

New candidate filings include magistrate race and U.S. Senate bids

By Macee Swafford

Staff Writer

LONDON — Several additional candidates have officially filed to seek public office ahead of upcoming elections, according to recent filings released by the Laurel County Clerk's Office and a separate announcement at the state level.

At the county level, Republican Tonya Poindexter has filed to run for Magistrate District 1, officially submitting her candidacy on Jan. 5. Poindexter joins Jason Neal Ivey and John Crawford in the district's primary race.

Chris Hubbard filed on Dec. 29 to run for Laurel County Surveyor

as a Republican, adding a new race to the local ballot for the May 19, 2026 primary election.

At the federal level, Amy McGrath has officially filed with the Kentucky Secretary of State's to run for United States Senate, formally launching her campaign in Kentucky. McGrath, a former Ma-

rine Corps fighter pilot and previous Democratic nominee for statewide office, filed for candidacy on Tuesday.

Another new candidate vying for the Democratic nomination in the Senate race is Vincent Anthony Thompson, while Valerie "Dr Val" Fredrick of Murray filed in the race

as a Republican.

Candidate filings for the 2026 primary election in London remain open through 4 p.m. this Friday at the Laurel County Clerk's Office, located inside the Laurel County Courthouse in London.

For more information, contact the clerk's office at (606) 864-5158.

ECONOMIC UPDATE

Popeyes opening date, new restaurants announced

By Macee Swafford
Staff Writer

LONDON — The local community continued to see steady economic movement throughout the month of December, marked by new business openings, relocations, expansions and ongoing construction projects.

Topping the list is Popeyes Louisiana Kitchen, located at 205 West Ky. 80 next to GoTime, which is scheduled to open to the public on January 19.

From new restaurants and retail offerings to health services, housing development and public-service partnerships; the activity proved to be a steady month of growth for the London-Laurel County Economic Development Authority.

The following is a list of other restaurants, businesses, and more announced in the December economic update from Economic Director Paula Thompson:

The Big City Pizza Company is coming soon to the London-Corbin Airport. The new pizza establishment will feature New York-style pizza made with homemade dough, real Chicago stuffed pizza, and their award-winning tipsy chicken with beer cheese and bourbon glaze.

Cintas Fire Division has moved into a new 12,000 square foot location at 66 Levi Jackson Mill Road. Their services include fire protection, extinguisher inspections, fire sprinkler systems and more. For more information, call 606-656-2000.

Site work has begun on Alamo Drive behind Habanero's Mexican Restaurant for a new hotel; Towneplace Suites Marriott. A late spring and early summer opening is scheduled with dates to be announced.

Perfectly Coordinated now offers day-of wedding coordination dedicated to making sure the big special day runs smoothly. For more information, the business can be located on their Facebook page under the same name.

A new bakery, Blessings and Batter Bakery, is now offering up a line-up of mouthwatering treats. On their Facebook page, those interested can find a menu of available to pre-order cupcakes, brownies and more. The business can be contacted at 606-312-5707.

Southeast Kentucky Behavioral Health has moved to a larger location

in the Arts on Broad business suites at 202 West Seventh Street, Suite 200. They offer outpatient counseling, tele-health, autism support services, and more. Visit SEKYBH.com for more information.

A new gym is in town. Legion Training Studio London is now open to the public, and located at 100 Bacho Way Suite 650. The gym has typical gym equipment, as well as a six person infrared sauna. They offer 24/7 access for its members. For more information, email legionfitnesslondon@gmail.com or call 606-269-3437.

The Buffalo Wings and Rings restaurant, located at 201 Faith Assembly Church Road, will transition to a locally owned restaurant called Blondie's All-Star Grill. They will add new items to their menu, as well as keep some already fan-favorites of Wings and Rings. They will be closed for re-construction, and plan on opening back up on January 15.

Timbrel Threads is a new apparel shop aimed at dressing dancers, dance families, and dance instructors. Their first collection will launch January 2026. To keep up to date with their collection, follow them

on Facebook at Timbrel Threads.

Isaiah 58:10 Ministries and Outreach has partnered with the City of London to provide a warming station at 203 South Broad Street when the temperatures are below 32 degrees. For more information, call 502-801-9119.

Ink By Charlotte offers permanent skin tattoos, tattoo removal, piercings, and coverups. To schedule an appointment, message Ink By Charlotte on Facebook for appointment information.

Jon Penny Photography is a new photography business in town that offers baby photo shoots, couples, prom and more. For more information, visit Jon Penny Photography on Facebook.

The Place at Court Road now has interior roaring and curving installed at its location at 700 Court Road. Finishing touches are now being made to the infrastructure. The plan is to begin construction of single-family homes after the first of the year.

Front Line Public Safety Equipment, a provider of equipment for police, fire, EMS, medical, and other first responders, has relocated at 200 Dog-

Patch Trading Center and re-opened on December 23. They can be reached at 800-282-2863.

Buff City Soap of London officially closed its doors permanently on December 30.

The new Pizza Hut location on 1758 Highway 192 is now open for business to the public. For more information, call 606-877-7777.

Construction has begun at 140 Faith Assembly Church Rd on a new medical cannabis dispensary. The business, High Profile, will be the only such pharmacy in the London community. This location will provide medical cannabis only to registered qualified patients, designated care givers, and visiting qualified patients. A late March early April opening is planned.

FEMA provided \$106 million to Kentucky disaster survivors in 2025

By TOM LATEK
Kentucky Today

FRANKFORT, Ky. (KT) — The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) says they have now distributed more than \$106 million to survivors of the three federally declared natural disasters in Kentucky this year.

As of Oct. 20, FEMA has paid out \$67.9 million for losses suffered in February's severe weather, \$34.9 million for April's severe weather and record flooding, and \$3.7 million due to damage from May's tornadoes. While the deadline for apply for benefits in all three disasters has passed, FEMA continues to process applications and issue payments daily.

Kentucky Emergency Management (KYEM), along with FEMA Individual Assistance Specialists in Kentucky are continuing to answer survivors' calls at the state's Unmet Needs Call Center, which is (502) 607-6665.

Kentucky survivors who have already applied for federal assistance may call experienced agents at that number to request a case review, make an appointment to meet in person, check the status of appeals or confirm processing decisions, confirm whether submitted documents have been received, get answers to questions about information or documents needed to resolve ineligibility

SEE FEMA, PAGE 10A

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