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Carter County Times

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CARTER COUNTY, KENTUCKY

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Jury finds Mitchell guilty of kidnapping and abuse

Recommends
25 years on four
charges

By Jeremy D. Wells
Carter County Times

On the evening of October 6, 2023, Carter County E911 received a call from a neighbor of Tristan Mitchell. Mitchell's girlfriend was at the home of the neighbor, named Brooke, and alleging assault by her boyfriend. According to the story that would emerge the victim and her child had come to Olive Hill to spend the evening and have dinner with Mitchell. She claimed that Mitchell first accused her of cheating before smashing her

new iPhone, because he didn't have access to it, hitting her, and then forcing her to perform sex acts on him under threat of death.

The defense, on the other hand, claimed that Mitchell was the victim of assault, because of his own infidelities, and that the rest of the story was a concoction from the victim dreamed up to punish Mitchell.

Brooke testified, during the first day of witness testimony in the jury trial on December 11, that before she contacted 911 Mitchell's girlfriend had first run to the home of another neighbor, an elderly gentleman identified as Jimmy. Jimmy, according to her testimony, contacted Brooke who came and collected the distraught woman, took her to her

See MITCHELL on A-8



Tristan Mitchell (submitted photo)

Passing Troy's Law

Bill sponsor
says HB115 has
good odds of
passing

By Charles Romans
Carter County Times

Editor's Note: This is part two in a planned series exploring the impact of Troy Caldwell's death on his community and the need for greater roadway safety.

If the friends and colleagues of Troy Caldwell have their way, tow trucks in the state of Kentucky will soon be able to display the same flashing blue lights as police officers and other first responders. But the lights would

only be visible from behind, to alert vehicles who are approaching the scene of an accident or disabled vehicle, and only when the vehicle was stopped. They wouldn't be visible from the front, and couldn't be mistaken for a police officer pulling someone over.

"The Law stipulates when blue lights can be used," Representative Richard White said of the proposed Troy's Law, named for Troy Caldwell, a tow truck driver who tragically lost his life in September of 2024. White, A Kentucky State Representative who represents District 99 in the Kentucky House of Representatives, said if the bill passes it will allow tow truck operators to use rear facing blue lights only when

See TROY'S LAW on A-3



Employees of Bubba's Towing participate in the Homecoming parade in Olive Hill. (Photo by Jeremy D. Wells, Carter County Times)



Give us this day, our daily bread

Food bank
expands to meet
demand

By Charles Romans
Carter County Times

A local food bank is expanding to meet more needs for Carter County residents and the surrounding areas.

"Right now, we are doing a monthly giveaway," food bank director Pam Wilburn said. "It is on the Saturday following the first Friday of each month. And on average we serve about 375 families."

The giveaway is based upon the number of people in



Participants line up for their monthly food bank distributions. (Photo by Charles Romans, Carter County Times)

the family, and that number can range from two to five or more. Wilburn said they also do emergency boxes for those in immediate need, and that she has

given away five of those in the past week.

Wilburn is now in the process of expanding into a store to

See FOOD BANK on A-6

Weekly arrests report

The following individuals were arrested and booked into the Carter County Detention Center over the past week. This list includes local arrests only. It does not include federal inmates being housed at or transported through the detention center.

- Shane Thornton, 45, of Grayson, arrested by Kentucky State Police, on two counts of failure to appear, arrested and booked January 28.
- William Berry, 52, of Grayson, arrested by Grayson PD, serving a warrant for a parole violation, and for non-payment of court costs, fees, or fines, arrested and booked January 28.
- Charles Buckler, 18, of Olive Hill, arrested by Kentucky State Police, for non-payment of court costs, fees, or fines, arrested and booked January 29.
- Rodney Stout, 63, of Delaware, OH, arrested by Kentucky State

- Police, on charges of speeding 11 MPH over the limit, failure to wear seat belts, careless driving, failure to produce an insurance card, operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol, and possession of an open alcoholic beverage container in a motor vehicle, arrested and booked January 29.
- Hollie Martin, 40, of Sandy Hook, arrested by Grayson PD, on charges of operating a motor vehicle under the influence of a substance with aggravating circumstances, and first degree wanton endangerment, arrested and booked January 30.
- Aaron Jones, 46, of Grayson, arrested by Grayson PD, charges unavailable, arrested and booked January 31.
- Gordon Blevins, 60, address unavailable, arrested by Kentucky State Police, on charges of possession of marijuana,

endangering the welfare of a minor, and operating a motor vehicle under the influence of a substance, arrested and booked January 31.

- Dalton Thomas, 27, of Olive Hill, arrested by Carter County Circuit Court, on a hold for Drug Court, arrested and booked January 31.
- Melissa Pennington, 40, of Hitchens, self-surrender, weekender, arrested and booked January 31.
- Todd Auer, 59, of Olive Hill, self-surrender, weekender, arrested and booked January 31.
- Michael McKenzie, 49, address unavailable, arrested by Grayson PD, for failure to appear, arrested and booked January 31.
- Destiny Gray, 25, of Grayson, arrested by Carter County Circuit Court, on a hold for Drug Court, arrested and booked January 31.
- Grady Scarbro, 42, of Grayson,

See ARRESTS on A-3

This Week's Obituaries

Clinton Ray Barker, 63
Daniel Jefferson Hall, 52
Elmo Holbrook, 70

Lenore Sparks, 58
Flora Jewell Blankenbeckler Walker, 78

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LIFESTYLE



Divas ON A DIME By Patti Diamond

Pulled pork nachos: The MVP of game day snacks

It's coming up on Super Bowl weekend, and if you know me, you know I'm all in for two reasons: the commercials and the food! I don't care who makes the most baskets! (Please know I'm kidding ... mostly.) Any excuse to host a party, right? And what's a game day party without a big, cheesy platter of nachos?

This year let's skip the basic chips-and-cheese routine and level up with Pulled Pork Nachos -- the ultimate crowd-pleaser. Sweet, savory and spicy, these nachos hit all the right notes. Imagine layers of saucy pulled pork, black beans, jalapenos, BBQ sauce, melty cheese and dollops of sour cream piled high on crunchy tortilla chips. It's a

touchdown of flavor!

I love making a great big batch of pulled pork -- it's the gift that keeps on giving. One roast can fuel a bunch of meals: pulled pork sandwiches, tacos, burritos, pork verde stew, or served simply with rice and veggies. And, of course, these nachos.

To make these nachos fabulous without overspending, add more black beans, pinto beans or refried beans to bulk up the dish and stretch your protein. Add any leftover roast veggies, cooked chicken or hamburger to the platter.

EASY PULLED PORK

Yield: 6-8 servings
Total Time: Varies by method

4-5 pounds pork shoulder, cut into 4 pieces

1 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon black pepper

1 onion, chopped

1 cup BBQ sauce

1 cup chicken broth

Ways to Cook:

Instant Pot: Season pork with salt and pepper. Set Instant Pot to Saute, brown pork on all sides. Add onion and cook briefly. Pour in broth and BBQ sauce; stir. Seal lid; cook on high pressure for 60 minutes. Natural release

for 10 minutes; shred pork.

Oven: Preheat to 325 F. Season, then brown the pork in an oven-safe pot. Add onion, broth and BBQ sauce. Cover; bake for 3-4 hours until tender. Shred pork; mix with sauce.

Slow Cooker: Season pork; place in slow cooker. Add onion, garlic, broth and BBQ sauce. Cook on low for 8 hours or high for 4-5 hours. Shred pork; combine with sauce.

PULLED PORK NACHOS

Yield: 4-6 servings
Total Time: 15 minutes

1 large (15 to 20 ounce) bag of tortilla chips (store brand is fine)

3 cups shredded, pulled pork

1/2 cup BBQ sauce (home made or store-bought)

2 cups shredded cheddar cheese (or a cheese blend)

1 (15 ounce) can black beans, drained and rinsed

1/2 red onion, thinly sliced

1/2 cup red bell pepper, chopped

1/4 cup pickled jalapenos (or more, to taste)

1/4 cup sour cream or ranch dressing (optional drizzle)

Fresh cilantro, green onions, sliced tomatoes and limes wedges (optional garnish)



These game day snacks are cheesy, meaty and loaded with all the good stuff! (Photo credit: www.JasonCoblentz.com)

Preheat oven to 375 F. Spread tortilla chips evenly on a large sheet pan.

Toss the shredded pork with BBQ sauce until evenly coated. Distribute over the chips. Sprinkle the shredded cheese generously over the meat and chips. Distribute the black beans over the cheese. Scatter sliced red onions and pickled jalapenos over the whole thing.

Place in the oven for 8-10 minutes or until the cheese is melted and bubbly, and everything is toasted up nicely.

Remove from the oven and drizzle with sour cream and/or ranch dressing (optional). Sprinkle with fresh cilantro and/

or other toppings as desired.

Game day or not, you can't go wrong with a crispy tortilla chip loaded with smoky, tangy, cheesy goodness. It's the kind of snack that turns any gathering into a celebration. So, grab your apron, whip up a platter of these nachos, and let the cheering begin!

Lifestyle expert Patti Diamond is the penny-pinching, party-planning, recipe developer and content creator of the website Divas On A Dime -- Where Frugal, Meets Fabulous! Visit Patti at www.divasonadime.com and join the conversation on Facebook at DivasOnADimeDotCom. Email Patti at divapatti@divasonadime.com
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Joyful Noise

Stop sleepwalking

By: Pastor Naomi Mitchell for Carter County Times

Sometimes the greatest temptation in life is to turn away from our self and to flee our own life. To settle for a shallow and superficial life, to not show up to our own life, to sleepwalk our way through this world. Ask yourself, "Is that really the life I want for myself?"

If you feel like you have been in a season of waiting for a long time, just remember God is always working behind the scenes. Your story is being written every day, and your best chapters can be just ahead. Don't settle for a life of "boring" chapters! No one wants to read a boring book, not even you.

Stop the sleepwalking and wake up. Seasons do change. God has given us all we need in His Word. Take a step back and think about a few "maybes". The things you go through are strengthening your patience. God is protecting you from things you

cannot see. He is preparing a blessing bigger than what you asked for. He's holding back the blessing until you are strong enough to carry it. He is working on someone else's heart before they step into your story. He is removing the people and things that cannot go where He is taking you. He is making sure your faith is in him, not in the outcome you want. He is letting you see that His presence is enough even without the answer. He's closing doors you begged for Him to open, because He sees the hurt they would have caused. He is making you wait because what you have asked for isn't ready, or maybe you aren't. He is making sure your heart is healed before He gives you what you have been asking for. These are some things to think about.

