

# Looking back to April 30, 2018

Written by Christy Hoots

The following information was entered into the April 30, 2018, edition of The Ledger Independent:

## Picnic table served up by BCHS students

**BROOKSVILLE** — Bracken County High School will be represented on the Purple People Bridge in Northern Kentucky this summer.

Students on the superintendent's council, and some with the art program, recently designed and painted a picnic table that will sit on the bridge, along with 50 other tables. While the table is on display, those walking by can stop and vote on their favorite design.

Superintendent Jeff Aulick said Children's, Inc. put the school district's name in for a grant that would allow it to purchase one of the tables for the project.

"They put our name in for it," he said. "I believe there is only one other school participating. The rest are organizations, townships and companies. The requirement was that the table represent whatever organization you were with, so you had to come up with a design that told who you were."

According to BCHS senior Colton Jones, the table will also be on the bridge during the Flying Pig Marathon and voted on by the participants.

"They'll vote for their favorite table at the run," he said.

BCHS/BCMS art teacher Chris Yelton was with the students when they painted the table in Covington.

"Several students participated in designing and painting the table," Yelton said. "We're really proud of the job they did. The table looks great."

Yelton said the students arrived around 8 a.m. on April 21 at a warehouse in Covington. When they left, the table remained at the warehouse and will be moved to the bridge.

"They put everything together in just a few hours," Yelton said. "They wanted to represent as much of the

school and the community as possible."

Two BCHS students, Mya Sharp and Tamiyah Moran, came up with the design for the table, but were unable to participate in the painting.

The design includes an outline of Bracken County and symbols from different BCHS programs.

Sharp said they were asked to complete the design by the superintendent's council and thought it would be a good chance to incorporate several aspects of Bracken County and the high school.

"We wanted to include some of the sports and activities we have at the high school," Sharp said. "We thought it was

important to include all of the major activities, such as basketball, drama, FCCLA, FBLA and others, but also include some of the activities that can sometimes be overlooked. I think it turned out pretty well."

Moran said the two gave the design outline, along with notes, to the superintendent's council, which was able to paint the table based on the design.

"We also had them each to put a hand print on the table when they were finished," Moran said. "We wanted to show that even though we came up with the design, they were the ones who created it. Everyone did this together."

"We were one of three schools from Northern Kentucky chosen to participate," Jones said. "It was a great experience to be able to paint the table that day and to see the design come to life. We had others who created the design, and there were several of us who painted it. We were able to incorporate so much of our school and county in the design."

Aulick said he was proud of the student's design.

"The table looks awesome," he said. "I'm so proud of the students on their hard work and what they've created."

Aulick said the winners will be announced at the picnic on June 16.

## McCormack in The Washington Post: Why is the Pentagon holding up Ukraine funds?

Submitted by the Office of Senator Mitch McCormack

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Senator Mitch McCormack (R-KY), Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, submitted the following op-ed published in The Washington Post regarding Ukraine:

Headlines often say that Americans don't support U.S. aid to Ukraine, but real Americans say otherwise. They have consistently affirmed that Washington should aid Kyiv in resisting Russian aggression. Congress last year acted on that wish: Republican majorities on both armed services committees authorized \$400 million for the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative for each of the next two years. Appropriators fully funded that authorization for fiscal 2026 with overwhelming support.

Yet the Ukraine aid we passed months ago is now collecting dust

at the Pentagon. When Senate appropriators have sought an explanation from the department's policy shop, led by Undersecretary Elbridge Colby, they've been stonewalled. Our colleagues on armed services have also expressed growing frustration with the Defense Department's inability to communicate.

This doesn't seem to be a first for Colby. Last year, he was reportedly behind the decision to suspend arms shipments to Kyiv — a decision that one source said caught Trump "flat-footed." Colby also determined that security assistance to Ukraine and America's NATO allies in the Baltics was "wasteful" and removed these long-standing efforts from the fiscal 2026 budget request. Republican majorities disagreed and restored the funds. We did so not out of charity but because aiding Ukraine is an investment in America's security.

In the first two years of the full-scale war, support for Ukraine drove billions

of dollars in investments in the U.S. defense industrial base. Even amid the Biden administration's anemic response, Senate appropriators used supplemental funding bills to expand production capacity for critical munitions and components like solid rocket motors. Congress also exceeded the Trump administration's request in the fiscal 2026 defense appropriations bill to build on that progress and address long-standing munitions shortfalls. Pentagon officials who embraced a continuing resolution last year — and a fiscal 2026 budget request that wouldn't have come close to maximizing U.S. production capacity — therefore needn't lecture us about limited supplies.

President Donald Trump's focus on ending the war is noble. But the price and stability of peace matter. The Pentagon's approach of withholding or slow-rolling support to Ukraine is in effect the same strategy President Joe Biden

deployed. Never mind that hesitating to give Ukraine what it needs weakens its capacity to defend against aggression and hampers the prospects of diplomacy.

Pentagon officials seem to have retained other self-defeating policies too. Army Secretary Dan Driscoll and then-Army Chief of Staff Gen. Randy George visited Ukraine last year to see firsthand the rapid evolution of battlefield tactics and technologies. Driscoll described it as the "Silicon Valley of warfare" and recently said the country has "done an amazing job innovating." But he and Gen. George are among the few senior officials to have made the journey.

