

KAYS BRANCH AND BEYOND

BY WANDA NEW
We are having our "second winter" after a spring of deception with 60 degrees and nice days. Someone stated, "Mother Nature has gone off her meds," as we had thunder and lightning on Saturday night, along with more than 5 inches of rain. Then, within 30 minutes or so, the world turned white with snow on Sunday morning, and churches in our area called off services. As I write, the floodwaters are threatening Monterey, Lockport and Gratz, but we sure hope it doesn't rise that high before it drops back out. I have helped clean houses that have been flooded with muddy waters, and it is just horrible for homeowners. I haven't seen my Lake New as high as it is now except for a couple of times in 24 years. Hopefully, the water pressure doesn't push out more holes in the ledges. Colby's daughter, Molly, turned 22 on Wednesday, so Barbara, mother and I joined Willis and Vanessa, and Steve and Susie Thomas, at Amigos for her celebration. It's good to have Colby's girls back in our neighborhood after living in Radcliffe for years. On Friday, Barbara and I took mother to Lexington to have a new prosthetic nose made by Scott Fiscus. He is only in Lexington one week a month, so she won't get the new model until March.

We ate out at a neat place near his office and made a few stops in Frankfort on the way home. Barbara loved the Earth Alchemy shop on Broadway. It's so much to see. She wants to go back. Ann Spicer said that she's just been hanging out ... or in-waiting, for better weather. She had to take her cat back to the vet, but it is better now. She was in contact with the recycle station in Frankfort. They say they are having trouble getting the sorting machine fixed after the fire there. It may be the end of March before we can take recycled materials to Rouse Avenue. Beth Conway said that they did get out and go to the farm machinery show in Louisville last week. Brayden went earlier, and then she, Danny and Brock went to the tractor pull. Then, Brayden went the next day with the Future Farmers of America group to see the exhibits on Friday. The big championship was to be on Saturday. Beth said that her mother, Pam, was turning into Donna and Don Ellis' driveway on Saturday afternoon when she was rear-ended by a boy from Owenton, which totaled her car. Fortunately, she had her seat belt on and wasn't hurt. Seat belts do save lives. Jessica and Kegan brought Kolsen and Konner to Owenton on Saturday to attend the

birthday party of Ethan's and Cagen's 1-year-old son, Coulter, at the firehouse, where Papaw Estes works. Ethan is Kegan's brother, so the kids are cousins. Konner was so excited to get up in the big fire truck. He just turned 3. Valentine's Day was extra special when Willis and Vanessa's son, Jordan, proposed to Hailey Johnson, and, of course, she said yes. Jordan lived in Georgetown for a few years but bought a house and some land just a mile from his family home, so they will be neighbors. Most of our True-New family lives within a couple of miles of each other, except for Bryan, and he's just in Owenton. So, we are blessed not to be spread out all over the country. Chris and Sophie were in St. Louis for volleyball on Saturday, Sunday and Monday. Joel and one of his employees, Hunter Matthews, were at an agricultural trade show in Columbus on Joel's birthday. After they got back home, Joel rented a car and drove five hours to surprise them in St. Louis, so he will come back with them after the Monday games. Sadly, before they all had left home, Laurie's 14-year-old dog, Ginger, died quietly in the hay in her dog house, and they buried her. I know how hard it is to lose a special pet that you've had so long. Mark Schimmoeller said that the family's

Sunday supper will be few in number with Laurie and Charlie, just him, Jennifer and neighbor Casey Starr as the Dufours are on the road and Trina wasn't feeling well. Mark said that Gray Zeitz is printing a copy of his new book of poetry, so that is great news. John Harrod is leading the Cowan Creek Winter School online for 12 weeks and also teaching fiddle to three students at Centre College once a week. Tona went to Bardstown one day to help her daughter, Beth, do some cleaning. On Monday, she met a friend for lunch and took her to see her art show. She wanted to take her sweeper for repairs to Cheeper Sweeper but found when she got there that they were not in business there anymore and gave no notice of whether they were still in business. She was going to Lexington one day to get it fixed there. They sold the Prius to Rachel, so that kept it in the family. Tona said her 9-year-old grandson, Breck, who had won the spelling bee recently, also excels in basketball, academic team and chess tournaments. He's a very smart kid to be proud of for sure. Dara's birthday was the 12th. She wanted supper in-house, so Patrick went to Mami Manchitos and brought supper home for her and made a big salad to

go with it. On Saturday, she went to Holly Hill Inn for the girls day out February birthdays lunch and enjoyed the time together. So, Valentine's Day was simple. Pat brought her candy and supper at home, which was fine. Like mine and Ray's, he had Ellis that night, so we cooked supper at his house, with no waiting in line there. Patrick said that he had to do the not-as-much-fun part of the Dinsmore log cabin job in writing up the report and the usual lunch with Richard. He got fixed up with Hulu TV, so he has lots of old movies and TV shows to watch now. Hannah had a full week again, of course. I missed her last weekend. On Saturday, she met up with some of the West 6th Farm regulars and some from Lexington's Tap Room at the new West 6th Brewery in Covington for a fun get-together. On Sunday after church, she walked the Thorobred Trail in Frankfort and had lunch at Coffee Tree. On Wednesday, she met up with the Sproles from Columbia in Louisville. She couldn't get a motel where she usually stayed before she realized that the farm machinery show had booked up most of the rooms. She met them for lunch at Monic Brewery, where they served smelts which she likes. Later, they enjoyed dinner at Butchertown, where they serve duck, rabbit and

other interesting foods. They had non-alcoholic cocktails made with beets. The next morning, they had breakfast in a pastry shop by the hotel, and she was happy to find they served chia pudding with fresh raspberries. They walked to the Duluth Trading Company and got some bargains at 70% off, then walked back in the cold wind to 21c for lunch, where she had a grain bowl. She tries to eat healthy. They went to the Mohamed Ali Center, which she said was so inspiring. It focused on his humanitarian side, peace and his values. It's one of the best that she had been to in a long time. Friday was another trip to the Verizon store, not her favorite thing to do but sometimes necessary. Again, she walked the Thorobred Trail with a friend, and then, another friend invited her to a dinner of venison and a real nice meal. Our Cedar Road neighbors, Rhonda and Tim Chisholm, returned from a great trip to one of their favorite places, St. George Island in Florida. It sounds even better with the nasty weather here now. Tim loves to fish. I didn't get a fish report, but I did see a picture of one nice fish on Facebook he caught. Every time you get upset at something, ask yourself if you were to die tomorrow, was it worth wasting your time being angry. Don't let the ugly in others kill the beauty in you.



