OBITUARY

Robert Lee Shrader, 77



Robert Lee Shrader, gifted storyteller, devoted father, and lover of the arts, was born on Jan. 22, 1949.

Bob enjoyed a childhood filled with love and laughter in La Grange, Ky. He was a proud graduate of Oldham County High School and Western Kentucky University.

What first started as a love of photography for his high school yearbook eventually became a career in video production. His early career started at his alma mater, Oldham County High School, teaching video production to students and pioneering one of the first closed-circuit television systems in the state. His early work included photography and media production at Kentucky Fried Chicken, where his favorite project was traveling with KFC founder Col. Harlan Sanders during the last year of the Colonel's life and creating a multi-image film telling the story of Col. Sanders and the early history of KFC.

Bob later left KFC to start his own business, Multi-Video Productions, Inc. During this time, he was the recipient of numerous Telly Awards and Louie Awards for creativity in broadcast television. His storytelling talents led him to the Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation as the producer, writer, and on-air talent for Bluegrass & Backroads, a video magazine program that received fourteen Emmy nominations and three Emmy Awards under his careful and creative leadership. Bob was a master writer, interviewer, and videographer, but his true passion was storytelling. For 7 seasons (seasons 5-11) of Bluegrass & Backroads, he amplified the voices and shared the gifts of many Kentucky artisans, towns and festivals. He was proud to tell the stories of so many wonderful and creative Kentuckians who call the Commonwealth home. Under his leadership, Bluegrass & Backroads secured a highly coveted national syndication deal on RFD-TV, allowing the show to reach millions of homes nationwide.

Beyond his work life and all of the awards and honors, Bob was a careful listener and skilled at making connections. He was a principled man of strong faith. He believed in the goodness of all people and urged others to be kind and to choose love. His mind constantly bubbled with creativity, and his home was always filled with music. He cordially co-parented with his former wife to raise their children with instruction mingled with grace, creativity that always made the magic happen, and above all else, with love.

He loved life and family, and enjoyed time spent in the kitchen with his children creating delicious meals, or walking in the park admiring the beauty of God's created world. He found peace walking along the beach and enjoying the soothing quality of the ocean.

And he was always happiest when surrounded by family playing cards, telling stories, or sharing time together.

His passion for interviewing and storytelling continued well into retirement. He could often be found connecting with and truly listening to the cashier at the grocery store, the med tech at the doctor's office, his barber, or anyone with whom he came into contact.

He would always call them by name and ask about their day or life with sincere concern and interest. He also never stopped writing and eventually authored dozens of short stories of adventure and childhood fun, as well as stirring poems that were frequent gifts to family and friends.

Bob passed away unexpectedly on Thursday, Oct. 29, 2026, following complications related to heart surgery.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Horace Louis Shrader, Sr. and Aline (Richardson) Shrader; his brother, Horace L. Shrader, Jr.; and his brother-in-law, Jan Neal Akers.

He is survived by his sisters, Charlotte Akers and Cheryl Beckley (David Beckley); sister-in-law, Melodie Shrader' two children, Robert L. Shrader (Lisa Hoffman) and Rebecca McCarty (Bill McCarty); and four grandchildren, Mariah Clark, Caroline Shrader, Elijah Clark and Lydia Shrader. He is also survived by his nieces, Ami Brooks (David Brooks), Shannon Seebert (Mike Seebert) and his nephew Elliot Beckley (Laurel Beckley); a great-niece, Katie Brooks; and a great-nephew, Theo Beckley.

The family received visitors on Friday, Nov. 6, at Beargrass Christian Church and again on Saturday, Nov. 7. A memorial service was held at Beargrass Christian Church on Saturday, Nov.7.

Burial followed at Valley of Rest Cemetery in La Grange, Ky.

30 La Grange taxpayers not allowed to vote in city elections

Local officials point to Secretary of State

BY GRANT GERSTNER
EDITOR

A total of 30 voters in the Lakeside Subdivision in La Grange who were able to vote in the primary election and received city tax bills earlier this year were not able to vote for city government candidates in the general election, Oldham County Clerk Amy Alvey confirmed.

