



From the Press Box

By Bill Tom Stone

A couple of mornings this week felt a little like fall, and that made me think of going back to school and football season. This may be my favorite time of the year, not only because of the cooler weather, but because it reminds me of the anticipation of school as a kid and getting back to see my friends. Growing up in the country and not having the opportunity to play with other kids, except for my brother Taft, who tried to kill me a few times a week, made me one of those crazy kids who looked forward to school—not only to learn, but to socialize. We are designed to be social creatures, to learn from each other, and to care about each other. I think that is why I still preach the value of team sports, especially the great sport of football.

This week was full of fun with all the team activities going on at LCHS. Band Camp started and will continue this week. The band members have been working hard and hope to bring the crowd a great show on Friday nights, as well as perform well in competitions throughout the upcoming year. Talk about a team sport—everyone must know their position on the field and the rhythm of the music they

much about safety, we would have already been tackling each other. But nowadays, the coaches—they knew what they knew), and the acclimation process is much more defined. Anyway, the players will start playing the game for real this week. They will host a scrimmage on August 8 against East Ridge and Green at 10:30 a.m. on the Lewis County High School field. This will be the first true competition of the year. If you get a chance, come out and get a glimpse of the team. The Lions have around 35 players, but Coach Stamm is still encouraging young men to come out and be part of something most people never get the chance to experience—a team. We wish the young Lions all the best.

Before I move on, I want to thank all the coaches who are working with the JFL this year. I know I'm going to miss some of you, but here are a few of the ones I ran into this past Friday at "Meet the Lions Night": Rusty Dyer and his right and left arms, Melissa Dyer and Megan Dyer-Applegate, Cody Stapleton, T.J. Freno, and Raymond Bolander. I was also happy and thankful to see middle school football coach

Lions looking forward to postseason play. More about the 2010s next week.

Now some BT's Tidbits:

Football will once again be holding the Yard Line Sale as a fundraiser for the team. The idea is simple: you pay \$25 and are assigned a random yard line on the field for the season. If the ball is on your yard line at the end of the first or third quarter, you win some money. There are only 99 numbers available, so get yours soon.

I want to thank Mr. Elden May for coming by the house to help me learn how to watch a game through the eyes of a reporter. Elden is a 1995 graduate of Lewis County High School and spent years as a sports editor for both the Maysville Ledger and the Ashland Daily Independent. He is currently active with the Kentucky Association for Academic Competition as both a coach and administrator, as well as serving on the Lewis County High School Hall of Fame Committee. His knowledge of Lewis County sports makes him one of the committee's most valuable members.

I had a couple of people stop by at "Meet the Lions Night" and ask me to include some contact information so



LEWIS COUNTY HERALD

2009 Playoff Football Team-Front row (left to right): Dalton Jordan, Andrew Prater, Zach Mustard, Matt Lewis, Roger Morgan, Codi Lewis, Nate Stone, Cole Cooper, Caleb Enix. Second row: Brandon Lung, Robert Harris, Nathaniel Lightner, Dalton Carver, Harold Lee, Jack Bane, Laithan Davis, Cody Lawhun, Cody Stapleton. Third row: Mike Mustard, Christian Conway, Jonny Everman, Kasey Riley, Kyle Ruggles, Nick Ruark, Matt Bonner, Tylier McAdams. Fourth row: J.P. Parker, Cory Christy, Devon Richmond, Dalton Cooper, Dustin Bradford, Bud Burris, Michael Roe, Adam Wills. Fifth row: Parker Logan, Cody Fite, Not Sure, Andrew Garber, Levi Clark, Derrick Miller, Lathan Rigdon, Damian Hill. Sixth row: Jared Carver, Shawn Lawhun, Jon Yates, Drew Trusdell, Blake Kilgore, Randy Wills, Zack Zornes, Mathew Garber. Back row: Coach Bill Melton and Coach Josh Hughes

are playing to make sure the performance has the effect they want to create. Each member depends on the others to make the show work. That is what I call teamwork. Good luck this week and throughout the season.

Volleyball has a big week with its first-ever Blue/White Night on August 6. Coach Bentley is excited about the event and is inviting everyone to come out and support the young ladies. Coach Bentley was on the WKKS Saturday Morning Sports Show this past week and talked about the upcoming season. Three of his senior players joined him: Khalee Stamper, Natalie Gilbert, and Ireland Kelly. These young ladies repeatedly talked about how, over the past few years, they have built the skills and fortitude to compete for a district title, and they are looking forward to putting that determination into action. If you have never been to a game, make every effort to get out this season and be part of what could be a special year for Lewis County volleyball.

