

OBITUARY

Ruben Rojas, 41

Ruben Rojas, age 41, was called home to Heaven on Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2026. Ruben was born on Dec. 29, 1984, in Carolina, Puerto Rico, to Lizette Falcon and Ruben Rojas.



At the age of 16, Ruben set his sights on becoming a professional jockey. He attended jockey's school at Agustin Mercado Reveron. He was respected for his determination and will not to allow being a Type 1 diabetic from age 10 to hold him back from his dreams of competing as a professional athlete. As an accomplished jockey, he raced horses all over the United States from 2002 to 2015. Ruben started in 2,370 races, winning 158, placing second in 200 and placing third in 235, meaning he won, placed or showed in one out of every four races he started.

On Oct. 5, 2007, Ruben's son, Alexander Rojas, was born. Ruben called his son his "number one" and was thrilled to travel to New York in May 2025, to watch Alex graduate from high school.

In 2020, Ruben moved to Oldham County and galloped horses at HighPointe Farm and Training Center in Oldham County. He made friends and worked other jobs in La Grange and Crestwood. In 2023, Ruben was baptized at Crestwood United Methodist Church. He was active in the English and Spanish-speaking services, small groups, outreach ministries and ESL and GED classes. His smile was contagious and his spirit immediately lit up a room. Ruben loved his church and the church loved him.

In 2025, Ruben began working full-time at Good-

will in Crestwood, where he made many friends. Ruben worked 40-60 hours a week and his caseworker, April Evans, was helping him grow personally, spiritually and professionally. Ruben's work ethic and personal advancement placed him in a difficult position. He no longer qualified for the life-saving health benefits through Medicaid. His goal was to grow in his career, provide for himself and his family, and give back to the community. Ruben, like many others, struggled to meet basic needs after his benefits were denied. The cost of basic health care, insulin and other diabetic needs was difficult to overcome. Ruben dreamed of owning a home, two acres and a horse. He knew two acres was all he needed to ride horses again. When Ruben had access to his medicine, he reached all his dreams. Without access, every day was a struggle: a reality that many people face every day.

Besides his son, Ruben is survived by sisters, Arlene and Desiree Rojas, brother Carlos Rojas, and his parents.

A Celebration of Life was held Sunday, March 1, 2026, at Crestwood United Methodist Church.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to Crestwood UMC. The proceeds will be used to support people in their time of need.

INDICTS

FROM PAGE A1

motioned for a small SUV to move through the intersection heading south, the citation says. The vehicle proceeded, but drifted left and hit Schneble despite his attempt to step out of the way.

A nearby officer heard the sound of the impact and called out to Schneble asking if he was hit.

"Officer Schneble stated the vehicle had hit him and was continuing south bound on [Highway 53]," the citation reads.

The nearby officer soon stopped the vehicle in front of Dairy Queen, observing the car's "cracked drivers side mirror."

29-year-old Hernandez "had a strong odor of alcohol from her breath and was unsteady on her feet" and refused any field sobriety tests, the citation says.

Hernandez was then placed under arrest, but "would not go into the back of the police car and resisted [officers'] attempts." Eventually, she was "assisted" into the cruiser and transported to the Oldham County Detention Center.

At the detention center, Hernandez refused sobriety tests until a blood-search warrant was obtained and executed at 10:10 p.m.

Hernandez's indictment includes charges of second-degree assault, police officer, a class C felony; third-degree assault, police officer, a class D felony; leaving the scene of an accident, failure to render aid, serious physical injury or death, a class D felony; operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol/drugs/etc., aggravator,

second offense, a class A misdemeanor; and resisting arrest, a class A misdemeanor.

Hernandez had been held at the Oldham County Detention Center on a \$90,000 cash bond, but her bond was partially secured on Dec. 17 and she was released.

Conditions to her release are that she has no contact with the complaining witness or victim, does not operate a motor vehicle and does not violate any other laws or get arrested.

Hernandez has an arraignment scheduled in Oldham Circuit Court for March 5 at 9 a.m.

Other February indictments include:

Stephen R. Stinson, 51, who is charged with two counts of theft by deception, over \$10,000, each a class C felony. Stinson has an arraignment scheduled for March 5 at 9 a.m.

Nora M. Stinson, 49, who is charged with complicity to theft by deception, over \$10,000, a class C felony. Nora Stinson has an arraignment scheduled for March 5 at 9 a.m.

Ronald A. Roper, 42, who is charged with possession of a handgun by a convicted felon, a class C felony; first-degree possession of a controlled substance, first offense, methamphetamine, a class D felony; failure of a non-owner to maintain required insurance/security, first offense, a class B misdemeanor; driving too slow for traffic conditions/minimum speed; and possession of an open alcoholic beverage container in a motor vehicle.

Roper has an arraignment scheduled for March 5 at 9 a.m.

Buddy P. Puzio, 42, who is charged with theft by unlawful taking or disposition, firearm, a class D felony. Puzio has an arraignment scheduled for March 26 at 1 p.m.

