



**SPORTS**  
BASEBALL,  
SOFTBALL TEAMS  
UNVEIL FIELD  
UPGRADES  
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# THE LARUE COUNTY HERALD NEWS

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## Public opinion sought for restaurant tax

**BY VICTORIA COX**  
EDITOR

The City of Hodgenville will hold a special meeting on Monday, March 24, to hear public opinions on implementing a restaurant tax.

Authorized to do so by state law, local cities are allowed to enact a levy and tax all retail sales of food and beverages in city limits. The tax rate may not exceed 3%, and all revenue must be used to fund the local tourism commission.

The City of Hodgenville Tourism and Convention Commission was established in April 2023 to promote and develop

convention and tourist activities and facilities in the local community. The commission is funded through a 3% transient room tax, which was implemented at the same time as its creation.

Councilmember Rita Williams's inquiry at the most recent Monday, Mar. 10 meeting determined that the city is not required to enact a tax levy simply because it has a tourism commission. However, a subsequent conversation stat-

ed there are only a few facilities the city can implement the transient room tax on, which gave the appearance that the commission is currently limited in funding.

Mayor Phelps invited all interested members of the public to attend the meeting and voice their opinion on the subject. With that being said, though, he requests individuals come prepared.



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## INSIDE TODAY'S EDITION



## 5 YEARS LATER

March marks  
5th anniversary  
of COVID-19

**BY VICTORIA COX**  
EDITOR

This month marks five years since the COVID-19 pandemic swept across

the globe, leaving isolation and shuttered doors in its wake. Although the global emergency caused by the infectious disease — which is responsible for more than 7 million deaths worldwide, to date — has ceased, society is working diligently to recover and rebuild what was lost all those years ago.

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LaRue County Schools

LCMS Speech Team pictured back row from left are: Madden Davis, Ava Cheeseman, Peyton Claycomb, Ainsley Walsh, Alma Mehicic, and Izzy Pierce. Front row: Cooper Braden, Henry Allen, Tamryn Miller, Kinzleigh Hack, Adalee Farmer, and Coach Kate McCubbin. Not pictured is Juhie Patel.

## Speech team celebrates historic regional win

For the first time in its nearly 60-year history, the LaRue County Middle School (LCMS) Speech Team claimed the prestigious Regional Championship Title in the Kentucky High School Speech League (KHSSL).

This historic victory marks a significant milestone for the program, which has long been a formidable presence in speech and debate competitions across the state.

The LCMS Speech Team has been a member of KHSSL for over 45 years, consistently producing top-tier individual and team performances. The program has seen individual state champions and numerous team awards, including top-three placements at regionals, top-ten finishes at state, and multiple School of Distinction honors. However, this is the first time the middle school team has emerged as the regional champion.

“This means that our team of students placed first out of all the other middle school teams competing in our region,” explained head coach Katy Cecil. “It’s a testament to the dedication, passion, and hard work of our students and coaching staff.”

The LaRue County Speech Program was founded in 1966 by Cecil’s father Garland Blair and has thrived under the leadership of six coaches over the decades.

Blair led both the middle and high school teams for 25 years before retiring.

Since then, the program has continued to grow under the guidance of committed coaches like Randy Stephens, Kimberly Mather, Greg Bowen, Helena Freedlund, and now Katy Cecil, who has been involved with the team for 24 years.

“In my time at LCMS and LCHS, we’ve coached hundreds

of students, won 16 state championships, two national titles, and earned multiple state and national accolades,” Cecil said. “The program has also produced dozens of students who have achieved Premier Distinction in the National Speech and Debate Honor Society and been recognized as Academic All Americans.”

Beyond competition, the speech program at LCMS serves as a powerful training ground for future success. Speech and debate equip students with skills from the Learner Profile: critical thinking skills, public speaking confidence, and the ability to analyze and articulate complex ideas in a short time.

It also brings students from across the state together in a collaborative and competitive environment.

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Submitted photo

Bill Rounsaville has announced his retirement as a bus driver at LaRue County Schools after nearly three decades behind the wheel. He is pictured with bus 151, the route which he has drove for the past nine years.

## ‘I found a ministry on this campus’

**BY VICTORIA COX**  
EDITOR

Bill Rounsaville has woken up at 4 a.m. every weekday for the past 29 years to ensure the students of LaRue County Schools are transported safely. For him, the school bus was more than just a vehicle — it was a pulpit on wheels and evidence that ministry can happen anywhere. After decades of service, Rounsaville has hung up his bus keys, retiring with a legacy of

faith, kindness and a life dedicated to serving others.

Born and raised in Georgia, Rounsaville’s path to his future wasn’t always clear. While he’d discovered early on that his purpose in life was to help people, he wasn’t sure how. And, although he dabbled with the thought of teaching or joining the military, he eventually rooted himself in ministry.

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### OBITUARY

James ‘Jim’ Evans, 89

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