Football is getting ready to gear up for real, with full-contact practice starting this week. Back in the day, before most of us even thought

Cody Fite helping unload the Lionbackers concession stand equipment along with a few of his players. Coach Fite is excited about the upcoming year. It is great to see so many young men who once played now giving back to their community.

With football season just around the corner, we have been covering some of the history of the program. We talked a little about the 1980s and 1990s last week. This week we will talk a little about the early 2000s. Coach Corky Prater called it a career as head coach in 2005. With his retirement, the administration hired Branden Combs to steer the ship. However, Combs left after only two years. The program was looking for stability and found it in Coach Josh Hughes. In only his second season, Coach Hughes took the Lions to a place they had not been in 17 years—the Kentucky High School State Playoffs.

In 2009, the Lions traveled to Belfry High School to play a tough Pirates team. The Lions led after the first quarter but trailed 21-14 at half-time. They would eventually lose, but for the next few years Coach Hughes had his

they could get in touch with me with information or ideas. I love that idea, so if you would like to email me, my address is epb_billtom_stone@hotmail.com, and my phone number is (606) 541-0305. I look forward to hearing from you with information and ideas.

The football team is looking for local businesses, churches, and individuals who would like to sponsor a team meal before each Friday night's game during the season. If you are interested, please let Bub Lee or Bill Tom Stone know as soon as possible.

With Lewis County sports starting to ramp up, I just want to ask you to encourage the young people you know to get involved. I think sometimes all a young person needs to start believing in themselves is an adult who encourages them. Be that catalyst who helps a young person become the person they were meant to be.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR



Dear Editor,

My grandparents' generation got a knock on the door once. Men in good suits with better promises: jobs, prosperity, a future. All we had to do was let them at the mountains. We know how that story ended. They took what they came for, and we were left with bare ridgelines and busted communities we've spent fifty years trying to heal from the scars their strip mining made.

Now there's a new knock at the door. This time they're not after coal. They're after our water, our power, and our quiet. And the people answering loudest in favor are the ones who own the land it would sit on and the construction companies that would bid the work.

I want to be fair when talking about data centers. The construction jobs are real, and for a year or two they'd put money in (mostly) local pockets. I won't pretend otherwise. That would make my words unreliable. But ask what's left when the trucks roll out and the concrete cures. A data center runs nearly empty. The handful of permanent jobs are specialized engineering positions filled by people who live out of town or out of state. Perhaps a janitor might be hired locally. There's no training pipeline that leads from Lewis County High School to those high-tech jobs without leaving our community first. No apprenticeship. No ladder for our kids to climb. Brookings researchers, who studied counties that landed big data centers, found the permanent employment gains were far smaller than industry-funded studies claimed.

And here's the part nobody puts on the brochure: few employees means little payroll, and little payroll means little additional tax revenue to our schools and services. Almost any other industry on that same land would pay people—our people—and those paychecks would circulate through this county, getting reinvested over and over.

Meanwhile, the costs don't stay on their side of the fence. A large data center drinks one to five million gallons of water a day, as much as a town of 10,000 to 50,000 people, running around the clock, with much of it evaporated and gone for good. Now, there are ways to reduce that number (closed-loop vs. open-loop systems), but they do cost more. I, for one, do not trust a large corporation to invest extra money just because it is better for the locals. And from what I have gleaned, it is not common practice for data centers to construct closed-loop water cooling

systems.

In rural Georgia, for example, neighbors of these data center facilities now say they can't drink their own well water. The groundwater dried up. The noise from cooling fans and generators can reach 96 decibels and never stops—not at night, not on Sunday, not ever. Researchers have tied that constant drone to lost sleep, stress, and worse. Can you imagine living next to that?

Then there's your electric bill. Mine is higher than it's ever been, and I'd wager yours is too. Data centers demand staggering—and I mean staggering—amounts of power. We all know what happens when demand climbs and supply doesn't: prices go up. It's Economy 101. Across the grid, regions that include facilities like these saw power costs jump from \$2.2 billion to \$14.7 billion in a single year, with data centers driving most of the increase. Ms. Betty Sue and Mr. Johnny Doe cannot outbid a billionaire corporation for electricity. They'll just pay more for it. This month. Next month. Next year.