Word of the issue first spread on Facebook, and now Alvey and La Grange Public Works Director Corey Rusnak have banded together to address the change.

In an email Rusnak sent to the mayor and council that was shared with the Era, Rusnak said that Lakeside was developed in the 1980s and 1990s, but the lot-by-lot ordinances annexing the neighborhood into the city were not originally recorded with the Secretary of State.

In 2002, the error was discovered and the ordinances were recorded with the Secretary of State, but "sometime between the primary election and now, the Secretary of State's office updated [their] mapping based on the recorded legal description in the ordinances" and some of the ordinances "did not have the correct description" and were considered as not part of the city.

"This is an unfortunate error from 24 years ago that was accepted by the Secretary of State's office up to this point, but more disappointing that nobody was notified …" Rusnak concluded.

The city and county clerk's office hope to work with the Secretary of State's office to properly annex the affected homes and restore the homeowners' right to vote in La Grange elections. The matter is also planned to be addressed at the next La Grange City Council meeting, scheduled for Dec. 7 at 6:30 p.m.

So long as only 30 potential voters were affected, the results of the city election would not have been effected, as the mayoral and city council races were decided by 244-vote and 47-vote margins.

As of press time, the Secretary of State's office has not responded to the Era's repeated requests for comment.

Court tables $100K request for John Black memorial statue

BY GRANT GERSTNER
EDITOR



Photo by Grant Gerstner

Magistrate Wayne Theiss requests the Oldham County Fiscal Court to pledge $100,000 to a memorial statue in honor of former Oldham County Judge Executive and late La Grange Mayor John Black.

After hearing a request from Magistrate Wayne Theiss, the Oldham County Fiscal Court voted 6-2 to table the $100,000 ask to pay for part of a memorial statue in honor of former Judge Executive and late La Grange Mayor John Black.

Theiss explained that the idea to honor Black's legacy with a memorial of some sort originated with the La Grange Tourism and that multiple meetings have been held to figure out what the memorial would look like and how it would be funded.

Theiss also said that he recently asked for a $50,000 commitment from the La Grange City Council. That request was tabled until further specific information on pricing could be presented, however.

"If you walk through La Grange or as you travel through Oldham County, you can't miss the many venues — both business and pleasure — that John Black had a hand in developing," Theiss said. "The best way to recognize the efforts and accomplishments of John is through a permanent memorial …"

Theiss made a motion to approve the request and, after being seconded by Magistrate Brent Likins, questions and comments ensued.

"Have we exhausted other options?" Magistrate Chris Haunz inquired, referencing that the statue of Colonel Oldham in front of the courthouse was largely funded by a challenge-coin fundraiser.

"I think this looks great, but to me, it would make sense that we try to get the money and then we fill in the back whatever is left," Haunz continued.

"John Black has done a tremendous amount for both the City of La Grange and Oldham County … but I would like to see us table this until we can take it through finance committee," Magistrate Kevin Jeffries said.

As to the mention of the Colonel Oldham statue, Jeffries said the challenge-coin sales raised approximately $140,000, though it did take "a long time," in his words.

"I find it disheartening that at the first meeting after former Judge Wendell Moore passed away, we're now 30 minutes into this meeting, and we've not even mentioned his passing, yet you're asking for money for another county judge that we also have a building named after already in the county," Magistrate Kevin Woosley said.

"This is certainly no dig at John, but it's easy to spend taxpayer money when it's not coming out of your own pocket … I think John would agree with me … He went out and raised money for events instead of using taxpayer money for a whole lot of stuff."

Judge Executive David Voegele apologized for not having a moment of silence for Wendell Moore and, though he said he wants to be careful with his words since Black was his brother-in-law and best friend, said he supported the idea.

"John was a great friend of mine … but I think something like this needs to be paid by the public," Magistrate Michael Logsdon said.

As a final comment, Theiss said that the memorial is "paying forward everything that John did for the 25 years or more that he was involved either in the City of La Grange or the county government."

