

OPINIONS

The opinion page does not reflect the views of the KyNewsGroup.

REGARDING THE BLACK FLAG



Heaven Is A Lot Like Kentucky

By Charles Mattox

I was cleaning up my office at the Gazette the other day, and among some old notes I found a particular aspect of the media coverage of Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath from August 2005.

“Nobody came for those people,’ one reporter after another penned with an expression of total surprise and disgust when speaking of the 100,000 or so refugees who did not evacuate the coastal south in

the wake of Katrina’s fury. Nobody came for them, in many cases, for up to two whole weeks.

Although that information was clearly disturbing, it came as no surprise to me.

First of all, most of those folks were poor and black. In my opinion, they continue to be largely forgotten about by the government and society in general. It just took them being trapped in a natural, and then social, catastrophe to remind everyone that they had been so forgotten and in such dire need of rescue.

I look at everything and analyze the information a little differently than some, as you may have noticed in the past, dear reader.

Here’s a prime example. James Smalley and Donald Maddox are but two Fleming Countians who have been needing rescue

for over 65 years.

As Korean prisoners of war, nobody ever came for them: Nobody.

They’re still unaccounted for after all these years.

They and over 8,500 other seemingly-forgotten soldiers who left home to serve their country during the war in Korea, never returned.

Seems kind of hypocritical to express disgust over the poor displaced folks down south who have been victimized by a natural disaster when we historically have exercised a policy of taking our young defenders of freedom from our homes and communities, drop them into hell holes across the globe and promptly forget about them when they no longer serve the war effort.

Hundreds upon hundreds are still missing and unaccounted for from the Vietnam War.

One of them is William Milliner.

William’s father Joseph Milliner fought to defend our nation during World War Two and was taken prisoner by German and Italian soldiers after being shot from the sky when his flying fortress was downed during a bomb run over Italy.

William was shot down in a helicopter in Laos in 1971.

Bath County native, Danny ‘Greasy’ Belcher, who helped lead Task Force Omega members in raising the black POW/MIA flags across the county, state and nation, continues to seek information regarding our POW/MIAs.

Belcher served in the same unit in Vietnam as William Milliner did.

Belcher and Joseph Milliner joined family members of the James Smalley family and the families of Flem-

ing County World War Two POWs, Herd Shrout, Garr May and Calvin Brown during a POW/MIA flag at the District 9 Office of the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet several years ago.

“Why was nothing ever done to find out more about Donald or any of those other boys,’ a distraught Dorothy Bower asked me in February, 2000 as she wondered aloud why her twin Donald Maddox, a young man raised in Elizaville, who went to Korea in 1951, and never returned home, could be so forgotten. Maddox was captured by Chinese forces during the frozen retreat from the Chosin Reservoir that winter.

His empty grave with monument awaits his arrival in the Elizaville Cemetery.

Why indeed was nothing ever done, to bring that fine young man, and all the

others home?

Why?

When I consider all the wonderful things Donald and James and William could have accomplished had they returned home, I am deeply troubled. For I also consider Daniel Boone and Simon Kenton and George Stockton, three men taken captive by enemy Native American forces during their lives. All were returned to their families though, and after that fact each struggled valiantly to bring peace and prosperity and family and communal security to Fleming County for future generations.

I wonder what they would say if they saw those black flags whipping in the wind all these years later. I often contemplate such things here in Fleming County.

Here beneath the black flag.



By Cecil Lawson

I’ve been in an unusually reflective mood this spring. While sitting and thinking about what to write about for this week’s column, I thought about a blog I used to keep until 2012 or so, and I returned to it. I looked at the archives going back 15 years.

As it turned out, in late May 2010, I was finishing up my second season working for the US Census. It was just over a year after moving back to Kentucky from Massachusetts, and it would be another year before I started work at the newspaper. It was in the midst of the Great Recession, and I was taking work wherever I could find it. I still lived with my parents. I used the blog as

a creative outlet for myself, and I expressed myself in a variety of ways. There’s a thread that links my writing back then and today. Here’s a sample.