If you are a regular student of the Word of God, you will learn a lot about life. If it's from God, it won't steal your joy. If it's from God, it won't ask you to compromise. If it's from God, it won't put out your

first love fire. If it's from God, it won't make you insecure. If it's from God, it won't lead you into sin. If it's from God, it won't damage your confidence. If it's from God, it won't make you chase. If it's from God, it won't make you question your value. If it's from God, it won't be impatient. If it's from God, it won't steal your peace. God is not the author of confusion, but of peace. 1 Corinthians 14:33

When you kneel to the Lord in prayer every day, He will stand up for you. Prayer is keeping company with God. If He be for you who can be against you? The Word of God is your weapon against the spiritual warfare of life. If you don't read His Word, you won't know it. If you don't know it, you won't live it. If you don't live it, you won't be transformed by it. God wants to speak directly to you, not through a podcast, video or IG clips -- even though these things are good -- but through your Bible. You need to

know the Word before you need the Word!

You say, "If I felt happy, I could trust Christ." But that is trusting your feeling, not Christ. "Do not rob your heart of the deepest joys of trusting in Jesus." "If I have seen in Jesus all that my soul can want, then I am one with him." Trusting in Christ does not come from us, it is always the work of the Spirit of God." (Charles Spurgeon)

God doesn't need anything that you know or have to assist Him in fulfilling His plans, or to bring to life the dreams that He has placed in your heart. All He needs is a

surrendered heart that's willing to lay down your own desires and timelines and your willingness to pick up His.

Renewing your mind in the Word isn't a one-time event. It's a daily practice, a commitment to align our thoughts with God's Word and replace lies with His Truth! Get yourself anchored in the scriptures. That is your most powerful tool. God's Word says you are loved, chosen, forgiven, and redeemed. Cultivate a prayerful mindset as a direct line to God. As we bring our thoughts, worries and struggles to Him, He will meet us with grace and peace. Practicing gratitude

daily has a transformative power. When we focus on what God has done and is doing in our lives, it shifts our perspective and fills our hearts with hope! This is life! Sleepwalking is boring and going nowhere. Amen! So be it.

JOYFUL House of Prayer, 2519 Quicksand Road, (P.O. Box 856), Jackson, Kentucky 41339. Send Comments/Prayer Requests: Pastornaomi-4god@gmail.com. FB: JoyfulHopprayer. Services: 10am Sunday and 6:30pm Thursdays. Radio Broadcast: WJSN 97.3 FM & WEKG 81.0 AM Sundays 1-2pm.

Kentucky Dept of Agriculture Livestock and Grain Market Report

Compared to last week, feeder cattle sold mixed with prices trending steady to 4.00 higher in the early markets and increasing as the week progressed finishing mostly 5.00 to 10.00 higher. The markets were active with good buyer participation showing good to very good demand for all feeder and yearling classes. Slaughter cows and bulls sold mostly steady to 3.00 higher with good to very good for slaughter classes.

Courtesy of <https://www.kyagr.com/>

Week ending 1/25/25

STATE AVERAGES			
Steers (M&L 1-2)	This Week	Prior Week	Last Year
350-400 lbs	352.76	356.86	276.73
400-450 lbs	344.47	347.29	270.10
450-500 lbs	337.61	332.86	264.83
500-550 lbs	318.89	319.97	253.45
550-600 lbs	315.91	303.50	244.31
600-650 lbs	294.16	285.63	234.61
650-700 lbs	278.86	279.40	227.86
700-750 lbs	261.82	261.21	215.55
750-800 lbs	258.86	257.42	212.91
800-850 lbs	249.64	245.92	205.74
850-900 lbs	241.36	242.85	200.39
Heifers (M&L 1-2)	This Week	Prior Week	Last Year
300-350 lbs	319.72	312.51	221.27
350-400 lbs	313.46	317.89	228.09
400-450 lbs	310.94	306.62	224.69
450-500 lbs	300.72	289.44	222.61
500-550 lbs	277.79	279.96	217.87
550-600 lbs	269.05	270.30	215.50
600-650 lbs	256.83	256.70	204.28
650-700 lbs	246.76	248.14	201.72
700-750 lbs	238.76	233.84	195.00
750-800 lbs	234.92	230.05	194.00

WEEKLY COW SUMMARY			
Slaughter Cows	Average	High	Low
Breakers	120.00-153.00	133.00-170.00	117.00-122.00
Boners	110.00-149.00	130.00-175.00	85.00-132.00
Lean	86.00-135.00	100.00-163.00	65.00-119.00
Slaughter Bulls	Average	High	Low
Yield Grade 1&2	140.00-181.00	155.00-196.00	110.00-156.00

Jan 23, 2025		Bowling Green, KY	
SLAUGHTER GOATS: 66			
Kids: Selection 1	50 lbs 425.00; 60 lbs 425.00.	Selection 1-2	83 lbs 292.50.
Selection 2	53 lbs 370.00; 68 lbs 350.00.	SLAUGHTER SHEEP: 522	
Hair Breeds-Choice & Prime 1-2 55-57 lbs 335.00-337.50; 60-66 lbs 342.50-352.50; 72-75 lbs 332.50-340.00; 88 lbs 265.00; 91 lbs 275.00; 120 lbs 142.50; 135 lbs 142.50. Choice 2 51-57 lbs 330.00-340.00; 65 lbs 297.50; 78 lbs 290.00; 88 lbs 270.00; 120.00 lbs 142.50. Wooled-Choice 2 73 lbs 290.00; 118 lbs 140.00.			
Week ending 1/25/25			
GRAINS			
	This Week	Prior Week	Last Year
Corn	4.69-5.10	4.69-5.04	4.01-4.72
Soybeans	9.71-10.94	9.19-10.61	11.54-12.73
Red Winter Wheat	4.74-5.79	4.79-5.53	5.27-6.35

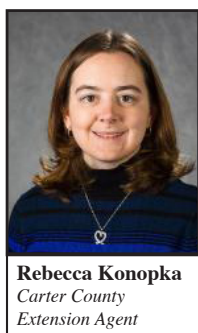


Extension Notes

University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment Cooperative Extension Service carter.ca.uky.edu

Berry plants for sale: Your opportunity to grow delicious and nutritious fruits

Although it may not seem like it right now, spring is just around the corner, and it's the perfect time to start thinking about adding berry plants to your garden. The Carter County Extension Office is excited to announce its annual berry plant sale, offering a variety of high-quality berry plants to help you cultivate your own bountiful harvest.



Rebecca Konopka
Carter County Extension Agent

Why Grow Your Own Berries? The numerous benefits include:

- Freshness: There's nothing quite like the taste of freshly picked berries straight from your garden.
- Nutritional Value: Berries are packed with vitamins, antioxidants, and fiber, making them a healthy

addition to your diet.

- Cost-Effective: Once established, berry plants can provide a continuous supply of fruit, saving you money on store-bought produce.
- Environmental Impact: Growing your own berries reduces your carbon footprint by eliminating the need for transportation and packaging associated with store-bought fruits.

The extension office is offering a selection of popular bare-root berry plants, including:

- Strawberries: Choose from everbearing varieties like Seascape that produce fruit throughout the growing season or June-bearing varieties like Earliglow or Flavorfest that have a larger, concentrated harvest.

- Jewel Black Raspberries: The fruit ripens early and the harvest season is concentrated.
- Triple Crown Blackberries: A thornless variety named for its three crowning attributes -- flavor, productivity, and vigor.

Order forms are available online at <https://carter.ca.uky.edu/berry2025> or at the Extension Office. All orders must be placed and paid for by February 10th.

In addition to offering high-quality berry plants, the extension office provides valuable resources and support to help you succeed in growing your own berries. Extension agents are also available to answer your questions and provide personalized advice.

Don't miss out on this opportunity to

See BERRIES on A-3

Arrests from A-1

arrested by Kentucky State Police, for non-payment of court costs, fees, or fines, and charges of operating on a suspended or revoked operator's license, first degree possession of a controlled substance (methamphetamine), possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of marijuana, no registration receipt, failure to produce an insurance card, and failure to wear seat belts, arrested and booked February 1.

- Connor Barebo, 29, address unavailable, arrested by Carter County Sheriff, on a charge of operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol, arrested and booked February 1.
- Constance Boggs, 44, of Olive Hill, arrested by Kentucky State Police, for non-payment of court costs, fees, or fines, arrested and booked February 1.
- Scott Tabor, 52, of Olive Hill, arrested by Kentucky State Police, for non-payment of court costs, fees, or fines,

arrested and booked February 1.

- Jeffrey Ratliff, 53, of Sandy Hook, arrested by Grayson PD, on charges of no registration plates, no registration receipt, operating a motor vehicle under the influence of a substance, operating a motor vehicle with an expired operator's license, first degree trafficking in a controlled substance (two or more grams of methamphetamine), possession of drug paraphernalia, and failure to appear, arrested and booked February 2.
- Michael Flanery, 49, of Portsmouth, OH, arrested by Grayson PD, on charges including two counts of failure to appear, two counts of non-payment of court costs, fees, or fines, and a single count of conspiracy to traffic in a controlled substance, arrested and booked February 2.
- Debra Breech, 57, of Portsmouth, OH, arrested by Grayson PD, on a charge of conspiracy to traffic in a controlled

substance, arrested and booked February 2.

- Teresa Johnson, 59, of Grayson, arrested by Grayson PD, on a charge of conspiracy to traffic in a controlled substance, arrested and booked February 2.
- Thomas Boggs, 52, homeless, KY, arrested by Grayson PD, on a charge of conspiracy to traffic in a controlled substance, arrested and booked February 2.
- Jeffery Adams, 63, of Grayson, arrested by Grayson PD, serving a warrant for a parole violation, and on charges of possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, possession of drug paraphernalia, conspiracy to traffic in a controlled substance, theft by failure to make required dispensation of property valued between \$1,000 and \$10,000, failure to appear, and two counts of first degree trafficking in a controlled substance (two or more grams of methamphetamine), arrested and booked February 2.

- Travis Irvin, 29, address unavailable, arrested by Grayson PD, for failure to appear, and a charge of contempt of court – libel/slander – resistance to order, arrested and booked February 2.
- Devon Branson, 42, of Stanford, arrested by Grayson PD, on charges of speeding 10 MPH over the limit, failure to wear seat belts, failure to or improper signal, no registration receipt, failure to maintain required insurance, operating on a suspended or revoked operator's license, and two counts of failure to appear, arrested and booked February 2.

All of the charges listed are arrest charges only, and do not indicate an indictment or a conviction for the charges in question. All subjects are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Information is compiled from publicly available sources, but may not be comprehensive.

Troy's Law from A-1

the vehicle is stationary.

