



September 9, 2025

Tommy Truesdell has won the Kentucky State Singles Elder Horseshoe Pitching Championship in Russell Springs. This is his fourth consecutive state championship title.

workers have been eagerly preparing for the 2025-26 school year for several weeks. Aulick says the district has many great programs in place that have made the transition into his position an easy one. "Trails for the Trades" benefit ride will help fund scholarships for students. A new Labor Day tradition is set to begin in Lewis County as Trace Creek Construction, in partnership with 1806 Adventure Park and Briery Creek RV Park, hosts the inaugural "Trails for the Trades" Benefit Ride on Saturday. The off-road ride and family event will take place at 1806 Adventure Park, located at 1979 Briery Creek Road in southern Lewis County. All proceeds will fund scholarships for students pursuing vocational and technical education. Burn Ban issued for Lewis County. A Burn Ban has been declared in Lewis County until further notice. Judge Executive George Sparks issued the Executive Order Sunday prohibiting all outdoor burning in Lewis County. Two airlifted following AA crash. The Lewis County Sheriff's Department is investigating a two vehicle collision at the intersection of the AA Highway and Briary Road (KY 1021) Friday afternoon. Sheriff Johnny Bivens said the incident happened about 2:30 p.m. involving a pick-up and a passenger vehicle. He said the 2008 Chevrolet Silverado pick-up, operated by Tommy Lee Ruckel, 33, of Vanceburg was traveling west on the AA Highway and a 2018 Hyundai Sonata, operated by Cassandra Cummins, 51, of Independence was traveling north on Briary Road. He said the two vehicles collided in the intersection. Cummins and a passenger in the Sonata, Selena Mingua, 22, of Winchester, Ohio, were airlifted from the scene to Cabell Huntington Hospital by Air Evac helicopters. Ruckel was taken to the hospital by family members. Eye Exam Month reminder for students and drivers. August is National Eye Exam Month, and state officials are encouraging Kentuckians to prioritize their eye health by making an appointment with their eye doctor.

September 2, 2025

Property tax bills will reflect slight increase. Lewis County Fiscal Court met in special session to finalize and accept property tax rates as officials prepare to get tax bills ready to mail to property owners. Local officials from the various taxing entities earlier set property tax rates for the current tax year and while many of the rates are unchanged from 2024, your total tax bill will increase by about 2.66 percent. Diamond Dinner is September 13. The annual David Iery Foundation Diamond Dinner is set for Saturday, September 13, at the Clarion North in Lexington. A card show will be from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. prior to the dinner with George Foster and Denny McLain signing from Noon to 2:00 p.m. Seven county roads set for improvement. Lewis County Fiscal Court met in special session last week and adopted a resolution approving the county's

participation in the state's Rural Secondary Road Program. Magistrates voted unanimously to enter into an agreement with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, Department of Rural and Municipal Aid, that will reimburse the county up to \$297,061 for resurfacing projects on several county roadways. Steven Pedersen Day proclaimed. Members of the Tollesboro Lions Club and President Craig Stanfield pulled off a surprise last week when Lewis County Judge Executive George Sparks stepped forward at their regular meeting to honor one of their own with a county-wide proclamation. Sparks declared August 25, 2025, as "Steven Grant Pedersen Day" in Lewis County, recognizing a lifetime of service in uniform and in community leadership.

September 9, 2025

Gasoline spill prompts multi-agency response. A gasoline spill at Super Quik in Vanceburg Friday evening brought out multiple emergency agencies and state officials. The incident happened about 7:30 p.m. when a customer drove away from the pumps with the nozzle still inserted in the vehicle's fuel tank, damaging the pump resulting in the release of several gallons of regular unleaded gasoline. Some of the gasoline entered nearby storm drains. Vanceburg firefighters arrived quickly and applied absorbent materials on the lot to control the spread of the fuel. Emergency Management personnel, the Lewis County Sheriff's Office, and Vanceburg Police also responded to the scene. As a precaution, employees shut off the station's master killswitch to stop additional fuel flow. Drought conditions deepen. More than half of Kentucky is now in Moderate Drought, according to the US Drought Monitor weekly report issued Thursday morning, but it remains to be seen what effect the rain last week will have on this week's report. Only 4.84 percent of the state is considered to have no drought, down from 13.01 percent the previous week. The area that is considered "Abnormally Dry," D0 on the drought scale that goes up to D4, or "Exceptional Drought," has dropped to 37.91 percent, after standing at 75.81 percent last week. LCSO will conduct safety checkpoints. 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. This is Suicide Prevention Month. September is recognized as National Suicide Prevention Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about mental health, reducing stigma, and reminding individuals and families that help is available. In Lewis County, local health and emergency officials say suicide prevention is not just a national concern — it is a local one. The Lewis County Health Department, local schools, and faith-based organizations

regularly work together to promote mental health resources and support.

