

# Looking Back At Webster County’s News, Newsmakers In 2025

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At their second meeting in June, the Webster County Fiscal Court approved a fund transfer to the Webster County Detention Center of offset a shortfall in payroll and the annual jail payment.

Carmon Ashby Todd, Gracyn Smith, and Maddie Wright were winners of beauty pageants held during the Sebree Summerfest in the first week of July. The 46th annual Sebree Firecracker Run was held on Friday, July 4. One person died on Sunday, July 13 as the result of a collision between a vehicle and a southbound CSX freight train. The Webster County Water District board met in July and discussed plans to work with the City of Providence on a water interconnect between the two utilities. The Clay City Council met in July and discussed the effect of Kentucky SB 63, which allows the use of special purpose vehicles on state roads. The July meeting of the Sebree City Council was canceled when a quorum was not present. One person was sentenced in Webster County Circuit Court in July.

Members of the Webster County Happy Feet committee were recognized at the Farm to Fork Dinner held in late July. The Farm of Fork Dinner helps fund the shoe program in Webster County. The event raised \$19,750 in 2025. The Sebree City Council met in a called session in July and accepted the 2024 audit report. The Webster County Fiscal Court scheduled a hearing for public comments concerning the approved 2025 tax rate of 18.3 cents per \$100.00 of assessed valuation. Because the rate is a four percent increase, the public hearing is mandated by state law.

At the annual meeting of the Webster County Farm Bureau, Jerry Don Winstead was recognized for his 50 years of service to the organization. Redbanks Colonial Terrace Nursing Home in Sebree received an excellent survey result in assessments conducted earlier in the summer. Teachers, administrators, and students were preparing for the opening of school in the second week of August. Kentucky VFW state leadership spent several hours in Providence on August2 conducting training for post commanders and quartermasters.

A lengthy article in The Sebree Banner on August 13 explained the decision-making concerning student cell phones in schools. New state regulations prohibit the possession of cell phones by students during class time. Two persons appeared before Judge Daniel Heady in August and entered pleas in Webster Circuit Court. The annual Hancock family reunion was held at Onton on August 10. Joan Hancock Wright was the oldest family member in attendance, and William Parker, a sixth generation descendant

of the family, was the youngest family member present. At the Webster County Board of Education work session in August, officials announced an autism unit will be added in the district as another method of meeting student needs.

On Sunday, August 24, the congregation of Onton United Methodist Church celebrated the church’s 205th homecoming. Six young ladies vied for the title of Webster County Distinguished Young Woman 2026 on August 16. The title was won by Raynei Roy. The Webster County grand jury convened in August and returned indictments against four persons. The Webster County Lady Trojans opened the 2025 soccer season with a match against Crittenden County. The Webster County Fiscal Court approved a bid for work on the Slaughters-Elmwood Road bridge in the amount of \$124,364. The court also approved a school resource officer contract. The Webster County Board of Education set the 2025 tax rate at 57 cents per \$100.00 of assessed valuation.

Annual end of summer celebrations in the communities of Poole and Onton were scheduled For September 5 and September 20. The Webster County Trojans played their first home game of the season on a newly renovated Trojan Field. The Trojans dropped a 42-12 decision to Muhlenberg County. Chris Goad was recognized by members of the Webster County Water District board for his 25 years of service to the district. The Webster County Fiscal Court learned in September the county will be the recipient of \$829,000 in road aid funds. The WC board of education heard a proposal for the construction of an additional greenhouse at the high school. Board members also received an overview of the district curriculum instructional plan.

Public health officials issued a warning in September that cooler weather brings with it more respiratory illness. That warning had merit as flu and flu-like illnesses have seen an increase as the year comes to an end. In late September and early October, The Sebree Banner ran a series of articles concerning the return of World War II veteran SSgt. Junior J. Shelton, who died on October 4, 1944 in action against Germany. His remains were identified earlier in the year, and on Saturday, October 4, 81 years after he died, his remains were returned to Sebree for burial. The Webster County Trojans got their first win of the season when they defeated Ohio County 22-20 in football action.

