor, Gerald "Hoopy" - 2000 - Basketball
Tabor, Melissa Jones - 2009 - Golf
Terry, William "Gander" - 1999 - Football
Thompson, Sean - 2023 - Football
Thurman, Greg - 2002 - Basketball
Towery, Carlisle - 1998 - Basketball
Turley, Curtis - 1999 - Basketball
VanHooser, Carrol - 1998 - Football
Wheeler, Floyd "Rip" - 2010 - Baseball
Wheeler, Clark - 2019 - Track and Field
Willoughby, James - 2012 - Track
Winders, Nicky - 2019 - Basketball, Golf
Woodall, Deller E. - 1998 - Football
Woodall, Jerry - 2004 - Football
Wring, Tommy - 2002 - Basketball
1945 Marion High Football Team - 2008
1963 CC High Football Team - 2000
1985 CC High Football Team - 2008
1942 Marion High Football Team - 2015



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BASKETBALL

Fifth District Standings

GIRLS		
Team	Dist	Overall
Lyon County	5-1	15-8
Crittenden County	4-2	14-11
Livingston Central	3-3	9-7
Trigg County	0-6	3-19
BOYS		
Team	Dist	Overall
Lyon County	6-0	22-3
Trigg County	4-2	10-12
Livingston Central	2-4	8-14
Crittenden County	0-6	2-15

Round the 5th District

RECENT RESULTS
Girls
 Caldwell County 55, Trigg County 37
 Hopkins Central 65, Trigg County 46
 Henderson County 52, Lyon Co. 25
 Livingston Central 41, Ballard 30
 Livingston Central 70, Tilghman 56
 Lyon County 64, Trigg County 26
 Union County at Livingston Central

Boys
 Caldwell Co. 64, Trigg County 55
 Graves County 78, Trigg County 47
 Heritage Christian 79, Livingston 69
 Lyon County 86, Central Hardin 72
 Lyon County 92, Trigg County 36

UPCOMING GAMES
Girls
 Feb 8 Trigg at Caldwell County
 Feb 9 Trigg at Christian County
 Feb 9 Lyon at Caldwell County
 Feb 10 Union at Crittenden Co.
 Feb 10 Livingston at Carlisle
 Feb 10 Kenwood (Clarksville) at Lyon
 Feb 13 Hopkins Central at Crittenden
 Feb 13 Trigg at Graves
 Feb 13 Union at Trigg

Boys
 Feb 8 Livingston at Hopkins Central
 Feb 9 Tilghman at Crittenden
 Feb 9 Trigg at Dawson Springs
 Feb 10 Trigg County at Madisonville
 Feb 10 Bowling Green at Lyon Co.
 Feb 10 Livingston at Carlisle Co.
 Feb 12 Caldwell at Crittenden Co.
 Feb 12 Livingston at Hickman County
 Feb 12 Trigg County vs. St. Mary

MISCELLANEOUS

Angela Starnes in HOF

Former Crittenden County coach and athletic director Angela Starnes has been inducted into the Todd Central High School Athletics Hall of Fame. A 1980 graduate of Todd Central, Starnes was a highly-decorated track and field athlete. She still holds the KHSAA 100-meter record. She is also a member of KHSAA Hall of Fame and the Farmers Bank Marion-Crittenden County Athletics Hall of Fame. The induction ceremony was last week at Elkton.

Baseball Softball sign up

Registration is now open for Crittenden County Dugout Club's youth baseball and softball recreational leagues. Deadline is March 9. Costs vary depending on the age of the child, and there are family discounts. Skills assessment is 10 a.m., to noon, Saturday, March 9 for some players. For more information call Tanner Tabor at 859-333-9751. Games will be played April 28 through June 15. Practices begins in late March. See Dugout Club Facebook Page or The Press Online for registration form with additional details. Forms are also available at The Press and YTG Insurance.



Crittenden County first-year head coach Matt Fraliex and his bench react to a play Friday night against Fifth District rival Livingston Central at Rocket Arena. The boys got their third win of the season on Saturday at Christian Fellowship. Photos By Allison Evans

Girls lose 3 of last 5 since All A

STAFF REPORT
 Despite only three wins this season, Trigg County was ready for the Lady Rockets Monday and took Crittenden County to the wire in a game that was probably closer than most expected.

