



THE WEBSTER COUNTY High School cheerleaders are pictured here as they rushed onto the field prior to last Friday night's football game and during the game as they "fired up" the crowd to support the Trojans. The cheerleaders honored America last Friday night by dressing in red, white, and blue. The WCHS cheerleaders spend many hours practicing routines for both the athletic and their competition seasons.



Honor A Tradition, Don't Be Held Hostage By It

By Tommy Druen

Every August, a man in the small Scottish town of South Queensferry gets covered head to toe in burrs. Yes, burrs, those prickly little nuisances that stick to your socks. Thousands of them. His neighbors weave flowers into the mass, press a decorated staff into each of his hands, and parade him through town for seven miles and nine hours.

He stops at pubs along the way. This is Scotland, after all. Since his face is completely covered, he drinks the free whiskey offered him through a straw.

It has to be quite the sight. A man transformed into a walking garden with flowers blooming from his burr-encrusted body, shuffling through the streets while people press coins into his costume. This has happened for at least 400 years. And it's widely believed that bad luck will fall upon South Queensferry if they ever stop.

Yet nobody can tell you why the tradition of the Burryman ever began. Not historians, not the residents of South Queensferry, not even the Burryman himself.

The original reason is just gone. Vanished completely. Maybe it was for good luck with the fishing boats. Nobody knows, yet everybody keeps doing it anyway.

When I first read about the Burryman, I thought it was a fun bit of quirky trivia. Then I realized we're not that different. Our families do this. Our workplaces do this. Our churches do this. We keep rules and rituals we've never once asked the reason

for, because somewhere along the way asking started to feel disrespectful.

Somebody, once, made a decision because the situation demanded it. It solved a real problem. Then the years went by, the reason faded, and the rule just... stayed. Eventually the only answer left is "because that's how we've always done it." And that might be the most dangerous sentence in the English language.

This doesn't mean tradition is an enemy. Far from it. Family traditions hold us steady in a world that won't slow down. Community traditions keep the stories that make a place what it is. The traditions handed down through faith carry wisdom. Traditions are real, and they matter.

But there's a difference between honoring tradition and being held hostage by it. The moment we stop asking why is the moment tradition becomes a cage instead of a cathedral.

So it's worth the occasional hard questions. Does this still solve the problem it was created for? If we were starting from nothing today, would we choose to do it this way?

Sometimes the answer is yes. Sometimes it's no. And sometimes, if we're honest, the answer is: nobody actually remembers. That answer shouldn't put us on the defensive. It should make us curious about what got lost along the way.

Here's the catch, though. Changing an old way requires something that keeping it doesn't. Risk. And most people, including me, will go to great lengths to avoid that. The familiar is comfortable precisely because it's

predictable. Changing means admitting you might get it wrong, in front of everyone who did it the old way before you. That's not just uncomfortable. It's lonely. It's scary.

So we cling to the familiar the way a kid clutches a blanket in the dark. We do things the same way even when they've stopped working, just so it doesn't get worse. Just to avoid the unknown.

Some traditions are great, while others aren't. The problem is distinguishing between the two. Sometimes we're preserving genuine wisdom. Sometimes we're just trapped in someone else's decision.

Some of what we've inherited is worth keeping. Some of it isn't. The hard part is distinguishing between the two, trying to determine whether you're preserving something wise or just carrying

out someone else's forgotten decision. Real honor means understanding why something started, not just that it did, and then deciding whether it still merits continuing.

The people of South Queensferry will probably never recover the meaning of the Burryman. That's a loss, but a harmless one. Not every tradition is that innocent.

It's not disrespectful to step back and ask: What are we actually preserving here? Why do we do it this way? And if the only answer is "because we've always done it", if you're defending something you can't explain, maybe you're not honoring anything at all. Maybe you're just covered in burrs, waiting for someone to tell you it's all right to take them off.

-- PUBLIC NOTICE --

NOTICE OF BOND RELEASE

In accordance with KRS 350.093, notice is hereby given that Se-bree Mining, LLC, 1146 Monarch Street STE:350, Lexington, Kentucky 40513, has applied for Phase I bond release on Increment No. 1 3 and 4, of permit 917-5027, which was last issued on July 9, 2026. The application covers an area of approximately 129.4 surface acres.

The permit area is near the intersection of US 41 and State HWY 494.

The bonds now in effect for the mentioned increments are surety bonds in the amount of \$738,977. 60% of the original bonds receiving Phase I release in the amount of \$443,386.20 is included in the application for release.

Reclamation work performed includes: backfilling, regrading, topsoil replacement, and drainage control including soil preparation and initial seeding and mulching in accordance with the approved reclamation plan and a report for the area has been submitted to the cabinet in accordance with 405 KAR 16:200, Section 8 or 405 KAR 18:200, Section 8. revegetation has been established in accordance with the approved reclamation plan and the standards for success of revegetation, successful completion of all surface and reclamation operations in accordance with the approved reclamation plan such that the land is capable of supporting the post mining land use of pastureland approved pursuant to 405 KAR 16:210 or 405 KAR 18:220; compliance with requirements of KRS Chapter 350, 405 KAR Chapters 7 through 24, and 405 KAR 10:020 and release of 129.4 acres.

Written comments, objections, and requests for a public hearing or informal conference must be filed with the Director, Division of Field Services, 300 Sower Boulevard Frankfort, Kentucky, 40601 by October 23rd, 2026.

A public hearing on the application has been scheduled for 9:00 AM on Tuesday, October 27th, 2026 at the Department for Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement's Madisonville Regional Office, State Office Building, Third Floor, 625 Hospital Drive, Madisonville, KY 42431. The hearing will be cancelled if no request for a hearing or informal conference is received by Friday October 23rd, 2026.

9/26c

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