

Deceased identified in I-75 semi wreck

BY MACEE SWAFFORD
STAFF WRITER

LAUREL COUNTY — Kentucky State Police have identified the two individuals involved in last Wednesday’s fiery multi-vehicle crash on Interstate 75 in Laurel County.

Steve Douglas, Public Affairs Officer with KSP’s Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Division, identified the deceased as Ricky Fagan, 37, of Culloden, Georgia.

Kevin Sylvester, 52, of Louisville, was transported for treatment of non-life-threatening injuries, Douglas said.

The crash occurred around 1 p.m. Aug. 26 near the 33-mile marker of I-75 and the northbound weigh station, resulting in a large fire and the closure of the interstate in both directions between Exits 29 and 38.

According to the preliminary investigation, three commercial vehicles and two passenger vehicles were involved in the collision. The impact led to a large fire at the scene.

While the southbound lanes reopened after a few hours, northbound traffic was reduced to one lane into the following day as a highway crew worked to repave damage to the road.

A separate commercial vehicle fire also impacted traffic on I-75 in Laurel County on Thursday, one day after the fatal crash.

The Thursday incident caused traffic restrictions as emergency crews responded to the commercial vehicle fire. No injuries were reported in that incident.

The two incidents resulted in additional traffic delays for motorists traveling through Laurel County during the week.

Douglas said the investigation into Wednesday’s fatal crash remains active, with additional information expected as the investigation progresses.

Superceding vehicular homicide indictment tops Laurel County grand jury’s August report

BY MACEE SWAFFORD
STAFF WRITER

LONDON — The Laurel County Grand Jury has returned a superceding indictment in the case of a three-vehicle accident that resulted in a fatality a year ago.

Kimberly Dianna Hedrick, 56, of London — also known as Kimberlee Dianna Howard — is facing six counts stemming from an Aug. 1, 2025, collision that occurred on American Greeting Card Road in southern Laurel County.

According to the indictment, Hedrick is charged with vehicular homicide for a death while operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol, a controlled substance or another substance that impaired her driving ability.

Hedrick also faces four counts of first-degree wanton endangerment. The indictment accuses her of striking a vehicle occupied by four passengers while under the influence of intoxicants, creating a danger of death or serious physical injury to each passenger.

The final count charges Hedrick with operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of intoxicants, first of-



KIMBERLY HEDRICK

fense.

According to an August 2025 release from the Laurel County Sheriff’s Office, the crash occurred around midnight the morning of August 1, 2025, approximately 11 miles south of London.

Authorities said a Chevrolet Tahoe driven by Hedrick, was southbound when it crossed the centerline — striking a northbound Chevrolet Aveo head on and critically injuring its driver, Benita Vickers, 55, of Corbin.

The Tahoe then collided with a Hyundai SUV and went airborne, landing on a guard-rail. The Aveo and Hyundai came to rest blocking the roadway.

LCSO stated that Vickers was transported to Baptist Health Corbin and pronounced dead shortly after arrival by Whitley County Coroner Andy Croley. A male passenger in her vehicle was also injured and taken to that hospital.

The driver of the Hyundai — identified as David Nicholas Wynn, 40, of London — fled the scene, according to LCSO, due to an outstanding warrant. Two female passengers in that SUV were

also taken to Baptist Health Corbin.

Hedrick was taken to Saint Joseph London for treatment of minor injuries.

Deputies noted the odor of alcohol and slurred speech, and charged Hedrick with vehicular homicide while under the influence.

Hedrick was initially indicted in May for vehicular homicide and DUI with aggravating circumstances. She remains free of custody in lieu of a \$50,000 bond posted on August 12, 2025.

Hedrick is scheduled to be arraigned on the superceding indictment in Laurel Circuit Court on October 14.

Wynn pled guilty last month to leaving the scene of an accident with death or serious physical injury. On August 24, Laurel Circuit Judge Michael Caperton sentenced him to a two-year suspended sentence with supervised probation for five years.