The bill, HB 115, is an amendment to the existing KRS 189.920, to allow wreckers to be equipped with a flashing, rotating, or oscillating blue light, to be used only when removing a vehicle or debris from the highway. It would also explicitly prohibit a wrecker from using a blue light when towing a vehicle.

"It will allow them to use the blue lights when they are working an accident scene," White said. Once the vehicle is moving, the lights will have to be turned off, but by that time the operator will of course be safely inside of the vehicle.

White gives Carter County tow truck operator Bubba Johnson the credit for raising awareness of Troy Caldwell's death and how the added protection of rear facing blue lights might have prevented it. White said it was very disturbing to learn that 42 wrecker operators had been killed across the country last year, as well as 22 EMS workers.

"I think people are getting so used to these yellow and red lights that they don't give them the respect they need," White said.

"We have the support of the local sheriff, but I think there is some push back,"

White said of the proposed bill, noting that some think it might reduce the effectiveness of the blue lights for police forces.

Still, White believes that if the proposed bill can get a hearing it will pass. Anyone interested in the progress of the bill should contact their state legislators through various means such as email, or by calling their office. There is also a telephone number dedicated specifically to that purpose, 1-800-372-7181.

"Once we get a hearing and go to committee, I don't believe it will have any trouble passing," White said.

"Troy was killed in

Bath County in September of last year," White added. "And earlier this month there was a gentleman in Western Kentucky that was hit. That's two in the State of Kentucky in six months."

Tow-truck operators face many of the same obstacles as other first responders, as they regularly assist other emergency services and police forces. Proponents of Troy's Law believe that it will add another much-needed layer of protection and help improve their safety dramatically.

Contact the writer at charles@cartercountytimes.com

Hidden dangers

Area woman shares experience with tick borne disease

By Charles Romans
Carter County Times

It is difficult to protect ourselves at all times, and more difficult to protect ourselves from the little-known dangers we might encounter simply going about our daily lives. One of these dangers that most know little to nothing about, and therefore are unable to take reasonable precautions against, is alpha-gal syndrome.

Alpha-gal syndrome is spread by the bite of ticks,

most usually the Lone Star tick. When it bites, the tick injects saliva containing alpha-gal into the body, which triggers an immune response. This creates a hypersensitivity reaction

to a sugar molecule called alpha-galactose. Alpha-galactose is found in the tissues of most mammals, but is not found in primates or humans. The infected human may not even notice the reaction until they consume meat such as beef, pork, lamb, or gelatin.

Once these products are consumed the symptoms usually manifest within 2 – 6 hours. Each individual has a different reaction, but typical symptoms are hives, swelling of the lips or tongue, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. In

See TICKS on A-8



Dr. Scott Palmer and Harmony Litteral (submitted photo)

Berries from A-2

enhance your garden with delicious and nutritious berries. Whether you're a seasoned gardener or just starting out, the extension office's berry plant sale has something for everyone. Get ready to enjoy the fruits of your labor and savor the taste

of homegrown berries this season.

For more information contact your Carter County Cooperative Extension Service. Educational programs of the Cooperative Extension Service serve all people regardless of economic or

social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expressions, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran

status, or physical or mental disability.

Upcoming Events:

- Private Pesticide Applicator Training – Thursday, February 6th from 9:00-12:00

CALENDAR

- **2/6: Private Pesticide Applicator Training @ 9 a.m.** | Carter County Extension Office
- **2/6: Carter County Library Board @ 6 p.m.** | Carter County Public Library - Grayson
- **2/7: Sit and Sew @ 9 a.m.** | Carter County Extension Education Center | For questions or to RSVP call 474-6686
- **2/10: Quilts for Veterans Sew Days @ 9 a.m.** | Carter County Extension Education Center | For questions call 474-6686
- **2/10: Homeschool group meeting @ 12 p.m.** | Carter County Public Library - Grayson
- **2/10: Game Night @ 5 p.m.** | Carter County Public Library - Olive Hill
- **2/10: Carter County Fiscal Court @ 6 p.m.** | Carter County Courthouse
- **2/11 Grayson Area Chamber of Commerce meeting @ 12 p.m.** | Johnny's Pizza
- **2/11: Grayson City Council @ 5:30 p.m.** | Grayson City Hall
- **2/11: Homeschool group meeting @ 6 p.m.** | Carter County Public Library - Olive Hill
- **2/11: Girl Scouts meeting @ 5:30 p.m.** | Carter County Public Library - Grayson
- **2/13: Bull Value Assessment Program @ 6 p.m.** | Carter County Extension Office | Call 474-6686 to register
- **2/14: Women's Meeting @ 12:30 p.m.** | New Hope Church of God of Prophecy, Grayson | All women invited
- **2/15: Friends of the Library meeting @ 5 p.m.** | Carter County Public Library - Olive Hill

Have an event to add to the calendar?
Email info to advertise@cartercountytimes.com

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Pet of the Week

Diva is a 40 pound female mixed breed, about two-years-old. This lovely girl is very friendly, walks on a leash, spayed, and up to date on all shots. Diva has a free adoption to an approved home. Stop by the Carter County Animal Shelter and meet her or call 475-9771 for more information.

Shelter hours are Monday through Friday 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. and Saturday by appointment.

The drinks were cheap

The ride home wasn't

Never drink and drive. Always buckle up.

A message from the City of Grayson and the Grayson ABC office

EXPECT MORE

We are Here for You.

Extended Drive Thru Hours –
7am till 6pm Monday thru Friday
7am till 1pm Saturday

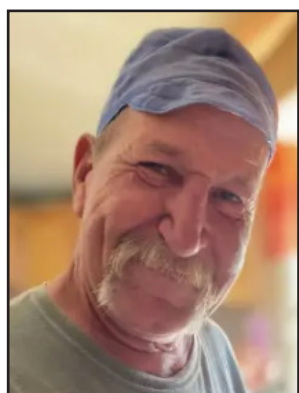
Commercial Bank of Grayson

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cbgrayson.com

OBITUARY

Clinton Ray Barker 1961 – 2025



Clinton Ray Barker, age 63, of Grahn Kentucky went home to be with the Lord on February 2, 2025. He passed away peacefully at his residence surrounded by his loving family.

Clinton was born July 10, 1961, in Grahn, Kentucky, a son of the late Cecil and Nancy Middleton Barker.

Clinton loved the outdoors, ginseng and mushroom hunting, fishing, spending time at sinking creek and sitting on the front porch with family and friends and watching Gunsmoke. He also loved the holidays with a house filled with his children and grandchildren. He was so proud of his family.

In addition to his parents, Clinton is preceded in death by one son, Tyler (Tater) Barker; one brother, Danny Barker; one sister, Faye Stephenson and one grandchild Baby Barker.

Clinton is survived by his loving wife of 43 years, Michelle Barker; two daughters, Amanda Humphries and Kelly (Josh) Bond, all of Grahn, Kentucky; one son, Travis (Shannon) Barker of Grahn, Kentucky; 9 grandchildren, Hannah Humphries, Ean Humphries, Nevaeh Bond, Taylor Bond, Alexis Bond, Raelynn Barker, Layla Barker, Ensley Barker, and Navey Barker, that were the light of his life and brought him so much joy; three sisters, Kathy (Bill) Stone, Debra Barker all of Grahn, Kentucky, and Glenna Perry of Olive Hill, Kentucky; one brother, Harold Barker of Grahn, Kentucky, along with a host of family and friends that will truly miss him.

Graveside services will be held 11 a.m., Wednesday, February 5, 2025, at Roar Cemetery in Grahn, Kentucky, with Brother Ethan Barker and Brother Jimmy Barker officiating.

Travis Barker, Josh Bond, DJ Carroll, Steve Carroll, Ethan Barker and David Barker will serve as pallbearers. Harold Barker will serve as honorary pallbearer.

Globe Funeral Chapel in Olive Hill, Kentucky, is honored to serve the family of Clinton Ray Barker.

Daniel Jefferson Hall 1972 – 2025



Daniel Jefferson Hall, age 52, of Olive Hill, Kentucky, passed away Monday, January 27, 2025, at his residence, surrounded by his loving family.

He was born Wednesday, August 19, 1972, in Columbus, Ohio, a son of Alice King Hall of Olive Hill, Kentucky and the late Henry Hall.

Daniel was a Christian. He enjoyed chewing his tobacco, farming, being on the move, working on anything he could use a hammer on.

In addition to his father, he was preceded in death by four brothers, JR Lee Hall, Ray Dixon Hall, Henry Lee Hall and John Hall; one niece, Snowy Brook Hall.

In addition to his mother he is survived by two daughters, Haidey (Jason) King of Grayson, Kentucky, Holly (Austin) Cole of Olive Hill, Kentucky;

two grandchildren, Izzabella Cole and Preston Cole; three brothers, Glen Hall and Charles (Mary) Hall all of Olive Hill, Kentucky, Joe Hall of Ashland, Kentucky; one sister, Florence Pack of Ashland, Kentucky; nieces and nephews, C.J., Khristal, Johnny Jean, Christy Dawn, Michael Lee, Keith, Matthew, Brian Ray and Gary along with many other family and friends who will sadly miss him.

Funeral services were held 1 p.m., Friday, January 31, 2025, at Globe Funeral Chapel, 17277 West US Hwy 60, Olive Hill, Kentucky, with Brother Nick Barker officiating. Burial followed in King Cemetery on King Cemetery Road in Olive Hill, Kentucky.

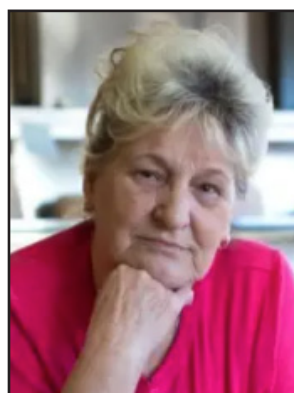
Friends visited after 11:30 a.m., Friday, January 31, 2025, until the service hour at Globe Funeral Chapel.

C.J. Hall, Charles Hall, Kelvin Barker, Joe Hall, Nick Barker, Brian Fraizer, Holly Cole and David Bauers served as pallbearers.

Steve Glass and Dr. Paul Lewis served as honorary pallbearers.

Globe Funeral Chapel in Olive Hill, Kentucky is honored to serve the family of Daniel Jefferson Hall.

Flora Jewell Blankenbeckler Walker 1946 – 2025



Tammy Smith, Kim Blankenbeckler.

Flo is survived by one son, Larry (Rena) Walker of Olive Hill, Kentucky; two daughters, Barbara (Donnie) Caudill, Debra (Bobby) Thompson all of Olive Hill, Kentucky; 6 grandchildren, Keisha Walker-Utley, Brittany Rayburn, Katie Thompson, Jerred Walker, Joey Thompson and Samuel Rayburn; 11 great grandchildren and one brother, Bert "Dixie" Blankenbeckler of Elliott County, Kentucky along with many other family and friends who will sadly miss her.

