

The lifelong power of reading – and why to join a book club now

By Tim Janes
*Clark County Public Library
Board of Trustee*

As we grow older, we come to appreciate that some of the most important habits in life are also the simplest. Reading—whether a novel, a biography, a play, or even a newspaper column like this one—remains one of the most powerful tools we have to stay mentally sharp, engaged with the world, and connected to one another.

Countless studies affirm what many of us have long suspected: reading

strengthens our cognitive abilities. It keeps the mind active, agile, and curious. Just as physical exercise strengthens our bodies, reading strengthens the brain—improving memory, enhancing concentration, and sharpening critical thinking. In an age of abundant distractions, reading asks us to slow down, focus, and enjoy the pleasure of a well-told story or an elegantly crafted idea.

But beyond the personal benefits, reading enriches our social lives as well. Book groups—large or small, formal or infor-

mal—create space for conversation, laughter, debate, and the joy of discovering new perspectives. They remind us that reading is not only a solitary act but also a shared one. A book becomes a bridge, connecting us to others who found meaning, humor, or insight in the very same pages.

Fortunately for our community, there are wonderful opportunities right here at home for readers to gather.

The **Clark County Public Library** continues its proud tradition of

offering engaging, open-to-all book discussions. On **Tuesday, January 20, at 6 p.m.**, the library will host a discussion of *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare. This timeless exploration of grief, conscience, memory, and human frailty will be guided by Shakespeare aficionado **Mel Jackson**, whose passion for the Bard brings the text to life. *Hamlet* is available for checkout now at the Clark County Public Library, making it easy for new participants to join in.

For those who prefer a daytime gathering, the readers group at **Brooks**

Place will meet on **Tuesday, January 13, at 2 p.m.** to discuss *The Last Devil to Die* by Richard Osman. This witty and heartfelt mystery—part of the beloved Thursday Murder Club series—offers plenty to talk about: friendship, aging, bravery, and the humor that gets us through it all. Copies of *The Last Devil to Die* are also available at the Clark County Public Library for anyone who'd like to read along. The group will meet in the private dining room at Brooks Place, and new participants are more than welcome.

These gatherings remind us of something essential: reading is not just an activity; it's a lifeline—to learning, to imagination, and to one another. In every chapter we read and every discussion we share, we're strengthening not just our minds, but our community.

So dust off that book on your nightstand—or pick up a new one—and consider joining one of our local reading groups. Your next great conversation might be just a page turn away.

Fiscal Court review

By MATT CIZEK
Winchester Sun

The following are from official accounts of Clark County Fiscal Court meetings on Tuesday, November 26, and Tuesday, December 3.

NOV. 26
Magistrate Mark Miller was absent.

Motion made by Magistrate Chris Davis, seconded by Magistrate Dan Konstantopoulos, to approve the second reading of ordinance 2025-11 approving the change of zoning classification of the 120.718 acres, more or less, of the properties addressed at 1131 Van Meter Road, 1175 Van Meter Road and 2224 Rolling Hills Lane, Winchester, Kentucky, from agricultural (A-1) zoning to planned development (PD) zoning. All magistrates and Clark County Judge-Executive Les Yates voted yea.

Motion made by Magistrate Davis, seconded by Magistrate Konstantopoulos, to approve the second reading of ordinance 2025-12 approving the change of zoning classification of the 314.30 acre, more or less, portion of land located on the tract of land addressed at 2500

Mt. Sterling Road, Winchester, Kentucky, from agricultural zoning (A-1) to planned development (PD) zoning.

All magistrates and Judge voted yea.

Motion made by Magistrate Davis, seconded by Magistrate Robert Blanton, to approve the first reading of ordinance 2025-13 relating to the fiscal year 2025-26 annual budget thereof. Whereas the Clark County Fiscal Court has realized unbudgeted receipts from the following funds. Be it ordained by the Clark County Fiscal Court of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

All magistrates and Judge voted yea.

Motion made by Magistrate Blanton, seconded by Judge Yates, to approve awarding and distributing funds from the Blue Grass Community Foundation-Clark County Fiscal Court Community Fund to local charitable programs, but to table the money going to The Fund for Greater Lexington programs after the joint meeting with the city and county in January.

Magistrates Steve Craycraft, Ernest Pasley, Konstantopoulos, Davis, and Judge Yates voted no.

