



Chris Smith - Backing the Pride Sports Photography/LEWIS COUNTY HERALD 16th Region referee David "Pudge" Stafford officiated his final game last week. Stafford was recognized before the start of the Morgan/West Carter game. Congratulations on 25 (plus) years of service!

March 4, 2025

Driver's licensing pop-up set for Lewis County. A pop-up driver's licensing event is scheduled in Lewis County Tuesday, March 11. Tornado drill is set for Wednesday. The 2025 annual Kentucky Statewide Tornado Drill is planned for Wednesday, March 5, at 10:07 a.m. as part of Kentucky's Severe Weather Awareness Week activities. Another text scam making the rounds. Sheriff Johnny Bivens is issuing a public warning about a recent text scam that has been reported by several Lewis County residents. The text message is regarding the supposed violation of a toll and reads as follows: "The Toll Roads Notice of Toll Evasion: Our records show that your vehicle has been involved in a toll evasion incident. This is a violation of the toll payment regulations and may result in additional penalties, including fines and suspension of access to toll roads." Presidential declaration for 11 counties. Gov. Andy Beshear announced last week that President Donald Trump approved his request for an Expedited Major Disaster Declaration, which includes public assistance for local governments and individual assistance for Kentuckians in the 11 counties affected by the most recent storms. Those 11 counties are: Breathitt, Clay, Floyd, Harlan, Knott, Lee, Letcher, Martin, Owsley, Perry and Pike. Additional designations and counties may be added at a later date if warranted by the results of further damage assessments.

March 11, 2025

Council amends ethics ordinance, OKs property buy. Vanceburg City Council met in regular session last week with members approving a modification to the city's Board of Ethics regulations that members reside in the county for at least one year prior to their appointment and remain a resident throughout their term on the board. Sunshine Week: Support your local journalists. Sunshine Week is March 16-22, and this year, there's an even greater need for you to get involved. Sunshine Week annually celebrates freedom of information laws in every state. It also salutes efforts by good government advocates and journalists to use and ensure the effectiveness of those laws to get the information we need as self-governing citizens. Phishing scam targets locals. Vanceburg Police Chief Joe Paul Gilbert is investigating a local phishing scam after someone hacked into an email account for an attorney's office in Vanceburg. Gilbert said email addresses were copied from the account and the scammer is sending out emails with the subject line stating "Catching Up..." My Latest Adventure; It's our month (Part III). March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month and I've been given the opportunity to share my experiences with more people to help spread awareness about the second leading cause of cancer deaths (following lung and bronchus cancer). Along with pancreatic and breast cancer, they are responsible for nearly 50 percent of all can-

cer deaths in the US.

March 18, 2025

Plant Board preparing for new electric supplier. Members of the Electric Plant Board of the City of Vanceburg met in regular session last week and learned that work is already underway in preparation for a new supplier of electricity for the local utility company. "We will be working with AEP Energy Partners over the next few months to finalize the transition over from Kentucky Power," said Plant Board Superintendent Bill Tom Stone. Traffic checkpoints aimed at safety. Sheriff Johnny Bivens has announced the Lewis County Sheriff's Department will be conducting periodic traffic safety checkpoints throughout the county to check motorists for compliance with motor vehicle laws including driving under the influence statutes. The Lewis County Sheriff's Department utilizes traffic safety checkpoints to promote safety for motorists on our roadways and to provide a deterrent for those who violate the laws. Magistrates approve courthouse roof fix. Lewis County Fiscal Court met in regular session last week with magistrates approving a proposal to make repairs to the courthouse roof at a cost of about \$17,700. Orus Weaver will do the work which will include improvements for drainage. VPD officer completes academy. Gov. Andy Beshear announced Thursday that 39 law enforcement officers from agencies across the commonwealth have graduated from the Kentucky Department of Criminal Justice Training's (DOCJT) basic training academy. These law enforcement officers now return home to serve and protect Kentucky and create safer communities. Among those officers is Logan Vonderbrink with the Vanceburg Police Department.

