

# Why Do People Believe They're Right When Experts Say Otherwise?

By Tommy Druen

My high school had just over 300 students. It was the only public school in the county. Needless to say, we weren't accustomed to success. Talent isn't only found in larger places, but our school simply had a smaller pool from which to draw.

Yet, our basketball team punched well above its weight. In my four years, we won the district tournament and the All "A" region tournament three times each. I'm proud to say I was a part of the team.

For the sake of full disclosure though, I wasn't the reason. I was the guy at the end of the bench. I didn't see the floor unless the outcome was already decided. Once, my coach asked me to keep stats during the game. That moment made my role crystal clear. Our odds of winning were better if I had a pencil in my hand, not the ball. Still, I never resented it. I knew our chances of winning were better with my friend J.P. Blevins on the court, averaging 30 points a

game, than me, who likely averaged more fouls than minutes played. I accepted my role. My desire to play was outweighed by my desire for the team to win.

I thought of that acceptance recently while watching a 2018 documentary called "Behind the Curve." It follows a group of people who genuinely believe the earth is flat. More troublingly than just that fact, they believe that governments, scientists and teachers (and the Freemasons, of course) continue to conspire to hide this "truth" from the public. I'll admit I dozed off halfway through, so I never quite grasped what the supposed endgame of this conspiracy might be.

What struck me though was not one of these flat earth believers was a scientist. None had relevant degrees or worked in any related field, although one had won a virtual pinball tournament. However, they were all certain they knew better than experts who had earned the advanced degrees

and dedicated their lives and careers to astronomy.

It sparked a question that I think of with increased frequency. Why do people believe they're right when experts say otherwise?

We see it everywhere. Social media has made armchair experts of us all. There are entire industries built upon this. Podcasts, YouTube channels, and blogs become the mediums where people confidently opine about topics they barely understand. And they're wildly popular. We've created celebrities, and fortunes, out of demonstrated ignorance.

Not long ago, a woman lectured me about how the Kentucky's General Assembly "really" works. I've spent 25 years working for the legislative branch while her job isn't even remotely related to government. She wasn't unintelligent, but she was unwilling to acknowledge her own ignorance. When I politely corrected her, she

questioned my motives for "defending the system."

What's more troubling is intelligence has itself become suspicious. I know brilliant people who are graduates of Harvard and Princeton. When they ran for public office, they deliberately hid those credentials. Why? They feared it would cost them votes. And I suspect they were right.

Isaac Asimov captured it perfectly. He said, "There is a cult of ignorance in the United States. The strain of anti-intellectualism has been a constant thread winding through our political and cultural life, nurtured by the false notion that democracy means my ignorance is just as good as your knowledge."

What troubles me even more than ignorance itself is that expertise is being treated as evidence of corruption. The more qualified someone is, the more time they've dedicated to something, the more suspicious they become. It's inverted the entire logic of knowledge.

My basketball team didn't succeed because of anything I did on the court. But I like to think I contributed in other ways. I made my teammates better in practice. I cheered them on during the games. I didn't create discord or undermine team chemistry. I simply knew my role.

You don't have to be the leading scorer to be valuable. But good teams are made up of

people who play certain roles. Currently, people are playing positions in society they're not prepared for, ones that treat hunches as expertise and opinions as knowledge. We could be so much stronger if we simply found our own roles and played them well. That's not a weakness, that's wisdom. And that's how our society wins.

## Webster County Jailer's Report

Webster County Jailer Greg Sauls reports inmates worked a total of 1886 hours between May 3 and May 9, 2026. Hours worked include 520 hours at the detention center; 280 hours at the RCC; 80 hours mowing; 360 hours for Union County; 40 hours for the city of Clay; 80 hours for the city of Providence; 160 hours for the city of Providence; 40 hours for recycling; 40 hours for the road department shop; 40 hours

for the dog warden and 16 hours for Landon's Hope.

The total jail population is 193 with 34 Webster County inmates, 33 Union County inmates and 126 state inmates.

Thirty inmates attended the Moral Recognition Therapy program; 29 attended Anger Management; 18 attended Thinking for Good and 15 attended Untangling Relationships. Eleven inmates participated in the GED

program with two taking tests.