Motion made by Magistrate Davis, seconded by

Magistrate Konstantopoulos, to approve Order 2025-144 awarding and distributing funds from the Blue Grass Community Foundation-Clark County Fiscal Court Community Fund to local charitable programs.

Magistrate Blanton voted no. Motion carried 5-1.

Motion made by Magistrate Pasley, seconded by Magistrate Craycraft, to approve the purchase of a 2025 Chevrolet Tahoe for \$57,231.00 for the Clark County Fire Department.

Motion rescinded.
DECEMBER 3: SPECIAL CALLED MEETING

Magistrate Mark Miller was absent.

Discussions of the replacement of the Director of Human Resources and the new Finance Officer took place; no official action was taken.

Motion made by Magistrate Davis, seconded by Magistrate Pasley, to approve order 2025-146 approving and accepting the vehicle bid (\$57,231.00) from Bachman Commercial for the purchase of a vehicle for the Clark County Fire Department.

Magistrate Blanton voted no. Motion carried 5-1.

Dr. Rand Paul and Senator Blumenthal Reintroduce "The Temporary Family Visitation Act"

NEWS RELEASE

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) and Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) reintroduced the Temporary Family Visitation Act (TFVA) that would establish a new family-purpose immigrant visa classification under the existing B visa category. The bill would allow U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents to petition for certain close relatives to temporarily visit the United States.

Under the current system, family members of U.S. citizens and permanent residents may only apply to visit their relatives through B2 visas. While facilitating family reunions is one of the main pillars of the U.S. immigration policy, the current immigration law lacks a direct path for families to temporarily reunite for family purposes such as weddings, birthdays, graduations, funerals, and holidays.

If enacted, the Temporary Family Visitation Act would amend the Immigration and Nationality Act and will establish a separate nonimmigrant

classification under B visa category for family members of U.S. citizens and permanent residents who are residents of countries not included in the Visa Waiver Program for a duration of 90 days.

Additionally, TFVA promotes U.S. national interests by supporting the principle of family reunion while strengthening the economy and reducing unintended immigrant visa applications.

“The Temporary Family Visitation Act is a great step forward in allowing family members of U.S. citizens/permanent residents to responsibly visit the United States for memorable occasions such as weddings, births and graduations,” said Dr. Paul. “The legislation will strengthen our economy through indirect spending and has the support of a large coalition of groups who agree that it is time to allow family members to visit the United States under responsible enforcement mechanisms to ensure that applicants do not overstay their visa.”

“This legislation helps family members mark life’s biggest moments

together in person. Families who happen to live in different countries deserve the opportunity to come together and reunite with loved ones for meaningful events. The Temporary Family Visitation Act eases obstacles facing family members of Americans and allows families to experience special occasions together,” said Senator Blumenthal.

TFVA requires:

- The petitioner submit a declaration of financial support under section 213 of the Immigration and Nationality Act.
- The applicant obtains travel medical insurance or demonstrate existing insurance that covers international medical expenses.
- The applicant expresses intent to depart the United States at the end of their authorized stay.

These requirements dissuade visa overstays by prohibiting the petitioner from using the TFVA if they had previously sponsored a relative who overstayed the 90-day period of authorized admission, it will also provide financial assurance to the U.S. Government.

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AXYDLBAAXR is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

12-15 CRYPTOQUOTE

TLHLDYLC UJ R DXVOF XE

UVMUOROUXV OX EXCBLO

XNCJLAMLJ UV OFL JLCMUHL

XE XOFLCJ. — CXYLCO AXNUJ

JOLMLVJXV

Saturday's Cryptoquote: SHADOWS CANNOT SEE THEMSELVES IN THE MIRROR OF THE SUN. — EVA PERON

AXYDLBAAXR is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

12-16 CRYPTOQUOTE

ATQACT XEQ TSVQB GTTPWSJU

UEQRQCY SQP ZT WS KENHJT QM

NSBPEWSJ. — PEQGNU UQXTCC

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: DECEMBER IS A MONTH OF INVITATION TO FORGET OURSELVES IN THE SERVICE OF OTHERS. — ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

AXYDLBAAXR is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

12-17 CRYPTOQUOTE

ZSJLFLETP, QPRC EN LD NPP

XQJL FN LQPSP FBNLPJT DU

XQJL FNB'L. — JBBPLL

ASFTZPN

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: PEOPLE WHO ENJOY MEETINGS SHOULD NOT BE IN CHARGE OF ANYTHING. — THOMAS SOWELL