Flora Jewell Blankenbeckler Walker, age 78, of Olive Hill, Kentucky, passed away Tuesday, January 28, 2025, at UK-St. Claire Healthcare in Morehead, Kentucky.

She was born Friday, August 15, 1946, in Elliott County, Kentucky, a daughter of the late James and Hazel Skaggs Blankenbeckler.

Flo was a member of First Baptist Church of Olive Hill and a member of Eastern Star for 31 years. She enjoyed working in her flowers, traveling, bowling, cooking, watching UK Basketball and spending time with her family, friends, especially her grandchildren.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her loving husband of 40 years, Carl Edward Walker; two brothers, Willie Blankenbeckler, Olen Blankenbeckler; four sisters, Yvonne Reinholtz, Ottie Mae Skaggs, Bertalene Edwards, Dorene Blankenbeckler; three nieces, Atonya Smith,

Funeral services were held 1 p.m., Saturday, February 1, 2025, at Globe Funeral Chapel, 17277 West US Hwy 60, Olive Hill, Kentucky, with Brother David Rayburn officiating. Burial followed in Olive Hill Memorial Park in Olive Hill, Kentucky.

Friends visited from 6 p.m., until 9 p.m., Friday, January 31, 2025 and after 9 a.m., Saturday, February 1, 2025, until the service hour at Globe Funeral Chapel.

Jerred Walker, Sam Rayburn, Joey Thompson, Craig Utley, Eric Rayburn, Peyton Walker, Rob Walker and Billy Earles served as pallbearers.

Globe Funeral Chapel in Olive Hill, Kentucky is honored to serve the family of Flora Jewell Blankenbeckler Walker.

Legislative update

FRANKFORT—The Kentucky General Assembly is inching closer to resuming the second part of the 2025 Regular Session on Tuesday, February 4. During this interim period, I've had the opportunity to meet



Robin L. Webb
Senator
State of Kentucky

with elected officials at all levels of government, as well as community members and stakeholders, to discuss proposals and collaborate on solutions to the pressing concerns facing Kentuckians. These conversations have been critical in shaping our legislative priorities for the weeks ahead.

One piece of legislation I am proud to sponsor is Senate Bill 58, which I re-

cently presented before the Statutory Committee of the

Public Pension Oversight Board. This bill would allow members of Kentucky's state retirement systems to name a special needs trust as a beneficiary of their retirement benefits.

It's a crucial change for families who care for children or other dependents with disabilities. Too often, these families face a tough choice: providing financial support through inheritance or retirement benefits may unintentionally disqualify their loved ones from essential programs like Medicaid or Supplemental Security Income (SSI). SB 58 ensures that

See WEBB on A-6

Elmo Holbrook 1954 – 2025



Elmo Holbrook, age 70, of Olive Hill, Kentucky, passed away Thursday, January 30, 2025, at UK-King's Daughter Medical Center in Ashland, Kentucky.

He was born Thursday, April 8, 1954, in Carter County, Kentucky, to the late Luster and Annie Catherine Bear Holbrook.

Elmo enjoyed coon hunting, farming and playing with his grandchildren.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by three brothers, Larry Holbrook, Carson Holbrook, Wendell Holbrook; two sisters, Rosewood Richmond and Burnice Maggard.

Elmo is survived by his loving wife of 51 years, Doris Barker Holbrook; three sons, Casey (Brandy) Holbrook of Olive Hill, Kentucky, Shannon (Amanda) Holbrook of Elliott County, Kentucky, Joshua Holbrook of

Olive Hill, Kentucky; one daughter, Brandie Fultz of Olive Hill, Kentucky; 11 grandchildren, Ryan, Kelsie, Blake, Hannah, Macayla, Sierra, Shelby, Emily, LeeAnna, Caleb, Eva; 2 great grandchildren, Eli and Maverick; two brothers, Wesley Holbrook of Lexington, Kentucky, Stoney Holbrook of Olive Hill, Kentucky; one sister, Judy Holbrook of Elliott County, Kentucky, along with many other family and friends who will sadly miss him.

Funeral services were held 2 p.m., Sunday, February 2, 2025, at Globe Funeral Chapel, 17277 West US Hwy 60, Olive Hill, Kentucky, with Brother Mike Bryant, Brother Dwayne Laney, and Brother David Bryant officiating. Burial followed in Bear Cemetery, on Binion Branch in Elliott County, Kentucky.

Friends visited after and after 12:30 p.m., Sunday, February 2, 2025, until the service hour at Globe Funeral Chapel.

David Barker, Blake Holbrook, Ryan Fultz, Rick Burton, Rocky Richmond, Darren Barker and Harlan Bear served as pallbearers.

Globe Funeral Chapel in Olive Hill, Kentucky is honored to serve the family of Elmo Holbrook.

Lenore Sparks 1966 – 2025



in death by two brothers, Dwight Johnson, Cole Torrance Johnson; one nephew, Bryon Ray Knipp and one great niece, Teelan Knipp.

Lenore is survived by one brother, Randy Johnson and one sister, Trina (David) Knipp all of Olive Hill, Kentucky; one nephew, Taylor Johnson; one niece, Lindsay Johnson; three great-nephews, Zachary, Alex, Matthew; two great-nieces, Abigail and Jacey, along with many other family and friends who will sadly miss her.

Lenore Sparks, age 58, of Olive Hill, Kentucky, passed away Friday, January 31, 2025, at Summer-ville Healthcare in Cloverdale, Indiana.

She was born Tuesday, June 7, 1966, in Boyd County, Kentucky, a daughter of the late James Larry and Billie Wicker Johnson Sparks.

Lenore was a Christian and a former Lady Comet during Hop Brown Era and a former coach for Scott County High School Girls Basketball. She enjoyed riding motorcycles, playing basketball, boating, water skiing, traveling and spending time with her family.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded

Funeral services were held 1 p.m., Tuesday, February 4, 2025, at Globe Funeral Chapel, 17277 West US Hwy 60, Olive Hill, Kentucky, with Brother Taylor Johnson officiating. Burial followed in Pleasant Valley Cemetery in Olive Hill, Kentucky.

Friends visited from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m., Monday, February 3, 2025, after 9 a.m., Tuesday, February 4, 2025, until the service hour at Globe Funeral Chapel.

Globe Funeral Chapel in Olive Hill, Kentucky is honored to serve the family of Lenore Sparks.

If you are 65+ years old or if you are 100% disabled

Stop by the PVA office in the old courthouse or give us a call at 606-474-5663 to see if you qualify for the **Homestead Exemption**. This exemption is a discount for older or disabled taxpayers on the home in which they reside.

Leslie Kiser-Roseberry, Carter County PVA
300 W Main St, Suite 214, Grayson, KY 41143

www.carterpva.com



Wednesday, February 5
East Girls vs Fairview

Thursday, February 6
West Girls vs Powell Co.

Friday, February 7
West Boys vs Morgan Co.

Saturday, February 8
West Boys vs Rowan Co

The Guns, Gold & Cash Pregame show begins at 7:04 p.m. on 99.7 WUGO & 100.9 FM WGOH. Also listen on wgohwugo.com and on the Go Radio Grayson app.



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OPINION

EDITORIALS | LETTERS | COLUMNS | COMMENTARY

First Amendment: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Guest Editorial

'Say what?' ideas for protecting Kentucky kids deserve lawmaker support

By Terry Brooks
The Kentucky Lantern

"Say what?" Merriam-Webster describes this idiom as "a way to express surprise or disbelief at what someone has said or at unexpected news." It is also the most popular response to any question or request directed to my three teenage grandkids. I'm never sure if that teen response is genuine surprise or a very skilled stalling technique.

There are a lot of "Say-what?'s" in our world, aren't there? Some are serious and discoveries core to life. Others? Well, they're a bit more frivolous.

Have you ever really looked at the warning label on that product you just purchased? Forbes Magazine catalogues those into its "Stunningly Dumb Warning Labels" list. For instance, on nearly every chainsaw is the directive, "Do not hold the wrong end while in operation." Say what? Or the required label on Superman Halloween costumes – "This costume does not enable flight." Say what? Or how about the warning on a popular nighttime sleeping medicine – "This product may cause drowsiness." Say what? Look on your washer and you will learn a stunning lesson – "Do not put a person in this washer." Say what? Or perhaps the most intriguing, "Say what?" is on your favorite product – fox and bobcat urine powder ... remember its stark warning – "Not recommended for human consumption."

As the Kentucky General Assembly re-convenes for this 2025 legislative session, our elected leaders face an array of complicated and difficult issues. Let's be blunt – when you talk about issues like abortion, taxes, crime, and education, the genuine debate based on sincere beliefs will be loud and raucous. Many of the emerging economic and social policies with which the Commonwealth must grapple are difficult propositions to tackle and around which to reach consensus. In fact, I would assert we need to give our lawmakers some grace and goodwill as they ponder those perplexing public conundrums.

On the other hand, there are a litany of issues – at least as pertain to kids – that are, "Say-what?" proposals. These ideas are deep in common sense and long on common ground. For instance,

- We can reduce the risk of sexual abuse and exploitation of students by ensuring appropriate disclosures, checks, and training for potential public and private school employees.
- We can boost safety and reduce online risk by increasing awareness of and ensuring appropriate responses to sexual extortion.
- We can protect kids from the harmful effects of vaping simply by ensuring compliance with existing laws through licensing retailers, conducting compliance checks, and penalizing those businesses selling to young people.
- We can help our youngest kids with special needs by incentivizing early childhood programs to better serve children with disabilities.
- We can uphold established and basic legal rights of children by ensuring that minors speak with a juvenile attorney before they waive their Miranda rights.
- We can promote housing stability by prohibiting a minor from being named on eviction notices and sealing filings that do not result in an eviction.

Check out our Blueprint for Kentucky's Children (<https://kyyouth.org/blueprintky/>) to learn more about these and other 2025 opportunities for our General Assembly to make a positive difference for children across the Commonwealth.

Any hesitation from any legislator on any of these measures should be met with your, "Say what?" as a constituent.

The commonwealth's kids simply deserve state leaders who give their full support to measures like these that can help Kentucky become the best place in America to be young.

(Originally published online, at <https://kentucky Lantern.com/2025/02/03/say-what-ideas-for-protecting-kentucky-kids-deserve-support-from-state-lawmakers/>. Republished with permission via Creative Commons license.)