March 25, 2025

Board of Ed sets LCHS graduation. The Lewis County Board of Education set the graduation date for high school seniors during a regular meeting of the board. Commencement exercises were scheduled for 7:00 p.m. May 23 at the LCHS Football Field. In the event of rain, the ceremony will be moved indoors at the Lewis County Middle School Gymnasium. Bill to improve colorectal cancer screening awaits final approval. A bill to improve colorectal cancer screening coverage in Kentucky has just two days left in March to pass during this legislative session. March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, an opportunity to spread awareness about the importance of preventive screening and the prevalence of colorectal cancer in Kentucky. House Bill 421, sponsored by Rep. Amy Neighbors, R-Edmonton, passed out of the House on March 5, 98-0, and passed out of the Senate Banking and Insurance Committee on March 11. KSP is investigating an officer-involved shooting. The Kentucky State Police Critical Incident Response Team has been requested by the Lewis County Sheriff's Office to investigate an officer-involved shooting that happened last week. Accord-

ing to a KSP release, the incident occurred last Tuesday just before 10:30 p.m. The preliminary investigation indicates that Lewis County deputies and Vanceburg Police Department officers were dispatched to a domestic violence incident on Little Cabin Creek where a male subject was reported to have been shooting a firearm. A KSP spokesman said after arriving, officers encountered Keith Truesdell, 49, who was armed with a firearm. The preliminary information indicates Mr. Truesdell fired a weapon toward the officers, and one deputy was struck. JROTC team keeps advancing. The Lewis County High School JROTC Precision Rifle Team has achieved a significant milestone by qualifying for the All Service JROTC National Championships at Camp Perry, Ohio. This marks their first time competing at such a prestigious level on the service side of things.

April 1, 2025

Grants will help combat addiction in Lewis County. Attorney General Russell Coleman announced more than \$19.8 million was awarded to 75 Kentucky organizations to combat the opioid and drug epidemic throughout the Commonwealth. Lewis County was named among the counties served by four of the recipients: Legal Aid of the Bluegrass, \$93,750; KVC Behavioral Healthcare Kentucky, \$426,640; Fresh Start Health Centers, \$353,756; Ramey-Estep Homes, \$224,000. Vanceburg's Trade Day is Saturday. Continuing an event that began in 2019, Vanceburg's Trade Day is planned for Saturday in the parking area behind the Depot Museum. Hours of the event are 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Learner's permits for 15-year-olds now law. Now that a new state law, House Bill 15, has taken effect, allowing 15-year-olds to earn their driver's permits, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet is working quickly to implement this exciting change. KYTC is making system upgrades so a credential can be issued allowing eligible applicants to take the written permit test. As early as April 2, applicants can start making an appointment with the Kentucky State Police. Ineligible voters removed from polls. Secretary of State Michael Adams announced that the number of registered voters in Kentucky has declined significantly since he took office in 2020, despite Kentucky's rising population during that time.

This finding comes following the removal of 231,110 ineligible voters from the rolls in February in compliance with federal and state law. Republican county officers are chosen. The Lewis County Republican Party Re-Organization meeting was held last week at the Lewis County Courthouse. County officers chosen include Chair Ben Collier, Vice-Chair Jonathan Ruggles, Treasurer Crystal Dyer, Secretary Andrea Ginn, and Youth Chairman Ryan Gifford.

