

Fed considering softer approach to marijuana

The Associated Press reported late last week that U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration is working on a plan to reclassify marijuana as a less dangerous drug. Many states have eased laws on pot, but it remains a Schedule I drug in the federal court's eyes.

By reclassifying marijuana as a Scheduled III drug, such as ketamine and some anabolic steroids, the DEA's decision would have ripple effects across the country.

Some Democratic leaders in Washington are calling for further softening, saying marijuana should be regulated like alcohol.

President Joe Biden called for a review of the federal marijuana law in October 2022, reports the AP, and moved to pardon thousands of Americans convicted federally of simple possession of the drug. He has also called on governors and local leaders to take similar steps to erase marijuana convictions.

A Gallup poll last fall found 70% of adults support legalization, the highest level yet recorded by the polling firm and more than double the roughly 30% who backed it in 2000.

Opponents of lessening the penalties for marijuana possession say it's a gateway drug that leads to harder addictions.

ARPA funds buy jail laundry equipment

With some help from a COVID grant, Crittenden County Detention Center got some new laundry equipment, saving the jail about \$30,000.

Jailer Athena Hayes said she learned about the opportunity to leverage funds from the American Rescue Plan Act to benefit the jail, which was looking to replace aging washers and dryers.

Crittenden County Health Department was integral in helping the jail secure the funds to buy six washers and four dryers.

State completes audit of 2022 county taxes

State Auditor Allison Ball last week released the audit of the sheriff's settlement for 2022 taxes in Crittenden County.

State law requires the auditor to annually audit the accounts of each county sheriff. In compliance with this law, the auditor issues two sheriff's reports each year: one reporting on the audit of the sheriff's tax account, and the other reporting on the audit of the fee account used to operate the office.

Auditing standards require the auditor's letter to communicate whether the financial statement presents fairly the receipts, disbursements, and excess fees of the Crittenden County Sheriff in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

The sheriff's financial statement did not follow this format, Ball reports. However, the sheriff's financial statement is fairly presented in conformity with the regulatory basis of accounting, which is an acceptable reporting methodology. This reporting methodology is followed for all 120 sheriff audits in Kentucky.

The sheriff's financial statement fairly presents the taxes charged, credited, and paid for the period Jan. 1, 2023 through Aug. 31, 2023 in conformity with the regulatory basis of accounting.

The audit contains the following finding: The Crittenden County sheriff's official receipt of taxes transferred from the outgoing sheriff was materially understated. The Crittenden County sheriff's official receipt of taxes transferred from the outgoing sheriff was materially understated by \$39,489. Property tax bills collected at the end of December 2022 were not marked paid in the sheriff's tax software by the former bookkeeper until Jan. 3, 2023. The incoming sheriff took office on Jan. 1, 2023, and these tax bills were included on the January 2023 monthly report.

We recommend the Crittenden County Sheriff's office ensure



tax bills are marked paid in the tax software in a timely manner. In addition, we recommend the sheriff use the correct reports when preparing the official receipt in the future.

During administration changes, it appeared tax payments were collected under outgoing and credited to incoming administration. New policies have been put into place regarding payments posted on the same day as collected.

The sheriff's responsibilities include collecting property taxes, providing law enforcement, and performing services for the county fiscal court and courts of justice. The sheriff's office is funded through statutory commissions and fees collected in conjunction with these duties.

The audit report can be found on the auditor's website.

295 bridge at Lyon line south of D'Burg will remain closed longer

Motorists traveling between Lyon and Crittenden counties are still having to self detour around a bridge on KY 295 at the county line which has been closed since early March. It appears the bridge will be remain closed for at least a few more months. There is some indication that it could be replaced at some point after July 1, at the earliest.

A routine inspection in March of the bridge that spans Livingston Creek found deterioration of structural beams underneath it. The bridge is located between Joe Peek Road in Lyon County and Millie Peek Road in Crittenden County.

This is a state bridge on a state highway and Kentucky Transportation Cabinet is responsible for its repair or replacement.

Signs and barricades are posted on either side. About 675 vehicles travel across that bridge on a given day, according to Kentucky Transportation Cabinet data.

US 60 West turning lane work starts later this month at school

As soon as school is out, Kentucky Transportation Cabinet contractors are expected to begin work to build a long-anticipated turning lane in Marion on US 60 West between the high and middle school campus and the hospital.

Crittenden County School Superintendent Tonya Driver said transportation officials have told her the work will not begin until after school is out May 24. There had been some anticipation that the project would begin sooner, which would have likely created traffic issues in the mornings and afternoons at the school. The school had already altered its student drop-off routes in order to accommodate the anticipated issues.

Mills appointed judge in McCracken County

Marion native James "Jamie" Mills has been appointed to serve as McCracken District Judge, Division 2.

Mills, 44, is a 1998 graduate of Crittenden County High School. He has been serving as First Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney in Paducah. He is also a current candidate for District Court Judge.

Mills has practiced law in McCracken County since passing the bar in 2005. In addition to being former First Assistant County Attorney, he was also a former public defender. Additionally, he teaches criminal justice at WKCTC.

Mills was sworn-in, at a private ceremony last Thursday. An Investiture ceremony will be held on Friday, May 10, at 2 p.m. in Court Room D of the McCracken County



Mills

Courthouse. All are welcome to attend.

Division 2 District Judge seat became vacant last fall with the passing of Judge Chris Hollowell. A primary election for the non-partisan seat will be on Tuesday, May 21, which will determine which two candidates will appear on the ballot for the general election in November.

Early, no excuse voting will begin next Thurs.

In-person, early voting will be available next week on Thursday, Friday and Saturday at the Crittenden County Office Complex. Voting stations will be open from 8 a.m., to 4 p.m., each day.

