



The Crittenden Press

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TWO DOLLARS

Permanent Saving House approves plan to stop clock changes

The U.S. House passed legislation last week that would make daylight saving time permanent, ending the twice-a-year changing of clocks. The Sunshine Protection Act passed 308-117 with support from the White House. The Senate must also approve the measure before it can be sent to the president. Supporters say permanent daylight saving time would provide more evening daylight for families, outdoor activities and businesses. Opponents warn it would create darker winter mornings, potentially affecting children waiting for school buses and commuters traveling to work. States could opt out and remain on standard time if their legislatures act before the bill takes effect. A 2025 Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research poll found 56% of adults preferred permanent daylight saving time, while about 4 in 10 favored permanent standard time.



Events begin this week

Coming up this weekend at the Crittenden County Fair will be Saturday night's truck and tractor pull. Gate fee is \$15 for 16-up and \$5 for ages 6-15. Under 5 is free. The event kicks off at 6 p.m.

On Monday, entries for 4-H exhibits will be taken from 2-5 p.m., at the fairgrounds. Those will be inside the Lions Club Agriculture Building and the exhibits will be open for viewing next Wednesday from 1-6 p.m., and Thursday from 11 a.m., to 3 p.m. Fair activities will continue into next weekend with the annual fair breakfast, poultry show, Friday Family Night and the demo derby and car show on Saturday, Aug. 1.

Special court meetings

Crittenden County Fiscal Court will hold a special-called meeting at 4 p.m. Thursday, July 30 at the County Office Complex for the primary purpose of awarding a contract for the Mexico Road bridge replacement project. As part of the same meeting, the court will hold a public hearing to receive public comments regarding a proposed ordinance, which would establish an electrical inspection fee schedule. Crittenden County Fiscal Court will hold a special-called meeting at 4 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 5 for the primary purpose of awarding a contract for the Nunn Switch Road bridge replacement project.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- Crittenden County Board of Education will meet at 5:30 p.m., Thursday, July 23, at Rocket Arena.
- Crittenden-Livingston Water District will meet at 4 p.m., Monday, July 27, at Deer Lakes meeting room.
- Livingston Fiscal Court will meet at 5 p.m., Tuesday, July 28, at the county office complex in Smithland.
- Caldwell County Fiscal Court will meet at 9 a.m., Tuesday, July 28, at the courthouse.
- Crittenden County Public Library Board will meet at 5 p.m., Thursday, July 30, at the library.

Tourism is suffering on both sides, Hayes says Legislators working toward a settlement over ferry closure

STAFF REPORT

Efforts to restore service on the Cave-In-Rock Ferry have taken a step forward over the past few days as lawmakers from Kentucky and Illinois discussed a potential solution to the contract impasse, even as the continued closure stifles tourism and disrupts longstanding ties between communities on both sides of the Ohio River.

Crittenden County Judge-Executive Perry Newcom said legislators from both states spoke directly during a conference call Friday about a proposal offered by Illinois officials. He said the parties tentatively agreed to pursue the option, with Kentucky lawmakers taking it to Frankfort for consideration and Illinois legislators doing the same in Springfield.

Newcom said he is hopeful progress is being made but remains guardedly optimistic that a compromise can be reached soon.

The ferry ceased operations June 30 after Kentucky, Illinois and ferry operator Lonnie Lewis failed to agree on a new operating contract. It has remained closed since July 1.

The crossing provides a direct connection between Crittenden County, Ky., and



Hardin County, Ill. Its loss is forcing commuters, tourists, businesses and vendors to make considerably longer trips between the two states.

Stephanie Hayes, chairwoman of the Rosiclare Fluorspar Festival Committee and a member of a Hardin County Tourism Committee, said the ferry is a transportation lifeline for both sides of the river.

"That ferry is just a key connection between western Kentucky and Hardin County," Hayes said. "I think we'll probably see a noticeable impact if it does remain closed."

Among the Illinois attractions likely to suffer are Cave-In-Rock State Park

and Garden of the Gods, both popular destinations for Kentucky visitors. Cave-In-Rock recently completed improvements to its campground as part of an effort to attract more tourists.

"I think that town is going to really see some decline if we do not get that ferry up and going," Hayes said.

The closure also comes as communities on both sides of the Ohio River prepare to celebrate their shared fluorspar-mining heritage.

The Ben E. Clement Mineral Museum in Marion will host an event Aug. 8 commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Hudson

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Babel gets taller by day

I caught myself talking to my phone the other day. Not calling someone. Talking to the phone itself. "What is this?" "Who made this?" "Summarize this document." "Remind me to do this tomorrow."

