

Heart of Scottsville Recently Recognized By Kentucky Main Street



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The Heart of Scottsville with First Friday was recently named Kentucky Main Street's Best Main Street Large Event for 2026. Congratulations to Hannah Brooks, Lizzy Gardner and all the board members and volunteers for First Friday on this award.

By **Chris Cole**
 STAFF WRITER

Over the past several months, The Heart of Scottsville, our community's accredited Kentucky Main Street non-profit program, has received a lot of recognition. From being named a Top 3 Kentucky Main Street program by the governor's office (having brought in approximately \$750,000 in downtown tourism) to creating one of the most successful street fairs anywhere in the Commonwealth of Kentucky, it seems like the recognition doesn't stop.

Yet it's something that Executive Director Hannah Brooks and her board are both humbled by and strive to improve upon.

"We received an award for the best Main Street large event in 2026 from Kentucky Main Street and we're really proud of that, really excited because we're, by far, not the biggest community and there are other communities now who started doing their own versions of First Friday," stated Brooks. It was precisely for the First Friday events that The Heart of Scottsville got its most recent recognition.

When asked why First Friday has been so successful and what sets it apart from the other similar events, Brooks stated, "I think it's twofold really. One, we're a grassroots organization so we don't have a lot of resources until we have to get real creative with our resources. I think that's part of it. I think that tension creates a lot of opportunity for ingenuity."

"But I think the biggest thing is just the culture of this community, it's the identity of the community that we serve. We're not just a small, rural community. We are, in fact, really tight knit. We really do have strong ties and strong bonds not just for this community but with each other...it feels like a big family reunion."

Brooks had to admit

though that the initial idea for First Friday wasn't hers originally.

"It was based off a Third Thursday event in a town in South Carolina did that I was familiar with," she said. "Theirs was uniquely theirs. They're the birthplace of sweet tea and so one year they did a big thing. They got the Guinness Book of World Record for the largest pitcher of sweet tea. There were elements that we couldn't duplicate and even as it's grown we couldn't do exactly the same thing. So we built it around our community, what we had available and what mattered to our community."

Brooks went on to explain that having the participation of the local churches from the outset has been one of the most unique things that has set First Friday apart from the other street festivals along with highlighting gospel and worship music into the event.

It's also been the catalyst for Brooks and her team to be sought out at various Main Street conferences that they attend.

"Main Street is like one big family spread out across the state," Brooks said. "When we get together it's a lot of fun. We're checking in on each other, swapping ideas and trying to problem solve."

With The Heart of Scottsville becoming a model Kentucky Main Street organization, Brooks was asked if any of what she's learned about managing limited resources is something that other Kentucky Main Street organizations can easily duplicate.

Her answer was, "It's born out of a genuine love for this community. So when you love something, you want to see it through. You want to see it healthy and strong and doing well. We love this community. We love our business owners, we love our neighbors. That passion translates

into we're going to find a way to help. That's where it stems from. Genuinely we care about the people we're here to serve. So when we see a problem, we're going to do our level best to find a way to solve it."

Brooks also credited the team and the board that makes The Heart of Scottsville what it is.

"Our capacity depends on our team. We can have all the great ideas in the world but if we don't have a good, strong team to execute that, it won't do us any good."

Brooks gave immediate credit to her assistant, Lizzy Gardner, for helping shape First Friday into being recognized as the best Main Street large event 2026.

"Lizzy has been a tremendous asset," stated Brooks. "She came on as a part-time executive assistant and quickly stepped in to coordinate First Fridays. She manages our vendor team and she's done such a great job that, predominantly, First Fridays is hers now. We let her run the show."

And over the last couple years, First Friday has grown from having just a handful of vendors that would take up space in a couple of the quadrants of the Square to now the street is shut down and there's a waiting list for the vendors.

It's not just Lizzy Gardner though.

"Over the last couple of years, our board dynamics has shifted into more of a working board," explained Brooks. "Our board has always been great about brainstorming and problem solving things. This board is the most active for volunteering for First Fridays and helping."