Incarcerated during the same period were Stephen Adams Heath Baumann Corey Butler Anthony Camalli Eric Dickerson Brittan Fowler Travis Gibson James Gilkey Shaun Golike William Hartsock Derek Hedgepath Kevin Hickman Lucious Hobson Derrick Howlett Gerson Humber-

to-Amad Gary McClain Grant Post Kobe Roiss Joseph Sellers Joshua Taylor Matthew Teeter Kolton Walker

## Webster County Sheriff Activity Report

The Webster County Sheriff's Office has the following activity to report for April, 2026.

This data is gathered by individual deputies during the course of their daily duties. This data was compiled and the total activity reported is as follows:

- Traffic Stops: 143
- Total Citations: 145
- DUI: 3
- Speed: 14
- Seatbelt: 0
- Courtesy Notice: 0
- Driver Inspections: 249
- Complaints: 333
- Special Detail: 120
- Directed Patrol: 40
- Motorist Assists: 8
- Criminal Cases: 15

- Criminal Arrests: 80
- Accidents Investigated: 12
- Programs: 2
- Warrant Service: 14
- Search Warrant Service: 4
- Criminal Summons Served: 5
- Civil Process Service: 49
- Security/Surveillance: 14
- Intelligence Reports: 1
- Vehicle Inspections (Office): 13+
- Victim Contacts: 375
- JC3: 7
- E Call Response: 4
- E Crisis Response: 4
- K9 Deployment: 9
- Drone Deployment: 0
- CSS Referral: 15
- Regular Hours: 932.5
- Overtime Hours: 83

### Advertisement for Webster County Schools

#### 3rd Local Planning Committee Meeting and Public Forum

The Webster County Schools' Local Planning Committee (LPC) will conduct a third PUBLIC MEETING on May 21, 2026, at 5:30 PM CDT at the Webster County Board of Education Central Office located at 28 State Route 1340, Dixon, Kentucky 42409. A Public Forum for public comment will follow this meeting at approximately 6:00pm. This is the third of a series of meetings and public forums to develop a District Facilities Plan for Webster County Schools. Hafer Architects will present an updated District Facility Plan to the committee. A draft plan was approved by the committee and sent to Kentucky Department of Education for their review and approval. The LPC will review the updated plan and possibly approve the plan for local board action. This meeting and future meetings will be informal gatherings to encourage local participation through community suggestions relative to future utilization of existing school facilities and construction of new school facilities. These community suggestions or recommendations will be closely monitored by the Local Planning Committee in the development of a proposed District Facility Plan for the Webster County School District.

For additional information contact Aaron Harrell, Superintendent of Webster County Schools, 28 State Route 1340, Dixon, KY 42409 at 270-639-5083.

The public is welcome and invited to this series of meetings and public forums.

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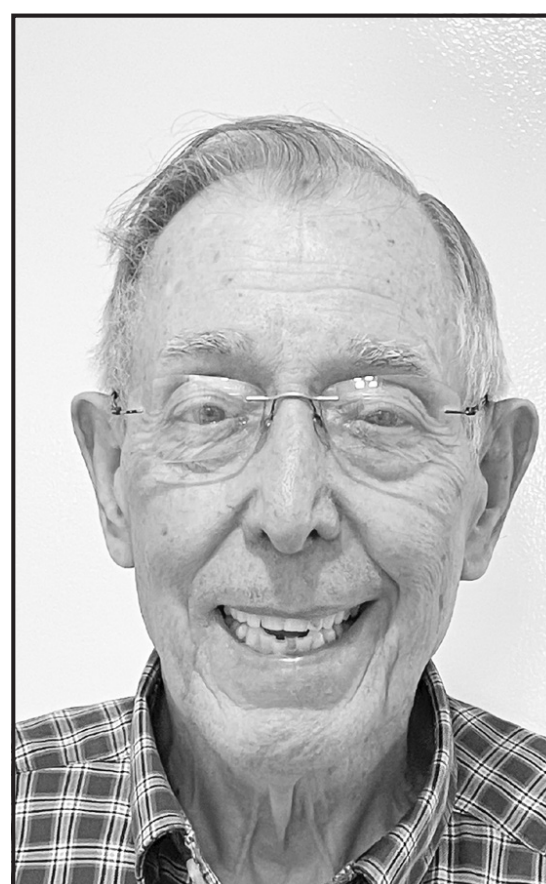
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