And then there are the new investments in tourism that our county has been focusing on. I love that we are investing in our natural beauty and amazing landscape. I hail from the Red River Gorge, a world-renowned natural area. Tourism keeps that part of the state alive and booming. Now let's think about the folks we hope will open Airbnbs and shops as we make a tourism push. They'll run the numbers on those utility costs and build somewhere else—somewhere without a data center.

I'm not against progress. I love the direction this county is heading, the new programs, the initiatives, the neighbors helping neighbors. Main Street has more businesses now than I have ever seen since living here. That's progress we built ourselves as a community, and it's exactly what's at risk if we let outsiders make our biggest decision for us.

Our grandparents didn't have the benefit of seeing how the coal story ended. We do. We have the receipts from communities across Kentucky, West Virginia, Georgia, and Pennsylvania that said yes to strip mining and regret it. We are currently hearing stories from real communities warning against this.

If someone does support these facilities, ask yourself, "What does this person

stand to gain?" "Do they want to sell land to a tech company?" "Are they expected to place a bid to construct it?" If the answer to any of those questions is yes, then I assure you they meet the definition of biased, and they may not be thinking of the long-term ramifications for our community or acting in your best interest.

So, I'm asking the Lewis County Fiscal Court to pass an immediate moratorium on data centers, and to do it swiftly. Nothing that lasts forever—just long enough to ask the hard questions before the bulldozers answer them for us. Long enough to ask ourselves: What if we are left holding the short end of the stick again when the men in business suits walk away? When you love a place, you don't let strangers with deep pockets decide its future.

This land took care of our families for generations. It's our turn to return the favor.

Respectfully,

**Alex Halsy, BSW
Garrison, Kentucky**

Sources: Brookings Institution (2026) on data center employment effects; Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) on water consumption and noise; Nature Forward on hyperscale water use; Tax Foundation on data center taxation; reporting from U.S. News and Yale E360 on community and grid impacts.

FIRE SAFETY CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE

The Vanceburg/Lewis County Volunteer Fire Department reminds you that practicing fire safety can save your life.

- Don't leave the kitchen when food is cooking.

- Be careful with candles, and never leave them burning when you leave home or go to sleep.

- Don't use space heaters as your primary source of heat, and keep them at least three feet away from furniture, curtains and other flammable materials.

- Put matches and lighters in a safe place and never let children play with fire.

- If you use wood heat, have your chimney cleaned and inspected regularly.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

BENCHMARK FAMILY SERVICES - Benchmark Family Services is taking applications for foster parenting. As the largest private foster care agency in the state of Kentucky, we are able to provide our foster parents with an unmatched level of training, support, and financial reimbursement. To learn more about becoming a foster parent, please call 606-783-0268 or go to www.benchmarkfs.org.

THE LEWIS COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH - Will be meeting at 6:00 p.m. at the Lewis County Health Department on Thursday, August 6th, 2026.

THE LEWIS COUNTY HERALD

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LEWIS COUNTY NUCLEAR ENERGY READY COMMUNITY CERTIFICATION

Public Meeting & Educational Seminar

Thursday, August 6, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.

Lewis County High School Auditorium
79 Lions Lane, Vanceburg, KY 41179

The public is invited to attend this free community educational event to learn more about economic development opportunities, workforce development, and the Nuclear Energy Ready Community Certification process.

This informational meeting is designed to provide factual information, answer questions, and encourage open community dialogue about what the certification process is, how it works, and what it could mean for Lewis County's future. Whether you are a resident, business owner, educator, student, or community leader, your participation is encouraged as we explore potential opportunities together.

Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend.

Public Notice 30,31c

LOAN OFFICER

A locally owned bank is seeking an experienced Loan Officer for all types of loans. The ideal candidate should have a degree from a four-year college or university, or two to four years of related lending experience and/or training, or an equivalent combination of education and experience.

The Loan Officer will be responsible for originating and processing loan applications, guiding clients through the loan process, and providing exceptional customer service. The successful candidate must be able to evaluate financial documents, coordinate with underwriters, and ensure compliance with regulatory and bank requirements.

The position also requires the ability to build strong relationships with clients, real estate agents, and other businesses.

The bank offers a competitive salary based on experience and education.

Please send your résumé to:

Pinnacle Bank President
P.O. Box 187
Vanceburg, KY 41179
EEO

Public Notice 31,32c