



# THE LEWIS COUNTY HERALD

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**Hammer Cooper/LEWIS COUNTY HERALD**  
An Air Evac medical transport helicopter and Portsmouth Ambulance crew responded to assist following an ATV accident over the weekend in the Garrison area. The AA Highway was closed for a short period while the stretch of roadway was utilized for a landing zone for the helicopter.

## Opioid settlement payments released

**By Dennis K. Brown** governing bodies.

How much money are local governments getting from the settlements of lawsuits filed against opioid manufacturers and distributors? Kentucky is getting \$478 million from the settlements through 2038, and a like amount is being paid each year to local governments in the state. State government got \$100.7 million in 2022 and \$17.4 million in 2023. It will get \$21.8 million this year and the same amount in 2025, and an average of \$24 million a year after that.

According to information on the site, Lewis County has received \$125,126.70 with an estimated future payout of \$377,438.91. The City of Vanceburg has received \$7,332.49 with an estimated future payout of \$55,384.82.

The state's money is being allocated by the Kentucky Opioid Abatement Advisory Commission, operated out of the attorney general's office. Local governments' spending is up to their

"This database undercounts the amount of opioid settlement money most places have received and will receive," note Aneri Pattani and Lydia Zuraw and Holly K. Hacker of KFF Health News.

The database reflects only the largest settlement so far, \$26 billion to be paid by pharmaceutical distributors Ameri-sourceBergen (now called Cencora), Cardinal Health, and McKesson, as well as opioid manufacturer Janssen (now known as Johnson & Johnson Innovative Medicine).

It does not include settlements with other drug manufacturers and retailers Walmart, Walgreens, and CVS. Data from these five companies will be added in July, according to BrownGreer, the settlement firm that gets the money and makes the payments.

It is not handling some additional settlements such as the agreement between Kentucky and four

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## Transition to Lewis County EMS is underway

**By Dennis K. Brown**

Lewis County EMS is moving closer to providing service after members of the Ambulance Service Board approved the hiring of a director and received a license to operate from the Kentucky Board of Emergency Medical Services (KBEMS).

KBEMS granted a license to Lewis County Fiscal Court effective today," Sparks said Thursday.

Sparks said he received notice that PEASI would be ceasing service in the county at midnight on Wednesday, April 3, and efforts were stepped-up to expedite receiving a license to operate. An ap-

plication had been filed in January.

Sparks said negotiations with Portsmouth Ambulance to continue to provide service until Lewis County EMS is fully operational were unsuccessful.

"We were financially unable to meet the subsidy Portsmouth Ambulance was asking to remain as a provider in the county," Sparks said. He said Portsmouth Ambulance forfeited their license to operate in Lewis County effective at midnight last Wednesday.

Sparks said the Ambulance Service District Board reported they had approved a candidate for EMS director and that director will be interviewing and hiring EMTs and paramedics in the coming weeks.

"We are inviting interested candidates to send resumes as soon as possible," Sparks said.

"We are very excited for Lewis County to be moving closer to having its own ambulance service provider," Sparks added.

He credits board members for their efforts moving the effort forward quickly and efficiently.

"They have done a tremendous amount of work in a short time," Sparks said.

Ambulance Service District Board Chairman Danny Palmer said contributions of ambulance vehicles and equipment from other counties and EMS boards have helped to put the matter on a fast

track.

"It would not have been possible without the efforts of many people," Palmer said. "The response has been amazing."

Lewis County Fiscal Court took a step in the transition of emergency medical transport services

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Judge Executive George Sparks said he had been in close contact with KBEMS Executive Director Eddie Slone for several months after Portsmouth Emergency Ambulance Service, Inc. (PEASI) had expressed their intention to discontinue service in the county.

"I'm happy to say that

enforced a few power outages and telephone disruptions including at the 911 Dispatch Center. Emergency calls were routed to Greenup County and relayed through backup communications links. Schools, the courthouse, justice center, and some businesses in the county closed early on Tuesday.

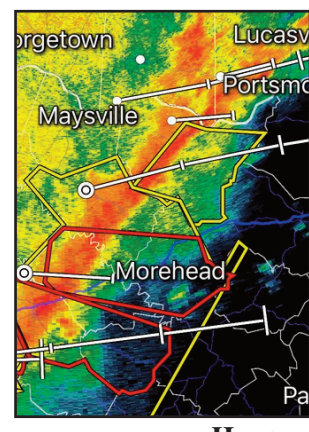
All Kentucky executive branch state office buildings closed Tuesday afternoon.

In addition, the governor activated Kentucky's anti-price-gouging laws.

Several southern Ohio counties also reported damage from wind.

People with questions about how to proceed with their insurance company after a disaster can find resources online at insurance.ky.gov or they can call the Department of Insurance at 502-564-3630.

## Severe storms cause damage, declaration issued



**By Dennis K. Brown**

Two rounds of severe weather swept across several states last week causing widespread damage and knocking out power to thousands.

Only minimal damage was reported in Lewis County compared to damage reported by high winds and tornadoes in several other Kentucky counties.

Much of the local damage was in the southern end of the county where road crews have been busy making repairs and clearing debris.

Gov. Andy Beshear declared a state of emergency and activated the State Emergency Operations Center.

Judge Executive George Sparks declared a state of emergency for Lewis County in joining with surrounding counties.

The National Weather

**HERALD**  
**Radar indicates a line of severe storms moving through Lewis County.**

Service confirmed 11 - EF-0 and EF-1 tornadoes across the state.

Extensive damage was reported in our region in Bath, Boyd, Carter, Elliott, Mason, and Greenup counties from the storms on Tuesday and Tuesday night.

Widespread power outages were reported in Boyd, Carter, and Greenup counties.

Lewis County experi-

## Sexual Assault Awareness & Prevention Month proclaimed

**Herald Report**

Judge Executive George Sparks has proclaimed April as Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month in Lewis County.

Judge Sparks was joined by local officials and advocates in his courthouse office for the official proclamation announcement signed last week:

WHEREAS, Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month is intended to draw attention to the fact that sexual violence is widespread and impacts every community member of the Commonwealth of Kentucky; and

WHEREAS, sexual violence is a continuum of intolerable and violent

crimes with public health implications for every person in the Commonwealth of Kentucky as a victim/survivor or as a family member, significant other, neighbor, or co-worker of a victim/survivor; and

WHEREAS, with leadership, dedication, and encouragement, there is evidence that we can be successful in preventing sexual violence and human trafficking in the Commonwealth through increased education, awareness, and community involvement; and

WHEREAS, Kentucky's Regional Rape Crisis Centers have led the way in the Commonwealth in addressing sexual violence by working

to prevent sexual violence while providing a full array of services to those who've been affected by sexual violence; and last year, Kentucky's regional rape crisis centers responded to over 3,800 crisis calls, provided more than 20,000 counseling sessions, performed over 6,000 advocacy services, and provided over 2,900 educational programs for over 95,000 Kentuckians; and

WHEREAS, Kentucky's Regional Rape Crisis Centers have set an important example of how forging collaborative relationships between service agencies, organizations, and community

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**Sam Richmond/LEWIS COUNTY HERALD**  
Heavy rain from storms moving throughout the area last week resulted in damage in portions of the county and across the state. Raccoon Branch Road was one of the roadways damaged in the event.

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