

Mascots just as good at keeping their identities secret as firing up a crowd

BY MIKE HOUSEHOLDER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

EAST LANSING, Mich. — Ross Ramsey enjoys spending time with fellow alumni at Michigan State football tailgates.

These aren't just any old former Spartans, though.

They were Sparty himself — something few knew when Ramsey and his pals donned the muscular mascot suit two decades ago.

“Once you are done being Sparty, you can tell others that you were Sparty,” said Ramsey, a physician and hospital administrator in Pigeon, Michigan. “And clearly you have a close bond with those others who were in the same role as you, because they couldn't share that experience with anyone else at the time, either.”

Ramsey and his buddies are members of an elite fellowship of ex-mascots. Men and women who once carried on as Big Al, Alabama's lovable elephant; the Disney-inspired Oregon Duck; Wisconsin's Bucky Badger and many more. We're talking humans in suits, not live animal mascots, which also are fixtures on college football Saturdays.

The job for costumed mascots is to fire up the crowd, bring a smile to a fan's face and symbolically represent the university.

“When you think of Michigan State, you think of Sparty. And everybody



Miami mascot, Sebastian the Ibis, leads the team onto the field before the start of an NCAA college football game against Ohio on Sept. 1, 2023, in Miami Gardens, Fla.

knows what the mascot is,” said Phil Lator, another former Sparty who joins Ramsey at the tailgates and also successfully concealed his alter ego during his tenure in East Lansing.

Anonymity is the name of the game for many college mascots.

“Some programs value secrecy so highly that multiple performers report to the stadium but only learn in the moment who will actually be suiting up,” said Jeff Birdsell, a communication professor at Point Loma Nazarene University in San Diego. Birdsell has

experience in these matters, having served as Point Loma's mascot as an undergrad, as well as inhabiting suits for minor league baseball, NBA G League and indoor soccer teams.

“Some schools have traditions where they work hard to keep the performers anonymous so that there can be a big reveal as part of graduation ceremonies,” he said.

Enter Nicole Hurley, who came clean about her Cocky past at South Carolina's spring commencement, rolling into the arena wearing her cap, gown and oversized yellow

bird feet of the bird mascot.

“When I walked across the stage, I felt so much joy. The whole arena started to clap and cheer, and it made me emotional,” said Hurley, a pediatric hematology oncology nurse in Charleston, South Carolina.

Only Hurley's room-

mates and parents knew about her second life, which included attending weddings, birthday parties, baby showers and other private events; firing up the crowd at Williams-Brice Stadium and rushing the floor after a 2023 men's basketball victory at Kentucky.

“There were countless moments that I had to change into my suit in my car, pretty much lie to every person about how I worked a job in athletics and created excuses when I was not free on the weekends due to working private events,” Hurley said. “When people I know would come up to take a photo with me when I was Cocky and they had no idea I was the one under the suit was the craziest feeling.”

Carlos Polanco-Zaccardi, whose years inside Miami's Sebastian the Ibis costume were known

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MESSENGER-INQUIRER



Store it All located at 2946 Fairview Dr. and 4328 Gateway Dr., hereby gives notice that on Saturday, December 6, 2025 at 1:00pm will sell the contents of the following units at a private sale for cash only:

- 1037 – Whitney Keiser
- 2094 – Deverionna Adams
- 2110 – Sharon Butler
- 3051 – Elizabeth Phelps
- B24 – Amanda Higgs

Not open to the Public
No Phone Calls Please



LEGAL NOTICE
SALE OF SIDE ARM
REFUSE TRUCK
ONLINE AUCTION

The purpose of this advertisement for auction is to offer for sale one surplus 2018 Mack Side Arm Refuse Truck.

Specifications may be obtained from the GovDeals website at the following link: <https://www.govdeals.com/owensboroky>. To register as a bidder on GovDeals, please follow the instructions at the following link: <https://www.govdeals.com/register/>. For information on how to place a bid, please follow the instructions at the following link: <https://www.govdeals.com/faq> and click "Bidding" in the dropdown box.

All auction bids must be electronically submitted on the GovDeals website before 6:00PM CDT December 9, 2025.

Equipment shall be purchased "As Is," and winning party shall make payment and pick-up equipment within 10 business days of notice of award. The City of Owensboro reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any irregularities in said bids. This advertisement was paid for by the City of Owensboro using taxpayer dollars in the amount of \$188.50.