April 8, 2025

Heavy rain results in slides, flooding. While portions of Kentucky received more than 14 inches of rainfall since Wednesday, Lewis County received reported amounts ranging from 6.5 inches to 7.5 inches. The rainfall has resulted in multiple embankment failures, some flash flooding, road closures, downed trees, and power failures for the county. Diabetes prevention: What you need to know. About one in three Kentuckians have prediabetes and often go undiagnosed due to a lack of noticeable symptoms. Prediabetes occurs when blood sugar levels are higher than normal but not yet in the diabetes range. If left unchecked, prediabetes can lead to type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke. It's important to know that prediabetes can be reversible, and with the right lifestyle changes, individuals can significantly reduce their risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Remembering Bentley Brothers Grocery. One of my most cherished childhood



LEWIS COUNTY HERALD Law enforcement officers from agencies across the commonwealth have graduated from the Kentucky Department of Criminal Justice Training's (DOCJT) basic training academy. These law enforcement officers now return home to serve and protect Kentucky and create safer communities. Among those officers is Logan Vonderbrink with the Vanceburg Police Department.

memories growing up in Lewis County is of a small, country store called Bentley Brothers Grocery. It was late fall, tobacco stripping season, and my parents would go to Bentley's and pick up a big roll of Kahn's bologna—the kind wrapped in the bright red plastic sleeve, along with a couple loaves of white bread and a pack of cold Pepsi in glass bottles. Dad would hand us a thick slice of bologna wrapped in bread, and we were given a short break to eat before getting back to the long hours of stripping tobacco. The memories of my visits to Bentley Brothers Grocery as a child are intertwined with the history of the store itself, a place that has been the heart of the community for generations. The story of Bentley's begins long before my visits, in the late 1940s, when Orville Bentley's father, John V. Bentley, opened the small store in downtown Garrison.

April 15, 2025

Council OKs request to apply for water well funding. Members approved a grant agreement for a well project for the Electric Plant Board of the City of Vanceburg. Council Member Angie Patton, who serves as council representative on the Plant Board, provided a brief update on the city owned utility company. Plant Board reviews several projects. The Electric Plant Board of the City of Vanceburg met in regular session with members hearing an update on funding a new water well project. Plant Board superintendent Bill Tom Stone said the preliminary application for the well project has been submitted for ARC funding. Civil rights lawsuit has been resolved. A civil rights lawsuit, filed December 16, 2024, by John Grabill against the City of Vanceburg, Mayor Dana Blankenship, Police Chief Joseph Paul Gilbert, and Assistant Police Chief Joseph Billman has been resolved. A press release from attorney Christopher Wiest of Covington states that, "John Grabill and officials with the City of Vanceburg resolved a federal civil rights lawsuit previously filed against the City of Vanceburg, Mayor Dana Blankenship, Police Chief Joe Gilbert, and Assistant Police Chief Joe Billman stemming from Mr. Grabill's arrest in August, 2024 and the City's attempts to restrict the open carrying of firearms including at City Council meetings." Thank a dispatcher this week. The second full week of April is recognized each year as National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week, bringing well deserved attention and recognition to the public safety dispatchers who are an invaluable part of every emergency response team.

April 22, 2025

Road improvement projects planned by state; County will have funding for other projects. Lewis County Fiscal Court met in regular session last week with members approving the annual rural secondary road program with

the state that was presented by Brandon Howe with the Department of Transportation. Howe reviewed funding and said about \$297,000 may be utilized as county flex funding for resurfacing projects while about \$634,000 will be utilized for resurfacing of about a mile of Briary Road and the entirety of Montgomery Road from the Greenup County line to KY 8. Students' last day of school to be May 30. Members of the Lewis County Board of Education approved an updated school calendar for the current school year to reflect needed changes to make up missed days for recent flooding. The last day for students will be May 30.

Graduation exercises for Lewis County High School Seniors will be May 23 at the LCHS Football Field. In the event of rain, the graduation will be moved indoors at the Lewis County Middle School Gymnasium. Installation of turn lanes will disrupt traffic on AA Highway. Work is getting underway this week on the addition of turn lanes at KY 989/Salt Lick Road on AA Highway.