The scary part wasn't that it answered. The scary part was how natural it has become.

A few years ago we'd have laughed at the thought of totting around a machine that could carry on a conversation, write a letter, identify an antique, diagnose a strange engine noise, or translate another language before the coffee got cold. Now, we're disappointed if it takes more than a few seconds.

I've been thinking a great deal lately about where these smartphones are taking us, and I'm not sure we're headed in the direction we think we are.

The Bible tells the story of the Tower of Babel, where people became so convinced of their own power that they decided to build a tower reaching to heaven. Because of punishment for their boldness – or one might say an immortal checks and balances system – their language was purposefully confused by God, and suddenly they couldn't understand one another.

Sometimes I wonder if we're building a modern version of that tower. Only this one isn't made of bricks. It's built from silicon chips, fiber-optic cable and artificial intelligence.

Don't misunderstand me. I'm not anti-technology. I fear not AI. I make my living using technology. Computers, digital cameras and the internet have transformed the newspaper business. Artificial intelligence has become another tool in that toolbox. Used wisely, it's remarkable. It helps organize information, speeds up research and can take care of tedious tasks that once consumed hours.

But tools have a way of becoming masters if we're not paying attention.

The next generation of smartphones won't simply answer questions. They'll make appointments, write emails, pay bills, edit videos, summarize meetings and probably remind us to call Mom on her birthday. Before long, we may spend more time talking to a computer than we do another human being. Not sure we haven't already arrived.

It makes me a bit uneasy. Conversation has always been about more than exchanging information. It's about reading the smile across the table, hearing the pause before someone answers, shaking a hand after a disagreement or sitting quietly beside someone who doesn't need advice nearly as much as they need company.

No matter how intelligent a machine becomes, it can't replace that. I also wonder what happens when we stop exercising our own minds. We already don't remember phone numbers because our devices do it for us. We don't memorize directions because GPS handles that. Soon we may not write, research or even wrestle with problems because our phones will gladly do those jobs, too.

Convenience is a wonderful servant, but it's a terrible substitute for wisdom.

I'm old enough to remember when folks gathered on the



Chris EVANS
Press Editor & Publisher
About Town

Struggles continue into new fiscal year

STAFF REPORT

Crittenden Fiscal Court met last week with the county's financial situation showing no improvement as it has moved into a new fiscal year. The jail continues to struggle and the road department awaits anticipated state and federal funding.

The court also addressed several other matters during its regular monthly meeting and scheduled special meetings July 30 to award the Mexico Road bridge project, which has been closed for more than a year and Aug. 5 to award the Nunn Switch Road bridge project, where the span has been reduced to a three-ton weight limit.

Additionally, the Crittenden County Sheriff's Office is without a school resource officer following the resignation of Deputy James Duncan.

Duncan, who was hired in fall 2023 to become an SRO, went on paid leave April 2 following the line-of-duty death of the school district's

CRITTENDEN COUNTY Fiscal Court



The jail population continues to dwindle, taking a toll on the county's general fund. File photo from inside Crittenden County Detention Center.

other SRO, Rick Coyle. Duncan was on assignment with Coyle when the incident that led to Coyle's death occurred.

The sheriff's office is conducting the first phase of its

hiring process for court security officers and SRO candidates. The department currently has six court security officers but will need

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CCEDC retires 21-year old park debt

STAFF REPORT

Crittenden County Economic Development Corporation is officially debt-free after paying off a loan that had been tied to its Industrial Park North property for more than two decades.

"We can celebrate now," CCEDC Chairman Chris Cook told members in recent correspondence. "We are officially debt-free now with \$20,615.90 in the bank."

Cook said the organization received confirmation Friday that its Kentucky Economic Development Finance Authority loan payoff had been processed.

The CCEDC borrowed \$300,000 through the state



Marion's wastewater treatment plant is an occupant at Industrial Park North.

economic development agency to purchase 105 acres on the north side of Marion on Jan. 1, 2005. The property, formerly used by Tyson Foods for chicken broiler operations, was acquired for \$272,500, with the loan also covering clos-

ing and related expenses.

For the loan's first 10 years, the organization paid 2% interest or about \$6,000 annually without making payments toward the principal. When the financing was extended, the CCEDC began paying \$250 per month toward principal in addition to interest.

Much of the remaining debt was ultimately satisfied through sales of portions of the property. The most recent transaction came in June when neighboring Riley Land Company acquired the final parcels. Riley owns the former Kentuckiana Livestock Market

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