It was tight most of the first half and Trigg led for a moment, but CCHS jumped ahead by 17 points when Elliot Evans scored eight points during a 12-4 run in the third quarter. Trigg rallied back in the fourth period, however, cutting the Lady Rocket margin to single digits before the Crittenden girls won it by a dozen, 56-44, to complete their regular-season Fifth District play.

Crittenden improved to 4-2 in league games. Trigg was winless in district play after losing to Lyon on Tuesday. The Lyons capture the league's top seed for postseason play with CCHS No 2, setting up a play-off opener against Livingston Central later this month.

Crittenden Co.	14	31	47	56
Trigg County	10	22	30	44

CRITTENDEN – Boone 16, Evans 16, Hodge 6, Federico 3, Rushing 7, Holeman 3, Stewart 5, Munday. FG 18. 3-pointers 5 (Evans 4, Holeman). FT 15-25.
TRIGG – Norwood 5, Navarro 7, Bush 13, Grinols 10, McGee 9, Rogers, Jones. FG 13. 3-pointers 5 (Bush 3, Norwood, Navarro). FT 13-16.

Loss at Lyon County

At Lyon County Friday, in a pivotal Fifth District matchup, the Lady Rockets got off to a difficult start and couldn't fully recover despite trimming Lyon's lead from 16 to 6 late.

The Rocket girls lost 60-51, giving Lyon County the upper hand in the Fifth District standings.

An inspired Lyon defense commanded the first half as the hosts rolled to a big lead while stopping Crittenden leading scorer Anna Boone on the floor. She had no first-half baskets, but finished with a game-high 21 points.

Boone led CCHS's late recovery with 11 fourth-quarter points, but Crittenden couldn't get a rebound when it needed one and couldn't force a steal when it had to have one. Meanwhile, Lyon stalled the ball in the final four minutes to protect its single-digit lead.

Rebounding was a factor in the game as the Lady Lyons won the glass and put three players in double-figure scoring.

Crittenden Co.	10	22	36	51
Lyon County	13	32	46	60



Anna Boone scores during the game at Lyon County.

CRITTENDEN – Boone 21, Evans 11, Hodge 4, Federico 8, Rushing 6, Holeman, Stewart 1, Munday. FG 17. 3-pointers 2 (Evans, Hodge). FT 15-22.

LYON – Taylor 17, Cotham 16, Collins 17, Downing, Coursey 6, Wynn, Holland 4, Perry. FG 21. 3-pointers none. FT 12-15.

Calloway rips Lady Rockets

Crittenden County's girls ran into an offensive juggernaut at Calloway County Tuesday, losing 70-56.

Guard Anna Boone scored 22 and guard Elliot Evans had 20 for the Rocket girls, accounting for 75% of CCHS's scoring against a persistent Calloway defense.

Calloway, now 20-5, is the third-ranked team in the First Region, according to KHSAA power rankings. Crittenden falls to 14-11.

Crittenden County	9	24	41	56
Calloway County	18	48	74	79

CRITTENDEN – Boone 22, Evans 20, Hodge 5, Federico 7, Rushing, Holeman 2, Walker, Stewart, Charlee, Champion. FG 23. 3-pointers 3 (Boone, Evans, Federico). FT 7-8.
CALLOWAY – Koch 19, Crouch 13, McLure 2, Futrell 16, Perkins 8, Lowe 21. FG 32. 3-pointers 9 (Crouch 3, Futrell 4, Perkins, Lowe). FT 6-9.

Boone nets 25 to beat Caldwell

After losing to Lyon Friday, the Lady Rockets pivoted to victory Saturday afternoon in a matinee game against Caldwell County at Rocket Arena.

Anna Boone was hot, particularly early, and led Crittenden County to a 60-39 win over the Lady Tigers. Boone scored 21 of her game-high 25 points in the first half as CCHS rolled up a big lead.

Crittenden got 11 points off the bench as all 10 available players got into the contest.

Caldwell County	10	17	25	39
Crittenden County	15	38	54	60

CALDWELL – Clark 9, M.Thomas 9, B.Thomas, Butts 9, Sykes 2, Copeland 4, Aikens, Williams 6. FG 15. 3-pointers 2 (Clark, M.Thomas). FT 7-11.

CRITTENDEN – Boone 25, Evans 2, Hodge 10, Federico 8, Rushing 4, Holeman 7, Stewart 2, Walker, Munday 2, Champion. FG 25. 3-pointers 6 (Boone 3, Hodge 2, Holeman). FT 4-5.