I know other officers who are eager to apply Ukrainians' counter-drone and electronic warfare lessons to the U.S. Army's preparations for future conflicts. They can't learn from a war, however, if they can't properly observe it. The Pentagon nevertheless continues a Biden

administration policy of significantly capping the number of military trainers authorized to assist Ukraine and witness the conflict up close.

Whether by policy or by choice, top Pentagon officials responsible for Ukraine policy, including the head of the U.S. European Command, haven't made the trip. The president's special envoy in charge of negotiations evidently hasn't either, even though he's been to Moscow multiple times.

America's adversaries aren't so willfully ignorant about the modern battlefield. They are learning and adapting. Iran has made that painfully clear in its attacks on U.S. personnel and facilities in the Persian Gulf, which applied drone capabilities honed by Russia with deadly effect. North Korea has likewise gotten involved, sending troops to Russia not out of charity but for tactical experience and closer alignment with Moscow. China is doubtless watching events in Ukraine and

the Middle East closely as it refines its military investments and plans.

We're already paying a price for inaction. The Biden and Trump administrations have both failed to take advantage of Ukraine's advances in drone and counter-drone technology. Militaries, including our own, are now scrambling to get those proven systems to the Mideast to better defend against Iranian strikes.

Meantime, the Pentagon still won't tell us why it hasn't obligated and executed modest Ukraine investments. If we're serious about "drone dominance," we shouldn't sandbag a relationship with the world's foremost drone experts. And if we're keen on remaining the world's preeminent superpower, we shouldn't let unelected defense officials undermine U.S. leadership and obstruct deepening ties with Ukraine's innovative military and industrial base. What gives?

## AG's Office Secures 5-Year Sentence in Eastern Kentucky Shooting

Submitted by the Office of Attorney General Russell Coleman

FRANKFORT, Ky. (April 29, 2026) — Attorney General Russell Coleman announced a guilty plea today for a Breathitt County man involved in a shooting last year.

Jonathan Keeton, 42, pleaded guilty to Wanton Endangerment First Degree, Discharge of a Firearm (Class C Felony), Theft by Unlawful Taking, Firearm (Class D Felony), and Criminal Mischief in the First Degree (Class D Felony) and received a

five-year sentence.

According to charges filed in Breathitt Circuit Court, on June 5, 2025, Keeton grabbed a pistol from the holster of a man during a verbal argument. Keeton then fired two shots into a vehicle, while a woman was nearby.

"When reckless criminal conduct like this endangers the lives of others, there will be serious consequences. We commend our law enforcement partners and our prosecutors for putting this violent offender behind bars," said Attorney General Coleman.

The Kentucky State Police investigated the case. Assistant Attorney General Tony Skeans prosecuted the case on behalf of the Commonwealth.

## Kentucky PSC approves \$63M rate increase for East Kentucky Power Company

Tom Latek  
Kentucky Today

FRANKFORT, Ky. (KT) — The Kentucky Public Service Commission (PSC) issued its Final Order in an East Kentucky Power Company (EKPC) rate case, in which the agency accepted a Joint Settlement Agreement (JSA) with modifications.

In their application, EKPC asked for \$79,757,474 or a 7.49 percent increase in revenues. Additionally, all 16 rural electric cooperative utilities who are Owner-Member cooperatives of EKPC, filed applications for a pass-through increase in rates to correspond with the increase

in EKPC's requested increase.

On November 25, 2025, EKPC filed a Joint Settlement Agreement between EKPC, the Attorney General and Nucor, which were interveners in the matter. It proposed an increase to base rate revenues of \$63,727,181 or 5.99 percent, as well as changes to their existing earnings mechanism (EM) and eliminating the Generation Maintenance Tracker, shifting to a symmetrical earnings mechanism (SEM).

The SEM would allow EKPC to automatically issue a refund to members if it earned over a 1.6 TIER in a given year and automatically collecting more if EKPC earned under a 1.4 TIER. The Parties agreed that EKPC should collect or return any margins to its Owner-Members for contemporaneous collection or pass-through to Retail Members in the form of a bill charge or credit.

In the order, the Commission modified the JSA, authorizing a revenue increase of \$63,670,273, or 5.98%. It also denied

the SEM for several reasons including EKPC's recent pattern of earning that shows EKPC is more likely to collect from its customers than to issue a refund and because the Commission fears the SEM could allow large bill increases automatically without customer notices or PSC oversight over whether the increases are fair, just and reasonable until after the fact.

The PSC also ordered that the existing EM is eliminated, and a modified Generation Maintenance Tracker is approved. Other modifications to the Joint Settlement Agreement were minor. The orders relating to each of the 16 cooperative pass through rate increases will be issued over the next few days. All new rates will be effective May 1, 2026.

EKPC provides electric generation capacity and electric energy to its 16 Owner-Member Cooperatives, which serve over 570,000 Kentucky homes, farms and commercial and industrial establishments in 89 Kentucky counties.

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