

THE WOODFORD SUN

MANAGEMENT

Ben Chandler — Publisher
Scott White — Managing Editor, scott@woodfordsun.com
Bill Nave — Business Manager
Lucie Chandler — Asst. Business Manager
(859) 873-3211
News — news@woodfordsun.com
Display Ads — adsales@woodfordsun.com
Classified Ads — comp@woodfordsun.com
Circulation — circulation@woodfordsun.com
www.woodfordsun.com

STAFF

Reporting/Photography — Bob Vlach
Copy Editor/Contributing Writer — Melissa Patrick
Sports — Bill Caine
Circulation Manager — Brenda Stone
Ad Sales Manager — Lucie Chandler
Layout / Ad Design — Tamara McSorley

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION RATES

\$50, Woodford County residents
\$38, Woodford County senior residents
\$60, Kentucky residents
\$65, out of state



White Lines...

Everyone is pitching in!

SCOTT WHITE
MANAGING EDITOR

Caught your breath yet?

A biblical flood nearly wiping out our treasured, historic Kentucky River hamlets. A major flood impacting those same communities and other parts of the county in mid-February. Tough ice and snow storms in January. Head-spinning news every day from Washington as President Donald Trump works to reassemble the federal government, which we are learning is beginning to pose existential threats to the agricultural and bourbon economies and, just as seriously, the ability of the Woodford County Health Department to carry out its core functions. And, perhaps, planned infrastructure projects dependent on state and federal grants will become the next casualties.

We need the Woodford County Ministerial Association to work overtime in their prayers for peace and calm.

Despite all this, we are seeing another reality, one that Woodford County Judge-Executive James Kay regularly reminds us: “Woodford County is the best county not just in Kentucky, but the world.” If you read last week’s stories on the initial responses to the floods and this week’s story on the beginnings of the recovery and relief efforts, then you know our community is unified. *We all live on the river! No one rests until our brothers and sisters in Clifton, Lower Clifton, Buck Run, Fintville, Mundy’s Landing, Shore Acres and Oregon Road are safe, secure, and recovered.*

At last night’s Versailles City Council meeting, I heard Councilmember Chantel Bingham talk about how the high school baseball team will set up spots for donations. I heard how the Versailles Fire Department is planning “boot drives” at Versailles intersec-

tions to collect donations. Emily Downey, president and CEO of the Woodford Chamber of Commerce, organized local businesses last weekend to donate a variety of items for flood victims. Hanging out at Cornerstone Drugstore, someone told me about a group of high schoolers planning to show up in Clifton to help out Debbie Tichenor and the Salvation Army. The comments on our Facebook flood stories overflow with prayers, questions about how to help and stories of folks helping their neighbors.

Man, we are so blessed to be here in Woodford County.

There will be many, many opportunities to show off our essential Woodford County-ness over the next several months. We already have people here from around the country with the Red Cross and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA, doing all they can to help. If you see someone wearing a Red Cross or FEMA shirt or jacket, ask to give ‘em a hug and see if you can buy them a cup of coffee.

Woodford County’s own superhero Drew Chandler, director of the Woodford County Emergency Management Agency, expects that Woodford County will be designated as a Major Disaster Area, so there will likely be lots more folks here from FEMA, the Small Business Administration and other state and federal agencies. Let’s welcome them with open arms and Woodford County hospitality.

This has been a long, tough winter that seems to be careening into a discomfiting spring. Like many of you, I am simply worn out . . . it is like, “What next?” But, we can, and sanely should, take solace that we live in the best county in not just Kentucky, but the country, the world, and, yes, the universe.



CINDY SAWYER, still smiling despite her and her husband Steve’s home on the river in Buck Run being nearly swept away. (Photo by Scott White)

Clippings from our past...

Editor’s Note: We are publishing excerpts from the Woodford Pennant from January to April, 1861, which chronicled the outbreak of the Civil War in Woodford County.