The Clay City Council met in October and approved second reading of an ordinance allowing the use of “side by side” vehicles on city streets. The Providence City Council set the 2025 tax rate at 50 cents per \$100.00 of

assessed valuation. The Webster County Lady Trojans volleyball team finished regular season play with a 20-5 record. At the October meeting of the board of education, Webster County safe school coordinator Zachary Lagrange was presented with a certificate of appreciation for his work in insuring the Webster County schools are meeting state requirements. The Webster County Trojans and Lady Trojans cross country teams qualified for the state cross country meet. Landon Higdon and Mayci Moore were medalists in the state meet. The Trojans finished eighth in a field of 33 teams, and the Lady Trojans were ninth as a team in a field of 28.

In an interview with a Sebree Banner reporter, Webster County Judge/Executive Steve Henry announced he would not seek re-election to another term. The Providence City Council met the first week of November and reviewed the audit report for fiscal year 2024. The Webster County Trojans football team ended regular season play with a 31-12 win over Todd County Central, the second win of the season for WCHS. The season ended one week later with a loss in the first round of the Class AAA playoffs.

Students at Sebree Elementary School participated in their annual Veterans Day parade on November 7. At Dixon, a Veterans Day parade was held on November 15. The Blackford bridge on KY 143 reopened after being closed by the state for several months. Test results were released in mid-November by the Kentucky Department of Education, and those results show Webster County Schools with growth in the latest assessment and accountability data. Adoption Day was celebrated in the Fifth Judicial District. The adoptive family of the year award went to John and Shannon Sheridan, who have adopted multiple children. That award was presented by Family Court Judge Brandi Rogers. The Webster County grand jury convened in November and returned indictments against seven individuals.

Webster County High School FFA students Alyssa Lovan, Hunter Redfern, and Saydee Cowan were recognized by the Hutson School of Agriculture at Murray State University for their leadership. The annual Sebree Christmas parade was held the final Saturday of November, the first of many holiday events held throughout the county. Those events were covered on the pages of The Sebree Banner in November and December. A food drive conducted by the student council at Sebree Elementary School collected more than 400 items which were delivered to the Sebree Christian Outreach Center.

The Webster County Trojans and Lady Trojans opened the

2025-2026 basketball season in the first week of December. The Trojans collected wins over Caldwell County and Heritage Christian Academy. The Lady Trojans split games with Caldwell County and Hopkinsville. United Community Bank announced in December its intention to purchase the Sebree branch of Sonata Bank. That purchase is expected to be completed during 2026. The candidate list of individuals seeking public office in the May 2026 primary election began to grow in mid-December. The December term of the Webster County grand jury returned indictments in five cases. The Webster County Board of Education met in December and heard updates concerning various projects underway in the school district.

Last week, five individuals and one team were inducted into the Webster County High School athletic hall of fame. Many businesses in Webster County used the pages of The Sebree Banner to offer their patrons holiday greetings. Basketball season is in full swing as both the Trojans and Lady Trojans had successful weeks on the court.

In another day, Webster County and the world will greet a new year. A year that brings with it hope . . . joy . . . perhaps prosperity. It is the hope of everyone at The Sebree Banner that 2026 will be a year of

kindness and compassion, happiness and fulfillment. Whatever the year brings, The Sebree Banner will be there to cover the news and newsmakers in 2026. Happy New Year!!

## Webster County Jailer’s Report

Webster County Jailer Greg Sauls reports inmates worked 1816 hours between December 14 and December 20, 2025. Hours worked include 520 hours at the detention center, 280 hours at the RCC, 80 hours mowing; 360 hours for Union County; 40 hours for the city of Clay; 40 hours for the city of Dixon; 160 hours for the city of Providence, 40 hours for recycling, 40 hours for the road department shop, 40 hours for the dog warden and 16 hours for Landon’s Hope,

The total jail population for the same period was 181 with 32 county inmates; 32 Union County inmates and 117 state prisoners.

Inmates participated in a number of DOC programs. Thirty-five inmates participated in Moral Recognition Therapy with one graduate; 32 participated

in Anger Management with one graduate; 18 participated in Thinking for Good and 16 participated in Untangling Relationships with one graduate’ Nine inmates participated in the GED classes.

Incarcerated during the same period were Jason Adams Katelynn Barker Tyress Battle Richard Bell Lacy Belt Mellody Braddam David Bryant Brandon Burcham Kent Clevenger Kenneth Coomes Geoffrey Deibler Pedro Francisco Taj Haggard Carroll Harris Diego Jimenez Austin Kautzman Nathan Kearby Lucas Kost Ceaairra McGill Skyler Patterson Dustin Roads Tyler Smith Sara Stuart

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