September 16, 2025

Council sets tax rates, OKs street repairs. Meeting in regular session last week, Vanceburg City Council approved plans to resurface portions of two city streets. Mayor Dane Blankenship said the projects will be on East Plummer and Court Street at an estimated cost of \$31,991.46. Funding for the projects will come from the state's municipal road aid fund. Members heard the first reading of a proposed ordinance (220.25-2025) setting property tax rates for 2025. The proposed rates are unchanged from the past several years at 13 cents per \$100 valuation on real estate and 14 cents per \$100 valuation on personal and tangible property. A second reading is planned for the October meeting. Plant Board seeks project funding. The Electric Plant Board of the City of Vanceburg voted during its September meeting to pursue outside funding for two major water system improvements, including construction of a new well and the installation of additional fire hydrants throughout the service area. Superintendent Bill Tom Stone told board members that the utility will once again submit a preliminary application for Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) funding for the long-planned well number seven project. Motorists delayed in KY 344 incident. A tractor-trailer hauling materials for a road project overturned last week on KY 344, disrupting traffic for several hours and prompting a multi-agency response. The incident occurred Monday morning as a contractor



September 16, 2025

Jeffery Davis/LEWIS COUNTY HERALD
Seniors Cameron Farris and Ava Marshall were named LCHS Homecoming King and Queen Friday prior to the Lions game against Garrard County.

duction into the Kentucky Veterans Hall of Fame. Riffe was formally recognized during a ceremony at Embassy Suites in Lexington, where he was enshrined among 26 veterans from across the Commonwealth. Kentucky drought deepens. Continued hot and dry conditions led to the drought situation deepening in Kentucky, according to the weekly US Drought Monitor report released on Thursday, including the first area designated as "Extreme Drought" so far this year. Magistrates approve grant money receipts. Lewis County Fiscal Court met in regular session and approved a series of measures, including additional funding for the Camp Dix Volunteer Fire Department project, a watershed management contract, and a resolution to consolidate two county roadways. Magistrates approved a modification to the Camp Dix VFD contract after additional funding was obtained through the Ken-

burn ban that had been in effect for all of Lewis County since August 24 has been lifted. Judge Executive George Sparks issued the burn ban for Lewis County due to dry conditions that led to increased chances for fire activity. Sparks said dry conditions and little immediate chance of significant rainfall led to the ban. The ban was lifted Friday following rainfall in the area. Sparks is BTADD award recipient. The Buffalo Trace Area Development District (BTADD) proudly presented the 2025 Regionalism Award during its Annual Meeting at Blue Licks State Park. The award honors individuals whose leadership, vision, and commitment strengthen communities and foster collaboration across the Buffalo Trace Region. This year's recipient, Judge Executive George Sparks, embodies those qualities through a lifetime of service to his county and the entire Buffalo Trace region.

burning within 150 feet of any woodland or brushland. Oktoberfest set for Saturday Downtown. Downtown Vanceburg will be the place to be on Saturday as the city hosts its annual Oktoberfest on the Ohio River. From 10:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m., the community will celebrate with live music, children's activities, contests, food vendors, and the return of some favorite fall traditions. Mayor Dane Blankenship will open the festival with a brief ceremony at 10:00 a.m. in Veteran's Park, kicking off a day designed to showcase local talent, family fun, and the community spirit that has become the hallmark of the event. Sheriff warns of Funeral Home Scam. Sheriff Johnny Bivens is warning residents about a new scam making its way across Kentucky that preys on families during vulnerable times by impersonating funeral home staff and demanding fraudulent payments. Bivens said his office has received reports and statewide alerts concerning individuals who are posing as employees of legitimate funeral homes. Victims report receiving unsolicited text messages that appear convincing, often including the real name of a funeral home staff member and an urgent request for payment to finalize arrangements or avoid supposed service interruptions.