May 20, 2010  
cloudy afternoon - pigeons rest on the old church's red brick bell tower

May 23, 2010  
Sunday morning fog - a delicate crane fly crawls on the screen window

May 24, 2010  
This entire area is awash in green seas of grass. I’ve had the opportunity to drive over many parts of the county, and everywhere I go, there are fields and hills covered with tall grass. The wind takes shape as it passes over, like the currents give shape to the ocean waves.

At night, the air is alive with smells. Cut grass, honeysuckle, humus, warm pond water, garden flowers – intensified by

humidity that descended upon us from the south.

My instinct is to withdraw, to enjoy the ending of this work (the Census), to transition into occasional summer employment for pay, and to spend the rest of my time writing and hiking. As much as I have enjoyed meeting many, many new people, I have come to realize that my truest vocation lies in the imagination, in the refinement of experience, and in the weaving of tales. To give back to you, the world, what experience has given to me, with colors and details unnoticed and forgotten.

That is what I will do.

May 26, 2010  
This day’s sun was penetrating; even at 6:30 this evening, it continues to bear down on your skin, and it keeps the air hot, humid, stifling. Max had a haircut yesterday, so he’s enjoying being able to stay outside for longer periods. As we walked this evening, people were sit-

ting on their porches, or mowing their yards, or riding motorcycles. The sun, the warmth, the humidity, give life to the community, bring all of the people out of their cold, gray torpor.

Yesterday, my friend Tom and I hiked along the Buck Creek Trail in the Zilpo area of Cave Run Lake. The trail was mostly flat except for steep climbs at the beginning and end, and it follows Buck Creek, which flows from the Cedar Cliffs into the lake. Although the weather was as warm yesterday as it was today, the trees shaded us, and the creek’s cold water provided some occasional refreshment for our tired feet. We covered over six miles, there and back. Our trek came to a close as we came upon a logging operation near the end of the trail. Although I despise all forms of despoliation of forests, the size of the logging equipment – a skidder, a log truck, and a giant crane/hoist – earned some respect from us. The log-

ging crew was oblivious to our presence, just a few feet away, shielded as they were in noise and safety concerns with enormous logs dozens of feet long.

June 3, 2010  
This long, quiet evening - the first in a long while. I gave it to myself as a much-needed gift.

I’m writing this on my new laptop, courtesy of working for the Census Bureau. A simple Toshiba Satellite L 500. If only they would have included Microsoft Office as standard software, then it would have been perfect.

Although the official beginning of summer was almost three weeks ago, the Kentucky version of summer has already begun – heat and humidity have settled with us for the long haul. Afternoon cloudiness and occasional thundershowers. Enough to keep (my dog) Max unhappy, even with his new haircut.

My summer yard and

landscaping work are underway, and I’m also helping out on the warehouse that burned late last year. I doubt that I will hear any more from the Census Bureau, which is fine with me. That kind of work is too time-consuming to me, with all of the driving; I feel like I lose control over my time when I’m on the road – unless I’m taking a road trip.

I’ve also got some home projects to do, including painting my bedroom/office/fortress of solitude and placing and grouting some tile around the bathroom sink. Dad might also need my help with his digging and plumbing work under the house.

Time for me to think of the whole and the long-term, to bring together all of the disparate threads of my life into one harmonious weave. The turning point, the chiasmus.

From the Table

By Tim Bailey

Well, this past week has been really busy, just as has everybody's. This time of year things start happening one after another. For myself it started off with my first power lifting meet since the surgeries, then the high school track regional, followed with district softball and regional softball. I am just a fan and uncle with the softball but still does not make it easier though.

Road races come at me every week although that may have to change it takes a little longer for recovery now days. During my younger days on Memorial Day weekend, I used to do 3 races, now I get one

in. Besides all this we decided to add a 3.1 mile race in Preston to raise a little money for the track/cross country teams. The race went great, thanks to all my good help Shawn, Robin, Tracy, Rhonda, Alison as well the Sherif Department and Spencer for being our lead vehicle driver and drone operator. I also have to mention Mike and Renee Cassidy as well as Los Tres Agaves; it takes a village to put on one of those events.

