

**AWARD**, from 1

The Downtown Danville Streetscape project was completed in the Fall of 2023 and includes several added safety features meant to slow traffic and protect pedestrians. These features include enhanced lighting, wider sidewalks, and shorter crosswalks. The wider sidewalks replaced a previously narrow walkway which had been

damaged by tree roots and erosion, creating a safety hazard for pedestrians.

The completed project promotes economic activity, social events, and boasts amenities like benches, outdoor café areas and improved landscaping, adding to the ambience of the historic Downtown area. A new fountain can be admired at the front of Weisiger Park, which serves

the community's outdoor event venue for outdoor concerts, holiday celebrations and more.

"Travel down Main Street on any given day and you'll see life happening, people taking a stroll, discovering new local businesses, and planning for events. It's a beautiful thing!" says Danville Mayor J.H. Atkins, "Receiving the 2025 Engineering Excellence Award is such an honor and is

truly the "icing on the cake" as we continue to see new businesses and creativity coming to life in Downtown Danville."

While the Downtown Danville Streetscape project is complete, the City of Danville, continues to reference its Downtown Danville Masterplan as a guide for future development and creating exceptional spaces for all.

The 2025 ACEC of Kentucky

Engineering Excellence Award is now proudly displayed at Danville's City Hall. The Downtown Danville Streetscape Project's success is a testament to the vision of the Danville community and the bold pursuit of sustainable growth by the City of Danville and exceptional partners, like Gresham Smith.

**MINES**, from 1

While thousands of coal-mining jobs have been lost in recent decades, MSHA inspectors remain busy, the analysis found. Out of the 33 MSHA field offices listed by DOGE, 16,639 inspections were conducted accounting for more than "234,000 hours

on site at mines and over 399,000 total hours completing inspection duties."

Willie Dodson, the coal impacts program manager for the environmental advocacy nonprofit Appalachian Voices, told the Lantern last month that MSHA operates under a legal and regulatory framework that came from "massive grassroots

movements" in the 1960s and 1970s to address dangerous working conditions in mines. Congress created MSHA as part of the Mine Safety Act of 1977 after the deaths of 26 miners in two underground explosions at the Scotia Mine in Letcher County the year before.

The rate of mining fatalities and injuries has plummeted since MSHA was established in 1977, Dodson said.

Dodson said new regulatory obligations being taken on by MSHA to monitor and control silica dust in mines that's contributing to a surge in cases of the occupational disease coal workers' pneumoconiosis — commonly known as "black lung" — is

coinciding with a decline in staffing at MSHA over the past decade. Shelton also pointed to the firing of federal researchers who were studying "black lung" as another safeguard for miners that is "on the chopping block."

Adding the potential termination of field office leases to the mix makes

Dodson say "the math doesn't work out" for regulating active mines.

"I am very concerned that certain inspections just aren't going to happen, or inspectors are going to be so rushed that they're going to miss things that they need to take note of," Dodson said.

# Distracted driving awareness emphasis in April

**BY TOM LATEK**  
Kentucky Today

April is National Distracted Driving Awareness Month, and state officials along with AAA East Central are partnering to drive home a life-saving message for all motorists: Buckle up, phone down.

"Driving distracted puts your life, and the lives of everyone around you, at risk," said Gov. Andy Beshear. "We want every Kentuckian and every visitor traveling through our Commonwealth

to make it home safely. Let's all do the right thing when we're behind the wheel. Put the phone down and focus on the road. It's a simple choice that saves lives."

As part of this month's awareness effort, KSP will participate in the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) high-visibility enforcement campaign, "Put the Phone Away or Pay," which runs April 7-13. This nationwide initiative is designed to reduce distracted driving through increased enforcement and public awareness.

"One moment of distraction can lead to a lifetime of regret. No text is worth losing a family member or harming another person," said KSP Sgt. Matt Sudduth. "While troopers enforce laws to prevent distracted driving, it's not about writing citations; it's about ensuring everyone makes it home safely."

Over the past decade, distracted driving has become one of the leading causes of vehicle crashes on our nation's roads. According to KSP's collision data, in 2024, there were 5,648 crashes, 27 of which were fatal, related to distracted

drivers, including those with cell phones.

"When we lose a life on a Kentucky roadway due to distracted driving, especially one that could have been prevented, it's a tragic day for the Commonwealth," Transportation Secretary Jim Gray stated. "Distracted driving is avoidable, and we must do everything we can to keep people safer on our highways."

According to the NHTSA, while anything that takes a driver's eyes off the road, hands off the wheel or mind off the task of driving is a

hazard, texting and using a phone while driving is especially risky, because it combines all three types of distraction — visual, manual and cognitive.

