

OPINIONS

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Heaven Is A Lot Like Kentucky

By Charles Mattox



By Cecil Lawson

I turned 54 a couple of weeks ago. Lori got me a birthday cake and took me book shopping, which was plenty of celebration for me. It got me to thinking of the milestones in my life and what's been important to me. High school graduation was 36 years ago; Morehead State, 32 years; University of Kentucky, 28 years; and UMass-Amherst, 15 years. In

*“The world breaks every one and afterward many are strong at the broken places. But those that will not break; it kills. It kills the very good and the very gentle and the very brave impartially. If you are none of these you can be sure it will kill you too, but there will be no special hurry.”*

Excerpted from “A Farewell to Arms” the Pulitzer Prize-winning, semi-autobiographical book, by Ernest Hemingway.

The Native American World is a fascinating, mys-

terious place with endless memories of those many, vibrant, ancient, cultures and bits of wisdom it holds and the knowledge we seek to hold even more closely. We live ‘close to the land’ in many parts of north-eastern Kentucky and our sacred communions with nature are long-standing. I’ve been fortunate in meeting many amazing individuals who know and understand a lot more about our prehistory and history than those who’ve been placed in charge of preserving our past.

Dennis Vespers is such a man. Dennis made some awe-some discoveries on his property, near the original Blue Licks Spring, of specially made sleds, made from ancient tusks of fauna and lage shaped bones of such and continues to try to understand the ancient cultures who called Blue Licks their home so many centuries ago. Dennis also pointed out that in 1979 the Park manager and the commissioner at the time, also donated Pioneer museum artifacts and it didn’t look like the

artifacts would be returned to the Pioneer Museum except for... public protest and a keen desire to see the museum, and the Blue Licks State Resort Park in general not trifled with. So, after noise was made, the dozens of artifacts in question were taken back by the Pioneer Museum from the borrower: Fort Boonesboro. Dennis was right there making noise when the 274 recently pilfered artifacts were stolen by political appointees and given away to special groups of Shawnee Tribal members from...

OKLAHOMA. Dennis joined Randy and Paula Hunter and members of the organization of park supports called Friends Of Blue Licks State Resort Park, in halting the illegal removal as 2024 ended and 2025 began. New year: New Goals, dear reader. The Lions of March might not be roaring at this moment, but spring draws nigh and the sunshine is coming.

ANOTHER YEAR OLDER

prominence? Who would have thought rock music would have dwindled into irrelevance and be replaced by country, hip-hop, reality TV pop music and later, YouTube music stars. The current generation of young people have never lived without at least access to the internet; they are digital natives. Time spent in nature has become more important to me now than ever. The sun wakes me up and livens my mind; catching glimpses of deer and squirrels and rabbits makes my heart happier; bird songs soothe my soul. I've never been a very outgoing person, but being around people, especially in large groups, continues to drain me, so

recharging outdoors is crucial for me to maintain an even keel in life. In this column I've often written about nature as sanctuary. A sanctuary is supposed to be a safe place to escape persecution and violence. Even without wholly understanding it in my youth, that's exactly why I retreated to the woods. I started out, ironically, “playing army” while in the woods, but over time I shed the accoutrements of war and have carried much less. I have learned to travel light, and that's a lesson that carries over into life. I have less tolerance for the things that get in the way of my direct experience of the world around me. I think that's

also why I get angry when I see more natural spaces being developed. I once had a dream when I was younger. I walked out onto the porch of my parents' home, and looking to the hills in the distance, I saw each ridge top was lined with houses. I felt my anxiety swelling, and I woke up. That was many years ago, but today, I see that coming true, little by little. But maybe I shouldn't be so upset. During a hike about a decade ago in a steep holler, I discovered near the top of a ridge the stone foundations of four homes or buildings. I pondered how building materials would have gotten up that high, but as I hiked fur-

ther, I discovered a path coming from another direction that would have allowed the builders to get there. People have come and gone to and from the landscape for decades and decades. I think back on how many old homes, foundations, or just daffodils I have stumbled upon in the deep woods, homes long abandoned and forgotten. Natives roamed the landscape centuries before, and we still see their traces under ledges, in caves and in the flood plains about us. Even though I prefer the woods for my solitude, perhaps it is a bit of personal growth for me to accept that others like them, too.