The Woodford Pennant April 6, 1861

An election will be held in the Great Commonwealth on May 4, 1861, for delegates to a Border Slave States Conference. The Pennant endorses Gen. William Butler of Carroll County and James B. Clay of Fayette County. The opposition Submission Party puts forward John Crittenden and James Guthrie, who will cave to the Northern interests. It is not necessary for us to pass any eulogy upon the distinguished gentleman who heads this ticket. Butler has passed more than a half-century in the service of the Union, and though he would be reluctant to give up the flag and the constitution for which he poured out his life’s blood upon the frozen fields of Canada, before the bristling bayonets of the British at New Orleans and in the dashing charge of his brigade at Monterey, yet he holds dearer and more sacred than all—even his life—the maintenance of our equality and independence as sovereign States. Of Mr. Clay it is quite as needless for us

to say anything. Within a few years, by his ability, force of character and great energy, he has attained a commanding position in the affairs of the nation. He will bring to bear in the canvass a spirit of fiery eloquence and weight of argument that will prove him more than a match for any competitor.

Last Saturday, three members of Congress, one of whom was from Ohio, called on the President. They found him engaged in looking over a number of maps of the gulf coast. A conversation ensued about the disposition of the Southern posts in the course of which the President gave it to be understood in unmistakable terms, that even though the evacuation of Fort Sumter should be determined upon, the other forts yet in the possession of the Federal troops would be held to the last.

A band of notorious horse thieves, C.S. Colving, Jesse White, and Joseph Lutz, were arrested near Cherry Grove in Montgomery County last week and eight stolen horses from Woodford County were

recovered including breeding stock and a fine stud.

\$500 Reward for apprehension of burglars and robbers who entered my house on April 1, chloroformed in his sleep, my house slave, robbed me of clothes, cash money, and all the silver they could find, fine saddlery and tack, and a fine sorrel mare branded on the left shoulder with a heart. I may be contacted at my home or a message left at the Pennant, W.P. Hart.

There will be an address by our great favorite son, John C. Breckenridge, at the Woodford Courthouse in Versailles on April 13 at 2:00 pm. Let there be a grand rally of the people to hear the distinguished Kentucky senator.

On Saturday last, Elder Curtis Smith delivered an exceedingly interesting and able discourse upon the probability of Christ’s advent in 1866. A large audience attended and listened attentively. The millennium commencing in six years has been addressed by several distinguished theologians.

Letter to the Editor

Broader view on overdevelopment

My previous letter published April 10, 2025, addressed the proposed development at what most of us know as the McDougal Garden Center location. This letter is intended to highlight the broader overdevelopment taking place in our community.

The current population of Versailles is approximately 10,000 people. With the already approved building projects currently or soon taking place, this will increase the population by 20+%. Over 2000 additional people, along with their vehicles, will move into Versailles over the next few years as these projects are completed. This 20+% rise is just in Versailles, not in the broader Woodford County area.

I believe that is simply too much growth. Some growth is necessary, but not that much. The growth is even more concentrated when viewed from the Troy Pike/Falling Springs Blvd interchange. Taking a bird’s eye view from that intersection and drawing a 1-mile radius circle includes the following developments:

- Rose Ridge Phase 5: 25 homes
- The Springs near Adena Trace: 200+ homes
- The Anderson Development at the southeast corner of Troy Pike and Falling Springs: 220 apartments and retail space
- The final phases of The Legends: 15 homes

Looking at the wider development in Versailles, you will find that there are 140 homes, 522 apartments and retail space being built along Lexington Road. All of this development results in well over 2,000 more

people, more traffic and more erosion of the character of our community.

I attended one of the most recent Comprehensive Planning meetings. Most attendees did not want to see this level of growth.

Now there is yet another development before the Planning Commission. Another development that would place 18 homes, 17 townhouses and 192 more apartments where McDougal Garden Center sits. That is simply too much development.

Over 30 people attended the Planning Commission meeting on April 10, when this latest proposed zone change from A-1 to R-4 (dense residential) for this development was to be heard and decided. The developer asked for and was granted a postponement by the commission at the meeting while everyone was present. The commission does a real disservice to the community by, essentially, blunting any community comment on this straightforward zoning change request.

I believe many of those people, much like myself, simply do not want any type of additional development in the Troy Pike/Falling Springs Boulevard location. If you feel similarly, please send a note to Woodford County Planning Director Steve Hunter at shunter@woodfordcountky.gov asking him to forward your comments to commission members, all of whom are appointed.

I also encourage you to send feedback to Versailles City Council members and Fiscal Court magistrates. Their email addresses are located on the city and county websites.

Mick McNulty
Versailles

Correction

In the story about the 60th anniversary of The Woodford Club, which appeared in the April 10, 2025, edition of *The Woodford Sun*, the *Sun* incorrectly identified the original golf pro. His name is Ron Hacker. His wife, Jackie, was not a professional golfer, but an accomplished amateur who won the Kentucky Women’s Golf Championship in 1973. The *Sun* also incorrectly spelled Ben and Bev Crain’s name. The *Sun* regrets the error.

