# OBITUARIES & NEWS

# BCM staff member has passion for deaf community on EKU campus



**Sophia Dodge (wearing hat, third from left) and the rest of her deaf Bible study group at the EKU Baptist Campus Ministry.** | SUBMITTED

**MARK MAYNARD**
KENTUCKY TODAY

RICHMOND, Ky. (KT) — God placed an urgency in Sophia Dodge's heart to reach the deaf community on the campus of Eastern Kentucky University with the gospel.

Dodge, an associate with EKU Baptist Campus Ministry, recently launched a Bible study for deaf students through the BCM. About a dozen people attended the first meeting last Tuesday.

Her burden for the deaf community began during her freshman year at EKU. A deaf student in one of her psychology classes had an interpreter, sparking Dodge's interest. Later, through the BCM, she met students majoring in interpreting and became more involved.

Her passion continued to grow.

"I fell in love with the language and the culture and ended up majoring in Deaf Education and middle school math," she said. "I started getting involved in the deaf community."

Dodge believes God used that deaf student, Haley Toler, who became her friend, to place the ministry on her heart.

"I wanted to plug her into the (BCM) ministry," Dodge said. "She didn't have a church (home). It's tough. If there's not an interrupter at church or BCM, they're not going to come because, obviously, they can't understand."

Dodge began learning more about the deaf community and how the BCM could better serve it. The International Mission Board considers the deaf community a lost people group because many lack access to the gospel.

Toler became a motivation for Dodge to help change that.

"It was heavy on my heart with her," she said. "I worked hard to get her an interpreter while we were in college. We had students who would interpret, and she came to Converge with us twice." Converge is a weekend of worship, fellowship and ministry sponsored by BCM.

"I feel like that opened a lot of doors. There was another deaf student who came to Converge one year."

That was four years ago. Dodge graduated from EKU in December, and she and her husband, Matthew, now serve as full-time BCM staff members. He is also working toward his Master of Divinity degree at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Dodge has continued exploring ways to minister to EKU's deaf community, which is larger than those at many public universities because of the school's proximity to the Kentucky School for the Deaf in Danville.

"What opportunities are there for deaf community now? We ended up having a deaf education student major on our leadership team," she said. "I befriended her and she befriended a deaf student last year and became friends. She was bringing her around and we found an interpreter. A lot of cool God-things that He orchestrated."

While completing clinical work at the Kentucky School for the Deaf, Dodge watched one of her former students be baptized.

Dodge encountered her again in Berea and invited her to attend the BCM, where an interpreter would be available.

"She is a new Christian, which is rare (in the deaf community)," Dodge said. "They don't have access like anybody else. They can't just walk into church because they can't hear it."

The challenges extend beyond attending worship services. Because English is not the first language for many deaf people, reading books and other discipleship materials can also be difficult.

"They struggle with discipleship and getting stronger in the faith because of a lack of accessibility."

Dodge is leading the newly established group through a study of 1 Peter.

"I'm excited to study the word together and teach them," she said.

During her research, Dodge discovered that EKU's BCM had previously offered Bible studies and interpreters for deaf students for decades. She is thankful for the opportunity to revive the ministry for a new generation.

"We are the only school in Kentucky and surrounding state that has a four-year interpreting program, and the only deaf education program is here. We are 45 minutes away from the School for the Deaf and have such a high population here that knows ASL (American Sign Language)."

If she had one wish, Dodge said it would be that one of the Kentucky Baptist churches in Richmond would begin a deaf ministry. She said only one church has a program now and it is not a Kentucky Baptist church.

Dodge views restarting the deaf Bible study as an assignment from the Lord — one that began in a freshman psychology class.

"I'm grateful that the Lord put me in that class (where she met Toler)," she said. "I'm the only one here on staff that knows this world and can get accessibility for them. I've been taught all these things to build this ministry again."

## Charlotte Ann Brookshire

Richmond



Charlotte "Granny Dude" Ann Brookshire , 83, passed away Monday, November 23, 2026.

Charlotte was born August 23, 1943, in Richmond, Kentucky to John David Hicks and Ebbie Marie Hall Hicks.

She loved hunting arrowheads, collecting Indian artifacts, and antiquing. Charlotte loved to spend her time reading and collecting books.

In addition to her parents, Charlotte was preceded in death by her son, Noble Lee Van Winkle; and siblings, Millie Jean Todd, John David Hicks Jr., Randolph Scott Hicks Sr., Noble Lee Hicks, Nettie Bell Smith, and Connie Jo Sparks.

She is survived by her daughters, Sherry Lynn Bryant (Tony) and Elizabeth Susan Neeley; son, Donald Wayne Van Winkle; siblings, Dianne McIntosh, Mollie Grant, and Linda Carol Rummel; grandchildren, Jessica Carol McVey, Jared Lee Scott Elkins (Ashley), Johnny Ellington (Amanda), Robbie Ellington (Brittany), Ezekiel Van Winkle (Cynthia), Caleb Van Winkle, Lex Van Winkle, Lily Van Winkle, Zachary Van Winkle, and Madison Clayton (Reese); and several great-grandchildren, and nieces and nephews.

Visitation will be held Monday, November 30, 2026, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Oldham, Roberts & Powell Funeral Home. The funeral service will follow at 1:00 p.m. with Pastor Jeff Jackson officiating. Burial will follow at Hicks Family Cemetery.

Pallbearers will be grandsons, Jared Elkins, Johnny Ellington, Robbie Ellington, Ezekial Van Winkle, Caleb Van Winkle, Reese Clayton, and great-grandsons, Chris Ellington and Johnny Ellington.

Condolences may be made at http://orpfh.com

## James D Green

Born to Miller E. Green Sr. and Ellena Mae Green August 20th 1941 to November 5th 2026. Services will be held Monday , November 30th at Good Samaritan Baptist Church Germantown Pike, Dayton Ohio.

*Read obituaries on the web at richmondregister.com*

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**BID NOTICE**

The Madison County Extension District Board is requesting proposals from qualified companies to provide Furniture for the Madison County Extension Office located at 230 Duncannon Lane, Richmond, KY.

To receive a full copy of the RFP, **contact Lisa Adams, County Extension Director, at adams.lisa@uky.edu or 859-623-4072.**

The deadline to submit proposals is **10:00am, Wednesday, December 3, 2026.**

The proposals must be sealed and labeled: **"MCEO Furniture"; ATTN: Lisa Adams; 230 Duncannon Lane, Richmond, KY 40475**.

The Madison County Extension District Board reserves the right to reject any or all proposals.

**Request for Proposals- Architect/ Engineer Firms for Design Services**

The Madison County Board of Education is soliciting letters-of-interest from qualified Architectural firms for consulting and design services for Site Improvements at Foley Middle School. Interested firms may drop-off or mail a one-page letter-of-interest to:

Randy Neeley, Superintendent
Madison County Board of Education
301 Highland Park Drive
Richmond, KY 40475

Letters may also be submitted via email to: dustin.brumbaugh@madison.kyschools.us

Letters must be received no later than Friday, December 4, 2026 by 3:00pm EDT.