Tied late, Rockets lose edge at Trigg

STAFF REPORT

In a game that was tied with five minutes to play, Trigg County pulled away late to beat the Rockets 63-52 Monday at Cadiz, closing out Crittenden County's district schedule.

A turnover or two and some missed shots led to four or five empty possessions after the Rockets tied the game on a Bryson Walker steal and pull up jumper with 5:12 to go.

Crittenden had hoped to catch the Wildcats short-handed with Trigg's leading scorer Jhaden Vaughn on the sideline injured. The game was close start to finish with Trigg leading by a handful of points much of the way, but never creating an insurmountable space. The Rockets were tied early, too, at 19, but never led.

Crittenden finishes winless in six Fifth District games this season and fell to 2-16 overall. **Meanwhile, Trigg posted its fourth win in five district games with one left against Lyon County on Tuesday.**

Crittenden Co.	11	23	39	52
Trigg County	16	27	46	63

CRITTENDEN – Belcher 7, Walker 24, Sharp 6, Reddick 13, Travis 2. FG 21. 3-pointers 5 (Walker 4, Belcher). FT 3-6.

TRIGG – Stewart 16, Bridges 6, Shearer 12, Williams 3, Bush 4, Breckel 5, Fogle 15, Terrell 2. FG 26. 3-pointers 9 (Stewart 3, Shearer 2, Fogel 3, Breckel). FT 2-4.

Rockets get third win

Crittenden County won for the third time this season, beating Christian Fellowship School 71-60 in comeback fashion on the road Saturday.

After falling behind by double digits early, Crittenden closed the gap just before halftime then held its own over the next eight minutes before making a strong run in the fourth quarter.

Walker scored 23 to lead the Rockets and center Jonah Reddick had perhaps his best outing of the season with 16 points. Jaxon Hatfield added 11 before dislocating a finger.

Crittenden hosts Paducah



Jonah Reddick reaches for a rebound against Livingston.

Tilghman Friday for the annual Hall of Fame Game and homecoming.

Coach Matt Fraliex said the team may get senior forward Gabe Keller back late this week. He's been out since the holidays with a broken hand.

CCHS has now defeated Christian Fellowship in eight straight times dating back to 2011.

Crittenden County	16	30	52	71
Christian Fellowship	25	35	57	68

CRITTENDEN – Belcher 8, Walker 23, Hatfield 11, Sharp 4, LaRue, Reddick 16, Travis 9, Rhodes. FG 27. 3-pointers 8 (Walker 4, Belcher 2, Hatfield 2). FT 8-9.
CFS – Corrig 27, Grigg 7, Kite 20, Burnett 12, Potter 2, Nesshoefer, Perez. FG 27. 3-pointers 4. FT 10-18.

Rockets lose to Cardinals

Crittenden County fell behind Livingston Central by 21 in the second period Friday at home and lost 78-63.

The Cardinals sealed the league's No. 2 seed and will get No. 2 Trigg County in the Fifth District Tournament opener later this month. Meanwhile, the Rockets will face Goliath Lyon County to open post-season play.

The Rockets got 28 points from Walker in the loss, and Livingston sophomore Logan Wring scored 32 for the winners.

Livingston Central	13	42	60	78
Crittenden County	12	21	36	63

LIVINGSTON – Wring 32, Thomason 14, Davidson 5, Hargrove 13, Hosick 8, Zaim 6, M.Zaim. FG 29. 3-pointers 8 (Hargrove 3, Hosick 2, Thomason, Davidson, Wring). FT 12-18.
CRITTENDEN – Walker 28, Belcher 5, Hatfield 9, Sharp 8, Reddick 2, Travis 2, Rhodes, Poindexter 9. FG 25. 3-pointers 9 (Walker 6, Belcher, Sharp 2). FT 4-5.

GOOD LUCK ROCKETS!

Rebecca J. Johnson
 Crittenden County Attorney
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TRIP

Continued from page 1
 have arisen about its completeness and viability during the review process. In light of that, local leaders have huddled back up and decided to retool the grant application with an "urgent need declaration" and ask for more money. Crittenden will be seeking \$1.5 million and Crittenden \$1.5 million in the current funding cycle for CDBG funding.



NEWCOM
 Crittenden
 Judge-Exec

"We're also requesting a line item in the budget for \$6.7 million to complete Phase 1," Newcom said, pointing to a multi-phase plan to double the size of Crittenden-Livingston Water District.