Other indictments returned August 21 include:

- Michael Roy Parker, 40, of East Bernstadt, was indicted on seven counts stemming from a June 28, 2026, incident.

Parker faces four counts of first-degree wanton endangerment, with the indictment ac-

cusing him of causing a fire at a residence where four people were residing, creating a danger of death or serious physical injury.

He also faces three counts of first-degree criminal mischief. The indictment claims he damaged a Chevrolet Equinox, a 2019 Nissan Rogue and a double-wide trailer, with each alleged offense resulting in a pecuniary loss of \$1,000 or more.

According to a release from the Laurel County Sheriff’s Office at the time of his July arrest, Parker started the fire in a driveway as he tried to steal gas from a car parked at the home. When the car caught fire, it ignited the trailer and other vehicles as well.

— Billy Raymond Biggs,

SEE REPORT, PAGE 3A

4 Family Garage Sale
1st one this year.
Thursday
Friday, Saturday
September 3-4-5.
Next house on East
4th Street past
Benge Farm Supply.
New items put out
each day.

Laurel County Fiscal Court honors Charles Brown upon retirement



Judge Executive David Westerfield, right, honors longtime employee Charles Brown for his 23 years of service. | PHOTO BY MACEE SWAFFORD

BY MACEE SWAFFORD
STAFF WRITER

LONDON — Laurel County Fiscal Court honored Charles (Charlie) Brown during its meeting last week as he prepared to retire after 23 years of service to the county.

Brown served as administrator of the county’s occupational tax office, which collects revenues vital to the operation of Laurel County government. Officials recognized him for his dedication, commitment and hard work throughout his

career.

His retirement was set to take effect the Friday. As part of the transition, the court approved the promotion of Crystal Madden to occupational tax administrator and set her salary at \$31 per hour. Officials noted Madden had worked alongside Brown and had been trained by him in the position.

The court also approved the purchase of new voting equipment totaling \$167,000. Half of the cost will be paid upfront, with the remaining bal-

ance due in January when the machines are expected to arrive. Officials said the equipment will be used through the 2027 state elections.

Fiscal court approved its July 2026 financial report and cash transfer report — including a \$79,170.23 transfer from the General Fund to the Jail Fund and a \$130,000 transfer of occupational tax funds to the Road Fund.

The court also approved a \$132,000 vehicle for the Laurel County Correctional

Center maintenance building and authorized advertising for bids for renovations on the new location of the 911 Dispatch Center.

Several tax settlement reports were approved, along with 2026-27 school tax rates submitted by local school districts. Officials said a special-called meeting would be held the following week to address the remaining school tax rate.

The Mortgage Loan Officers name was incorrect in the BEST OF THE BEST, should have been Paula Hall. We are sorry for any inconvenience this may have cause.

Mortgage Loan Officer: Paula Hall

Laurel County Board of Education Proposed Tax Notification

The Laurel County Board of Education is proposing a general fund tax levy of 45.6 cents on real property and 45.6 cents on personal property. The General Fund tax levied in fiscal year 2026 was 46.2 cents on real property and 46.2 cents on personal property and produced revenue of \$19,977,831.55. The proposed General Fund tax rate of **45.6 cents on real property and 45.6 cents on personal property** is expected to produce \$21,221,395. Of this amount, \$2,714,756 is from new and personal property. The compensating tax for 2027 is 43.1 cents on real property and 46 cents on personal property and is expected to produce \$20,230,609.

The proposed rate is expected to generate more revenue than received in the preceding year. The general areas to which revenue of \$1,243,563 above 2026 revenue is to be allocated are as follows: \$186,534 Building fund, \$600,000 transportation, \$457,029 instructional

This information is published pursuant to KRS 160.470. The proposed tax rate is not subject to recall under KRS 132.017.

The General Assembly has required publication of this advertisement and information contained herein