Sorrowful old songs sometimes expose our innermost feelings and fears

This commentary might make more sense if you take a few moments to go online to Google and search for and then listen to "Old Five and Dimers Like Me" by Waylon Jennings.

It was written and first performed more than 50 years ago by a great country songwriter, Billy Joe Shaver, who was part of the "outlaw" country music movement along with ole Waylon, Willie Nelson and others.

This song has been in my head for the last two weeks and I suspect it is related to my growing concern about the future of our country, especially the potential impact on the elderly and other vulnerable persons if our national economy goes sour.

As an octogenarian (82) myself, I worry that radical restructuring of the federal government and political retribution at the highest levels could endanger my Social Security and other benefits I've earned over more than 60 years of work.

More importantly, the ongoing, wholesale firing of federal employees without notice or perhaps even legitimate cause could create an entirely new demographic of poor folks facing hunger and homelessness.

Shaver and Jennings, now both deceased, combined their talents to describe the plight of ordinary people with a working-class background who may struggle to maintain a decent standard of living.

The reference to "five and dimers" goes back to the oldtime variety stores which sold inexpensive goods, much like the "dollar store" concept which is flourishing today.

Waylon Jennings soon will be gone 23 years but

his life reflected the authenticity of that song since his singing career included a series of ups and downs, financial and otherwise. I hope my anxiety about the future proves to be unfounded but I'm sharing the lyrics of the song for you to think about.



Keith Kappes
Columnist
Carter County Times

I've spent a lifetime making up my mind to be More than the measure of what I thought others could see.

Good luck and fast bucks are too far and too few between

Cadillac buyers and old five and dimers like me.

She stood beside me letting me know she would be Something to lean on when everything ran out on me.

Fenced yards ain't hole cards and like as not never will be

Reason for rhymers and old five and dimers like me

It's taking me so long and now that I know I believe

All that I do or say is all I ever will be.

Too far and too high and too deep ain't too much to be

Too much ain't enough for old five and dimers like me.

An old five and dimer is all I intended to be.

Keith Kappes can be reached at
keithkappes@gmail.com

Who picks your fruit? The real cost of America's broken system

It's been a bumpy few days since Trump took office. He strong-armed Google into calling it the Guff of America, which is... weird. Medicare, Medicaid, Meals on Wheels, and other federal programs were frozen for a day. Insulin lost its price cap, so it's back to being stupid expensive. Meta started randomly adding Trump and Vance to people's feeds like it's a MySpace Top 8 no one asked for. ICE agents pulled immigrants from their jobs and slapped cuffs on them, promising a one-way ticket "back where they came from."

For the people who pulled the lever for Trump, I don't want to be an I told you so person. But, well—you reap what you sow.

Eggs are expensive. So expensive that even the guy selling "farm fresh" ones out of his trunk in the Kroger parking lot is charging Whole Foods prices. Bird flu is the official excuse for the shortage, but in a post-COVID world, nobody's taking any chances shutting the economy down again. Coffee, beef, and orange juice are next in line to skyrocket—thanks to

tariffs and a labor shortage, which is a fancy way of saying we don't have enough poor people willing to pick produce for pennies.

The U.S. is nearly impossible to immigrate into without a golden ticket. A special visa runs about fifty grand. Most people—including me—don't have a spare fifty large lying around. If I did, I'd own my car outright, and creditors wouldn't greet me by my first name. But people find their way here, just like my great-grandparents did from Ireland. The only difference is they just had

to sign their names in a book. Now, immigration is a maze of paperwork, bureaucracy, and waitlists longer than a Red Lobster on Mother's Day.

Meanwhile, these raids? They weren't happening in Boston's Irish neighborhoods or Queens' mix of Polish, Greek, and Italian communities. But sure, every undocumented worker they arrested had a criminal record. Of course.

See FRUIT on A-8

Carter County Times
Members of the Editorial Board
Nicole Wells, publisher
Jeremy Wells, editor Keith Kappes, columnist

Policies

General

Advertisers should check their ad the first time it runs. The Times shall not be liable for any typographical errors or for failure to publish an ad or errors in publication except to the extent of the cost of the ad for the first insertion. Adjustment for errors is limited to the portion of the ad wherein the error occurred. The Times reserves the right to reject any advertisement and submitted editorial copy, and reserves the right to edit any copy submitted for publication. Corrections will be made at the discretion of the editor.

Circulation

A one-year in-county subscription costs \$26.00 plus tax. Due to additional mailing fees, any subscriptions mailed out of county will cost \$52.00 plus tax.

Letters & Opinion

The Times welcomes all letters to the editor.

Letters should be limited to 300 words or less. Letters should focus on issues that affect the community as a whole, and not personal or business disputes.

Letters must include a verifiable address, along with the phone number and signature of the writer. Letters submitted via e-mail need only include a phone number in lieu of a signature.

Letters, columns and cartoons do not necessarily reflect the views of the Times or EK Newsgroup, LLC.

General interest guest columns are welcome. For details email editor@cartercountytimes.com.

Deadlines

The deadline for news copy and letters to the editor is noon on Monday prior to publication. The deadline for display and classified advertising is 5 p.m. on Monday prior to publication.

Webb from A-4

retirement benefits can be directed to a special needs trust without jeopardizing eligibility for those vital services.

I have spoken with many families across Kentucky who constantly worry about the future care of their loved ones. This bill provides peace of mind by giving them greater flexibility and security in their financial planning. During the committee discussion, I emphasized that this proposal is both compassionate and practical. The response from my colleagues was encouraging, and I will continue working to build momentum for its passage as the session moves forward.

Recently, I had the privilege of honoring former state Rep. Danny Bentley for his many years of dedicated service to our commonwealth. Friends, family, and colleagues from across the state gathered to celebrate Danny's achievements and contributions. Danny, a pharmacist and educator by trade, has long been a champion for health care access, education reform,

and rural development. In the General Assembly, he worked tirelessly to expand access to prescription medications, improve opioid addiction treatment, and enhance pharmacy services in underserved areas. His expertise in health care policy has had a lasting impact, particularly in rural Kentucky, where access to quality care remains a challenge.

Several leaders shared heartfelt reflections on Danny's legacy, including House Floor Leader Steven Rudy, Rep. Scott Sharp, and former Rep. Brandon Reed. Aaron Thompson, president of the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education, also spoke about Danny's influence on education policy. One of the most memorable moments came when Mayor Tony Wilson paid tribute through a musical performance, adding a deeply personal touch to the event.

Danny Bentley has left an enduring legacy in the General Assembly, and although his presence in Frankfort will be missed, his work has advanced

health care and education for countless Kentuckians. I'm grateful to have served alongside him and with him to strengthen our region.

The agriculture community in northeast Kentucky recently suffered a profound loss with the passing of Ray Sammons, a lifelong farmer, veteran, and advocate who dedicated his life to supporting agriculture and rural development. Ray served honorably in the United States Marine Corps during the Vietnam War before returning home to build a thriving career centered around farming and community service. Over the years, he became a cornerstone of agricultural leadership by serving on the Boyd County Farm Bureau Board of Directors for 34 years and actively participating in programs like 4-H and the Master Cattleman's Program. His work left a lasting impact on me and these programs still very much matter to me to this day.

Ray's presence could light up any gathering—his friends and neighbors often

remarked on his warm smile and generous spirit. I was fortunate to have known Ray both personally and professionally, growing up around him at events that celebrated and supported our agricultural heritage. He was a true friend to my family and a strong ally of Kentucky farmers. His contributions helped strengthen the fabric of our rural communities, and his absence will be deeply felt. I extend my heartfelt condolences to his family, and may his legacy of service and dedication not be forgotten.

As we prepare to reconvene on February 4, I want to remind you that staying engaged with the legislative process is essential. The Kentucky General Assembly's website makes it easy to follow our work and gives you a front row seat to our legislative activities. The Legislative Calendar outlines committee meetings and floor sessions, while the Legislative Record provides bill texts, summaries, and vote histories. Want updates on specific legislation? Bill Watch lets you follow

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Carter County Fiscal Court will be accepting sealed bids for the purchase of a used grader. Sealed bids are to be turned in to the Judge Executive's Office located at 300 West Main Street, Room 227, Grayson KY 41143 no later than February 10, 2025 at 3pm. Requirements are as follows; \$60,000 or less purchase price and less than 5,000 hours. Please call the road foreman Jason Carroll at 606-316-8096 for further information. Bids will be opened and awarded February 10, 2025, at 6pm at the Regular Fiscal Court meeting.

bills in real time, sending alerts each time they move forward.

For those who prefer to watch the process unfold, Kentucky Educational Television (KET) broadcasts all floor debates and key committee meetings, while the Legislative Research Commission (LRC) provides full committee hearing coverage on YouTube.

Have something to say? Your voice matters. Share your thoughts through the Legislative Message Line at 1-800-372-7181, or contact your legislator directly by calling 502-564-8100. Those with hearing impair-

ments can use Kentucky Relay (7-1-1).

Our work relies on the input of constituents to help us advocate for policies that meet the needs of our communities. Whether it's education, health care, or public safety, the decisions made in Frankfort affect all of us. Your voice matters, and I encourage you to share your thoughts.

If I can assist you, you can contact me by email at SD18@cm.kylegislature.gov or call the General Assembly Message Line at 1-800-372-7181. Kentuckians with hearing loss can use Kentucky Relay by dialing 711.

Food Bank from A-1

serve the community, she said. God's Food Pantry in Morehead, supplies Wilburn's group with the food they dispense to those in need, and Wilburn said that they had approached her nearly a year ago to open a store. Though her group was not ready at that time to tackle the project, they are now moving forward with it. Even now Wilburn and volunteers are painting and preparing to open.

"God just gave me a peace about doing this store," Wilburn said, and all her reservations melted away. "I thought it would help so many of our families if we had a store they could come to where they wouldn't have to stand in line. Especially

since a lot of our people are elderly."

Another consideration, which Wilburn said she saw as a sign that the time was right, was learning about a grant that might help fund the project. What she was currently doing wouldn't qualify, because according to the language of the grant it had to be a new work, and not an existing endeavor.

"And that fell right in line with what we wanted to do," she noted.

"So, you could just see God moving," Wilburn said. "Here was this idea, and then this grant comes along. So, it all just fell together."

Wilburn said the store will be open two days each week, two hours at a time.

"It will be for 65 years and older, or it will be by referral from the (School) Resource Centers from Carter County Schools who can refer a family. And for that age isn't a factor."

Wilburn said the Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) can also refer a family.

Patrons of the store will be allowed to shop twice per month, Wilburn said, but if they shop at the store they won't be able to take advantage of the monthly food giveaway. That being said, there is no plan to stop the monthly service, and both will continue to operate.

