



Judge Executive's Report

By George Sparks

We hit the ground running in September. Throughout the course of the month, I stayed busy working on projects to move Lewis County toward a bright future. As always, I was blessed to meet with a lot of great people, share ideas, and learn new things.

First up, I met with Destiny Conner, Reentry and Employment Service Navigator, at the Lewis County Public Library. Destiny will be set up at the library from 11:30- 1:30 on the first Tuesday of each month. She will be available to help Lewis County residents with resume writing, interviewing skills, job searching and many other services. She is dedicated and ready to serve our community. Please reach out to the Judge Executive's office if you'd like more information about Destiny's services.

Next, I met with Tracey Miller, professor at the UK Department of Landscape Architecture/ Martin-Galton College of Agriculture, Food, and Environment. She brought her class of approximately 30 students to Lewis County to look at several projects related to tourism and outdoor recreation. Brian Storz of the KY Division of Water met with us, along with a long list of community partners and leaders Mr. Ben Collier organized. Dr. Miller and her students will work on projects throughout the semester to share with us. While they were in town, we showed the students around Vanceburg and Lewis County so they could ask questions and brainstorm potential ideas for our area. These students are in their second year at the University of Kentucky and are very interested in this opportunity to help our county make the most of our great resources. I am very excited for the group to share the thoughts, ideas, and designs they have put together!

I met with staff from Fresh Start Health Center and the Lewis County Health Department to discuss Recovery Ready Community Centers. These centers offer support programs that help those who gotten off course in life. They help people with support in educational opportunities such as earning a GED, resume writing, and interview skills to name a few. We have been working together with a larger group to be-

come a Recovery Ready Community (RRC) through the Office of Drug Control Policy. We have made great progress toward being named a RRC. So far, only 29 out of 120 counties have been earned this title. We hope to be added to that list!

Back at the office, I met with my staff to develop and apply for the KACo Insurance Grant. The grant must be related to reducing the risk of injuries that our insurance policy may cover. I worked with Morgan Cooper who prepared and submitted the grant after Fiscal Court approved us to apply.

I was honored to be able to attend the Kentucky Veterans Hall of Fame 2025 Induction Ceremony at the Embassy Suites in Lexington, KY. Our very own Sgt. Major Elden Riffe was one of twenty-six inductees from across the state to be selected for the class of 2025. I am thankful for Elden who served over 26 years in the US Army, 17 years as LCHS JROTC instructor and 10 years as Chief Deputy Sheriff in Lewis County. Elden enjoys working with the Rough Riders Saddle Club, hunting, and encouraging young people to do and be their best. We appreciate you, Elden. Congratulations on your outstanding achievements and thank you for your service!

Next, I presided over the September Fiscal Court Meeting. The meeting was opened with prayer by Pastor Jim Bob Williams. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by County Attorney Ben Harrison. The meeting minutes were approved for the regular meeting held on 8/11/25 and special meeting held on 8/26/25. A contract modification for the Camp Dix Fire Department Project was presented and approved. Ordinance #25-04 Budget Amendment, also related to the CDFD project, was approved. The Kinniconick Creek Watershed Management Plan contract was approved. Resolution #25-14 Concord Trinity Road was approved. Surplus used equipment from the county Road Department was approved to be sold later in a September auction by Stacy Cooper. Luke Bentley Jr. was reappointed the Garrison, Quincy, O-Heights Water District a four-year term ending 12-31-2029. Waylon Salvia was approved as a part-time em-

ployee at the Road Department. The court approved submitting a KACo Insurance Grant application. If we are awarded the grant, it will be used to make safety improvements in the courthouse and at the Road Department. The court approved a \$500.00 donation to the Buffalo Trace Fire School coming up on October 17th-19th. Monthly reports were presented by all departments and were all approved.

I attended the Lewis County Ambulance Service District Board meeting. Chairman Danny Palmer called the meeting to order. They approved the past meeting minutes and financial reports. Sam Waninger with Craft, Waninger, and Noble presented the independent audit report which was great. Director Michael Byble gave his monthly report and several other things related to the service were discussed. I thanked them all for the enormous amount of work they have done in order for us to have this life-saving service here in Lewis County.

The Lewis County Conservation District Board of Directors invited me and Solid Waste Coordinator Roger Lewis to attend their meeting. They want to partner with the county in order to create a plan to help clean up tires from tractors, trucks, wagons, and other farm implements in Lewis County. We appreciate their interest in helping us clean up our county and our farms.

I met with UK and BTADD at the Mason County Extension Office to help develop Kentucky's Sustainable Materials Management Plan. This was a training/idea sharing/planning opportunity to develop plans to help clean up and keep our waterways and our counties cleaner.