Photo by Ann Carter
 Karol Ellis (seated) and Charlie Ellis (left) pose for a photo with Brody Hearn (center) and the Owenton City Council during a meeting this week. Hearn was awarded the Citizen Hero Award for saving the Ellis's life when they home caught fire. Shown with them, from left, are Mayor Adam Gaines, councilmembers Patty Sue Miller, Jill Dunavent, Larry Dale Perry, Jimmy Marston, Leigh Hawkins and James Abner.

HERO

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I had to attend a city council meeting." Charles and Karol Ellis were in attendance as Hearn accepted his award. Hearn was checking calves around 1:30 a.m. on his family's farm when he noticed the Ellis's home was on fire. Hearn called 911 and ran next door to get them out. "When I first saw the fire my first thought was to get the two individuals out of the house because I knew they were elderly and needed a walker to walk," said Hearn said just days after the fire. Hearn began pounding on the door but got no response. He then started pounding on a bedroom window and shouting the names of those inside. "When [the man inside] woke up he started shouting, 'Who is there?' and then he unlocked the

door," Hearn said. "I then entered the house. The moment I stepped in the house, adrenaline took over and I immediately went to find his wife. When I walked into his wife's room it was filled with smoke. "While she was getting changed, I went to find the dog and two cats. The dog was in his pen just a couple of feet away from the flames. As I was going back in to get her, my dad showed up and helped me get her out." Also during the meeting, the first reading of ordinance number 796, which deals with abandoned and blighted properties inside the city limits, was held by the council. The ordinance set forth a real property tax on vacant, unapproved, unsafe, dangerous, and unfit for intended use properties. Properties will be determined by the code enforcement officer. Property owners will be notified by March 1 if their

properties are going to be assessed at the new tax of 75 cents per \$100. The city will continue to use its current regulatory blighted property notice procedure. Gaines informed the council that this ordinance is similar to the one that is currently in place in the city of Carrollton, which they claimed to have been successful. The second reading of the ordinance will be held during the March meeting. A resolution opposing the commonwealth's centralization of business taxes and fees was also approved by the council. In opposition to Kentucky Constitution section 81, Mayor Gaines urged community residents and council members to contact their representatives, voicing their concerns. After learning that repairs would cost between \$5,000 and \$6,000, the council approved surplus and scrapping the broken metal salt bin.

Gains and the council opened the sealed bids for the concrete saw. The bid for \$450 from Rodney Cobb was accepted. The \$300 annual stipend for the fire chief was discussed by the council. When the fiscal year ends, Gaines recommended that the council consider adjusting the amount as the current amount it was set in 2013. Gaines said, "Greg does a lot for the city and goes above and beyond for the community." Councilwoman Jill Dunavent informed the council that because Jennie Urie is no longer teaching art classes at the high school, the crosswalk project has stalled. Urie was in charge of enlisting the students to paint the crosswalk. Dunavent stressed that a new artist must be found in order for the project to be completed. Gains said the paint has been purchased for the crosswalk.

PARK

FROM PAGE A1

jobs, increased revenue and long-term growth for our community. "We are committed to making Owen County a top destination for business and industry, and this Build-Ready site is a major step towards that goal." The site is approximately 15 miles from Interstate Highway 71. The site is located about 45 miles from the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport. "The build-ready site has been a top priority for the Owen County Industrial Development Corp. for many years," said Casey Ellis, the county's former judge-executive and a member of the Owen County Industrial Development Corporation. "We are thankful for the build-ready program and for the commitment of Judge Woodyard and the fiscal court members who supported this investment. Their foresight continues to move the city of Owenton and Owen County forward and creates future opportunities for our residents." "The work that is happening in Owen County, and across the commonwealth, is a testament of Kentucky's commitment to site development," Gov. Andy Beshear said in a news release. "It's paving the way for companies to choose the commonwealth as their New Kentucky Home, bringing quality jobs and opportunities with them. I want to thank local leadership in Owen County, as well as state officials who helped make this site in the Owenton Industrial Park certified and ready for business."

HOST

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head but never attempted to get them down on paper. The class with Georgia gave me the courage to write my stories. I learned that it is never too late to be a writer." Stamper is a seventh generation Kentuckian. She is the author of three creative non-fiction books, and her essays have appeared in multiple anthologies. She contributes regularly to Kentucky Humanities and other periodicals. Stamper delivered an Agrarian Voices Lecture at The Berry Center in September 2023.

Stamper will guide the small workshop group in how to collect, write and shape personal stories. This workshop is open to 12 participants. Three of the 12 seats are specially reserved for Henry County or Owen County residents. The \$75 registration fee includes both days, instructional costs, a copy of Stamper's memoir Small Acreages: New and Collected Essays and light refreshments. Discounted enrollment is available for farmers and for residents of Henry and Owen Counties. Contact Shannon Boyd, Farm and Forest Institute Program Coordinator, for more information: 502-845-9200.

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