

'It can be uncashed checks, utility deposits, stocks, bonds, physical contents of safety deposit boxes from banks and financial institutions. These items are inactive or abandoned by their owners or just forgotten.'

Director of unclaimed property for the state treasury, Dillion DiOrio, on any unclaimed property in the area

Other views

Broadway Bridge soon to be a memory

After months of inactivity, demolition of the remaining portions of the Broadway Bridge is expected to finally resume next week after work was paused for the winter and spring months with only the main bridge truss and piers 5 and 6 from the truss to Taylor Avenue left to dismantle.

The first three spans were removed last autumn and we, like many local residents, will be glad to see the remnants of the bridge gone as well.

The Broadway Bridge, which has been closed to both pedestrian and vehicular traffic for the past 32 years, sustained a partial collapse in early August that prompted the closure of the Kentucky River navigation channel as well as the River View Park walking trail and led to the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet seeking bids for the demolition project.

Originally, state and local officials had hoped to save the bridge's truss for a future pedestrian crossing, but the lone bid for the project was much greater than KYTC engineers anticipated and the project was re-advised to include the complete removal of the bridge.

The \$10.7 million contract was awarded jointly to Haydon Bridge Company Inc. and C.J. Mahan Construction Company LLC. The project is estimated to be complete by Sept. 1.

According to city project manager Chuck Knowles, a mobile, rough terrain crane is to arrive at the Benson Creek boat ramp followed by a 100-ton crawler crane, forklift and container boxes. Temporary fencing has been placed at the boat ramp and there is a path to the boat ramp along with parking on the right side of the lot for local traffic at all times.

Next week, and periodically throughout the demolition, authorities will need to close the Kentucky River navigation channel below the bridge. The truss will be dropped into the river the week of July 14 and it will take crews an additional two weeks to remove it from the river.

We've said it in this space but it warrants repeating — now would be a fitting time for R.J. Corman Railroad Group, which shares pier 4 with the Broadway Bridge, to possibly paint or, at the very least, clean its rusted railroad bridge. We believe it would exponentially improve that area of downtown Frankfort.

Frankfort State Journal

Numbers to know

| | |
|---|----------|
| United Way Help Line | 211 |
| Emergencies | 911 |
| Scott County Sheriff's Office (non-emergency) | 863-7855 |
| Georgetown Police Department | 863-7826 |
| 911 Dispatch | 863-7820 |
| Scott County Judge-Executive's office | 863-7850 |
| Georgetown Mayor's office | 863-9800 |
| Scott County Emergency Management Agency | 863-7848 |
| Scott County Schools | 863-3663 |
| Sadieville City Hall | 857-4576 |



Addressing KY's colon cancer problem

As we move through July, the legislative interim continues with a full agenda of interim joint committees, statutory committees, and task forces meeting to discuss a wide variety of topics in preparation for the 2026 Regular Session. This week, I would like to take some time to discuss a bill passed in the 2025 Regular Session, HB 421, and its importance to our Commonwealth.

HB 421 requires all health insurance companies in the state of Kentucky to expand access to early colorectal cancer screenings for high-risk individuals and eliminates out-of-pocket costs and prior-authorization for eligible colonoscopy prep materials. Screening for colon cancer is crucial because it can be cured if detected early. Before this bill, insurance companies could refuse to cover the cost of these potentially lifesaving tests if a patient was under 45 years of age, even if they were considered high risk. This new bipartisan legislation aims to save more Kentuckians from this disease through early detection.

The need for this legislation comes as a result of Kentucky having the highest national

incidence rate of colon cancer, according to 2022 data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Across demographic differences, colon cancer rates are alarmingly higher in our state than the national average. For all races and ethnicities, 46.5 people out of 100,000 men and women are diagnosed with colon cancer in Kentucky, compared to the national rate of 36.7. While lifestyle choices, such as diet, exercise, alcohol and tobacco consumption, along with genetics, are contributing factors for colon cancer development, increasing access to testing is action the legislature can take to improve the health of Kentuckians.

As with most cancers, early detection is the best way to prevent disease progression. For people diagnosed with colon cancer in the early stages, 90% survive. Promotion of testing for people that are high risk, alongside people over the age of 45, is the best method for preventing future deaths from colon cancer in Kentucky. With the passing of HB 421, the financial burden of testing is eliminated for these high-risk patients. Because of screenings, colon cancer is one of the most preventable forms

of cancer, and accessing this healthcare is becoming easier through new legislation. As a result, more patients will be able to test, which will hopefully lead to an increase in early detections of colon cancer and a decrease in colon cancer fatalities.

