

OBITUARIES & NEWS

Janice Hamilton

Berea

Janice Stephenson Hamilton, fondly known as Jan among her loved ones, passed away peacefully on September 23, 2025, in her hometown of Berea, Kentucky. Born on December 5, 1931, to the late John "Jay" Wesley and Esther Claire Brandenburg Stephenson, she embraced the world with a creative spirit and a dedication to the community that would touch countless lives over her 93 years.

Jan's roots ran deep in Berea, as did her commitment to education. After graduating from Berea Foundation School, she broadened her horizons at Bowling Green University in Ohio before returning to her roots, where she completed her teaching degree at Berea College. She poured her energy and love into the next generation as a teacher for 20 years with the Berea Community School system. Her passion for learning and teaching shaped the lives of many students, who often remembered her fondly long after leaving her classroom.

Jan's artistic soul found expression through her love of basket weaving and poetry. She was a cherished member of Union Church, contributing to the community with her time, talent, and the beauty of her flower arrangements that adorned the sanctuary on Sundays. Her creative fingerprints can be found in every verse she wrote, every basket she crafted, and every bouquet she arranged. Music was woven through the fabric of her



life as well, with the piano being her faithful companion from grade school well into her golden years. She used this gift to bring joy to others, playing for residents at her nursing home with the same enthusiasm she once played for her friends and family.

Predeceased by her parents, her beloved husband, Bill Hamilton, Jr., and her sister-in-law, Anne Harper Stephenson, Jan's legacy continues through her loving family. She is survived by her cherished brother, John William Stephenson; her devoted children, Robin (Keith) Hamilton Ammons, Karen Hamilton Reed, and Stuart (Kyle) Hamilton; her adored grandchildren, Adria (Greg) Sutherland, Lindsay (Travis) Meyer, Patrick (Giovanna) Hamilton, Rachel (Stan) Nickell, and Christopher Reed; as well as her treasured great-grandchildren, Hamilton Meyer, Mattie Meyer, Rose Nickell, Asa Nickell, Ella Sutherland, Eva Sutherland, Urijah Reed, and Grayson Reed, who will all carry forward the memory of her warmth, her strength, and her boundless creativity. She is also survived by two sisters-in-law, Peggy Bicknell and Dolly Herdon, and brother-in-law, Richard Hamilton.

A Celebration of Life will be held at 3:00 PM, Sunday, September 28, 2025, at Lakes Funeral Home, with Pastor Kevin Slemp officiating. The family will be accepting friends from 2 pm to 3 pm. Condolences may be left for the family at www.lakesfuneralhome.com

Kentucky trails nation on new climate and health scorecard

SARAH LADD
KENTUCKY LANTERN

Kentuckians stand to lose more years off their lives due to power plant emissions than residents of almost any other state, according to a first of its kind national report released Thursday.

In the Commonwealth Fund's State Scorecard on Climate and Health, researchers ranked Kentucky as 50th overall among the 50 states and District of Columbia for health impacts of electricity generation emissions, flood risk posed to health care facilities, energy efficiency policies, health sector greenhouse gas emissions and more. Only West Virginia ranked lower.

Michael Seilback, the nationwide advocacy and state public policy expert at the American Lung Association, said the pollution in Kentucky's air contributes to asthma attacks, lung cancers and premature death.

Michael Seilback is the assistant vice president of state public policy for the American Lung Association. (Photo provided)

"When we turn on a light switch, we don't often think about where that energy is coming from," Seilback told the Lantern. "And what we're talking about here is that these power plants that are fueled from coal — the burning of that coal to produce energy produces massive amounts of emissions."

Kentucky's longstanding loyalty to coal is "a major contributor to the state's poor grade" in this report, Seilback said. About 68% of Kentucky's electricity generation came from coal in 2023, the third-largest share among the states after West Virginia and Wyoming, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

"Often we think about how much energy you're using in your house, and that's relevant, but the question is, 'where is that energy coming from?'" Seilback said. "If you were able to say all of Kentucky was being powered through wind, solar, hydropower, there would be less of a concern about using

electricity because you weren't producing all those emissions."

This report "should be another data point for decision makers to say 'we really need to move away from fossil fuels and towards green energy, which will improve the health of Kentucky residents,'" Seilback said.

Cabinet for Health and Family Services data shows 12,266 people visited emergency departments in Kentucky for asthma treatment in 2024. There were more than 1,000 hospitalizations, as well, and 34 deaths related to asthma that same year. Air pollution can cause asthma, according to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, as well as worsen its symptoms.

"The exposure to these pollutants are literally shortening people's lives," Seilback said.

Kentucky has the nation's highest rates of cancer and lung cancer.

Among the eight indicators on which each state was evaluated, Kentucky ranked best on risks facing health care facilities

from natural hazards, defined as vulnerability of health care facilities to natural hazards. "On average, health care facilities in Kentucky are located in areas facing less risk from natural hazards than facilities in other states," the report states.

At the same time, Kentucky's number of inpatient beds in high-hazard flood zones significantly raises the flood risk to the state's health care facilities, according to the report.

Hawaii ranked worst on health harms from electricity generation, the report said, because of the islands' high use of petroleum to generate power. Kentucky and West Virginia ranked next worst. The researchers quantified health effects of power plant pollution by using disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) — described as "a common measure of the burden of disease, representing years of healthy life lost" — to calculate "the standardized health burden for every unit of electricity generated."

"In Kentucky, emissions from

electricity generation result in more negative health impacts per unit of electricity than in other states," the report says. "Negative health impacts are represented by years of healthy life lost."

The commonwealth is joined by Louisiana and West Virginia as the worst-ranked states overall, meaning they "face more frequent and intense hazards and lack supportive energy and environmental policies."

The highest ranking states in the report are Vermont, New York and Washington, meaning those states "have lower environmental risk and vulnerability as well as stronger decarbonization and clean energy policies."



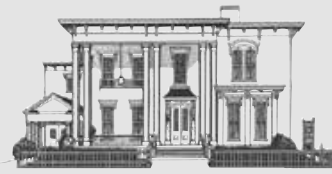
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