RFG removal request receives approval, should lower gas prices

BY ERA STAFF

Gov. Andy Beshear announced that his request for the Louisville area to be removed from the federal Reformulated Gasoline Program (RFG) received approval from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which should result in lower gas prices for residents. The change is set to take effect May 27, 2026.

"At a time when costs are too high for Americans, I am proud that we are able to deliver some relief for Kentuckians by having the RFG mandate removed for Louisville," said Gov. Beshear.

"Reformulated gas was costing Kentuckians 10 to 25 cents more per gallon, which now can go toward groceries, rent and other things that matter to our families. I am grateful to the EPA for approving this request and for local leaders who helped raise their voice to support this much-needed change."

The Governor submitted this request to the EPA in February 2025 through a letter that shared that the Louisville area has seen emissions continuously decline since meeting the 1997 ozone standard 18 years ago. Kentucky opted into the program Jan. 1, 1995, as an air

quality control measure, and then was redesignated in July 2007.

Jefferson County will be removed from the mandate, as will parts of Bullitt and Oldham counties.

Approval was received via a letter from EPA Administrator Lee M. Zeldin.

Jason Nemes, R-Middletown who represents a portion of Oldham County posted on social media following the announcement, "RFG is gone. This will reduce our price at the pump by about a quarter a gallon. We've been trying to get this done for a long time. I'm thankful it is finally here."

SCHOOL

FROM PAGE A1

"It's also a way for us to show our appreciation for our teachers in the district and everyone who works for us in our county," added Board Member Adam Springer.

"[It is] definitely a recruitment tool... [and helps] keep staff and that retention, and hopefully get some of the great teachers that may have left over the previous years back into the county."

"It's well deserved," concluded Vice Chair Allison Sheffer. "We're very thankful."

The approval is a repetition of similar raises over the last four school years. As previously reported, the board approved a 5% raise in salaries and a \$2 per hour rate increase in March 2025.

The 2025 increase was also combined with an initiative package, which gave additional funding for clubs, school nurses, bus monitors, student technology and free/reduced lunches as well as a \$40 reduction in school fees for each student enrolling in the 2025-2026 school year.

According to district leadership, the 2024-2025 school year saw a 7% raise for certified and salaried employees and a \$2 per hour increase for hourly classified staff; the 2023-2024 school year saw a 2% raise for all district employees; and the 2022-2023 school year saw a 3% raise for all employees.

In other news, the board approved a proposed calendar for the 2026-2027 school year, which will begin on August 12 and end on May 25, 2027 for students — barring any days missed for weather.

The calendar also includes the following major breaks: fall break from Oct. 19 to Oct. 23; Thanksgiving break from Nov. 25 to Nov. 27; winter break from Dec. 21 to Jan. 1, 2027; and spring break from March 29, to April 2, 2027.

Staff workdays are scheduled for Aug. 11, Oct. 16, Jan. 4, Feb. 12, and March 12. Make-up days are scheduled for May 26 through June 2.

Other off days, outside of holidays, include Oaks Day on April 20, Primary Election Day on May 18, and Election Day on Nov. 3.

The board also approved the tentative 2025-2026 graduation date of May 30 at Freedom Hall, though the date may be altered depending on event space availability.

The board also approved next fiscal year's allocations to school Site-Based Decision Making (SBDM) Councils, which was \$140 per student at each school. The total amount of funding allocated to each school is based on the projected number of students for the upcoming year.

A partial allocation of each high school's funding is also shared with Arvin Education



Photo by Grant Gerstner

Superintendent Claudette Herald, pictured far-left, and the Oldham County Schools Board of Education pose on Feb. 23 after receiving a certificate in observance of School Board Appreciation Month — which is held in January, but the board did not meet in-person due to weather conditions.



Photo courtesy of Oldham County Schools

Superintendent Claudette Herald with Justice Slayton's mother, who accepted Justice's Yes, I Can! Technology Award that she was awarded posthumously. Justice is one of 12 winners in the nation and is the first Oldham County student to ever win the award.

Center based on the number of students that attends the Arvin Center.

The board also approved several updates to procedural forms so that they more accurately resemble district policies and conducted a first reading of an update to a policy regarding the enrollment of nonresident students.

The policy update largely deals with nonresident students who are children of full-time employees, who —if approved — would be subject to a review of their prior attendance, behavior and academic effort before they are permitted to enroll.

The board also made the following recognitions:

The late Justice Slayton was recognized for being posthumously selected as the recipient of the Council for Exceptional Children 2026 Yes,

I Can! Award for Technology.

The award specifically acknowledges students and youth with exceptionalities who have demonstrated exceptional achievement though the effective use of technology, including assistive technology, to advance their academic and non-academic skills.

The award also recognizes the positive impact of technology on the student's social and emotional development or well-being.