Brooks then conveyed a story about going to Nissan Stadium in Nashville recently to volunteer as part of a Chris Stapleton concert. "It was hard

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Feline Trap, Neuter and Release Contract Approved

By **H.D. Overholt**
 STAFF REPORTER

Allen County Fiscal Court met Tuesday, June 9, 2026 at 9 a.m. in the City-County Building Fiscal Court Room, 201 West Main Street with Judge-Executive Dennis Harper presiding and Magistrates Anthony Thompson and Ricky Cooksey were absent.

The May 26, 2026 minutes were approved with no corrections or additions noted.

Bills list was presented and approved along with a transfer of funds from general account to Jail Account (\$57,000) and \$55,000 to Road Fund Special Reserve.

The Allen County proposed 2026-2027 budget received second reading and includes a four percent raise for county employees. The Kentucky Department of Local Government has reviewed and approved the budget as presented.

Transfer of Appropriations involving Wilkerson Road Bridge in Western Allen County of \$97,407 with a 80/20 percent Kentucky Transportation grant was approved, including Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) \$15,000 from past flood damage in 2025. Kentucky funding will be received upon completion and filing of costs.

Allen County Chief Deputy Sheriff Travis Adams presented April's activity report within the department including 25 alcohol, 37 accidents, 17 alarm calls, eight domestic violence, 18 motorist assists, 27 welfare checks, 105 civil summons served, 35 subpoenas, 25 warrants served and seven transports with a total of 765 calls for service. The Sheriff's 2025 Tax Settlement and 2025 Franchise Tax Settlement was approved pending state audits. Chief Deputy Sheriff Adams related the receipt of grants for new firearms (\$17,000) and 18 sets of body armor (\$45,000-\$50,000) with magistrate approval. A welcome is extended with new Certified Officer Cameron Wilson hiring and he will begin immediately.

Allen County Jailer Tim Meador was at training in Owensboro Ky. Kimo Butler was hired as deputy jailer position and had been employed in the past within the Detention Center. A billing of Kentucky State inmates (\$52,055) has been filed and eight ankle monitor clients were reported in May. Community Service has collected 27,900 pounds trash with clean up of 14 dumps and 73 tires collection since the year began.

Magistrates were requested to submit their road paving list needs. The 400 miles of county rights-of-way mowing first round was just about completed. The bid for winter road salt with Kentucky Association of Counties was \$149 per ton, an increase of \$30 over 2025 bid.

Transfer Station Director Derek Isenberg related Allen County

Transfer Station can only receive local residence trash and public notice is being implemented at the station.

Magistrates approved purchasing a loader with a state contract McCoy Recycling Grant of \$89,987. The Infiltration Project is ready for bid when contract is signed. The state mandated concrete pad engineering planning stage is completed and ready for construction to control leaching of rainwater and liquids into surrounding environment.

Shelter Director Johnathan Carter reported May daily average housing of dogs at 26 and cats at 11 with no dogs and six cat euthanasia. Released to Warren County Humane Society were 35 dogs and 12 cats with 27 city runs and 61 county runs.

Magistrates approved an inter-local agreement with Bowling Green Warren County (BGWC) Humane Society for conducting Trap, Neuter and Release cat program in Allen County with \$8,500 in grant funds. The BGWC Humane Society can conduct the program for about \$10 per cat as apposed to \$100 per with local society.

A review of Local Ordinance of License indicated a raise in fee structure was needed since it has been 15 years since the last review. Magistrates will address the License rates at next meeting.

Magistrates approved a 500-pound stocking of fish at Allen County Park pond for catch and release.

Magistrates approved \$18,000 with North Central Telephone Cooperative for a new system of updating technology with the county facilities along with an additional \$100 per month for Allen County Attorney's office

Emergency Director Gary Petty reported the last phase of DR-4913 involving FEMA Storm 25 application category C (county resources cost) was approved involving \$43,000. A declaration has been issued for Allen County with Storm Fern in February 2026 and filing of application of storm costs has been sent to FEMA.

Upon receiving additional comments, opportunity after the business agenda was completed, Rob Herrington asked for time to receive financial aspects of the new Allen County Park in the White Plains area.

Questions for exact financial expenditures were not available on the spur of the moment and Judge-Executive Harper related any input should be presented in writing and they will be supplied. Oral questions concerning paved driveway, restrooms and concession building was presented and Judge-Executive Harper related the two-phase construction project was being developed, including the amenities named.

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