From the Table

By Tim Bailey

Well, like I said last week, we are going to go into detail of those summer games I discussed. Although as I am writing this, the outside games do not look much fun. But as you know this is Kentucky weather in March. The first game we talked about last week was called Andy Over. I do not know why it is called Andy Over, but I guess maybe long ago the inventor of the game named it after himself? It could also have

been named after the place where the first game was held Andy's house. Any way our main site was at Veral Ingram's house, so I guess we could have called it Veral Over? This is the way a game would be played. First you would pick sides making it as even as possible. Next the someone on each side would pick a number the closest chose which side to start on or if they wanted first ball. We will say the team red will go to the front and blue to the back of the house, If the blue team de-

cided to give the ball first to red, then they had to call out loud ANDY OVER, throwing the ball over the house. As the ball bounces over to the blue team, one person would catch the ball, and the blue team would divide up and charge around the house. The point is to hit as many red players as possible to make them blue team members. Thus, speed and agility were most important (and being lucky) on which side of the house you decide to run, because like the blue team, the red team could go left or right. The surviving red team members who made it to the opposite side now wait for the ball to be thrown over, so they can try to retake their teammates and maybe pick up a few of the blue squad. With 10 to 15 people storming around sharp corners, there is sure to be crashes. One of the more spectacular ones was Mike Jackson

and Chris Williams, with no permanent damage but maybe a little blood. The next game was a night game played to a huge field much larger than any athletic fields of today. More to the looks of a golf or a cross country course, maybe this game I played years ago lead me to my running now? We played this game at several places, but our main field was in Clark County. It was on Eugene Hampton's farm - Brother Hampton as we called him. He would have us down for a cook-out, hike, a swim in Red River (more on that adventure later), and the night before a game of KICK the CAN or hit the CAN. This was a night game with no lights but only the moon above. The only light was a flashlight of the person who would start the game. With the Can placed on a log and the light turned off, all others playing

would disperse into the night. When everyone was gone the game would start hunting for people using the flashlight. If he or she (this was a coed sport like most all ours were) spotted someone they would call out that person's name out run back and kick or knock the can as far as they could, leave the flashlight and hit into the darkness. This individual sport had no score board and only ended when it became daylight or everyone got tired. Usually the tiredness came way before daylight. The last game talked about last week is one that many have played. Usually that special uncle, such as several of the Copher clan or even that papaw, who enjoys a good laugh, gets a game started. The event begins with a long walk out in a field much like the field used in kick the can. Although here no light is used, less we scare away

our objective. The young rookies' only job is to stay quiet and still and hold the sack that was giving to him and be ready. Telling him it was the easiest job of the night as they headed out into the night. As the selected bag holder waited the others would head back to the house for supper and waited for the bag holder to get tired of standing in the middle of the dark and head back to the house. Of course, this is the famous hunting game of Sniping. A game that has been passed down from generation to generation. That all said, maybe some uncles or aunts out there might want to take a young rookie out for a hunt as the weather warms and the snipe's turn out. Hey take care of yourself, mother nature and watch for snipes. Remember always be KIND.