Justice Slayton makes for one of 12 winners in the nation that has been recognized this year for her determination and achievements, and is the first Oldham County student to ever win the award.

"She is greatly missed by all who knew her," added Superintendent Claudette Herald.

Also recognized were the

following students for earning the spot in the Kentucky Music Educators Association (KMEA) All-State Choir, All State Bands and All-State Orchestra.

Students selected to perform in the All-State Orchestra were North Oldham High School's Ada Heppermann and South Oldham High School's Oryan Admony.

Students selected to perform in All-State Bands include:

South Oldham High School's Skyla Cun, Zoe Gatewood and Amelia Vanderpoel; North Oldham High School's Jonathan Loleng, Grace Myers and Piper Davino; Oldham County High School's Nick Turner, Will Matthews, Killian Jones, Anthony Payne, Ethan Meredith, Kaitlyn Osorio, Cole Birchmeier, Ryder Cantrell and Avery Dremov.

Students selected to perform in All-State Choir include:

South Oldham High School's Andrew Bednar, Caroline Bednar, Sylvia Buchenberger, Sophia Davis, Cooper Finewood, Jonas Gomsak, Daphne Kennedy, Taylor Meredith, Livvy Matthews, Logan Myers, Ben Osborne, Matthew Osborne, Ryan Partington, Norah Rembold and Gabriella Watkins; North Oldham High School's Alex Reynolds; Oldham County High School's Abigail Baker, Madison Blevins, Rylee Brown, Elli Burrell, Preston Corbin, Daven Drury, Clayton Evans, Edward Gutierrez, Zakkary Lehman, Keegan McKinney, Emilie Thompson, Josiah Wolfenbarger, Gabrielle Wood, Madelynn Burton, Chloe Falt, Alethea Hill, Morgan McWane, Ella Milberger, Jayden Pace and Pierce Woodruff.

The board also recognized Centerfield Elementary part-time daycare director Shallen Rich, Camden Station Elementary teacher Andie Marx, and South Oldham High School Club Service Chair Bobbie Stoess with Ignite Passion Awards.

The Oldham County Board of Education's next meeting is scheduled for March 23 at 4:45 p.m.

The Carroll County Public Library is accepting resumes for an enthusiastic, service-oriented Library Director to oversee all library operations for a regional community of nearly 11,000, with a staff of 10-12 people. Essential management duties include planning and implementing programs to support the library's goals and objectives, fiscal accountability, and public relations while representing the library on a local and state level. The Director reports to and serves as a professional/technical advisor to the Library Board of Trustees on policy, finances, planning, library performance and law affecting libraries.

Successful candidates will have a master's in library information science (MLS) or related college degree and KDLA approved certificate with a minimum of three (3) years' experience in library management and a strong commitment to intellectual freedom and Freedom to Read. Salary range is \$50,000-\$70,000, (depending on education and experience) with a generous benefits package.

Candidate should consider relocating in the Carrollton/Carroll County area. Resumes with salary request and names and contact information for three (3) professional references, should be sent by March 31, 2026, to Board President, Greg Goff, 136 Court St. Carrollton, KY 41008 or emailed to employment@carrollcountylibrary.org

The Oldham Era
Your News Since 1876.

105 S. Walnut, La Grange KY 40031
502-222-7183

Publisher: **Jane Ashley Pace** - publisher@oldhamera.com, 502-222-7184
Editor: **Grant Gerstner** - editor@oldhamera.com, 502-839-1688
Sports Editor: **Wyatt Sparkman** - sports@oldhamera.com, 502-219-6338
Advertising Representative: **Barbara Duncan** - advertising@oldhamera.com, 502-222-7185
Obituaries: obits@oldhamera.com

POSTMASTER: Send corrections to: The Oldham Era, 105 S. Walnut, La Grange KY 40031. Periodicals postage paid at La Grange KY 40031 - USPS 407-700.

Subscription: The Oldham Era is published every Thursday.
Digital only subscription: **\$25.44**
In-county print and digital subscription: **\$50.88**
Out-of-county print and digital subscription: **\$85.00**

LEGAL NOTICE
The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet

In accordance with KRS 176.051, Kentucky's noxious weed law, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet will control noxious weeds on state-owned right of way at the request of the adjoining property owner. The noxious weeds named in this law are Johnson grass (*Sorghum halepense*), Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), Cutleaf Teasel (*Dipsacus laciniatus*) Nodding thistle (*Carduus nutans*), Common teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum*), Poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*), Marehail (*Conyza canadensis*), Amur Honeysuckle (*Lonicera maackii*), Multiflora Rose (*Rosa multiflora*) Japanese knotweed, (*Polygonum cuspidatum*), Spotted Knapweed (*Centaurea stoebe*) and Kudzu (*Pueraria montana*).

Persons who own property adjacent to state right of way and who are involved in eradication efforts on their property can submit a written application to the highway district office in their area. Contact information can be found at transportation.ky.gov/DistrictPages