We held a 9/11 Memorial Service on the courthouse front porch to honor and remember the lives lost on September 11th, 2001. I thanked those in attendance and spoke briefly along with County Attorney Benjamin Harrison. County Clerk Leslie Collier sang and Clarksburg Christian Church Minister Tom Cox shared a message from God's Word. We ended the service by thanking all our first responders for their dedication and commitment to serving and helping others.

I attended the Black Oak

Recreational Park Committee meeting. Chairman Jack Lykins called the meeting to order. Treasurer Penny Lee gave a financial report that was approved. Melissa Hardy with BTADD gave an update on the GRANT and LWCF for the sports complex. The committee discussed several other projects in the park that are being planned and/ or worked on now.

I worked with Solid Waste Coordinator Roger Lewis on the county wide tire collection. It was held from September 11th-September 13th. This event occurs every three years. Several loads of tires were brought in from all parts of the county. Over 12,000 tires were collected over the span of three days. This event, along with the week-long county wide cleanup, is a big step in making Lewis County cleaner. Thank you to Roger and our employees at the Solid Waste/ Recycle Center for their hard work on this event.

The 2025 KY County Judge Executive Association (KCJEA) Fall Retreat was held at Cumberland Falls State Park. We learned about the history of the coal industry and its effects. Dr. Quentin with University of the Cumberlands spoke. Firestone HR Manager Kanisha Hughey gave a presentation called "Rubber Meets the Road." Judge Pat White gave a presentation about the falls' impact on their community. UK Cooperative Extension Service's Nick Carter spoke about local and state government relations. President Robert Stivers/ Senator District 25 gave a KY Senate legislative update. Jim Codell of Codell Construction talked about the effects of building a better future. Harlan County Judge Dan Mosley and Todd Ruckel, KCJEA Executive Director, spoke about local government issues.

I attended the BTADD annual meeting held at Blue Licks State Park in Carlisle, KY. The meeting was called to order followed by roll call, prayer and

the Pledge of Allegiance. The past meeting minutes and financial reports were approved. Next, bank authorization and intergovernmental review processes were discussed and approved. Executive Director Kevin Cornette gave the 2025 annual report. An awards ceremony was held. A Community Leadership Award was given by all five Buffalo Trace County Judges. Lewis County selected Todd Ruckel, former Lewis County Judge and Executive Director of KCJEA, as this year's recipient. We appreciate the great work Todd has done and the impact he has made across the Commonwealth. I was honored to be selected for the BTADD Board of Directors Regionalism Award. I appreciate Executive Director Kevin Cornette, BTADD staff, and the Board of Directors. Last, Kasey Ellis from the Kentucky Council of Area Development Districts spoke before the meeting was adjourned.

Later in the month, the Comprehensive Inc. Board of Directors monthly meeting was held. Chairperson Rebecca Cartmell called the meeting to order. We discussed a new software program and storage of data. CEO Goldie Williams gave the board an update and overview of all programs. Donna Hicks gave an overview of an audit that is currently in progress. Committee reports were presented, and a bylaw change was discussed before the meeting was adjourned.

The Licking Valley Community Action monthly Board of Directors meeting was held at the Mason County Senior Center. Thanks to Center Coordinator Beth Gram for the warm welcome. We welcomed Chad Current as the new Mason County board member. The meeting was opened with prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance. Executive Director Kenny Walters gave program reports, agency updates, and senior center updates. A vendor disclosure agreement was approved, and the meeting was adjourned.

I attended a Recovery Ready Community Committee meeting at the LC Extension Office. During the meeting we discussed the many aspects of a Recovery Community Center. The Vanceburg Lewis County Planning Commission meeting was held at City Hall. During the meeting the committee, along with BTADD, discussed the Comprehensive Plan Update. A community survey will be available online and on paper in next few weeks. We are now in the final stages of the update.

I was able to attend the Buffalo Trace Regional Water Management Council quarterly meeting. Kathryn French, Youth Career Coach at TENCOR Workforce, gave a talk about putting Kentucky youth to work. Three new projects were approved by Council: the Vanceburg Water Loss Reduction Project, the Vanceburg Hydrant Replacement Project, and the Mt. Olivet Meter Replacement Project. Eleven project amendments were approved. Community Development Director Kristie Dodge explained the ranking criteria. The meeting was then adjourned.

I attended the Hospice of Hope Board of Directors full board meeting. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Barb Campbell. Executive Director Shawn Flaughter shared the operational report and discussed the 2026 budget goals. Meeting minutes and financial reports were all approved.

I attended the KACo Listening Tour in Flemingsburg, Ky. During this meeting, we discussed the issues that matter most to county elected officials.

