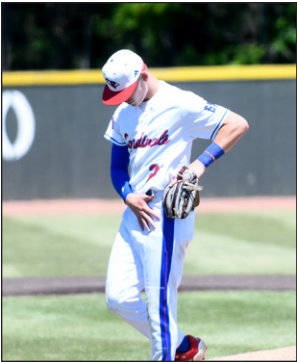




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Rogers, Cards take down in Adair in 5th Region opener
>>SPORTS B1



Check out coverage of the Crystal Rogers case going back to 2015 on our special section on kystandard.com **>>NEWS**

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The Kentucky Standard

WEDNESDAY, MAY 28, 2025

First trial in Rogers disappearance centers on recent suspect

BY FORREST BERKSHIRE
SPECIAL TO THE STANDARD

Steven Lawson goes on trial Tuesday accused of conspiracy to commit the murder of Crystal Rogers, a Bardstown woman missing since July 2015.

The opening day of the trial saw a jury seated by lunchtime, and opening statements were set for after the lunch recess.

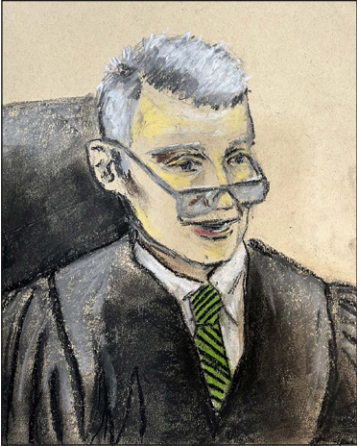
Lawson's trial is the first of two scheduled this summer that aims to bring closure to a family — and an entire community — that has longed for answers for nearly a decade. In June, Rogers' former boyfriend, Brooks Houck, and Lawson's son, Joseph Lawson, are scheduled to go on trial together on the same charge of conspiracy to murder.

Both trials were moved to Warren County in an effort to find a jury that has not been exposed to the long-running and highly publicized case that has dominated local and Louisville-area news, was featured on national television news and spawned at least half a dozen podcasts of the true-crime genre.

LAWSON CONNECTED EARLY, BUT DREW LITTLE ATTENTION

Steven Lawson's name surfaced within days of Rogers' disappearance, although it gained little public notice at the time.

Three days after Rogers' family reported her missing, **SEE ROGERS/PAGE A8**



SYDNEY YOUNG/Special to The Standard
Nelson Circuit Court Judge Charles Simms III presides over the opening of the Steven Lawson trial Tuesday in Bowling Green in a sketch. No cameras or other electronic devices were permitted in the courtroom.



KATELYN NORRIS/The Kentucky Standard

The Stephen Foster Youth Performing Art Academy kicked off last week with the first of three programs. On Saturday, the students performing Dare to Dream Jr. at the J. Dan Talbott Theatre.

Dare to Dream kicks off first of three youth theater programs

Stephen Foster's Youth Performing Arts Academy begins

BY KATELYN NORRIS
KNORRIS@KYSTANDARD.COM

One week, one performance and an opportunity to shine.

This spring, The Stephen Foster Story unveiled a new summer program for area children and teens — The Youth Performing Arts Academy. Last week, the first of three summer programs began with Dare to

Dream Jr., a weeklong theatre experience for young performers from second to 12th grades. At the end of the week, the class of more than a dozen students performed their hour-long show to a crowd of loving family and community members.

The program was created and ran by Katie Kiefer and Allen Brooks — the duo helmed the weeklong production for the show. Kiefer said they are both incredibly proud of their students. She said they worked hard and accomplished so much

SEE DARE/PAGE A3

The newest graduates of Nelson County High School toss their caps in the air at the end of Friday's commencement ceremonies.

PETER W. ZUBATY/The Kentucky Standard



Nelson County Schools celebrates Class of 2025

350 graduates conferred across the district

BY KATELYN NORRIS
KNORRIS@KYSTANDARD.COM

Two graduations. Three hours. 350 students.

Nelson County Schools waved goodbye to the class of 2025 from Nelson County and Thomas Nelson High Schools last Friday.

The school year has finally come to an end for Nelson County Schools seniors this past Friday as both TNHS and

NCHS sent off more than 350 students to the next stage of their lives. Both high schools saw their gyms filled to the brim with loving family, supportive community members, beloved friends and teachers — and most importantly the **SEE NELSON/PAGE A8**

Old Kentucky Home MS opens sensory garden

Yearlong project comes to fruition

BY KATELYN NORRIS
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After a year full of projects, planning and creation, the students of Old Kentucky Home Middle School have created a space for all their peers.

Behind OKHMS, a large garden filled with colorful rocks, numerous plants, wind chimes, games and more has become a passion project for the agriculture students. During the last week of school, the school's sensory garden was officially opened to the school's special education students, with multiple experiences for them to enjoy.



KATELYN NORRIS/The Kentucky Standard

Old Kentucky Home Middle School opened its sensory garden prior to the end of school last week as agriculture students spent the year creating the space.

From a swing, bench and picnic table crafted by students to a music wall and a sensory square, there are a wide range

of projects present in the garden.

SEE GARDEN/PAGE A6



PETER W. ZUBATY/The Kentucky Standard

Members of local American Legion and VFW posts salute after the laying of the wreath at the annual Memorial Day ceremonies at the Bardstown Cemetery rotunda.

'Sacred Songs' for those who didn't make it home

Memorial Day ceremonies honor those servicemembers who made the ultimate sacrifice

BY PETER W. ZUBATY
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"This is a privileged assignment ... to acclaim the deeds of our illustrious ancestors," said Trappist monk Bro. Luke Armour in the keynote address at Monday's Memorial Day ceremony at the Bardstown

Cemetery rotunda. "Remember not just war and loss, (but) the light and love of these individuals ... who made the ultimate sacrifice on our behalf," Armour continued. Armour, who has served

SEE SACRED/PAGE A6

>>OBITUARIES

Bonnie Lee Nally,	59
Ellen Mae Lacy,	84
Ruth Rosalind 'Rosie' Cahoe Thompson,	88
Mary Helen Ballard Cecil,	102

>>Page A2

>>THIS WEEK IN PICTURES



>>www.kystandard.com

>>INSIDE

Religion	B2
Obituaries	A2
Opinion	A4-5
Sports	B1
Comics	B7
Social	A2
Classifieds	B6



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