

Looking back to Dec. 1, 2018

Written by Christy Hoots

The following information was entered into the Dec. 1, 2018, edition of The Ledger Independent:

MCMS teacher receives Sanford award

A Mason County Teacher is the Kentucky winner of the first ever Sanford Teacher Award. Kerri Stanfield, a teacher at Mason County Middle School, was recently awarded the Sanford Teacher Award in Kentucky. She is one of 51 teachers in the country to receive it. The National University System began offering the award this year to teachers across the nation who are inspiring to their students.

“The award honors teachers for inspiring teaching, which to me means recognizing each student as an individual, building a relationship with each student, and recognizing how each student is motivated and how they learn best,” Stanfield said. “Each state, plus the District of Columbia, has one winner, and there will be a national winner in 2019.”

Stanfield said she was surprised to find out she had received the award.

“I was absolutely shocked when I found out I won the award. A few months ago I found out I was nominated and they sent me a packet to complete, but once I finished it, I never had another thought about it,” she said. “On Nov. 26, I received an email that I was indeed the winner for Kentucky. I thought that someone was playing a joke on

me, especially when it got to the cash award.”

The cash award was for \$10,000, according to Stanfield.

“I was just so honored. In the words of my teenage daughter, I ‘was shook’ for the rest of the night,” she said. “With all the craziness of our Amazing Shake competition going on, I don’t think I’ve really even had time to process how I feel yet. We don’t teach for awards and recognition, we do it for our students. So to be honored in this way is very special and a blessing.”

Stanfield has been a teacher in Mason County for 10 years. She graduated from Mason County High School in 1996 before attending Maysville Community and Technical College, where she took general education courses.

“I attended Maysville Community College and took general education classes, but never really could decide what I wanted to be when I grew up. It wasn’t until later, as my own children were entering school and I was doing more and more volunteer work at Straub Elementary, that I realized education was indeed my calling,” she said.

Stanfield received her bachelor’s degree in elementary and middle education from Midway College and her master’s degree in literacy specialist from the University of the Cumberland.

“This year is my 10th year of teaching, and all my years have been at Mason County,” she said.

Stanfield will be now be considered for the national Sanford award, which comes with a \$50,000 prize.

Ripley River Village Christmas Weekend urges residents to shop local for the holiday

Submitted by Jill Mikal

RIPLEY, Ohio — The Ripley River Village Christmas Weekend committee is reminding residents of the many opportunities to support local businesses while shopping this holiday season.

The annual Friends of the Library Book Sale will be held at the Library Annex, 19 Main St., on Friday, Dec. 12 from 7:30- 8:30 p.m., and Saturday, Dec. 13 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Books make great gifts.

Southern Hills Community Bank will draw the winning name for their Christmas Basket raffle at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 13 at the Ripley branch. The basket of Christmas goods

is valued at \$160. Southern Hills will be open from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 12, and 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Dec. 13 for filling out raffle tickets.

Throughout the holiday, the Olde Piano Factory Shoppes merchants, located at US Highway 52, will be open their regular hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and noon to 6 p.m. on Sunday. While there, residents may register for a gift certificate drawing on Sunday evening, Dec. 14. The gift certificate may be used at any of the Piano Factory merchants’ stores.

Bristow Pharmacy and Gift Shop, at 100 Main St., will offer a holiday special on both Friday, Dec. 12 and Sat-

urday, Dec. 13 of a free gift with purchase.

Ranch & Root Market, at 6 Main St., will be holding an entrepreneurial program for Ripley youngsters who want to learn how to run their own business. Residents may shop for handmade gift items from several school-age children who are running their own businesses. The Santa’s Workshop pop-up store on the second floor of the market will offer a variety of the children’s one-of-a-kind gifts on Sunday, Dec. 14 from 1-4 p.m.

Ranch & Root Market will also offer a holiday promotion, “Shop Local, Win Local,” culminating in a drawing for a \$50 Ranch & Root gift card on Sunday evening, Dec.

14. Each \$20 purchase enters the shopper to win the gift card.

Other Ripley merchants open during the River Village Christmas weekend with special sales and treats include N. 2nd St. Mercantile, Eagle Valley Cutlery, Studio Twenty Eight, Northern Yankee Moonshine, Suite C Beauty Bar, Ripley Women’s Club Thrift Shop, Judith’s Antique Attic and more.

The Ripley River Village Christmas weekend will run from Friday, Dec. 12 through Sunday, Dec. 14. Additional information may be found on the Ripley River Village Christmas Facebook page.