Engineering, design, permitting, survey, easements and acquisitions are among Phase 1 steps, plus improving a transmission line between Grand Rivers and North Marshall water districts. By updating that line across Kentucky Dam into Marshall County, Grand

Rivers can have more reliability in its secondary source of water. Then, Crittenden-Livingston Water District can push more water to customers northeast of the Cumberland River.



SWANSON
 Livingston
 Judge-Exec

"We are looking for funding to make sure our communities have the water they need for residential customers and economic development. Businesses will not come to communities where there is not reliable water," Judge Swanson said.

She and Newcom also would like to get some state government support to resurrect the West Kentucky Regional Recycling Corporation's efforts. A few days ago, the West Kentucky Correctional Complex in Fredonia ceased its processing of recyclable material. For more than 30 years, the prison farm had accepted and processed cardboard, plastics and other recyclable material for a five-county corporation made up Crittenden, Livingston, Lyon, Caldwell and Trigg.

Judge Newcom said the volume of recyclables going to the farm center from the five communities grew so great that the supply of finished project coming out had no where to go.

"It's a supply and demand issue," Newcom said, calling it a shame that people want to recycle but the system can no longer handle all of it.

There is so much recyclable material on the market, Newcom explains, that prices have collapsed over the years making it too costly for the prison farm to continue providing the service.

Newcom and Swanson think the five counties might be able to pool their resources with help from the state and create a recycling center in one of the communities. Newcom said Crittenden County will be the most logical place because it is the only county with an inmate work release program.

Cave In Rock Ferry funding for the next two years, money for an airport taxiway and discussion about the last segment of new US 641 between Fredonia and Eddyville are among other items Judge Newcom hopes to broach with cabinet leaders in Frankfort.

JANUARY 2024

Weather Yearbook



Coldest Temp
-0.1

Warmest Temp
57.6

Wettest Day
2.06

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Average Temp	32.4	42.5	31.4	36.7	39.6	34.4
Coldest Temp	-0.1	18.3	5.6	19.6	15.7	6.0
Hottest Temp	57.6	68.0	63.7	60.0	65.7	62.3
Precipitation	6.8	7.2	4.3	4.3	4.78	4.04
Wettest Day	2.06	2.47	2.13	1.85	2.07	1.30

■ After a dry and mild December to close out 2023, Crittenden County was greeted with a cold blast in the new year. Last month recorded the coldest average temperature for January since 2018. It was also the second wettest in the last decade. Only January of 2022 saw more precipitation. The county also saw low temperatures in the single digits for six out of seven days from Dec. 14 through Dec. 21. The average temperature for Monday, Dec. 15 was 5.7 degrees.

DEATHS

Continued from page 1
 to die of an overdose."

The doctor further explains that fentanyl made and distributed on the black market can be dressed or disguised as just about anything. Someone may think they're getting a pill from a friend's mom's medicine cabinet when it's something far more sinister and deadly.

"It is a dangerous time right now because people don't know what they're getting," Kiefer adds.

Marion Police Chief Bobby West says law enforcement is well aware of an influx of fentanyl and it is deeply alarming. Typical policing and investigations are aimed at combating the problem, but West stresses that families and friends of addicts or casual recreational drug users can and must be among the greatest preventative resources.

"Conversations need to be had about this drug and how it can kill you," the chief said.

Marion police cruisers are equipped with life-saving medication that can often reverse an overdose from opioids - including heroin, fentanyl and prescription opioid medications commonly known as Percocet, Oxycodone, Lortab or Hydrocodone.

"Around here, the street name for fentanyl is Blues," West explains, describing it as an elongated blue pill.

Tablets can also be round and white or other colors, he adds.

Without identifying individuals, Gilbert said toxicology tests have provided conclusive evidence of lethal amounts of fentanyl in bodies of three males ranging in age from their early 20s to around 40. Another male, who died as a result from unnatural causes, was found to have fentanyl in his system, too, but the drug was not a direct cause of death. It could have been a contributing factor, the coroner said.

Gilbert has been coroner here for about 14 years. His family has been involved with the coroner's office for much longer so he's well versed in causes of unintentional overdoses and unnatural deaths in Crittenden County.

"It is a concerning situation to have four in a county our size test for fentanyl over a short period of time," Gilbert said. "It's a dangerous pill. One dose can get you."

