

Student spotlight: Esther Gundorin – Beauty with a purpose

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Esther Gundorin is a student at Campbellsville University Harrodsburg's School of Cosmetology. She has dreamed of becoming a cosmetologist since she was a little girl.

Esther grew up in a large family with five brothers and six sisters. One of her older sisters would often help her with her hair as they prepared for church on Sundays. Gundorin remembers the loving care her sister showed her and how beautiful it made her feel inside.

"I just knew in my heart that God had created me to help others feel beautiful—especially on the inside," she shared. "As I grew older, I began helping my sisters with their hair, and it was such a unique experience."

Gundorin graduated from homeschooling at 16 and worked several part-time jobs, but she always felt called to pursue her dream. She initially enrolled in a cosmetology school in Somerset, but when her family began preparing to move from Liberty to Florida, she had to withdraw and post-

pone her plans. After much prayer, Gundorin's family decided that God's plan was for them to remain in Kentucky. When she learned about the cosmetology program in Harrodsburg and realized it was a shorter drive, she decided to enroll in the School of Cosmetology at Campbellsville University Harrodsburg.

"I prayed about this. I didn't want to pursue it unless God truly had His hand in it," said Gundorin.

Gundorin says her family's support has meant everything to her.

"My family lineage is Russian and Ukrainian. My parents immigrated to the United States in 1995 with nothing. They are humble and loving people with an incredible work ethic," she shared. "They are strong in their faith and knew that by moving to America, they would not be persecuted for their religious beliefs and values. God walked with them throughout their journey to the United States. I still have family in Ukraine, and they are always in my prayers."

Gundorin is scheduled to graduate from the School of Cosmetology at CU-Har-



Dan Yates/CU-Harrodsburg Cosmetology Instructor Andromedia Warner, left, has helping Esther Gundorin realize her dream of becoming a beautician.

rodsburg in September. She is especially grateful for her instructor, Ms. Andromedia Warner.

"Ms. Andro helps us walk within our purpose," Esther said.

"Esther has a sweet, sweet spirit," said Warner.

After graduation, Gundorin plans to use her talents in hair, nails and skin care as a ministry.

"I love the whole trans-

formation—the before and after—and the beauty of the process," Esther said. "I want to make people feel beautiful inside and out, just like I felt when my sisters helped me with my hair. I want to listen to their stories because everyone has a story. I also want to share the love that I have received. I want people to know that we need Jesus—we all need Jesus."

Former

\$200—\$100 for operating a dirty kennel and \$100 for not having an up-to-date kennel license. Aubrey also signed a waiver to not hold Mercer Animal Control liable, according to court records.

Aubrey had originally been indicted on 29 class A misdemeanor counts of complicity to commit 2nd degree animal cruelty. Those counts were dismissed, according to court records. Her jury trial had been scheduled to begin on March 27, at 9 a.m. in Mercer County District Court. "Karen has helped take care of animals for decades," said Brandi Lewis, an attorney with Baldani Law Group in Lexington who represents Aubrey. "This certainly wasn't an issue of animal cruelty on her part. That's reflected in the county attorney's amendment of the cruelty charges to violation of a county ordinance."

Four people—including Aubrey—were indicted in 2024 after police searched a Salvisa residence in August of that year.

In addition to Aubrey, Gabriella A. Follmer and Amanda G. Coontz were also indicted on multiple misdemeanor charges for intentionally or wantonly subjecting an animal to cruel treatment

"through failing to provide adequate space, health and care and by subjecting the animal to cruel neglect," according to the original indictments. Gabriella Follmer was indicted on charges of 1st degree possession of methamphetamine and torture of a dog, both class D felonies, and 30 class A misdemeanors: one count of possession of drug paraphernalia and 29

counts of 2nd degree animal cruelty. Follmer was sentenced to two years on the felony controlled substance possession charge. The felony complicity to torture a dog or cat charge against her was dismissed. She was sentenced to 12 months, with probation for 2 years, on the misdemeanor charges, according to the Circuit Court Clerk's Office.