"We could never quit our once-a-month

giveaway," she said. "Because too many people depend on it. But we did think that would eliminate some of the waiting on that give away day."

People who take advantage of the services shouldn't be put off by the word 'store,' because all items are free to those in need.

"But it is set up just like a store with shelves and everything," Wilburn said. "And we had a donation of shelving. And people from Genesis Rehab will be coming to set them up and paint for us. And people can come in and 'shop' just like at a grocery store."

Her church, Grayson Free Will Baptist, is a small church, Wilburn said, and they wouldn't

be able to do what they do each month without the support of other churches in the area such as Kilgore Methodist, England Hill Freewill Baptist in Catlettsburg, Wolf Creek Baptist, Heritage Free Will Baptist, and the Church of Latter-Day Saints.

"We are so excited to get this up and moving," Wilburn said.

Though the grant might be a future help, they are opening the store as soon as the paint dries.

"It (the grant) will sure help us if we get it, but we are going ahead anyway. God has always supplied what was needed. When we started all of this, I told everyone that if all we had to pass out was peanut butter and crackers, then

we would pass that out with joy."

Fortunately for a community in need, that scenario never played out. In fact, Wilburn said they recently received a grant of \$1,000 from the Tri State Foundation and used that money to purchase wagons to help with loading groceries.

"And thank God, they were heaped up as people loaded up their vehicles. And we are going to do the same thing with our store."

The store, she said, will be called Daily Bread Food Pantry.

Contact the writer at charles@cartercountytimes.com.

Cave Run Symphony Orchestra to be storytelling at Feb. 23 concert

An orchestral salute to great stories and a "Meet The Instruments" event for young children will be the featured attractions in Morehead on Sunday, Feb. 23, when the Cave Run Symphony Orchestra continues its 11th full season with a concert entitled "Symphonic Stories" at 3 p.m. in the Morehead Conference Center.

It will be the CRSO's

third performance of the 2024-25 season and will be preceded by a special event at 1:30 p.m. to introduce elementary school students to the instruments of the orchestra. Students and accompanying adults from local schools have been invited to be CRSO guests for the concert.

"We are pleased to present another great concert and to introduce

a new generation of local citizens to the instruments that create the beauty of orchestral music," said Dr. Craig Burrows, CRSO board chair.

The instrument event goes from 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. in the front lobby of the MCC. Hosting will be Dr. Michele Paise, professor of music, and music education students from Morehead State

University.

The 60-piece orchestra is operated by the Cave Run Symphony Orchestra Society, Inc., a non-profit, tax-exempt organization under Section 501 ©(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Gifts to the CRSO are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.

Gifts are received at PO Box 441, Morehead, or at the door of each concert.

"The orchestra is underwritten by gifts, sponsorships, program book advertising, and ticket sales and we welcome support at any time of the year," Burrows added.

Adult tickets are \$15 and are available for the Feb. 23 and April 6 concerts at the Morehead Visitor Center or online at crsosome.org. Cash or checks will be accepted

for payment at the Visitor Center.

Concert tickets can be purchased at the MCC with cash, checks, credit or debit cards. Children and students of all ages are admitted free of charge.

Morehead is proud to be the smallest city in Kentucky with a community-supported symphony orchestra.

How a bill becomes a law

How does a bill become law? This is a seemingly

simple question that requires a rather detailed, lengthy response. Creating laws is not an easy or simple process, which is no accident. As a matter of fact, this is the way the Founding Fathers intended it. Our Founding Fathers wanted to ensure that bills face much scrutiny and deliberation before becoming law. Hence, they established the framework for a robust, stringent process that a bill must undergo to become law, safeguarding against the passage of impulsive or ill-conceived legislation. Throughout the 2025 Regular Session, you will observe the process outlined below as pieces of legislation filed by members of the General Assembly move forward.

Step 1: Introduction and Committee Referral: A bill may be introduced in

either the House or Senate. Each bill is assigned a



Patrick Flannery
Representative
State of Kentucky

number, read by title and sponsor, and referred by the Committee on Committees, a group of legislative leaders tasked with assigning a bill to a committee, to the appropriate standing committee.

Step 2: Committee Consideration: The committee assigned a bill by the Committee on Committees will either choose to act or fail to act on it, resulting in the bill's death. If the committee chooses to act, a public hearing is held, which is also broadcast live on KET.org and the legislature's YouTube page, @KYLRC-CommitteeMeetings. The bill is presented, debated, and open to questioning from committee members. A bill may be reported out of committee with one of the following reports: favorable, favorable with amendments, favorable

with committee substitutes, unfavorable, or without opinion.

Step 3: First Reading: When a committee reports a bill favorably, the bill is given its first reading on either the House or Senate floor and is placed in the Calendar for the following day for its second reading.

Step 4: Second Reading and then to Rules: The bill is read for a second time and sent to the Rules Committee, a group of legislative leaders and other members who prepare the Orders of the Day. The Rules Committee then decides to either recommit the bill, sending it back to committee, or to place it in the Orders of the Day, a list of bills and resolutions ready to be debated and/or adopted within each chamber that day.

Step 5: Third Reading and Passage: Typically, the Majority Floor Leader, the spokesperson for the majority party on the floor, makes the motion to read the bill for a third time. Earlier this month, HB 1, a

measure that would lower the individual income tax from 4% to 3.5%, was read for the third time on the House floor. The motion went as follows: "I move that House Bill 1 be taken from the Orders of the Day, read for the third time by title and sponsor only, and placed upon its passage." The motion is adopted by voice vote, and the floor is open for debate. After debate on the bill and any amendments, a final vote is taken. To pass, the bill must be approved by at least two-fifths of members in each chamber, equivalent to 40 representatives or 16 senators, with a majority of members present and voting, unless the bill contains an appropriation of funds or an emergency clause. In that case, the bill must be approved by a majority of members in each chamber, equivalent to 51 representatives and 20 senators.

Next Steps: If a bill is defeated, it will likely not have another vote unless two members who voted against it request its reconsideration, and the majority approves. If a bill passes in one chamber, it will move to the other chamber for consideration, where it goes through the same first five steps again. In the end, both the House and Senate must agree on the final form of the bill. If either chamber fails to concur on amendments, the differences may be reconciled by a conference committee of both representatives and senators. Changes agreed to by the conference committee are subject to approval by both chambers.

Step 6: Enrollment: Once a bill is passed by both the House and Senate, it is carefully read to ensure the final wording is correct. The bill is then signed by the presiding officer of each chamber, the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate, and sent to the Governor.

Step 7: Governor's Action: Once received, the Governor has 10 days, excluding Sundays, to act on the bill. The Governor may sign it, permit it to become law without a signature, or veto it. If the Governor vetoes the bill, the legislature may override the veto

if a majority of members in both the House and Senate vote to do so.

As you can see, the process of passing legislation is not a simple one, and we, as legislators, do not take this responsibility lightly. As legislators, we are looking to advance policies that will make Kentucky a better place to live, work, and raise a family.

As the second part of the 2025 Regular Session commences, I encourage you to watch committee meetings and floor proceedings live on KET.org and follow @KYHouse-GOP on social media to keep track of things happening in Frankfort. To learn more about how a bill becomes law and how you can get involved, please click here to view a resource courtesy of the Legislative Research Commission (LRC), the administrative office of the General Assembly.

I can be reached anytime through the toll-free message line at 1-800-372-7181 or via email at Patrick.Flannery@kylegislature.gov.

Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



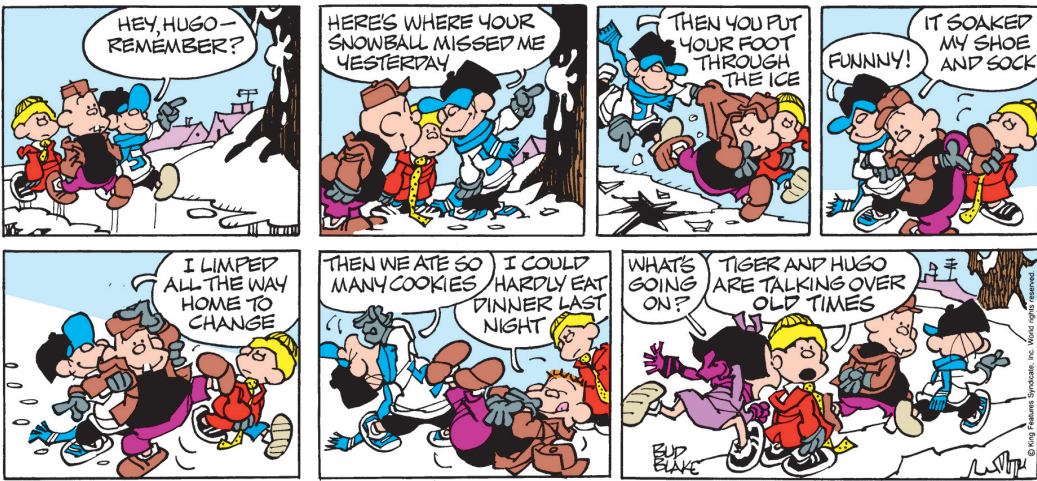
The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



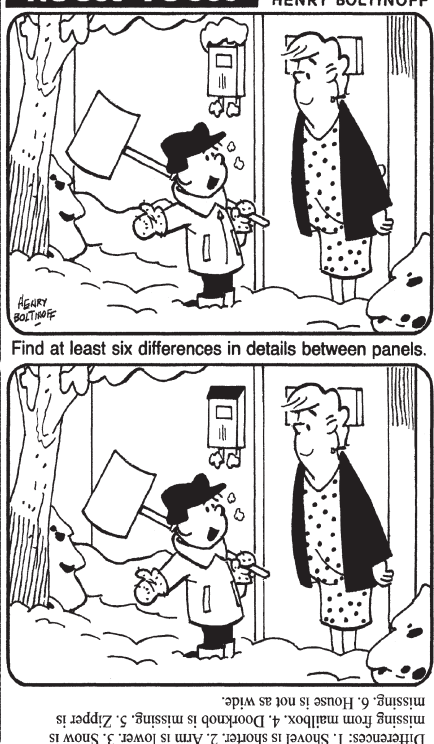
OLIVE

By Emi Burdage



HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



CryptoQuip

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.

Clue: G equals U

BFWZT FWTF NP COT G.M.
QOTWT LTNLBT FBQFDM LGC
PNWCO CNXM NP TPPNWC:
COT ZWTFC LFXM WTZYNX.

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SCRAMBLERS

Unscramble the letters within each rectangle to form four ordinary words. Then rearrange the boxed letters to form the mystery word, which will complete the gag!