Voters for all precincts may take advantage of the no-excuse early balloting. Take your driver's license to the polling place.

Traffic restrictions for commuters crossing Ohio River at Henderson

Several traffic restrictions are planned this week to accommodate work on Section 1 of the I-69 Ohio River Crossing.

Earlier this week, several work-related delays were observed near the crossing.

Beginning on or after Wednesday, May 8, US 41 South at KY 35 will have one lane closed for a bridge deck pour. This closure is expected to start around 5 a.m. and last until late afternoon. There will also be work on KY 351/2nd Street at US 41 (both directions), one lane closures with short-term closures with flagging to accommodate a bridge deck pour.

Beginning Thursday, May 9, US 41 North between KY 351/2nd Street Exit and US 60 Interchange will have one lane closed for barrier extension.

Beginning on or after Friday, May 10, KY 351 West, will be one lane for utility work. This lane restriction is expected to be in place from 4 p.m. to 11 p.m. for 1 day.

Drivers are encouraged to slow down, stay alert and watch for new traffic patterns. Actual dates and anticipated work may be adjusted if inclement weather or other unforeseen activities occur.

Find more information about I-69 ORX at I69OhioRiverCrossing.com.

McDaniel is honored by Ole Miss society

Kenlee McDaniel of Marion, who is majoring in Integrated Marketing Communications, was among 58 rising seniors to join the Tassels Chapter of Mortar Board at the University of Mississippi.

Mortar Board is a national honor society that recognizes college seniors for their achievements in scholarship, leadership and service, provides opportunities for continued leadership development, promotes service to colleges and universities and encourages lifelong contributions to the global community.

Criteria for selection include a minimum GPA of 3.0 or top 35% of the junior class, whichever is higher, and a demonstrated commitment to scholarship, leadership and service.

The 2024 class of new members was initiated into the chapter on March 7.

Derby tickets way up

The price of tickets to the Kentucky Derby was significantly up this year, according to ticketing technology company Logitix. Tracking tickets across multiple exchanges on the secondary market, Logitix reported the average price paid per ticket this year was \$758.58, not including fees. That is a 35% increase compared to 2023, when tickets sold for an average of \$492.03 per ticket.

The 150th Kentucky Derby produced one of the most dramatic finishes in history as three horses finished within a nose at the wire. Mystic Dan won the race, hanging on with two challengers closing at the end. It was the closest three-horse photo finish since 1947. Mystic Dan, an 18-1 shot, edged Sierra Leone by a nose, with Forever Young another nose back in third on Saturday. Sierra Leone was the most expensive horse in the race at \$2.3 million.

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50 YEARS AGO

May 9, 1974

■ Jayne E. Clark, a sophomore at Murray State University and a 1973 graduate of Crittenden County High School, was added to the staff of The Crittenden Press until her return to school the following fall. She worked as a news and feature writer and photographer in addition to assisting with production of the paper.

■ Congratulations were extended to more than 100 students at Western Kentucky University's annual Awards Day Banquet by President Dero G. Downing. Dr. John D. Parker, of the Department of Government Faculty, presented a plaque to the recipient of the Pi Sigma Alpha National Political Science Honor Society Award for the Outstanding Government Major, Stuart L. Phillips, a senior from Marion.

■ Honor graduate Linda Lou Hunt of Marion, a magna cum laude graduate of Murray State University in the 1974 spring commencement, was photograph as she accepted her degree and the congratulations of Dr. Constanine W. Curriss, university president. Hunt earned a bachelor's degree in business education.

25 YEARS AGO

May 13, 1999

■ Most children had to skip school to go fishing, but not students at Crittenden County Elementary School. Physical education instructor Angela Starnes arranged for the use of a pond owned by Harold Collins that lies just across the fence from the school playground.

Starnes said all children had the opportunity to fish during their regular PE class time with cane poles.

■ Andy Hunt and Jessi McDowell received plaques and bonds for their 4-H project books entered in the Pennyrile Area competition. Hunt was selected champion in two projects and received a \$100 savings bond. McDowell received a \$50 bond for her championship.

■ The FFA chapter from Crittenden County High School was one of 43 schools across Kentucky, Tennessee and Illinois participating in the 47th annual FFA Field Day at Murray State University's West Kentucky Exposition Center. Chapters accumulated points in competition by counting the five highest of nine team scores and the four highest of the five individual scores in the field day contest. A total of 1,284 students competed in 17 events.

10 YEARS AGO

May 8, 2014

■ May is National Beef Month and James Comer stated that he knew of two great ways to celebrate: start grilling delicious steaks and burgers and tell everyone you know about all the benefits of beef. According to the Kentucky office of National Agricultural Statistics Service, there were 8,900 head of beef cattle in Crittenden County in 2013 and 16,300 head of cattle in all.

■ Crittenden County High School students Cole Foster and Lauren Beavers were selected to attend the 2014 Governor's Scholars program held in June of that year.

■ Crittenden County senior Aaron Owen signed to study business and play golf at Transylvania University in the fall of 2014.

REAL ID required to fly in 1 year

Will your license fly? That's the question state officials urge Kentuckians to ask themselves as only one year remains before federal REAL ID Act enforcement starts May 7, 2025. After that date, a REAL ID state-issued driving or identity credential or another federally accepted form of REAL ID, like a passport, will be required for air travel checkpoints or access to military bases or

federal buildings that require identification.

State-issued REAL ID driving and identity credentials must be requested in person at any Driver Licensing Regional Office operated by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC). A valid passport or passport card, military ID or Department of Defense ID are other common forms of acceptable ID.

The Crittenden Press

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