"Distracted driving is a choice, and it's one that can have deadly consequences. Every time you get behind the wheel, your full attention is required to keep yourself and others safe," said Kentucky Office of Highway Safety Executive Director Bill Bell. "We are committed to spreading the message that no text or phone call is worth a life. Stay focused and stay safe."

**BY TOM LATEK**  
Kentucky Today

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has announced that Frito-Lay has issued a recall of a limited number of 13 oz. bags of Tostitos Cantina Traditional Yellow Corn Tortilla Chips in Kentucky and 12 other states, that could include

nacho cheese tortilla chips and therefore may contain undeclared milk.

Those who have an allergy or severe sensitivity to milk run the risk of a serious or life-threatening allergic reaction if they consume the recalled product.

The product included in this recall was distributed to a mix of retailers including grocery, convenience

and drug stores, as well as e-commerce distributors, in the following 13 states: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia. Consumers would have been able to purchase these chips as early as March 7, 2025.

The products affected

have both a "Guaranteed Fresh" date of 20 May 2025, and one of the following manufacturing codes, where "XX" is any number between 30 and 55:

- 471106504
- 18 13:XX OR 471106505
- 85 13:XX OR 471106506
- 85 13:XX
- OR
- 471106507
- 85 13:XX

Consumers with the product described above can visit the Frito-Lay Contact Us page here, or call 1-800-352-4477 (between 9 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Central Time, Monday through Friday).

No allergic reactions related to this matter have been reported to date. No other Tostitos products, flavors, sizes or variety packs

are included in the recall.

Frito-Lay says if consumers have an allergy or sensitivity to milk, they should not consume the product and discard it immediately. The product is safe for those who do not have an allergy or severe sensitivity to milk.

The company says only about 1,300 packages of the product are believed to be affected.

# Fulfilling a promise to a Civil War veteran

**BY JADON GIBSON**  
Contributing Writer

Cumberland Gap is at the tri-state of Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia.

The area changed hands several times during the Civil War.

The Rebels held the Gap for a year before General Burnside led his troops in an assault on the rebels in September of 1863.

Burnside tricked his adversaries into believing they were out-manned. He moved his troops and artillery into position while being watched by the rebels from a distant mountain. Under the cover of darkness he moved his troops only to have them openly move again into position the following day. This was done a third time.

Feeling his troops were outnumbered, Rebel General Frazer surrendered his dug-in force even though they had a superior position.

Lt. William R. McEntire was a member of Company A of the Ninth Georgia Artillery and was in command of a cannon at Fort Pitt, near the Pinnacle on Cumberland Mountain.

When he was told to surrender he refused and ordered his men to continue firing. Reports are that they gladly complied. He and the defiant members of his company were eventually arrested and placed under guard.

However, after dark individuals of the pesky unit were able to demonstrate their continued defiance by tearing down the Yankee flag.

Soon McEntire and the others were shipped off to prisons in the north and the Gap remained in Union hands for the remainder of the war.

McEntire and the other Rebel prisoners were kept under harsh conditions in the northern prisons until they were released on June 16, 1865. Not unlike the others, survivors of Company A returned to Georgia not knowing what to expect. McEntire fared worse than most. His wife and children had been killed, falling before Sherman's march through Geor-

gia. Only ashes remained where his home and farm buildings once stood.

He found little to hold to in Georgia so young McEntire left it all behind and migrated to Texas as many others did in that era. The initials GTT meaning 'gone to Texas' were common in courthouses at the time.

McEntire remarried and became quite successful in Texas ranching and banking circles. When Civil War Company A held their yearly reunions he always attended. These events were held in or near the Atlanta area. With each successive meeting a dwindling number of veterans attended as they died off or became immobile.

The men who attended enjoyed reminiscing about the war but McEntire remained bitter about the misguided surrender. When McEntire called the roll of 150 names at the 1904 reunion in Smyrna, Georgia, only twenty-one were present. Most of the others were deceased.

McEntire died in 1917, while he was in his eighties, but not before making an unusual request of his grandson George McEntire.

"If it is in your power I want you to return to Cumberland Gap on September 9, 1963, one hundred years to the day after our surrender," he uttered. "I want you to promise me that you'll stand near Fort Pitt on Cumberland Mountain, look to the north, and curse the Yankees."

George appeased his grandfather by making that promise. Although he never knew if he would be able to keep the promise it remained in the back of his mind.

The years past and finally 1963 arrived with George becoming more excited with each passing day. His health and finances were such that he could make the trip.

George McEntire drove from his Texas home arriving at Cumberland Gap National Historical Park on September 9, 1963. When he told his story to a park ranger, McEntire was informed that the name "McEntire" was carved into a rock near the Pinnacle.



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