Last, but certainly not least, we celebrated Randy Stamm's retirement from Lewis County Road Department. Thank you for over 23 years of committed service to our county! Randy was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation from me on behalf of the good citizens of Lewis County. Congratulations, Randy!

LCCE Students of the month



Lewis County Chamber of Commerce

Douglas Lodge, President

By Lisa Grabinski
 Congratulations to the Live Wire printing team on receiving their well deserved plaque at our last chamber meeting!
 Your commitment to deliv-

ering vibrant, high quality printing services for advertisements truly distinguishes you. We encourage everyone to explore their offerings and discover how they can enhance your brand!

If you're not already a member, consider joining your local chamber of commerce today.

Together, we can support our community and grow our businesses!



Left to right: Lisa Grabinski, Roger Jahn, Live Wire printing team, and Joni Pugh.

Treasures by Wilma Erwin

Have you ever compared what you know to what others know? If you should undertake such a task you will need a story board tool just to help you limit your choices of comparisons. They are many. You could compare:

- Humans to God
 - Elders to a Child
 - The Learned to the Illiterate
 - The Experienced in a particular field to the Novice
 - The Gifted to the Un-gifted
- The comparisons are only limited by your ability to find two to compare. Let's look briefly and limited at the Divine versus the Human.

Divine knowledge is original experience and rests on infinite and foundational knowledge. Humans have only derivative, limited and ultimately, mostly, based on others' experiences and relating of the happenings. The Lord experienced the past, is in the present and has the future simultaneously in mind. He has all of Creation of all things and how they will or will not change to New Creation of new heaven and new earth in simplicity to Him. He knows every human to the nth degree.

We humans live in one spot on this earth at a time. We humans live in one place in time and that for only a few decades at most. We experience a few other humans in that same band of time.

He can hold Spiritual over physical. We focus on earthly things, happenings, and people to the extend we can be totally ignorant of our eternal selves.

He is omnipotent, omniscience and omnipresent! We are so limited! Our scope is laughable when compared to what we know of Him, much less what is really true of His abilities.

His motivation is intrinsic to His nature. Ours needs constant help.

He is holy, righteous, hates evil and desires purity. We must constantly wrestle our own selfish nature, Satan and powers of darkness to rise out of the miry clay. Even then we

get no where unless we ask Jesus and The Holy Spirit into our hearts to constantly advise and empower us.

By now you are probably saying, "Wilma, you are too human to even have such a discussion with us." You are correct. I am finite.

One thing that has always made me laugh within myself is the counting of time by humans. They will say this happened exactly so and so millions of years ago. Really! Since no humans were there to write it down and leave it for you, how do you know? Some would say carbon dating. OK. Didn't humans have to make

up the chart for estimating carbon dating since no humans left marked, dated samples? It always seems strange to me that a mere human can make up a system we based millions of facts upon; but God gave us His account and they doubt it.

I'll take God's account. After a lifetime of reading His Word I've found no faults or errors. The truths in God's Word hold up! Well, at least it has held up some eighty years in my case.

You could take this same comparison or do other comparisons. You will find we humans limited.

Blessing on believing God's infinite wisdom.

LIHEAP Vendor Meeting

Any vendor wanting to participate in the Subsidy & Crisis Program needs to attend vendor information meeting on October 17, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. The meeting will be held at the Licking Valley Central Office located at 203 High Street, Flemingsburg, KY 41041.

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COMMUNITY EVENT

OKTOBERFEST-CITY OF VANCEBURG FALL FESTIVAL - Will be Saturday, October 11, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Opening ceremonies with Mayor Dane Blankenship at Veteran's Park at 10:00 a.m. Food trucks, kids' activities, and booths open at 10:00 a.m. Free admission. Join us for a packed day of live music by Bobby Mackey, The Carvers of Rock Creek, and Lionel and Scotty Cooper. The Lewis County High School Drama Department will be performing. Baked goods, homemade items, ice cream, donuts, face painting, etc. Bouncy houses, hay rides, Weiner dog races, pie baking contest, corn hole tournament, kids' pumpkin painting, and more. For more info, call Brenda at 740-534-3138 or brenda.bear@cityofvanceburg.com.

It makes sense to list local, having your listing agent close to your property is a real positive.



With my office being located on Main St. in Vanceburg, I specialize in Lewis County Properties whether homes, acreages, or businesses.

Licensed Agent, Licensed Drone Operator, and I work with local Contractors.

I also partner locally with Auctions By Cooper, Stacy Cooper when auctioning Real Estate.

RICHARD WALJE SALES AGENT, PHONE 606-262-0822
STORY REALTY & AUCTION LLC

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