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HOUSING AUTHORITY OF MOREHEAD/OWINGSVILLE/FLEMINGSBURG

200 Heritage Place Morehead, Kentucky 40351 (606) 784-4314 Fax# (606) 784-7032

The Housing Authority of Owingsville will be accepting sealed bids for Lawn mowing services for the 2025 mowing season. All Bids must be clearly marked “Mowing Bid 2025” and submitted by 4:00 PM on March, 28th 2025 at the following address: Sealed Bid Email Bid: jdpatrik@windstream.net Housing Authority of Owingsville 200 Heritage Place, Morehead KY 40351 Attention: Executive Director Bids should be submitted on a per mowing basis and should include picking up garbage prior to mowing, weed eating, and blowing off of sidewalks and parking lots. Leaf removal should also be quoted as a separate line item. Mowing should be calculated on a 10-day basis thru the 2025 mowing season. It may vary at the discretion of the Executive Director depending on the weather conditions. The successful bidder must provide and list the Housing Authority of Owingsville as additional insured on general liability and workman's comp insurance. The Housing Authority reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

Jeffrey Patrick, Executive Director

Housing Authority of Morehead/Owingsville/Flemingsburg

200 Heritage Place

Morehead, KY 40351

Phone: 606-784-4314 Ext. #103

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PUBLIC NOTICE

An ordinance amending the Menifee County budget for fiscal year 2025, to include unanticipated receipts and to increase expenditures for the General Fund which totals \$51,185.10 was adopted by the Menifee County Fiscal Court on March 14, 2025. A copy of the adopted ordinance with full text is available for public inspection at the office of the county judge executive during normal business hours.

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CITY OF FRENCHBURG

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A public hearing will be held by the City of Frenchburg at the Frenchburg City Hall on Thursday, April 3, 2025 at 6:15 p.m. For the purpose of obtaining written or oral comments regarding the proposed use of Municipal Aid and Local Government Economic Assistance program funds for the upcoming fiscal year.

	Municipal Aid Road Program	Local Government Economic Assistance
Balance carried forward	\$91,000.00	\$ 14,000.00
Anticipated Receipts	\$14,000.00	\$ 13,000.00
Anticipated Interest Income	\$ 60.00	\$ 15.00
Total Resources Available	\$105,060.00	\$ 27,015.00

PUBLIC INSPECTION: The City of Frenchburg's proposed budget and proposed use of Municipal Aid and Local Government Economic Assistance program funds are available for public inspection at City Hall during normal business hours.

Interested persons and organizations are invited to the public hearing to submit written or oral comments on the proposed uses of Local Government Economic Assistance funds as they relate to the City's entire budget.

And person(s) especially senior citizens who cannot submit written comments or attend the public meeting, but wish to submit comments should call City Hall at 606-768-3457, so that the City can make arrangements to secure their comments.

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The Center for Rural Development is accepting grant applications in Bath and Menifee Counties for 2025 ARC mini-grants

The Center for Rural Development is accepting grant applications for the 2025 Kentucky Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) mini-grant program. The mini-grant program (sometimes referred to as the Flex-E-Grant program) is open to qualified local units of government and non-profit entities in Bath County for capacity building planning and implementation projects. Other counties within The Center's service area that are eligible to apply include: Bell, Breathitt, Carter, Casey, Clay, Clinton, Elliott, Estill, Floyd, Harlan, Jackson, Johnson, Knott, Knox, Lawrence, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Magoffin, Martin, McCreary, Metcalfe, Morgan, Owsley, Perry, Pike, Rockcastle, Rowan, Russell, Wayne, Whitley, and Wolfe. The mini-grant program provides strategic investments in projects that build

community capacity to mobilize local resources, gain leadership experience, and strengthen community institutions and networks. Grants are subject to approval for up to \$10,000, require a 20 percent match of total project costs, and are to be completed within a six-month timeframe. Mini-grants are available on a reimbursement basis only. For more information or to download a request for proposal, visit <https://centertech.com/arc-mini-grant-flex-e-grant/>. All grant applications and supporting documents must be submitted to The Center for Rural Development by 5 PM (EDT) on May 2, 2025. Digital files are preferred and may be emailed to [arc@centertech.com](mailto:arc@centertech.com). For questions about the application process or program guidelines, please call 606-677-6000 or email [jvanthournout@centertech.com](mailto:jvanthournout@centertech.com).