October 14, 2025

Council sets tax rates, OKs budget amendment. Vanceburg City Council met in regular session last week with a brief but full agenda that included second readings of two ordinances and several resolutions related to funding and infrastructure projects. Swearingen is candidate for magistrate. Paul Bruce Swearingen wishes to announce his candidacy for Magistrate in District 2 for the Lewis County Fiscal Court. Paul previously served as Magistrate from 2007 to 2014, during which projects such as guardrail installation and blacktopping were completed. Blankenship resigns as Vanceburg Mayor. Vanceburg Mayor Dane Blankenship has submitted his resignation from the position, marking an unexpected change in city leadership following Saturday's successful Oktoberfest celebration in Downtown Vanceburg. City officials confirmed the resignation letter was left on the mayor's desk at the city building late Saturday. Osman Pharmacy to close Friday. Osman Pharmacy in Vanceburg will be closing its doors on Friday after decades of serving Lewis County. In a message to customers, the Osman Pharmacy family cited the challenges of operating as an independent pharmacy under the current insurance system as the primary reason for the closure.

To be continued next week.



LEWIS COUNTY HERALD

Longtime Vanceburg fixture Osman Pharmacy will close next month, citing the challenges of operating as an independent pharmacy under the current insurance system.

crew was cutting a tree in preparation for a culvert replacement project and had the southbound lane closed. A tractor-trailer owned by URETEK USA, traveling through the northbound lane under flagger direction, slipped off the asphalt when the left rear wheels of the trailer dropped off the roadway. The truck overturned onto the driver's side. The driver, identified as Jagger Portillo of Del Rio, Texas, was not seriously injured. Gift card scam targets employees. Local residents are being warned about a text message scam that has been circulating in the area. Sheriff Johnny Bivens says the message appears to come from a company CEO or supervisor and asks employees to discreetly purchase gift cards. The scammer often claims the cards will be used as a surprise gift for other workers — and sometimes even encourages the employee to "keep one for yourself." KY 344 road closure. Highway crews in Lewis County plan to temporarily close KY 344 to replace a culvert beginning at 7:00 a.m. Saturday, September 27, on KY 344 between KY 377 and Holly Branch Road.

September 23, 2025

Elden Riffe named to Veterans Hall of Fame. Lewis County native Sgt. Major Elden Lee Riffe has spent a lifetime in service — to his country, to his community, and to the people who know him as a soldier, teacher, deputy, neighbor, and friend. That lifetime of dedication has now earned him one of the state's highest honors, in-

tucky Department for Local Government. The \$82,000 modification increases the overall project contract amount to \$1,082,000, covering bid overruns and extending the contract completion date to June 30, 2026. Osman Pharmacy to close. After decades of serving Lewis County, Osman Pharmacy has announced it will close its doors on October 17. In a message to customers, the Osman Pharmacy family cited the challenges of operating as an independent pharmacy under the current insurance system as the primary reason for the closure.

September 30, 2025

Board of Ed reviews policies and personnel matters. The Lewis County Board of Education met in regular session with members hearing staff updates, approving facility projects, and acting on a range of policy and personnel matters. KY 344 road closure planned. Highway crews in Lewis County will temporarily close KY 344 between KY 377 and Holly Branch Road to replace a culvert beginning at 7:00 a.m. Saturday, October 4. The nearby location at milepoint 15.1 will remain closed until 5:00 p.m. Sunday, October 5. McCann is magistrate candidate. "I am honored to announce my candidacy for re-election as Magistrate of District Two in Lewis County," said Joey McCann. Serving the people of our community over the past term has been a great experience, and I am excited to continue building on the progress we have made to-

October 7, 2025

THE HERALD celebrates National Newspaper Week. This week marks the 85th observance of National Newspaper Week, an annual celebration of the enduring role newspapers play in keeping communities informed, connected, and empowered. Since 1940, Newspaper Association Managers has sponsored and supported this recognition of the vital work done by newspapers across the United States and Canada. For more than a century, THE LEWIS COUNTY HERALD has embodied that mission. Founded in 1924, the newspaper has chronicled the life of Lewis County, covering everything from fiscal court and school board meetings to local sports, community milestones, and the achievements of everyday citizens. Fall Wildfire Season underway. State officials are urging Kentuckians to be alert as the fall wildfire hazard season is well underway, bringing outdoor burning restrictions to the state, including a ban on daylight

Get texts of Lewis County breaking news, school closings and severe weather notices on your cellular phone.

Text "lewiscounty" to 78015.



THE LEWIS COUNTY HERALD

336 Lions Lane, Vanceburg, KY 41179