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SUNDAY, JUNE 29, 2025

Houck Trial Day 3: Prosecution prods statement discrepancies

BY FORREST BERKSHIRE
SPECIAL TO THE STANDARD

BOWLING GREEN — Day three of the trial of Brooks Houck mostly consisted of the continuing testimony by Jon Snow, the lead detective on the Crystal Rogers case for the Nelson County Sheriff's Office in its early years.

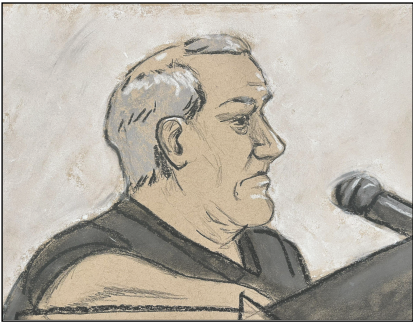
Houck has been charged with murder and tampering with evidence in Rogers' 2015 disappearance and presumed death, while Joseph Lawson is also on trial for conspiracy to murder and tampering with evidence. Lawson's father, Steve, was convicted of similar charges as Joseph late last month.

Snow's testimony continued until almost 2:30 p.m. Thursday and much of it centered around an eight-page statement Houck provided to Snow during a July 8, 2015, interview at the sheriff's office. Much of that interview has been online for years and can be viewed on Youtube, but jurors saw an extended version that featured some new information.

On cross examination of Snow, the defense painted a picture of a loving relationship between Houck and Rogers and countered the prosecution's depiction of Houck as uninterested in Rogers' whereabouts following her disappearance.

Late afternoon saw a flurry of witnesses called to the stand as the prosecution attempted to poke holes in Houck's written statement of his actions and whereabouts on July 3, 2015, the day Rogers went missing.

STATEMENT INCLUDES GLARING OMISSION



SYDNEY YOUNG/Special to The Standard

Danny Singleton, depicted here in a sketch from Thursday's court proceedings in Bowling Green, testified in the Crystal Rogers murder trial. Singleton was a former employee for accused murderer Brooks Houck in 2015 when Rogers went missing.

July 8, 2015, was the third time Houck had spoken with investigators. As part of that interview, Snow asked Houck for a written statement, and Houck spent more than an hour writing an eight-page statement. It detailed such tasks as his plans to mow some lots he owned that were overgrown, clear brush, and make contact with workers or contractors he employed, among others.

What it did not mention, however, was a trip he made to the family farm earlier the day of July 3. Houck has said he and Rogers traveled to the farm that evening to spend time together. He says she returned to their home with him that evening; however, investigators believe she never left that

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SYDNEY YOUNG/Special to The Standard

The prosecution team is depicted in a sketch from Thursday's court proceedings in the Crystal Rogers disappearance case in Warren Circuit Court. The faces of the jury members have been shaded out to prevent identification.



SYDNEY YOUNG/Special to The Standard

Marcella Ray is depicted testifying in a courtroom sketch from Warren Circuit Court on Thursday. Ray was working for Radio Shack in 2015 and sold a digital audio recorder to Brooks Houck, who is on trial for the disappearance and presumed death of his ex-girlfriend, Crystal Rogers.

Four Roses approved for 16 new rickhouses

Community members express disappointment with decision

BY KATELYN NORRIS
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Cox's Creek citizens voiced their concerns over a proposed a rickhouse complex location on Samuels Road at the latest City-County Planning and Zoning Commission meeting. The committee approved the proposal by the end of the public hearing.

On Tuesday, the Planning and Zoning Commission held a public hearing for Four Roses' proposal for a new location for its distilled spirits storage facility. The 16 rickhouses would be located at 1955 Samuels Road (Ky. 509) on more than 100 acres of agriculture land. The staff report from the Office of Planning and Zoning recommended approval as the distiller's application meet all 10 conditions.

However, more than 70 Cox's Creek residents — many surrounding the property or in close proximity — expressed their dissent over rickhouses being built on the property. Of the main concerns with

residents was the current road conditions of Ky. 509 and the whiskey fungus — or baudoinia — growth on plants and homes.

Prior to public comments, Jason Cole, counsel for the committee, said the condition of the road is not in the committee's jurisdiction and cannot be taken into consider when making the decision.

Angie Reid and her husband Kenneth Reid spoke out about how their farm is already affected by the whiskey fungus in the area. Angie said the couple's farm is diagonal to the property and she worries about the increased fungus growth on their products. She said because of other rickhouses in the area, they dedicate a large portion of their time cleaning off their plants and produce in order to sell them.

She raised concerns about how it will affect their livelihoods and ability to sell their products at the highest level of quality. After the decision to approve the application, she expressed her disappointment with the decision.