Kalyn Fox
Purchasing Manager

SEE MASCOTS/PAGE B7



LEGAL NOTICE FOR
BID # 2025-11 WAREHOUSE SPOTTER
TRACTOR
REQUEST FOR BIDS
OWENSBORO RIVERPORT
AUTHORITY

Notice is hereby given that the Owensboro Riverport Authority is requesting proposals to purchase 1 new Warehouse Spotter Tractor. Copies of the Request For Proposals are available from the Owensboro Riverport Authority, by contacting Michelle Payne, Purchasing Agent, at mpayne@owensbororiverport.com. All proposals shall be submitted in accordance with requirements set forth in the RFP and shall be received at 1771 River Road, Owensboro, KY before 2:30 p.m., (CST), December 10, 2025. All late proposals will be returned unopened. Emailed proposals are not accepted. Owensboro Riverport Authority reserves the right to postpone, accept or reject any and all proposals and to waive any informality in the bid process as Owensboro Riverport Authority deems in its own best interest.

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MASTER COMMISSIONER
SALE
FREEDOM MORTGAGE
CORP. V. ESTATE OF IRA
DAUGHERTY, ET AL.
CIVIL ACTION NO. 25-CI-
00290, MAP #5-8-8-6
AMOUNT OF JUDGMENT:
\$64,356.11
ADDRESS: 1815 W. PARRISH AVE., OWENSBORO, KY

By virtue of Judgment and Order of Sale of the Daviess Circuit court the undersigned will, on Monday, December 15, 2025, at 10:00 AM, at the Courthouse 2nd Floor Fiscal Court Room in Owensboro, Ky., expose to PUBLIC SALE the above real estate. For a complete legal description of the property see the Court record in the Circuit Clerk's Office.

TERMS: CASH OR 10% DOWN & BALANCE 30 DAYS. If on credit purchaser must post bond with approved surety for the balance of the purchase price, plus 6% interest per annum from the date of said bond. The buyer shall be responsible for the current year's property taxes. MASTER COMMISSIONER DAVIESS CIRCUIT COURT



MASTER COMMISSIONER
SALE
NATIONSTAR MORTGAGE
LLC V. CHARLES CAMPBELL, JR.
CIVIL ACTION NO. 24-CI-01066, MAP #3-11-22-8
AMOUNT OF JUDGMENT:
\$182,188.27
ADDRESS: 814 MARY LOU CT., OWENSBORO, KY

By virtue of Judgment and Order of Sale of the Daviess Circuit Court the undersigned will, on Monday, December 15, 2025, at 10:00 AM, at the Courthouse 2nd Floor Fiscal Court Room in Owensboro, Ky., expose to PUBLIC SALE the above real estate. For a complete legal description of the property see the Court record in the Circuit Clerk's Office.

TERMS: CASH OR 10% DOWN & BALANCE 30 DAYS. If on credit purchaser must post bond with approved surety for the balance of the purchase price, plus 6% interest per annum from the date of said bond. The buyer shall be responsible for the current year's property taxes.

MASTER COMMISSIONER DAVIESS CIRCUIT COURT



NOTICE OF MECHANIC'S
LIEN PUBLIC SALE
A 2019 GMC Terrain Denali 2.0L 4Cyl Gas LTG Turbocharged (VIN: 3GKALSEX9KL354753), left unclaimed and unpaid for repair/storage charges, will be sold pursuant to mechanic's lien law. Sale will occur on Tuesday December 30th at 8am at Fast Lane Auto Repair, located at 2121 Triplett Street Owensboro, Ky 42303. All parties with interest or claim should contact Keith Knott or Edward Caswell 270-231-8161 prior to sale. Vehicle sold as-is, where-is.



MASTER COMMISSIONER
SALE
U.S. BANK N.A. V. RONALD W. SIMPSON, ADMIN.,
CIVIL ACTION NO. 24-CI-00758, MAP #106-27-1
AMOUNT OF JUDGMENT:
\$42,058.06
ADDRESS: 12405 FULLENWIDER RD., LEWISPORT, KY

By virtue of Judgment and Order of Sale of the Daviess Circuit court the undersigned will, on Monday, December 15, 2025, at 10:00 AM, at the Courthouse 2nd Floor Fiscal Court Room in Owensboro, Ky., expose to PUBLIC SALE the above real estate. For a complete legal description of the property see the Court record in the Circuit Clerk's Office.

