

TOP VIEWED STORIES OF 2025

**10. UAW CALLS FOR INVESTIGATION OF BLUEOVAL SK**  
The United Auto Workers union is asking the National Labor Relations Board to investigate Ford and BlueOval SK, accusing the company of violating federal labor law in what they are calling a “scorched-earth anti-union campaign designed to scare workers and chill support.”

**9. HIGH WATER CLAIMS LIFE OF ELIZABETHTOWN MAN**  
Heavy rains created dangerous driving conditions in

February with several roads throughout the county being flooded. Thomas Oakes, 63, of Elizabethtown, died after he ran his vehicle off the road into high water. A mother and daughter swept away by flood waters also were killed.

**8. 6-YEAR-OLD BOY DEAD AFTER ACCIDENTAL SHOOTING**  
A 6-year-old boy died in late January and a Radcliff man arrested after police say the child accidentally shot himself when he accessed an unsecured gun. Damarco Rashan Callen, 26, was

arrested.

**7. LOCAL BUTCHER BRINGING FRESH-CUT MEATS TO E'TOWN**  
Bradshaw Smoot opened The Local Butcher on East Dixie in Elizabethtown. The 26-year-old’s family operates Green River Meats, a butcher shop and meat processing plant in Campbellsville.

**6. DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR NEW KROGER GREENLIT**  
Elizabethtown is getting another Kroger and plans for the development at the corner of Patriot Parkway and

Ring Road were approved in February by he city’s planning commission.

**5. TEEN, WHO DIED ON HIS BIRTHDAY AFTER BEING SHOT, IDENTIFIED**  
An 18-year-old male died after being shot in Radcliff on his birthday. Jarrett Anthony Banks Jr., also known as Rico Doyle, was a senior at North Hardin High School.

**4. PREPARING THE WAY FOR WAWA**  
As dirt is moved, Radcliff is to be home to a new Wawa

location, one of two in Hardin County. The convenience store will be on U.S. 31W at the intersection with Vine Street. Elizabethtown also is in line for a Wawa convenience store at 2500 Ring Road at its intersection with Shepherdsville Road.

**3. MAKING WAY FOR FREDDY’S**  
Dirt Works crews are busy moving dirt on property along Ring Road, between Patriot Parkway and North Dixie Avenue, for a Freddy’s Frozen Custard & Steakburgers location.

**2. NEW TENANTS COMING TO MALL**  
After months of negotiating new lease contracts, Towne Mall is getting two new tenants, HomeGoods and Sierra.

**1. JURY RECOMMENDS 20 YEARS FOR MAN CONVICTED IN WIFE’S DEATH**  
A 34-year-old Rineyville man who shot and killed his wife at her birthday party has been found guilty of first-degree manslaughter. SOURCE: Website analytics, thenewsenterprise.com

OTHER STORIES RECEIVING VOTES

Policy changes leads to frustrations at fiscal court, June 26  
Patton Museum on Army’s chopping block, July 3

Trooper Lake to become state’s destination for mountain bikers, July 30  
Vine Grove Fire building housing antique, pumper trucks burns, Aug. 21

New tenants coming to mall, Oct. 25  
Jury recommends 2-year sentence for woman convicted of animal torture, Nov. 20

Boys & Girls Club coming to Radcliff, Dec. 5  
Three hotel projects announced for Elizabethtown: Hotel coming in Ring Road near I-65 exchange,

May 9; New hotel development coming to south end, Oct. 30; New hotel on horizon as zone change seeks approval, Dec. 18  
Senior meal shortfall

coverage: Funding shortfall forces cuts to local senior citizen meals, Sept. 12/  
Senior meal programs to continue after money moved, Oct. 23

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be pulled from the station there.  
Residents from White Mills also wanted to see what they perceived as a promise upheld.  
In the end, Taul said the county would come up with the estimated \$400,000 annual cost to add the full-time service.

**7. ELIZABETHTOWN TO BUY 220 ACRES FOR POSSIBLE AIRPORT EXPANSION AS THREE CAPITAL PROJECTS UNDERWAY**  
In what is being called a “50-year plan,” the city of Elizabethtown announced in October its plan to purchase 220 acres off Hayden School Road to expand the Elizabethtown Regional Airport – Addington Field’s runway from 6,000 to 7,800 feet, if the project is approved by the Federal Aviation Administration.  
The land purchase follows the construction of three capital projects at the airport.  
The projects include a six-bay T-hangar, a privately funded corporate hangar and a \$2 million renovation of the airport’s terminal paid for with a state grant.

**6. YOUNG RECOUNTS CRYSTAL ROGERS’ MURDER CASE AFTER CONVICTION**  
In a case that captured the attention of the state and nation, Brooks Houck was sentenced in September to life in prison for the murder of Crystal Rogers of Bardstown, his then-girlfriend and mother of five, after nearly a decade of investigations by state and federal agencies.  
The team who were able to bring Houck and his accomplices, Steven and Joseph Lawson, to justice were from the Hardin County Commonwealth’s Attorney’s Office, led by Hardin County Commonwealth’s Attorney Shane Young, who was the special prosecutor assigned to the case.  
Without much physical evidence, including not having a murder weapon or Rogers’ body, Young’s team was able to secure the conviction in one of the most high-profile cases in Kentucky history.