Shoppers spend billions on Black Friday to snag holiday deals, despite wider economic uncertainty

Wyatte Grantham-Philips
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Despite wider economic uncertainty hovering above this year’s holiday season, shoppers turned out in big numbers for Black Friday — spending billions of dollars both in stores and online.

Adobe Analytics, which tracks e-commerce, said U.S. consumers spent a record \$11.8 billion online Friday, marking a 9.1% jump from last year. Traffic particularly piled up between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. local time nationwide, when \$12.5 million passed through online shopping carts every minute.

Consumers also spent a record \$6.4 billion online on Thanksgiving Day, per Adobe. Top categories that saw an uptick in sales across both days included video game consoles, electronics and home appliances. Shopping services powered by artificial intelligence and social media advertising have also particularly influenced what consumers choose to buy, the firm said.

Meanwhile, software company Salesforce — which tracks digital spending from a range of retailers, including grocers — estimated

that Black Friday online sales totaled \$18 billion in the U.S. and \$79 billion globally. And e-commerce platform Shopify said its merchants raked in a record \$6.2 billion in sales worldwide on Black Friday. At its peak, sales reached \$5.1 million per minute — with top categories including cosmetics and clothing, according to the Canadian company.

Mastercard SpendingPulse, which tracks in-person and online spending, reported that overall Black Friday sales excluding automotive rose 4.1% from a year ago. The retail sales indicator, which is not adjusted for inflation, showed online sales jumped by double digits (10.4%), while in-store purchases inched up 1.7%.

Michelle Meyer, chief economist at the Mastercard Economics Institute, said consumers are “navigating an uncertain environment” this holiday season “by shopping early, leveraging promotions, and investing in wish-list items.”

Black Friday is far from the sales event that created midnight mall crowds or doorbuster mayhem just decades ago. More and more consumers have instead turned to online deals to make post-Thanksgiving purchases from the comfort of their own homes — or opt to stretch out spending across longer promotions now offered by retailers.

In-store traffic has dwindled over the years. Initial data from RetailNext, which measures real-time foot traffic in physical stores, found

that U.S. Black Friday traffic fell 3.6% compared to 2024. Still, the firm noted that was “notably better” than a sharper 6.2% decline it saw in the days leading up to Thanksgiving.

Sensormatic Solutions, which also tracks store traffic, found that in-store retail visits dipped 2.1% — but said that was in line with expectations and trends already seen this year. Traffic over the week of Black Friday was up nearly 57% compared to the week prior, per Sensormatic.

“Black Friday has really turned into like a full week event, or even further,” said Grant Gustafson, head of retail consulting and analytics at Sensormatic Solutions. And “Black Friday is really the start of just a really and critical stretch for retailers,” he added — noting that the weekend following Thanksgiving, as well as the days leading up to Christmas next month, will also be some of the busiest in terms of in-store traffic.

Meanwhile, in terms of e-commerce, Adobe expects U.S. shoppers to spend another \$5.5 billion Saturday and \$5.9 billion on Sunday — before reaching an estimated \$14.2 billion peak on Cyber Monday, which would mark yet another record.

Still, rising prices could be contributing to some of those numbers. U.S. President Donald Trump’s barrage of tariffs on foreign imports have strained businesses and households alike over the last year. And despite spending

more overall, Salesforce found U.S. shoppers purchased fewer items at checkout on Black Friday (down 2% from last year). Order volumes also slipped 1%, the firm noted, as average selling prices climbed 7%.

This year’s holiday spending rush arrives amid heightened economic uncertainty for consumers. Beyond tariffs, workers across public and private sectors are also struggling with anxieties over job security — amid both corporate layoffs and the after-effects of the 43-day government shutdown.

An uptick in budget-conscious behavior can also be seen in store traffic. While Sensormatic doesn’t track spending, “we do track consumer footsteps,” Gustafson notes — and “consumers are thinking a little bit harder about their purchases” this year, he explains, “to make sure that they’re getting their very best deals.”

For the November-December holiday season overall, the National Retail Federation estimates U.S. shoppers will spend more than \$1 trillion for the first time this year. But the rate of growth is slowing — with an anticipated increase of 3.7% to 4.2% year over year, compared to 4.3% in 2024’s holiday season.

At the same time, credit card debt and delinquencies on other short-term loans have been rising. And more and more shoppers are turning to “buy now, pay later” plans, which allows them to delay payments on holiday decor, gifts and other items.

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