

OBITUARIES

Carolyn Sue Holm

EUGENE, Ore. — Carolyn Sue Holm died on March 30, 2026, in Eugene, Oregon, at the age of 78.

Born Carolyn Sue Vinson, she lived a life centered on learning, family, friendship, and faith. She graduated from Trigg County High School in Cadiz, Kentucky, and went on to Murray State University, where she earned an undergraduate degree, a master's degree, and completed advanced graduate coursework in education.

Carolyn devoted much of her professional life to teaching speech and literature, spending most of her career at Shawnee Community College in Ullin, Illinois. She also taught at Shawnee High School in Southern Illinois and Hopkinsville High School in western Kentucky. She loved literature, language, and ideas, and she shared those gifts generously with her students for over 30 years.

She was a faithful member of St. Matthew By the Lake ELCA Lutheran Church in Benton, Kentucky, and Emmaus ELCA Lutheran Church in Eugene.

She is survived by her sister, Anne Vinson Wamser of Raleigh, North Carolina; her son, David Leonard Bradley IV, and his wife, Carolyn Bradley, of Cheshire, Connecticut, and their daughters, Allison Bradley and Katherine Bradley; her son, John Vinson Bradley, and his wife, Annie



Cole-Bradley, of Eugene, Oregon, and their children, Anna Bradley and Isaac Bradley; her stepdaughter, Kim Giltner, and her husband, Brian Giltner, of Metropolis, Illinois, and their children Zachary Giltner and Madison Giltner; and her stepson, Kris Holm, and his wife, Regina Holm, of Paducah, Kentucky, and their children Catherine Holm, Lily Holm, and Cooper Holm. Carolyn is also survived by her lifelong friend, Robert Collie of Fairdealing, Kentucky.

She was preceded in death by her husband, John Ted Holm; her brother, John Robert Vinson III; her mother, Doris Peal Vinson; and her father, John Robert "Jack" Vinson Jr.

A local service will be held in Eugene, with a memorial in Kentucky to follow at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorial contributions be made in Carolyn's memory to Hosea Youth Services, 834 Monroe Street, Eugene, OR 97402; phone 541-344-5583, or online at hoseayouth.org.

The family is grateful for the love, prayers, and kindness shown during this time.

Thomas 'Tom' Harrington

Thomas "Tom" Harrington, 78 of Martin, Tennessee, formerly of Marshall County, Kentucky, passed away Saturday, April 4, 2026, at Diversicare of Martin.

Born Tuesday, July 15, 1947, in Bennington, Vermont, he was the son of the late Gaylord Harrington and the late Helen Thompson Harrington. From 1977 until 1995, Tom and his family owned and operated a staple in the Aurora community, Harrington's Lakestop Convenience Store. He retired as the owner and operator of Tom's Primitive Weapons in Aurora. Tom loved the outdoors and was an avid hunter and fisherman.

Surviving are son, James "J.T." Harrington (Erin) of Hernando, Mississippi; daughters, Leslie Ary of Martin, and Allison Jeffords (Jack) of



Metropolis, Illinois; sister-in-law, Carol Harrington of Bennington, Vermont; grandchildren, Autumn Ticknor, Noah Jeffords, Tori Ary, Will Ary, Eli Harrington, Luke Harrington, Seth Harrington and Owen Harrington.

He was preceded in death by his parents and brothers, Frank Harrington, Arnold Harrington, and Chet Harrington.

The family will receive friends from 4-6 p.m. Saturday, May 2, 2026, at Collier Funeral Home, 211 W. Fifth St., Benton.

A private funeral ceremony will be held at a later date.



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The Tater Day parade made its annual journey up Main Street promptly at 11 a.m.

TATER

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Tater Day organizer Drew Williams has worked to revitalize the event for several years, and finally had plans to return the vendors to the square for 2025. A historic bout of flooding caused that plan to be canceled, but it came to fruition in 2026.

While the closure of the square is a return to the history of Tater Day, Williams also sees it as a safety improvement.

"We definitely closed down the court square," said Williams. "We had a lower traffic stop rate, because people were going slower around the court square detours, which is a big issue of public safety for me."

Among the new events Williams has coordinated were a sweet potato dessert bake off and a sweet potato pie eating contest.

"We had the sweet potato pie eating competition," said Williams. "We had winners. We had a whole bunch of kids sign up. I thought it was a beautiful kind of example of what we can build. It all seemed to be going really well, so we're just going to keep building for next year."

The pie eating contest saw 12 contestants compete to see who could eat a single pie the fastest. Ultimately no one completed their pie after 10 minutes had elapsed, so the winners were determined by who had eaten



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Benton Mayor Rita Dotson was selected as the grand marshal of the parade. Dotson is in her final term, having served the city as mayor for almost 12 years.

the most of their pie by that time.