Gilbert has tracked the number of overdose deaths in the county since he became coroner in 2010, but he says there are routinely three or so a year. Until now, illegal methamphetamine, prescription drugs and lethal cocktails of multiple drugs have been the primary causes of those overdoses.

Awareness needs to be raised through educational programs and community campaigns, Gilbert said.

"Fentanyl is a problem

that has been prevalent in bigger cities, but it is starting to find its way down here," the coroner said.

The state medical examiner's office in Madisonville serves 27 counties. Dr. Kiefer said he performs about 200 autopsies a year. About 12 or 13 percent are overdoses, and virtually all of them are a result of fentanyl.

Recreational drug use and addiction to substances is a somewhat modern problem in world history. Not until the late 1800s were chemicals and compounds mixed together in commercial quantities that made them easy to acquire whether by legal or illicit means. Sure, alcohol, nicotine, marijuana and even caffeine are addictive substances that have been around for millennia, but their use typically doesn't kill you, at least not without some prolonged abuse.

About a decade ago, law enforcement, behavioral specialists and medical professionals began seeing a paradigm shift in the way people were dying from recreational drug use and addiction. It used to be, they say, that overdoses were generally caused by recreational users taking too much or creating lethal mixtures of multiple drugs. Accidental overdoses are also common, something as innocent as grandma getting her medications mixed up. Substance use disorder can be lethal too. Abuse of drugs over a long period of time will create health consequences that can end in death.

Things have changed over the past 10 or so years. Nowadays, one dose, one first-time hit can be fatal. Fentanyl is approximately 100 times stronger than morphine and 50 times more potent than heroin. Illegal manufacturers often lack understanding, ability and precision to make fentanyl. It's not a forgiving drug. One minuscule mistake is irreversibly deadly.

In 2022, Kentucky's overdose deaths were down. The state has been one of the most aggressive in the country to combat the problem. Yet, while accidental overdoses of prescription medicines or illegal substances has declined, fentanyl deaths are rising.

Just last week, Kentucky announced a new specialty license plate that will be available in March or early spring for Kentuckians wishing to help raise awareness about the dangers of fentanyl. The problem is becoming so pervasive that advertising it on automobiles has become the newest strategy to prevent it. As described by the medical examiner from Madisonville, it's a dangerous time for addicts and even passive

WHAT ARE SYNTHETIC OPIOIDS?

Synthetic opioids are substances that are created in a laboratory. They act on the same targets in the brain as natural opioids, such as morphine and codeine, producing pain relief effects. Natural opioids are naturally-occurring substances extracted from the seed pod of certain varieties of poppy plants. Fentanyl and methadone are synthetic opioids and have approval for medical use.

Illegally produced synthetic opioids are the ones creating the biggest problem. While they are structurally related to the Schedule II opioid analgesic fentanyl, they're typically slightly different. Similar drugs were trafficked and abused on the West Coast in the late 1970s and 1980s. DEA cracked down on them in the 1980s and slowed their use. Since 2013, there has been a re-emergence in the trafficking and abuse of various clandestinely produced synthetic opioids, including several substances related to fentanyl. Most synthetic opioids are believed to be made abroad, then imported into the United States.

While fentanyl is to blame for most overdoses in the United States, observers say altered versions of the drug and the proliferation of those "analogs" is rising steeply. A new "zombie" drug, also known as "tranq", is showing up in toxicology results from autopsies in some states. A veterinary sedative, xylazine is a non-opioid that has sedative-like symptoms, such as extreme sleepiness and respiratory depression. It is gaining notoriety for its debilitating effects and leading to a surge in emergency room visits and public safety concerns.

recreational drug users. Experts warn against taking any type of drug unless it is prescribed by a doctor and comes from a licensed, legal pharmacy. Local nurse Robin Curnel, MSN, RN, says fentanyl is a clandestine killer.

"It is more lethal than any other street drug and most people don't know that what they have purchased is fentanyl. Dosing in hospitals for the treatment of cancer patients is in micrograms. What people are getting off the streets can kill in minute amounts," Curnel said. "It's really scary and a substance abuser generally has no way to test if the drug they just bought is fentanyl or laced with fentanyl."

The stark reality of this drug is that it can creep undetected into any corner of society and become an instant killer. Now, it's in Marion.



CURNEL
 Local Nurse

Don't Forget

Valentine's Day!

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 14

B

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