

Grand jury indicts former police protester

BY MARY JANE EPLING
THE DAILY INDEPENDENT

CATLETTSBURG A man who led civil outcries against the Ashland Police Department following the highly scrutinized death of his brother in 2023 was indicted by Boyd County grand jurors this week.

Lajuan M. Wilkerson, 38, of Ashland, faces a two-count indictment alleging fourth-degree domestic violence assault and first-degree strangulation.

Wilkerson was arrested by deputies with the Boyd County Sheriff's Department back in January on charges of violating an emergency protective order leading up to the most recent indictment occurring after an incident on

March 1.

The recent indictment comes nearly two years after Wilkerson and community members protested the death of 34-year-old Clarence Wilkerson, Lajuan's brother, who died in police custody.

On the heels of national protests in the death of George Floyd, video captured by a bystander of Clarence's final moments briefly gained viral and national headline attention in 2023, driving peaceful protests and statements from the Fraternal Order of Police, the Boyd-Greenup County Branch of the NAACP and former city officials.

However, a grand jury failed to find any criminal fault of numerous responding officers and a Kentucky

State Police investigation ruled Clarence Wilkerson's death as a result of drug intoxication, exacerbating prior conditions of congestive heart failure, hyperlipidemia and diabetes.

Lajuan Wilkerson declined to give comment on those results in June 2023.

Current charges are presumably unrelated to Lajuan's previous civic activity and are still alleged at this point.

Lajuan Wilkerson is currently not in custody after being released sometime after his January arrest, but is to be held on a \$75,000 bond on the latest allegations.

An indictment is not an indication of guilt and all individuals appearing below

remain innocent until proven guilty.

Boyd County grand jurors also issued indictments this week:

- Cody Stiltner, 29, of Portsmouth, Ohio, was indicted in two separate cases on two counts of first-degree promoting contraband, one allegedly occurring on March 27 and the second on March 28.

- Franklin Watts, Jr., 44, of an unknown address, was indicted on charges of possessing methamphetamine and fentanyl.

- Christopher Wayne Godfrey, 38, of Grayson, was indicted on charges of public intoxication, possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of methamphetamine.

- Dana A. Mahoney, 47, of Olive Hill, was indicted on a sole count of first-degree promoting contraband.

- Carl Abrams, 63, of Ashland, was indicted on a sole count of first-degree promoting contraband.

- Rozwell M. Watkins-Jennings, 36, of Savannah, Georgia, was indicted on a sole count of first-degree domestic violence strangulation.

- Angela M. Adkins, 48, of Martha, was indicted on charges of operating a motor vehicle under the influence of a controlled substance, possession of an unspecified drug and possession of drug paraphernalia.

(606) 326-2652 |
mjepling@dailyindependent.com

NEWS IN BRIEF

Chicken keeping class offered

ASHLAND Chicken Keeping 101 will be offered at 6 p.m. Tuesday and 10 a.m. April 21 at the Franks Education Building.

Bobbie Smith is the instructor. The Franks Education Building is at 1758 Addington Road.

Registration is required; call the Boyd County Extension Office at (606) 739-5184.

Bundt cake focus of session

GREENUP

The main branch of the Greenup County Public Library will have a session for making a blueberry lemon Bundt cake at 11 a.m. April 26.

The class is for those 18 and older. To sign up, call (606) 836-3771.

MEETING

Tuesday, 6 p.m.: Olive Hill City Council, regular session, at Olive Hill Police Department.

Staff reports



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Dr. Brad Morris, left, of Morris Eyecare in Greenup, received the Employer Support of Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Patriot Award this week. Making the presentation was Cheryl Spriggs, ESGR area chair, and nominator for the award Lt. Col. John Adams, who works for Morris Eyecare. Adams is a member of the Air National Guard's 158th Medical Group with headquarters in Vermont.

ADAMS RECEIVES PATRIOT AWARD

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

Boyd County EMS will hold their quarterly board meeting which will include the budget for 2025-2026, on Wednesday April 16 at 2:30pm. This will be held at the downtown bldg. at 2758 Greenup Avenue.

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April is Foot Health Awareness Month!

Take a step toward better foot health with our Free Foot Screenings every Wednesday in April!

Free screenings include an exam, health education and giveaways for people with foot-related concerns or those having difficulty caring for them. Registered nurses will provide screenings.

Location: St. Mary's Wound and Hyperbaric Center

Ground Floor of St. Mary's Medical Center

Time: 9 to 11 a.m.

More information: 304.399.7450