TERMS: CASH OR 10% DOWN & BALANCE 30 DAYS. If on credit purchaser must post bond with approved surety for the balance of the purchase price, plus 6% interest per annum from the date of said bond. The buyer shall be responsible for the current year's property taxes. MASTER COMMISSIONER DAVIESS CIRCUIT COURT



LEGAL NOTICE FOR
BID # 2025-10 5,000 LB.
FORKLIFT
REQUEST FOR BIDS
OWENSBORO RIVERPORT
AUTHORITY

Notice is hereby given that the Owensboro Riverport Authority is requesting proposals to purchase 1 new 5,000 lb. forklift. Copies of the Request For Proposals are available from the Owensboro Riverport Authority, by contacting Michelle Payne, Purchasing Agent, at mpayne@owensbororiverport.com. All proposals shall be submitted in accordance with requirements set forth in the RFP and shall be received at 1771 River Road, Owensboro, KY before 2:00 p.m., (CST), December 10, 2025. All late proposals will be returned unopened. Emailed proposals are not accepted. Owensboro Riverport Authority reserves the right to postpone, accept or reject any and all proposals and to waive any informality in the bid process as Owensboro Riverport Authority deems in its own best interest.



LEGAL NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE
INVITATION TO BID

- Bid No. 2526-33: Fire Rescue Tools (Fire Rescue)
- Bid No. 2526-34: Four (4) New 5th Wheel Road Tractors (Solid Waste)
- Bid No. 2526-35: One (1) New AWD Backhoe Loader (Solid Waste)
- Bid No. 2526-36: One (1) New Front End Loader (Solid Waste)
- Bid No. 2526-37: One (1) New Wheeled Excavator (Solid Waste)
- Bid No. 2526-38: One (1) Used Roll-Off Truck (Solid Waste)
- Bid No. 2526-39: Four (4) New Walking Floor Trailers (Solid Waste)
- Bid No. 2526-40: One (1) Used ¾ Ton Pickup Truck (Solid Waste)

Daviess County Fiscal Court is seeking a qualified vendor to provide the item(s)/service(s) listed above. Bid specifications are on file at the Daviess County Courthouse, 212 St. Ann Street: Room 202, Owensboro, KY 42303 in the Purchasing Department or online at www.daviessky.org. Bids must be mailed or delivered to Daviess County Fiscal Court on or before 2:00 PM, local time on Thursday, December 11, 2025. The bids shall be opened and publicly read at this time. Daviess County Fiscal Court reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any irregularities in said bids.



LEGAL NOTICE

RFP 4454
2026 DRONE SHOW

The City of Owensboro ("City") is requesting proposals from qualified contractors to provide and execute a custom, high-quality drone light show for a special event taking place over the Ohio River. Specifications for the above are on file and may be downloaded from the City's online Bonfire portal at <https://owensboro.bonfirehub.com>. Proposals must be submitted through the Bonfire portal on or before 5:00 p.m. prevailing local time on Friday, December 19, 2025.

The City of Owensboro reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any irregularities in said proposals. This advertisement was paid for by the City of Owensboro using taxpayer dollars in the amount of \$117.00.

Kalyn Fox
Purchasing Manager



LEGAL NOTICE

RFB # 4453
DEMOLITION OF STRUCTURE

The City of Owensboro ("City") is seeking a reputable contractor to demolish one structure. The successful bidder shall provide all labor, materials, equipment, supervision, and incidentals required to demolish, remove, and dispose structure and debris from this property in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal requirements.

Specifications for the above are on file and may be downloaded from the City's online Bonfire portal at <https://owensboro.bonfirehub.com>. Bids must be submitted through the Bonfire portal on or before 2:00 P.M. prevailing local time on Tuesday, December 16, 2025, at which time bids will be opened and publicly read aloud via Microsoft Teams meeting. The Team meeting link can be found on the Bonfire portal.

The City of Owensboro reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any irregularities in said bids. This advertisement was paid for by the City of Owensboro using taxpayer dollars in the amount of \$143.00

Kalyn Fox
Purchasing Manager