The winner was Chad Jones with Camden Faith and Aiden Peck taking second and third place respectively. The event was sponsored by Main Street Pizza and Tap. First place was awarded a \$100 gift card, while second and third place each received a \$25 gift card.

Williams has also worked to revive historic events that have lost popularity or stopped happening over the years. Among those is the pony pull. In past years, particularly when the event aligned with Easter Sunday, the crowds have been small, but Williams said the stands were full for the 2026 event.

"This year it was standing room only," said Williams. "We're going to bring out an additional set of bleachers next year. So, again, trying to bring back those nostalgic events is really important."

In addition to the parade, which featured Benton Mayor Rita Dotson as grand marshal, Monday also played host to several events that were originally set for Saturday, April 4. This included the Rural Heritage Celebration antique tractor and gas and steam engine show, a Candidate Corner where those running for office could be found, and more.

Tater Day 2027 will be Monday, April 5.

CEO

FROM PAGE A1

believed building trust with the community would lead to an increase of clinic and surgery patients, as well as an increase of emergency room patients. He also stated that he believed the swing bed program was not only a way to increase patients and revenue, but also a competitive edge.

In an interview following the meeting, he described the swing bed program as a way to continue caring for patients and reduce readmissions.

"They have been discharged from acute care, and so therefore you may have a patient that still needs some clinical needs, such as speech therapy, OT, physical therapy, still needing a skill," said Luther. "Being a critical access hospital allows our beds to be multiuse, compared to a bigger hospital, so we're able to continue to have patients in our hospital that would not qualify for other different hospitals. We can keep people close to home, instead of having to either go to a nursing home, or go home and still get a readmission."

The final piece of Luther's plan is to put more focus on the hospital foundation by increasing community support.

"It is evident that people are proud of the community hospital that we have here," said Luther. "We have to build those relationships and give them the opportunity to donate or whatever we need to do on that piece. I will tell you, I have a good friend, his name is Roy Lowdenback, who runs the foundation for all of Baptist [Health]. He will tell you that giving a patient the opportunity to give back is the best thing. Patients want to give back, and we've got to give them the opportunity to give back. At this moment in time, I don't feel like we have that today. So, we're going to work through that because we have to build more of a relationship and give people opportunities for that."

Luther noted the number of plaques and honorific signage around the hospital signifying donations as evidence of past community support for the organization.

Luther also shared that he would seek input from others in the hospital, particularly department directors, in order to continue finding ways to cut expenses and increase revenue. He shared that at the next directors' meeting he would be present a document for the directors to submit ideas.

"I'm asking every department director to give me revenue generating ideas or expense reduction," said Luther. "They are all on the ground knowing what's

going on. And guess what? They have the answers. So we're going to ask them to let us know what [they] think we need to be changing here."

Luthern then cited a story about American Airlines, stating that in 1987, the company decided to remove one olive from their salads. Luther said the small change totaled \$40,000 in savings for the company.

The board then approved the purchase of new equipment to be used for the swing bed program. The purchase was approved with the use of foundation funds.

The purchase comes after CFO Janice Kelley shared that while the hospital's revenue is behind what was budgeted for this point in the year, the hospital has received its annual funding from the Joe Tom Haltom fund. For 2026, that total was \$381,370.88, and Kelley said the previous year that fund was \$355,909, noting that the fund generated more money this year.

The hospital is also amid its annual audit, having had auditors in the building in mid-March. Luther and board chair Lauren Mann both shared that the auditors spoke highly of Kelley and her team.

Amid public conversations and rumors about the hospital's financial situation, some have speculated that the hos-

pital's financial strain may be related to a lawsuit involving a former employee. Kelley and Mann confirmed that the lawsuit was ongoing, but stated that it was not related to the financial situation, as it was covered by the hospital's insurance policy.

In an interview following the meeting, Luther reiterated his excitement at beginning the role, and his belief in the quality of care of the hospital.

"I'm excited to be here," said Luther. "I've only been here 30 days, and I can attest, I mean, I came from Baptist. This hospital is a great hospital. We just need to work on the things that I have outlined, and we are going to be perfectly fine."

He also reiterated that the hospital is in a "fine" financial state, but noted that health care can be an inconsistent business.

"Financially, we're doing fine," said Luther. "Health care is a difficult world, and so you have mountains and valleys. At this point, we are working on some of our streamlining of services that I believe will continue to put us moving into the future."

The meeting also featured the hospital's annual report from Chief Clinical Officer Tiffany Tubbs.

The hospital board regularly meets at noon on the first Tuesday of the month. The next meeting is set for May 5.