Amanda Coontz was also indicted on a charge of 1st degree trafficking in methamphetamine, a class C felony; torture of a dog, a class D felony; and 30 class A misdemeanors: one count of possession of drug paraphernalia and 29 counts of 2nd degree animal cruelty. Coontz entered a guilty plea and was released to treatment. She is set for final sentencing on June 3, according to the Circuit Court Clerk's Office.

Kenneth Brawner was indicted on a charge of 1st degree trafficking in methamphetamine, a class B felony, and possession of drug paraphernalia, a class A misdemeanor. Brawner is set for a pretrial conference on April 8, according to the Circuit Court Clerk's Office.

The indictments stemmed from a search warrant executed by police at a residence at 2595 Oregon Road in Salvisa on Sunday, Aug. 25, 2024.

The animals were taken to the Mercer County Animal Shelter and the Mercer County Humane Society.

Aubrey resigned as president and as a volunteer with the Mercer Humane Society Board on Aug. 28, 2024.

At the time of her indictment, the Mercer Humane Society Board of Directors

said they were closely following the matter related to the nine dogs from the humane society, which were kept at the house in Salvisa, which they called a kennel owned by Aubrey.

"Throughout the year, those MHS dogs were taken to special events, including Bark in the Park, the Kentucky Heritage Jazz Festival, Shaker Village events, other festivals, as well as adoption events," the board said in a 2024 statement. "They were also made available at the MHS office for meet and greet with prospective adopters. All nine dogs were happy, clean, and in excellent condition. All nine had been vetted, neutered or spayed. Any other dogs found at the facility belonged to an outside occupant, which may have caused a temporary overcrowding situation."

"The humane society has been providing shelter and care for neglected, abused, and abandoned animals for more than 50 years and continues to be committed to rehabilitating them and connecting them with their forever homes," the board said in the statement.

According to the board, Aubrey has been dedicated to helping animals in need for more than three decades.

"Those who have volunteered with her or who have been helped by her know that she is a wonderful and caring person who would never do harm to any animal," the board said. "She has actually nursed all of the animals that came to her tortured, abused and starving, back to good health. She has advocated for the animals and been involved



Photo Submitted

Mercer Students Receive Scholarships for Dual Credit

Fourteen students from Mercer County Senior High School were recently awarded a total of \$4,365 through the Mercer County Community Dual Credit Scholarship Program. Sponsored by Mrs. Carol Conover, the scholarship is awarded to Burgin Independent School, Mercer County Senior High School, or Mercer County homeschooled students who are enrolled in dual credit classes at Campbellsville University Harrodsburg. During the 2025–2026 school year, the scholarship program has awarded a total of \$21,908.00 to 51 students. "Thanks to the generosity of Carol Conover, Mercer County high school students are able to earn college credit through Campbellsville University Harrodsburg while still in high school. Her investment in local students is truly an investment in the future of our community," stated Kimberly Steele, Director, Conover Education Center, Campbellsville University Harrodsburg.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Preserve Farm Lands
Dear Editor:

This message is addressed to the people of Mercer County. I am a private citizen with a love for the people and the area where we have been blessed to live. I have loved our children in the public schools here as a teacher in both Harrodsburg Independent and Mercer County High School, seeing the great potential in our children and nurturing it with the best of my ability.

Because of my heart for this land and its children, I grieve for those who want a career in agriculture right now. The Mercer and Burgin Future Farmers of America chapters were recently honored by the Fiscal Court, and rightfully so. Farmers are and have been the backbone of our community. Not only do they feed us, in my experi-

ence, but they have also been a moral compass and guiding force for us all. As I looked at the young people in their FFA jackets, I wondered if their dreams were about to be shattered by the greed of a few. Would their farmland all over the county be denigrated by new technology that has no production value but defiles our water, soil and air?

Why not, instead, take the tax exemptions that the state is promising over 15 years (taxpayer money, in the final analysis) and put that into help for agriculture? For schools? For infrastructure?

Say yes to farming and no to data centers. There are better solutions for all of us, well, almost all of us.