Facet **CAPSET**
Cover **LOCKA**
Shrink **ITHREW**
Scant **PASSER**

TODAY'S WORD

Even Exchange

by Donna Pettman

Each numbered row contains two clues and two 6-letter answers. The two answers differ from each other by only one letter, which has already been inserted. For example, if you exchange the A from MASTER for an I, you get MISTER. Do not change the order of the letters.

- 1. Victor ___ N ___ Coldest season ___ T ___
- 2. Park chair ___ N ___ Seashore ___ A ___
- 3. Knight's garb ___ M ___ Tree-enclosed area ___ B ___
- 4. Salve L ___ Witch's brew P ___
- 5. Label ___ R ___ Tasteless ___ L ___
- 6. In easy reach ___ N ___ Hale ___ R ___
- 7. Loftier ___ A ___ Steering tool ___ I ___
- 8. Saber L ___ Waltz or foxtrot D ___
- 9. Pace ___ D ___ Make every effort ___ V ___
- 10. Arc ___ U ___ Whittle ___ A ___

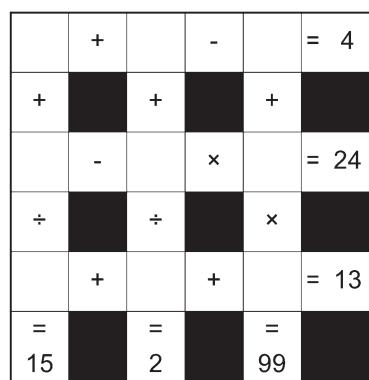
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GO FIGURE!

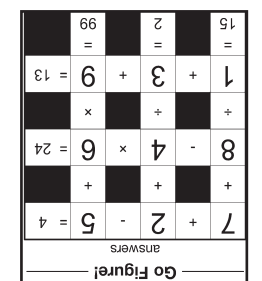
The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

DIFFICULTY: ★★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!



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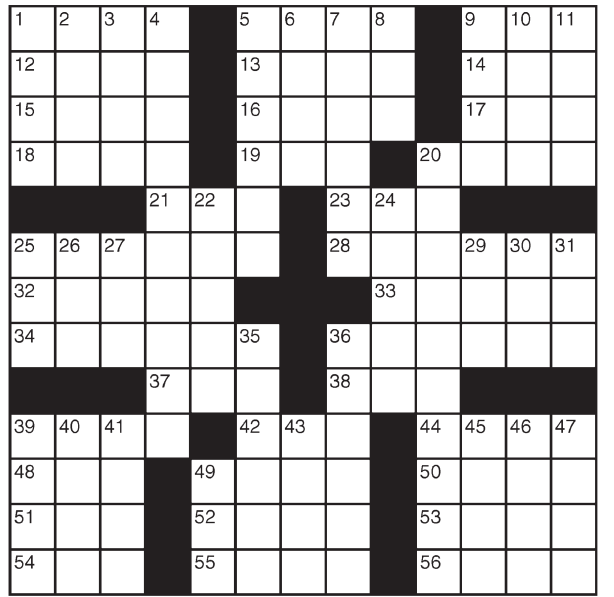


- 1. Winner, Winter
- 2. Bench, Beach
- 3. Armor, Arbor
- 4. Lotion, Polton
- 5. Brand, Brand
- 6. Hardy, Hardy
- 7. Tiller, Tiller
- 8. Lance, Dance
- 9. Slide, Slide
- 10. Curve, Curve

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Beanies
- 5 Enfold
- 9 Stanley Cup org.
- 12 Luau dance
- 13 Roof overhang
- 14 Parisian "yes"
- 15 Pedestal occupant
- 16 Sketch
- 17 Trio after Q
- 18 Church organ feature
- 19 Retrieve
- 20 Bogus
- 21 Canonized Fr. woman
- 23 Soul, to Sartre
- 25 "Fantasia" ballerinas
- 28 Esteem
- 32 Commence
- 33 Biblical king
- 34 Gave a speech
- 36 Sipping aids
- 37 Weep
- 38 Spigot
- 39 "Holy cow!"
- 42 Away from SSW
- 44 Foot fraction
- 48 Flight stat
- 49 "Misery" star James
- 50 Olympian Lipinski

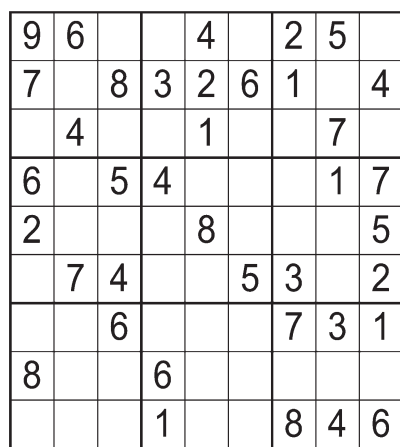


- 7 Online icon
- 8 Church seat
- 9 Director Ephron
- 10 Corn cover
- 11 Low-calorie
- 20 Frenzied state
- 22 Photocopier need
- 24 Maestro Zubin
- 25 "Westworld" network
- 26 Suffix with hotel
- 27 Links org.
- 29 Notable time

- 30 Tier
- 31 Mag. staff
- 35 Energetic person
- 36 Shorthand
- 39 Profit
- 40 Shoppe description
- 41 Pack cargo
- 43 Handle
- 45 "The Lion King" lion
- 46 Gullet
- 47 Slugger Aaron
- 49 Purring pet

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Weekly SUDOKU



Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆

◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging
◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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WORD LADDERS

Can you go from SEARS to LAIRD in 6 words? Change one letter for each rung in the ladder.

SEARS

LAIRD

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Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

- TELEVISION: What is the name of the spaceship on the TV drama "Firefly"?
- GEOGRAPHY: What is the only tropical rainforest in the United States?
- LITERATURE: What is the title of author Oscar Wilde's only complete novel?
- MOVIES: What is the name of the killer in the movie "Silence of the Lambs"?
- SCIENCE: What are the three branches of science?
- AD SLOGANS: Which fast-food chain's slogan is, "What you crave"?
- GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: How many NFL teams are named after animals (including birds)?
- U.S. STATES: In which state is the U.S. Naval Academy located?
- ASTRONOMY: How many constellations are visible from Earth?
- ART: What is the Japanese art of arranging flowers called?

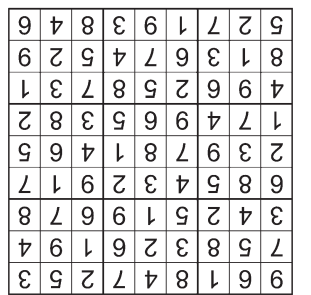
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- 10. Ikebana
- 9. 88
- 8. Maryland
- 7. Philadelphia Eagles and Seattle Seahawks
- 6. Baltimore Ravens, Carolina Panthers, Chicago Bears, Cincinnati Bengals, Denver Broncos, Detroit Lions, Indianapolis Colts, Jacksonville Jaguars, Los Angeles Rams, Miami Dolphins, Philadelphia Eagles and Seattle Seahawks
- 5. Natural Sciences, Social Sciences and Formal Sciences
- 4. Buffalo Bill
- 3. "The Picture of Dorian Gray"
- 2. El Yunque National Forest, Puerto Rico
- 1. 1959
- 1. Serenity

Answers
1. Aspect 2. Cloak
3. Withers 4. Sparse
solution
SCRAMBLERS

SEARS, HAIRS, HEIRS,
HAIRS, LAIRS, LAIRD

WORD LADDER



Answers

Weekly SUDOKU

The Great Plains region.
where people always put
Large area of the U.S.
ANSWERS

King Crossword

Answers

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■ Ticks from A-3

severe cases anaphylaxis, a life-threatening allergic reaction, can occur. The syndrome is difficult to diagnose, and therefore often goes undiagnosed, because it requires a blood test that detects antibodies to alpha-gal. And though avoiding meat and meat byproducts might be effective for some in managing it, currently there is no cure for alpha-gal syndrome.

Amanda Litteral currently lives in Lexington, but she is originally from Leatherwood near the border between Greenup and Carter Counties. Litteral was forced to learn the hard way about alpha-gal syndrome because two different members of her family contracted it. Her first brush was when her daughter Harmony Litteral was (unknowingly) bitten by a Lone Star Tick while showing animals at the Greenup County Fair.

“In 2017 my daughter was cleaning out goat stalls at the Greenup County Fair,” Litteral said. “They were showing goats at the time, and she had gotten into a nest of ticks.”

She took her daughter to urgent care immediately and got the ticks removed,

but unknown to her the damage had already been done. Urgent care gave her the standard antibiotics and told Litteral her daughter would be fine. But in November of the same year, Harmony Litteral had her first anaphylactic reaction.

“In the middle of the night her lips started swelling, her tongue started swelling, so we drove her from Route 7 to King’s Daughters Hospital. They said she just had an allergic reaction and sent her to an allergist in Morehead. The allergist tested her, and she tested negative to nearly everything,” Litteral said.

Ultimately the allergist said Harmony had Celiac Disease, because of her reaction to bread and cereal.

The allergist was on the right track, though not in the way he assumed. Litteral later found out that a lot of breads and cereals are vitamin fortified with lamb, a trigger for alpha-gal. But Litteral did not know this at the time, so her daughter went on a gluten free diet until 2020.

“In 2020 she was at the house eating bacon,” Litteral said. “She immediately began swelling. Her throat and

tongue swelled, and she began itching all over.”

Litteral took her daughter to the doctor who tested her for beef, lamb, and pork allergies, and she immediately reacted. She had become so allergic in fact that the reaction manifested itself even when those meats were being cooked anywhere near her. Ultimately Litteral’s daughter was sent to a hospital in Cincinnati, Ohio, because Litteral herself had been reading about alpha-gal and thought it might be what was tormenting her daughter.

The doctor in Cincinnati administered the test but admitted not knowing much about it. He had only encountered one other patient with alpha-gal syndrome. While there her daughter saw several specialists including another allergist, but there was not much knowledge of the syndrome. Determined, Litteral dove into research, looking for any information that might help ease her child’s suffering.

“I searched websites and Facebook groups and started to find other people in other states that had it,” Litteral said.

This research yielded a connection with a lady in Mississippi who was an advocate for people suffering from the syndrome. This led to a connection with a doctor from the UNC School of Medicine, Scott Palmer Commins. Doctor Commins is currently the lead researcher of alpha-gal.

It took seven months for Litteral to arrange an appointment with Dr. Commins, but when she was finally able to see him, she brought records of every single prior doctor visit. Commins poured over these and conducted his own examination. Commins, in addition to alpha-gal, also diagnosed Harmony with another condition which exacerbated her condition even further. He determined that Harmony also suffered from Ehlers-Danlos syndrome (EDS), an inherited disorder that affects the body’s connective tissues; tissues that provide support and structure for skin, bones, joints, blood vessels, and other organs.