From Our Files

10 Years Ago April 16, 2015

The big news of the week was a brawl between Fiscal Court Magistrate Ken Reed and Bobby Dotson, former lifelong friends. The fight began inside of Cornerstone Drug Store and Main and Lexington Streets and spilled onto the sidewalk before resolving in front of Steve’s Barber Shop. The fight, according to onlookers and the participants, stemmed from Reed’s perception that Dotson supported a primary challenger to Reed in the last magistrate’s election, and that the two had stopped talking to one another. When Dotson entered the store, according to several customers, Reed said, “What the hell are you looking at?” to which Dotson replied, “I’m looking at you, you ugly son of a bitch.” Witnesses said Reed threw the first punch, and then again outside when intervenors thought the fight had been broken up. When Dotson’s brother, Gerald Dotson who also sits on the fiscal court with Reed, was asked how he expected to get along with Reed as colleagues on the court, Gerald said, “He doesn’t talk to me either.”

A group of students from WCHS teacher Kyle Fannin’s community activism class are holding Spark Versailles in downtown this coming weekend. The students will be operating a pop-up coffee shop to demonstrate their vision of what downtown Versailles can become. Senior Brandon Evans said organizing a three-day event and ensuring everything comes together with live music, vendors and their own shop has been “challenging, a lot of work and a whole lot of fun.”

The ordinance committee of the Midway City Council approved the text of a proposed fairness ordinance which adds sexual orientation and gender identity to the list of protected classes. If passed, it will cover housing, public accommodations, and employment. Mayor Grayson Vandegrift said a public hearing to discuss the proposal will be held before the full council votes on the ordinance.

25 Years Ago April 20, 2000

The state’s new budget includes \$2.75 million that will be used for four Woodford County projects: The community recreation center, Versailles’s water supply needs, the Woodford County Hospital District, and the Bluegrass Railroad Museum.

Sheriff John Coyle has been elected chairman of the Woodford County Democratic Executive Committee.

Allen Holt and Joe German Jr. have been appointed to the Woodford County Parks and Recreation Board.

Silas Hart was recently honored as Volunteer of the Year by Woodford County Schools and Outstanding Central Office Volunteer by the Kentucky Coalition of School Volunteer organizations.

A plaque memorializing longtime Kentucky Legislative Research Commission director Vic Hellard Jr. of Versailles was unveiled in a ceremony at the state Capitol on April 12.

Ground was broken April 13 for the Woodford County Early Childhood Center, to be constructed adjacent to the Community Education Center on South Main Street.

Groundbreaking for a

new city park on properties at Douglas Avenue, Amsden Avenue, and Preston Court will take place on April 22.

Norman Morton was recently honored for his three years as president of the Woodford County Theatrical Arts Association. Wanda Rodgers has been installed as the new president.

40 Years Ago April 18, 1985

Ruth Burleigh of Midway, a resident at Taylor Manor in Versailles, celebrated her 103rd birthday on April 10.

George Johnson recently retired after working more than 40 years as an orderly at Woodford Memorial Hospital.

James Chapman, a farmer from Versailles, captured two pulling awards during the national finals of the TNT Championship Pulling Circuit held in Charlotte, N.C. recently.

David Lohr, a senior at Transylvania University, has been accepted into the Johns Hopkins University Medical School for the term beginning this fall.

Claire Cundiff of Versailles was named to the dean’s list at the University of Louisville for the fall semester.

Henry Carl has been honored for 40 years of volunteer service with the Woodford County Red Cross chapter.

Virginia M. Frazer, 85, a former long-time city employee and newspaper correspondent, died Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Elwood House of Midway are spending several days this week in Washington, D.C.

Woodford County High School students participating in the University of Kentucky’s recent Merit Day were Michael D. Bates, James A. Bloom, John E. Christopher, Michael C. Gordon, and David E. Prigge.

Promising newcomers on the girls’ track teams at WCHS are Chris and Trina Schimmoeller, Lottie Jangdal, Selina Blair, and Denise Cowan. Top returnees on the boys’ team are Donnie Preston, Bruce Graves, Gary Geldhof, Mark Goode, Tim Leigh, and Butch Burden.

Find us on