This project will provide right and left turning lanes onto KY 989 from the AA Highway. Fire destroys Garrison home. Firefighters were called to a Garrison home last week after a neighbor noticed smoke coming from the residence. The incident happened about 1:30 p.m. Wednesday on Martin Lane near First Street at the home of the family of William and Alicia Kibler.

Firefighters from Garrison, Black Oak, and Firebrick departments responded to the call and remained on the scene until about 4:30 p.m. UK's cancer research 'groundbreaking'. Researchers at the University of Kentucky looked at the differences in the colon cancer tumors from Appalachian and non-Appalachian patients as a way to try to explain the high mortality rates of colorectal cancer in Appalachian Kentucky. The interdisciplinary team of researchers focused on analyzing samples from patients diagnosed with colon adenocarcinoma, the most common type of colorectal cancer, noting that despite Appalachian Kentucky being a rural region with significant economic distress, "the differences in colorectal cancer incidence and outcomes cannot be entirely attributed to resource scarcity," according to a UK news release.

April 29, 2025

Dr. Melton resigns as school superintendent. Meeting in a brief special session last week, the Lewis County Board of Education accepted the resignation of Superintendent Dr. Michael Melton.

Dr. Melton was named as Superintendent of Lewis County Schools during a regular meeting of the board one year ago.

He has accepted the position of Superintendent of the Bath County School District effective July 1. Alpha-Gal Syndrome webinar is May

29. In response to rising concerns and increasing numbers of individuals impacted by Alpha-Gal Syndrome, also known as red meat allergy, the University of Kentucky Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment will host a free statewide webinar on May 29.

Alpha-Gal Syndrome is triggered primarily by bites from the lone star tick, which carries the sugar molecule "alpha-gal." This molecule is linked to serious allergic reactions in some people who consume, or even come into contact with, red meat and other mammalian products. Driver flees crash scene. Deputies are investigating an incident involving a pick-up truck and camping trailer on Kinney Road last week in which the driver fled the scene.

Deputy Jason Bryant said the red Dodge pick-up was towing a camper trailer traveling north on Kinney Road about two miles south of the AA Highway when it traveled off the roadway and struck several trees. Four hurt in chain reaction crash behind school bus. Lewis County Sheriff's Deputies are investigating a multiple vehicle incident last week involving a school bus and three passenger vehicles. The incident happened Wednesday afternoon on the AA Highway at the intersection of Spy Run Road, just west of Garrison. The incident happened shortly after 3:00 p.m. when the Lewis County school bus had stopped in the eastbound lane to drop off a student and two passenger vehicles had stopped behind the bus. A third eastbound vehicle struck the rear of the second stopped vehicle resulting in a chain reaction with the second vehicle then striking the rear of the first stopped vehicle which then struck the rear of the school bus. There were eight students on the bus along with the driver and monitor. No injuries were reported aboard the bus. The driver of one of the vehicles, Ryan Hill, and two passengers in a second vehicle, John Graves and Michael Graves, were taken to Southern Ohio Medical Center in Portsmouth, Ohio, by Lewis County EMS. Another occupant, Bryce Graves, was airlifted from the scene by Air Evac to a Columbus, Ohio, medical center with critical injuries. Second case of measles confirmed. Kentucky public health officials continue to urge Kentuckians to ensure their children are immunized against measles, as they announced the state's second confirmed measles case in 2025. The case was a child who was traveling through the state when they sought treatment, according to a news release. The child, who is not a U.S. resident, was diagnosed at a health care facility in Kentucky, which is why the case is counted as a Kentucky incident. River Town Fair is Saturday. The City of Vanceburg is excited to welcome everyone back for the Third Annual River Town Fair this Saturday. Festivities begin at 10:00 a.m. next to the former JC Video parking lot, at the corner of Main and Railroad streets with the unveiling of a new mural. place."

Please see page 4



Providing resources for Kentuckians seeking help for a substance use disorder and offering support to their families.

833-8KY-HELP (833-859-4357)

or text **HOPE to 96714**