Unfortunately, on top of everything else she had endured, Harmony was also diagnosed by

Commins with mast cell activation syndrome (MCAS). MCAS causes mast cells to release too many of what is known as chemical mediators, which cause an allergic reaction throughout the body even when an allergen isn’t present. To treat her, Dr. Commins put her on a mast cell stabilizer, and instructed her on what foods (especially red meat) to avoid.

“After two years on mast stabilizers her reactions went from one every week that put her in the hospital to maybe one every three months. She was completely vegan, and we were avoiding everything that caused a reaction. Now we are at the point where it’s like she is in remission, and it’s almost gone. But I had to do my ‘crazy mom’ research to get us to that point,” Litteral said.

Litteral endured a less than sympathetic medical community to help her daughter. She said she has been accused of ‘making it up’ and told that the condition ‘wasn’t real,’ but she did not let those things stop her. Ironically, however, since she had made so many trips to UK Hospital (in fact,

she eventually moved to Lexington) the hospital eventually brought residents to her to educate them about the syndrome.

During this time, sadly, Litteral’s father was also diagnosed with cancer. Before one treatment he told her that he had been bitten by a tick and showed her the spot on his leg that wasn’t healing. She recommended that he be tested for alpha-gal because she feared it would affect his treatment. Her father did test positive for the syndrome, and only took two treatments for his cancer because each treatment caused anaphylaxis. Unable to be treated, after an extended stay in the hospital he decided to return home, and passed away two weeks later.

Today Litteral does everything within her power to raise awareness of alpha-gal syndrome and potential treatments. She encourages anyone who is suffering from it, or has a family member that is, to reach out to her on Facebook.

Contact the writer at charles@cartercountytimes.com

■ Fruit from A-5

America has a weird relationship with blaming Mexicans, Salvadorans, and Guatemalans for everything while simultaneously treating their food, women, and labor like national treasures. We devour

tacos at record rates, ogle their women in beer ads, and expect them to be the backbone of cheap labor. Yet every election cycle, some talking head gets on TV to tell us they’re ruining the country.

The company line is “come here legally.” But the system is designed to make that impossible. Every political enterprise needs a boogeyman, and for decades, immigrants have been the go-to villain.

Yet no one’s lining up to pick fruit, clean chickens, or work on a roof in the Texas sun—not at the wages employers are offering, anyway.

So, which is it? Pay Americans a livable

wage to cut down those trees in your yard, or let immigrants do their jobs quietly while keeping their heads down, hoping they don’t get shipped back to the country they walked through hell to escape.

Take a page from those Christian Bibles—unless, of course, those only apply when it’s convenient.

Contact us at news@cartercountytimes.com

■ Mitchell from A-1

home, and called 911 on her behalf.

During that call Brooke told the operator that she was unclear on the nature of the incident, and that she was having a hard time getting answers out of the victim, but she indicated that there seemed to have been an altercation, and that Mitchell had the victim’s one-year-old daughter. Because of the difficulty in getting information out of the victim, the 911 operator asked Brooke if the victim was in an altered state, to which Brooke replied, “you could say that.”

According to the opening statements of Tristan Mitchell’s attorney, Michael Curtis, this was an indication that the victim may have been inebriated. His argument was that the victim was under the influence, that she had a previous altercation with another girlfriend of Mitchell’s, and that the accusation of assault from the victim was a matter of “the fury of a woman jilted.”

Brooke, however, said there was no indication that the victim seemed inebriated to her. She testified that when she responded that way to the 911 operator – a statement she didn’t remember making but didn’t contest was reflected in the call – she meant only that the victim was traumatized and hysterical.

Her assertion was later backed up by testimony from Carter County EMS paramedic Kyle Wilburn, who testified that no drugs or alcohol were found in the victim’s system. Wilburn also testified to the nature and extent of the victim’s injuries, as well as bruises later found on her child after police were able to reunite the child with her mother. While Wilburn said under questioning that he observed multiple injuries before beginning his assessment, he was able to examine them more closely once she was inside the ambulance. He testified

that those injuries included “swelling and discoloration around both eyes, (and) bruising around the forehead,” as well as abrasions on her legs, torso, and back, bruising that resembled a handprint around her back under her armpit, an abrasion that had bled but was no longer bleeding on her ankle, a hematoma on her leg, and swelling on the forehead that radiated behind the ear – which Curtis characterized as a “pump knot.” Wilburn also testified to bruising found on the child, and the nature of bruises, explaining that fresh bruises appear as red or lighter spots, before turning dark and then yellowing as they heal. He also noted that the more traumatic the injury, the more quickly a bruise will darken. The nature of the bruises on the victim, based on his testimony, appeared to indicate they were not old bruises, but were recent.

Wilburn also testified that the victim had at least one broken nail, as shown in photos taken by police officers inside the ambulance after Wilburn’s initial examination. But, when questioned about the victim’s facial piercings, which Curtis seemed to indicate would have displayed more bruising or been torn out if the attack was as violent as the victim described, Wilburn said that he didn’t notice any indication that there was damage to the piercings. Curtis also questioned claims from the victim that she had been “dragged around” by her hair, but Wilburn said he couldn’t testify to any damage to the victim’s scalp based on his examination of her. He said that, from the photos provided, he could only say the victim’s hair appeared “messy.” He also said that while the victim initially refused transport to the hospital, she acquiesced on prompting from first responders. He noted it wasn’t an uncommon response for victims of ac-

cidents or traumatic events, who don’t necessarily feel the full extent of their injuries right away because of adrenaline.

During her testimony the victim discussed how she met Mitchell on a dating app, and how he appeared “picture perfect” at first, before things started going downhill. She moved in with Mitchell after dating for a month, at his insistence. She said they had the sort of normal spats that every couple has, but that the conflicts quickly “escalated.” She testified that Mitchell was jealous of the men who came into her place of employment, and communicated that to her. Her testimony of their early difficulties, however, drew an objection from the defense and an admonition to the jury to disregard any testimony about previous altercations, and to focus only on the incident of October 6.

After the judge’s instructions to the jury, the victim continued with her testimony.

The victim testified that she had already moved out of Mitchell’s home before the October 6 incident, because of the escalating tension, and that her father bought her a new phone because Mitchell turned off the service on the phone that was on his plan. She further testified that Mitchell had broken a previous phone, and insisted she get the phone on his plan, because he wanted the ability to monitor her phone calls.

When Mitchell tried to reconcile, she said, she “essentially played nice,” because she wanted to collect the rest of her belongings from his home, not because she was sincerely interested in reconciliation. So, she testified, on the evening of October 6 she showed up in Olive Hill, picked up pizza from Tyler’s Pizza at Mitchell’s direction, and went to his home.

That was where testimony ended on the first day of the trial.

On the second day of testimony the victim testified to the events leading up to the assault, including Mitchell purposely parking his vehicle in a way that blocked her vehicle from leaving once they arrived at his home. After eating she said he asked for her phone, and asked for the passcode, which she said she entered for him before he snatched it back from her. She testified that she wasn’t allowed to have a passcode on the phone he bought for her, and they had a brief back and forth where he demanded the passcode, and the victim insisted she be allowed to enter it. It was after taking the phone back from her, she testified, that things escalated quickly and Mitchell began smacking her. He accused her of talking to other men, she said, before throwing her phone against the brick wall, and then into the yard, before continuing to assault her. She said her daughter was crying for her, and that Mitchell, who had been pulling her around by her hair, then began to strangle her and said to her, “You’re not such a bad bitch when you’re about to die.” She claimed he stopped to catch his breath, then stood up and began to pull her around by her hair once again. The abuse continued, she said, until he allowed her to stand up, at which point her daughter ran to her. Mitchell then ordered her to put her daughter down, she said, telling her she “had about five seconds to put her down before I beat your skull in.” She said he continued to “smack her,” before forcing her upstairs and sexually assaulting her. Following the assault, she said she tried to escape with her daughter while Mitchell was distracted. But as she attempted to flee, she said, Mitchell – still fully nude – followed her outside and began dragging her back to the house by her hair once again. It was at this point

he pulled her daughter from her arms and, according to the victim, told her if she came back that he would allow them to leave. But, she told the prosecutor, she didn’t believe him. Instead of risking injury to her child, she said she ran to the nearest trailer, which was unlocked, and ran inside, locking the door behind her and begging the occupant, Jimmy, to help her.

“I probably scared that old man to death,” she said.

It was at that point Jimmy called Brooke and she and her boyfriend came to help the victim, contacting 911 as Brooke testified the previous day. During that call to 911, the victim told the jury she sat on the couch hoping that her daughter was alright, and that help would arrive soon.

After police arrived, she said, they retrieved her daughter and both she and her daughter were examined by the paramedic. She testified that she could feel her face beginning to swell, and said her daughter was traumatized and just wanted to sit in her lap. She also testified that she was initially resistant to seeking treatment because of embarrassment, but then decided to follow first responder recommendations to be transported to the hospital.

On the third day Deputy Bobby Hall, with the Carter County Sheriff’s Office, also testified to what the police witnessed at the scene, including broken fingernails and clumps of hair found around the house, which police photographed.

After deliberation amongst the judge, the Commonwealth, and defense on the nature of the charges, and which charges to dismiss or to amend, and instructions from the judge to the jury, they returned their verdicts.

On count seven of the indictment, tampering with physical evidence, the

jury returned a verdict of three years. They returned a verdict of sixteen years on count eight, a charge of kidnapping, one year on count ten, a charge of first degree criminal mischief, and five years on count eleven, a charge of second degree criminal abuse. With regard to the concurrent/consecutive recommendation, the jury recommended the sentences for counts seven, eight, ten and eleven be served consecutively, one after the other.

During final sentencing Judge Rebecca Phillips noted that the jury returned verdicts of not guilty on counts three, four, six, and nine, and that the Commonwealth moved to dismiss count five. She also noted that she would follow the recommendations of the jury, and that there was a waiver of jury sentencing on the misdemeanor charges. She also found that “under count one, pursuant to the verdict of the jury, that you are guilty of fourth degree assault” sentencing him to twelve months. She sentenced him to another twelve months on count two, second degree wanton endangerment. Those charges will run consecutively with the 25 years recommended by the jury.

Mitchell was found not guilty on charges related to the sexual assault due to the nature of the incident, and he will not have to register as a sex offender.

(The Carter County Times has a policy of not identifying victims of violent crime except under exceptional circumstances. Likewise, we have chosen to identify some witnesses by first name only, out of respect for their privacy. The full names of the victim and all witnesses are a part of the public record, and they were identified fully in the courtroom.)

Contact the writer at editor@cartercountytimes.com