"Is this about the people or is this about the money?" she asked during the public hearing. "... It's concerning. The mold is going to get on ours, it's already on ours. It's already on our greenhouses. It's already on our stuff. We've got to watch

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Houck-Lawson trial: Opening statements and first witnesses hit the stand

Prosecutors suggest Houck's mother started the conspiracy

BY PETER W. ZUBATY
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BOWLING GREEN — The Crystal Rogers murder case is underway 10 years after the Bardstown mother of five disappeared, with Tuesday featuring jury selection and Wednesday diving into opening statements and the first group of witness testimony.

Rogers was 35 years old and a mother of five when she went missing on July 4 weekend 2015, and while prosecutors and investigators have admitted her body has yet to be found, three men have been indicted in connection with her disappearance. Brooks Houck, Rogers' ex-boyfriend, has been charged with murder and tampering with physical evidence, and Joseph Lawson has been charged with conspiracy to murder and tampering with evidence. Lawson's father, Steve, was convicted late last month and sentenced to 17 years on similar charges as what his son faces.

Tuesday's jury selection winnowed down a pool of 132 to 15, and ultimately 12 will decide the verdict after the prosecution and defense close their arguments. The trial is expected to last about 10 days, which will target its completion following this year's Independence Day holiday, a full 10



SYDNEY YOUNG/Special to The Standard

Brooks Houck is depicted in a sketch at Wednesday's first day of arguments in the trial over the disappearance and presumed murder of Crystal Rogers in July of 2015. Houck and Rogers were in a relationship at the time of her disappearance. The trial got underway Tuesday in Warren Circuit Court in Bowling Green, with Nelson Circuit Judge Charles Simms presiding over the trial.

years after Rogers went missing. Nelson Circuit Judge Charles Simms III is presiding over the case in Warren County Circuit Court, where the trials have been moved in an effort to find an untainted jury pool.

Rogers was last seen July 3, 2015, and her vehicle was found abandoned on the Bluegrass Parkway near Mile Marker 14 later that holiday weekend, with her purse, keys and cell phone still inside the car, a maroon Chevy Malibu. In previous court hearings, as well as in Steve Lawson's trial last month, it was admitted by the defense



SYDNEY YOUNG/Special to The Standard

Kylie Fenwick is depicted in a sketch at Wednesday's first day of arguments in the trial over the disappearance and presumed murder of her mother, Crystal Rogers, in July of 2015. Fenwick testified that she was 14 at the time of her mother's disappearance. Brooks Houck and Rogers were in a relationship at the time of her disappearance, and Joseph Lawson is an accused co-conspirator in allegedly helping Houck kill her mother and dispose of the body, which has not been found. The trial got underway Tuesday in Warren Circuit Court in Bowling Green, with Nelson Circuit Judge Charles Simms presiding over the trial.

that both Lawsons tampered with her car, allegedly abandoning it on the Parkway.

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County approves road department's material bids

BY KATELYN NORRIS
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On Tuesday, Nelson County Fiscal Court approved bids for materials for the road department. Prices fluctuated from last year, seeing increases and decreases in price for vital materials.

County Engineer Brad Spalding presented a general overview of the bids to the court in a special-called meeting earlier this week. Across all of the essential materials needed for the road department like pipes, asphalt and salt, the latter saw the highest jump in price from last year's bids. The bid price for salt jumped more than \$20, increasing from \$101 per ton for 2024-25 to \$122.50 for the 2025-26 fiscal year. Spalding said the jump is due in part to the bad winter weather experienced in the region in late 2024 and early 2025.

However, Spalding ensured that the county barn is full of salt, which was bought under the \$101 price.

Mago Construction bid on the county's asphalt supply, which also saw a spike in price. Asphalt base saw the largest increase going up to \$73 per ton — a \$1.50 per ton jump from last year's prices. Asphalt surface increased a dollar for 2025-26; its new price is \$79 per ton.

Cedar Creek Quarries was awarded the contract for rock and saw minimal increases for materials across the board. Dense Graded Aggregate (DGA) rock had a 50-cent increase, going up to \$14.25 per ton. Similarly #57 rock, a type of crushed concrete, saw the same increase for a new price of \$16.75 per ton. The largest increase for the county's rock materials was the crushed stone base, which jumped to \$15.50, a difference of 75 cents.

Pipes also saw a jump in price with Hayes Pipe Supply being awarded the contract. Spalding said the county primarily uses the 18-inch or 24-inch pipes. Galvanized pipes had the biggest step up in price — 18-inch from \$26.25 in 2024-25 to \$28.23 per foot and 24-inch from \$35 to \$38.58.

Dual wall polyethylene pipes saw a decrease in price for this year, the 18-inch and 24-inch pipes dropping down to \$12.47 and \$20.56 per foot.

Asphalt Material Inc. from Elizabethtown brought the county the biggest discount for road oil with both chip-seal (RS-2) and HFRS-2, another asphalt emulsion, dropping from \$2.66 per gallon to \$2.55 per gallon when delivered.

Additionally, American Tire was awarded the contract for tires and tire repair for the county.

OBITUARIES

GLORIA BURGIN SWEAZY
ROGER DALE GRITTON
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