If you are at a high risk of developing colon cancer due to family history or other health factors, or are older than 45, I encourage you to start screening now, if you haven't already. Encourage those around you to get tested as well. This is something simple you can do to benefit your health in the future. I want all Kentuckians to have the chance at living longer, healthier lives, which is why I voted in favor of this bill and look forward to it going into effect on January 1, 2026. It is never too late to start taking care of your health, and testing may be your first step in that direction.

As always, I can be reached anytime through the toll-free message line in Frankfort at 1-800-372-7181. You can also contact me via email at Vanessa.Grossl@kylegislature.gov and keep track through the Kentucky legislature's website at legislature.ky.gov.



Vanessa Grossl
State Representative

KY legislators are ignoring the open meetings law and voters

Keeping with the theme of legislative contempt for the voters who elected them to public office, on June 27, we learned that “during a media tour of the temporary workspace [necessitated by the Capitol renovations], Senate President Robert Stivers said about their being no gallery at all for the public that it ‘didn’t seem like a relevant expenditure that we wanted to incur’ and that the public would still be able to see what is happening via live-streams in two large rooms” in the Capitol Annex.

Let’s be completely honest. Lawmakers have never given a thought to attendees standing along the walls of a committee room or lined up outside a committee room hoping to at least overhear some of the committee discussion. Such overflow rooms exist in the Capitol Annex when hearings are conducted, but are rarely if ever used to accommodate overflow crowds.

And this, notwithstanding the fact that in 2013 the legislature codified, at KRS 61.840, the duty of all public agencies — which includes the Kentucky General Assembly — to “provide meeting room conditions, including adequate space, seating, and acoustics, which insofar as is feasible allow effective public observation of the public meetings.”

Lawmakers were so smitten with the idea of meeting room comfort and acoustics that they included almost identical language in a second statute, KRS 61.820, in the same year:

“All meetings of all public agencies of this state, and any committees or subcommittees thereof, shall be held at specified times and places which are convenient to the public. In considering locations for public meetings, the agency

shall evaluate space requirements, seating capacity, and acoustics.”

Oh! And the legislature framed both statutes in mandatory rather than permissive terms — not “may provide” or “may evaluate,” but “shall provide” and “shall evaluate.” The intent of the open meetings law is to ensure that interested citizens are afforded the opportunity to participate in public agency proceedings. By consigning the public to two remote spectator rooms in the Capitol Annex, the General Assembly impedes public participation in the legislative process and denies advocates for or against a bill their opportunity to participate in the process as they have through time. There is “a vast difference between ‘substantial’ compliance and no compliance at all,” (Arnett v. Sullivan, 279



Guest Columnist
Amye Bensenhaver

Ky. 720, 132 S.W.2d 76 (1939)).

Have lawmakers considered the necessity of guardrails to ensure — even in the vastly inferior live video transmission of the proceedings — that public access is not impeded by disruptions in the transmission? How can the public be certain that lobbyists (and others) are excluded from the chamber floor — a problem identified with increasing frequency? What if the observer rooms require their own overflow rooms?

So many questions. So few answers.

The opportunity to correct this architectural omission has long passed. Kentucky’s lawmaker have achieved their desired purpose: to avoid looking at, or listening to, the rabble — to maintain their false calm in the face of opposition and the questionable dignity of the office to which the rabble elected them.

Out of sight, out of mind. It is lawmakers who are

out of their minds when they regularly, and with increasing frequency, treat their constituents (and the voters) as “irrelevant expenditures.” Each year they heap new insult upon past injuries.

Once again, their decision is a violation of the open meetings laws they enacted. It is a direct affront to the voters who elected them. But if they insist on treating their constituents as irritating lodgers, I suggest they eliminate the tiresome introduction of friends and family — often seated in the gallery — and wrap up the long session a month early.

If you can’t stand the heat, fellers, get out of the “temporary workspace.” Such delicate eyes and ears have no place in a participatory democracy.

AMYE BENSENHAVER is a retired assistant AG who specialized in open records laws; she is the co-founder of the Kentucky Open Government Coalition.

Corrections

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Georgetown News-Graphic will be glad to correct any errors that appear in the newspaper or clarify any statements that are unclear.

The correction or clarification will appear on Page 6.

To request a correction or clarification, 502-863-1111 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., and ask for Ashley McGee.

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Mike Scogin Editor/Publisher

Stephanie Furnish Business Manager
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