As for our track squads they did great. The boys made it back-to-back runner-up and the ladies took runner-up as well. Unlike last year on our home track, we had to travel to Harlan County. That, if you

don't know, is nearly in Virginia/Tenn. It was worth the long trip though. Well, unless you had to get up and go to school, work, or drive a school bus. Thanks to all the parents and other fans who drove down.

At the power lifting meet, which I may have push the envelope a bit, but talking to others at the meet who have gone

through troubles said you got to get back into as soon as possible. I tell both guys and gals on the track team all the time it has got to hurt to work so I have back up my words. I always thought I made that saying up but come to find out it has been used years ago. Although I will say mine is a little shorter.

Last, but not least, by far

the family get togethers have started and will go on till the Copher Christmas. Great memories are made at everyone of these from mom falling in slow motion with playing a minute to win it to Uncle Oscar wearing a red wig dancing (well moving somewhat) to the sound of Smoke On The Water by Deep Purple to our latest Zack throwing a

lit match on the table cloth then flipping in Alisons lap. We have never had any serious things happen but we will see with many more get togethers in store who knows.

That said take care of yourself. mother nature and always BE KIND.

**The Bath County Fire Taxing District is accepting bids for a 2 door commercial fire engine. Engine shall have at a minimum 1000 gallon poly tank with at least a 1250 GPM top mount Pump. Interested parties can contact Ike France at 859-473-0968. Bids can be submitted to the Bath County Fire Taxing District, PO Box 1444 Owingsville, KY 40360. Bids shall be postmarked by 06/12/2025**

*Published in the Bath County News-Outlook 05.29.25 and 06.05.25*



**Gateway Plumbing**

COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL SERVICE

**Andrew Ferrell**  
Master Plumber

**(606)768-2730**  
330 Tower Road,  
Frenchburg, KY 40322

**Commercial & Residential Service**

**Service Area:**  
Bath, Menifee, Montgomery, Morgan, Powell, Rowan and Wolfe County

**Advertisement for Bath County Schools Surplus Sale**

The Bath County Schools' will have a surplus sale on June 12th, 2025 at 11:00am at the Bath County school bus garage, 645 Chenault Dr, Owingsville, KY 40360.

Items to be sold, but not limited to

- 1 School bus
- 1 2004 Chevrolet 2500 2wd
- Inflatables
- Cafeteria tables
- Kitchen Equipment
- Workout equipment
- Solar Car
- Box Trailer
- Desks
- Scrap metal
- Bus parts

and much more

Items can be viewed the day of the sale starting at 10:00am

*Published in the Bath County News-Outlook 05.29.25 and 06.05.25*

**Notice of Bid Opportunity for Hay Cutting at Crossroads Elementary**

For Bath County Residence only:

The Bath County Schools will be accepting bids for the opportunity to cut hay on the acreage at Crossroads Elementary School.

Interested individuals are asked to submit their Name, Phone Number, and Address to:

Bath County Board of Education  
Attn: Phil Dettwiller  
405 West Main Street  
Owingsville, KY 40360

Deadline for submission:  
All bids must be received by 12:00 noon on Thursday, June 12.

Bid Opening:  
Bids will be opened on Monday, June 16 at 10:00 AM at the Bath County Board of Education office.

A random drawing will be conducted upon the opening of the final bid. The selected bidder will be granted the opportunity to cut hay for one summer season.

*Published in the Bath County News Outlook 05.29.25 and 06.05.25*

**POLICY OF NON-DISCRIMINATION**  
**SECTION 504**  
**PUBLIC NOTICE**

This notice is published pursuant to the requirements of 24 CFR Part 8 Nondiscrimination Based on Handicap in Federally-Assisted Programs and Activities of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, as published in the Federal Register on June 2, 1988. Section 8.4 prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals because of their disability.

The Bath County Fiscal Court advises the public, employees and job applicants that it does not discriminate on the basis of handicapped status in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in its programs and activities.

The Bath County Fiscal Court has designated the following person(s) as the contact to coordinate efforts to comply with this requirement. Inquiries should be directed to:

Name: Forrest McKenzie  
Office: Bath County Judge-Executive's Office  
Address: PO Box 39  
Owingsville, KY 40360  
Phone Number: (606) 674.6346

*Published in the Bath County News-Outlook 05.29.25*