Jeffries then made a formal motion to table the request, which was seconded by Woosley. "There's a lot of information that we don't have — we don't know what the cost is going to be, we don't have a lot of the details yet …" Jeffries said. When brought to a vote, the motion to table was passed 6-2 — Voegele and Theiss opposed, Magistrate Stephanie Hawkins absent.

After the motion passed, the court conducted a moment of silence for Wendell Moore.

In other news, the court conducted two first readings on two separate zoning change requests.

A lot in the 3000 block of Commerce Parkway is proposed to change from planned-unit-development zoning,"PUD," to light industrial, "I-1," to allow the construction of speculative warehouses.

Wescott Development is requesting that 2706 S. Highway 393 be changed form heavy industrial zoning, "I-2," to community business district, "C-2."

Both proposed zoning changes are scheduled to have a second reading a public hearing at the court's Nov. 17 meeting.

The court also approved a $159,255 contract with QK4 for the final design of the Highway 22 and Clore Lane intersection in Crestwood. According to Oldham County Engineer Jim Silliman, the project is being funded by the state with a 20% match from the county that is coming from an escrow account for the Brentwood Subdivision.

The court also approved a contract with the Administrative Office of the Courts to be reimbursed for maintenance to the new courthouse, which prepays the county an estimated amount each quarter. The total reimbursement for this year is about $505,000, according to Chief Financial Officer Stan Clark.

The court also approved a benefit renewal package for county employee medical, dental and vision insurance plans. The plan is self-funded, which Clark says will allow for more flexibility while being "as seamless [change] as possible" in terms of providers and deductibles.

The court also approved the release of an erosion control surety in the form of a $89,500 bond for first phase of the first section of Sanctuary falls, as well as the recommendation to accept a portion of Paramount Commons into the county road maintenance system — specifically 684 linear feet starting at U.S. 42 past the Goshen library.

The court also approved a modification to the Emergency Management Association program funds contract, shifting the contract's end date to September 2027.

The court also approved the hiring of Derek Hebner and the contract renewal of Todd Maggard at the Oldham County Police Department, as well as the hiring of Bronwyn Good to the Parks Department.

The court also voted to approve the reappointment of Howard Ferrell to the Sheriff Merit Board for a term expiring March 11, 2028, and the appointment of Jane Coble Royer to the Ethics Commission for a term expiring Oct. 18, 2029.

The Oldham County Fiscal Court's next meeting is scheduled for Nov. 17 at 2 p.m.

Small plane lands on prison property

BY GRANT GERSTNER
EDITOR

After having power issues mid-flight, a small private plane made a safe emergency landing onto the fields at the Roederer Correctional Complex in Buckner late Monday afternoon.

Reports first came in around 3:41 p.m. regarding a potential plane crash, but according to Emergency Management Deputy Director Kevin Parker, the pilot was able to make a soft landing, avoiding any flames, explosion or injuries for the two souls on board.

Leadership program created for school principals

BY TOM LATEK
KENTUCKY TODAY

The Kentucky Association of School Administrators recently launched the Kentucky Principal Leadership Academy, a 15-month experience designed to help principals build leadership capacity, strengthen school culture and create measurable impact in their schools.

Created specifically for Kentucky public schools, the academy combines executive coaching, peer collaboration, leadership assessment and applied practice, according to the announcement. Its inaugural cohort will connect principals from rural, suburban and urban districts in a sustained professional learning community focused on moving leadership development from theory to action.

The academy represents the latest step in KASA's work to establish a clear statewide standard for school-leader development — and to ensure Kentucky principals have a professional home equipped to support them throughout the most demanding stages of their careers.

"No organization is better positioned to understand the realities of the principalship or to turn that understanding into practical, sustained support," KASA Chief Executive Officer Dr. Rhonda Caldwell said in a news release. "Leadership development is not simply one part of KASA's work. It is central to who we are and to our responsibility to Kentucky's schools."

The Kentucky Principal Leadership Academy is

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