Sincerely,
Betty Dean
Harrodsburg

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following births are recorded at Ephraim McDowell Regional Medical Center in Danville:

- Feb. 13, a son, Jonathan Leo Frey, born to Brooklyn and Jontorri Frey of Danville;
- Feb. 14, a son, Thomas Ray Stevens, born to Hannah and Dakota Stevens of Danville;
- Feb. 20, a daughter, Sherry Valencia Wright, born to Kaitlyn and Matthew Wright of Lancaster;
- Feb. 20, a daughter, Emersyn Jo Miller, born to

Lorie Devine and Robert Miller of Danville;

- Feb. 23, a daughter, Armani M. Daniels, born to Ariel Flora of Danville;
- Feb. 24, a daughter, Aaliyah Jade Skye Lopez, born to Breanna Campbell and Martin Lopez of Harrodsburg;
- Feb. 24, a son, Jacob Darrel Morgan, born to Cassidy Allen and James Morgan of Waynesburg;
- Feb. 25, a son, Jericko Akari Lee Brock, born to Mallery Reynolds and Gregory Brock of Danville.

Join the Mackville Boosters for a Gospel Music Gathering

Mackville Boosters

Maria Wheeler & Barbara Best
Guest Columnist

Stay healthy and check on neighbors!

The Mackville Boosters will have another hot meal at noon on Wednesdays. The cost is \$6.

The Washington County Public Library Bookmobile will come on March 18. It comes every other Wednesday at noon to the Mackville Community Center.

The next drive-thru dinner meal will be on Saturday, April 18. The meals are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children 10 and younger.

We still have Mackville Cookbooks for sale. They are \$8 each.

Join us for a soul-stirring Gospel Music Gathering on Saturday, March 21, from 1 p.m. to 9 p.m. To schedule a time, call Nelson Reynolds at 859-319-8373.

Prayer concerns for Nancy Tatum, Ken Young, Barbara Ward, Tommy Bartley and Norman Byrd.

Mackville sympathy goes to the family of Gail Blackwell.

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that Lake Village Water Association, Inc. expects to file an application with the Public Service Commission on or about March 12, 2026, seeking approval of a proposed adjustment to its rates for water service. The proposed rates shall not become effective until the Public Service Commission has issued an order approving these rates or six (6) months from the date of the filing of the application, whichever occurs first.

CURRENT AND PROPOSED RATES LAKE VILLAGE WATER ASSOCIATION

RETAIL RATES

Rate per Thousand Gallons per Month	Current	Proposed	Difference
First 2,000 gallons	\$30.37	\$33.08 Minimum Bill	\$2.71 8.9%
Next 18,000 gallons	\$11.88	\$12.94 Per 1,000 gallons	\$1.06 8.9%
Over 20,000 gallons	\$9.64	\$10.50 Per 1,000 gallons	\$.86 8.9%

WHOLESALE RATES

per Month	Current	Proposed	Difference
For all Water Sold	\$4.76	\$5.18 Per 1,000 gallons	\$.42 8.8%

WATER LOSS REDUCTION SURCHARGE

Amount per Customer per month	Current	Proposed	Difference
	\$1.61	\$1.61	\$0 0.0%

If the Public Service Commission approves the proposed water rates, then the effect on the average monthly bill for each customer class is set out in the table below.

Customer	Avg. Usage	Existing Bill	Difference	Change	Percentage
Retail Customer	4,000	\$54.13	\$58.96	\$4.83	8.9%
Wholesale Customer	4,700,000	\$22,372.00	\$24,346.00	\$1,974.00	8.8%

The Application may be examined at the utility's office located at 801 Pleasant Hill Dr., Burgin, Ky; telephone (859) 748-5642.

The rates contained in this notice are the rates proposed by the utility. However, the PSC may order rates to be charged that differ from the proposed rates contained in this notice.

A person may examine this application at the Public Service Commission offices located at 211 Sower Boulevard, Frankfort, Kentucky, 40601, Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm or through the PSC website at <http://psc.ky.gov>. Comments regarding the application may be submitted to the PSC through its website or by mail to the Public Service Commission, Post Office Box 615, Frankfort, KY 40602. You may contact the Public Service Commission at (502) 564-3940.

A person may submit a timely written request for intervention to the Public Service Commission, Post Office Box 615, Frankfort, KY 40602, establishing the grounds for the request including the status and interest of the party. If the Public Service Commission does not receive a written request for intervention within thirty (30) days of the initial publication of this notice, the Public Service Commission may take final action on the application.