**5. LOCAL GOP CHAIRWOMAN ADMONISHED BY STATE PARTY FOR ‘VILE’ SOCIAL MEDIA POST**  
The Hardin County Republican Party found itself embroiled in controversy when its party chairwoman, Bobbie Coleman, shared a video to the party’s Facebook page depicting former President Barack Obama and former First Lady Michelle Obama as primates. The former president’s head appears to be superimposed on a chimpanzee’s body and the former first lady’s head on a gorilla’s body.  
The video, which received national attention and to which Coleman admitted sharing, received admonishment from Kentucky Republican Party Chairman Robert J. Benvenuti III and an investigation by the state party was promised.  
Before any public announcement of action taken by the state party, Coleman announced her resignation effective Dec. 29, when the



GINA CLEAR/The News-Enterprise, file

**A farm home off Old Sonora Road is reflected in April in flood waters that remain blocking the family’s drive from their property. The road also is impassable at this point.**



GINA CLEAR/The News-Enterprise, file

**Elizabethtown city employee Matt Coogle calls out the number of meals needed for a family in November during a food distribution event at Pritchard Community Center in Elizabethtown to aid residents affected by the federal government shutdown.**



Elizabethtown Regional Airport

**An initial stage of a 50-year plan for Elizabethtown Regional Airport at Addington Field is to expand its 6,000-foot runway to 7,800. The possible expansion now is attainable after Elizabethtown City Council voted in October to purchase 222 acres to the west of the airport.**



PETE ZUBATY/Paxton Media Group, file

**Special Prosecutor Shane Young of Hardin County looks on during an October 2023 status hearing in the Crystal Rogers murder case. Young and his legal team won three convictions in the case, one of the more high-profile cases in Kentucky history.**

local party’s executive committee unanimously elected her husband, Kim Coleman, as its new party chair.

**4. COMMUNITY LEADERS STEP UP WHEN FEDERAL SHUTDOWN AFFECTS LOCAL PROGRAMS, FAMILIES**  
The longest federal shutdown in the nation’s history – lasting 43 days from Oct. 1 to Nov. 12 – affected many families in Hardin County who either worked

for U.S. Army or federal agencies at Fort Knox or who received SNAP benefits, which were also paused during the shutdown.  
Because of a lack of benefits for low-income families for food, the city of Elizabethtown partnered with Feeding America, Kentucky’s Heartland to feed 1,000 families three separate times during November.  
Local Head Start programs operated by Central Kentucky Community Action also faced



Submitted, file

**Serving as a delegate, Hardin County Republican Chairwoman Bobbie Coleman of Vine Grove signs the Kentucky banner at the 2024 Republican National Convention in Milwaukee. Coleman resigned as chair of the party in late December and her husband was elected chairman by the executive committee.**



GREG THOMPSON/The News-Enterprise, file

**As motorists pass by along Interstate 65, crews from Dirt Works Unlimited can be seen in September reshaping the landscape at the end of Commerce Drive near Buffalo Lake in Elizabethtown. The area is being prepared for the city’s and Elizabethtown Tourism’s outdoor music venue project.**



Hardin County Sheriff’s Office

**A bronze medallion, seen right, has been stolen from the headstone of Brianna and Bryce Taylor at Elizabethtown Memorial Gardens. Four men have been accused in the theft.**

closure as its already approved federal appropriations were not going to be paid out Nov. 1 during the shutdown. The agency decided on a loan to keep the doors open until federal funding was able to be released.  
Local small businesses, especially those close to Fort Knox, reported at least a 20% dip in sales during the period as the shutdown was affecting Fort Knox’s \$100 million in annual payroll and local nonprofits reported being overwhelmed by the demand created by the shutdown.  
Other utility infrastructure projects waiting on federal dollars also were paused.

**3. SITE WORK BEGINS FOR NEW OUTDOOR MUSIC VENUE IN ELIZABETHTOWN**  
After approving what was expected to be at least a \$30

million outdoor concert venue, the city of Elizabethtown and Elizabethtown Tourism began work in February for the approximately 10,000 seat facility.  
After bids came in, construction costs estimates grew to \$42 million.  
The venue is expected to attract higher-level talent than what is available for The State Theater and nearby outdoor

venues, which seat a few thousand less, and will be managed by a third party.  
Concerts are expected to begin in the fall of 2026.

**2. THE YEAR OF FLOODS**  
Three different rain events — in February, April and June — brought high waters to Hardin County including three deaths of Hardin Countians in flash flooding in February.  
Elizabethtown resident Thomas Oakes, 63, died Feb. 15 when his vehicle ran off Gilead Church Road in Glendale and Oakes exited his vehicle in the high waters. Oakes’ body was found a short distance from his vehicle.  
Amy, 35, and daughter Charlotte Mae Philpott, 7, died Feb. 15 when the vehicle Amy was driving with both in it was swept off the road by flash floods in Hart County.  
The floods in February and another round in April closed several roads across the county and saw the city of West Point and the Colesburg community needing emergency efforts to include shelters and water rescues as residents had to evacuate home.  
Parts of Sonora remained underwater weeks after the April rains, leaving several roads impassable in that part of the county. The storms brought millions of dollars of property damage and a response from FEMA.

**1. SK ON PULLING OUT OF JOINT VENTURE IN GLENDALE**  
Like all messy divorces, the breakup of Ford Motor Co. and South Korean manufacturer SK On in its joint venture, BlueOval SK, has brought significant collateral damage to the area in its wake.  
With the split, some 1,500 workers employed at the BlueOval SK Battery Park in Glendale were laid off and their jobs officially will be terminated Feb. 14.  
The announcement came through media reports Dec. 11, where SK On announced the withdrawal from the joint venture with Ford to make electric vehicle batteries. The company built twin two-mile long, 4-million-square foot manufacturing plants on a 1,551-acre site in Glendale and another battery plant and assembly plant in called BlueOval City in Tennessee.  
In the breakup, it was later revealed Ford will retain ownership of the facilities in Glendale, and plans to invest another \$2 billion to retool the facility and hire 2,100 workers for a battery storage operation, which has yet to be named and is expected to begin operations possibly in 2027.  
The state is renegotiating its incentives package with Ford, officials said.

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